

Sept. 13 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1995

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the Mayfield Woods Middle School. In his remarks, he referred to student Terrell Brice; Gov. Parris Glendening of Maryland; and Myrna and Dora Camarena, sister and mother of Drug Enforce-

ment Administration Special Agent Enrique Camarena Salazar, who was killed while conducting an undercover investigation of drug traffickers in Mexico.

Statement on the Normalization Agreement Between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

September 13, 1995

I welcome the agreement signed by the Foreign Ministers of Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in New York today normalizing their relations. The agreement is very much in the interest of both nations and will significantly strengthen regional stability while aiding our efforts to negotiate a wider peace in the Balkans.

Both Prime Minister Papandreou and President Gligorov deserve congratulations for demonstrating the courage and determination needed to reach an agreement that was fair to both sides. I hope both governments will now proceed to establish friendly and enduring bilateral relations while taking steps to resolve their remaining differences, including over the name issue.

I also wish to thank U.N. Special Representative Cyrus Vance and U.S. Special Envoy Matthew Nimetz for their tireless efforts in helping to mediate the dispute.

In view of the significant progress represented by this agreement, I wrote to President Gligorov earlier in the week inviting his government to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. I am pleased to announce that I have received his positive response and can confirm that diplomatic relations now exist between our two countries.

I look forward to meeting with the negotiators and representatives of the two countries tomorrow to congratulate them personally on this important achievement.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Representatives From Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and an Exchange With Reporters

September 14, 1995

Normalization Agreement

The President. First of all, let me say that I am delighted to be joined here by the Foreign Minister of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Ambassador to Greece to formally congratulate these two countries on the agreement they signed yesterday in New York, agreeing to normalize their relations.

I want to say a special word of thanks to a great American, Cy Vance, who is here, who represented the United Nations; and my Special Envoy, Matt Nimetz, for the remarkable role they played in bringing these two countries together.

As you know, the United States has had troops stationed, since I became President, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to try to help to prevent the spread of the Balkan war. And for these two countries to work out their longstanding differences and look forward to relationships of permanent peace and commerce and accord with one another is an enormous step forward in our attempts to find a comprehensive peace in the Balkans.

Now, I also want to tell you that we have some reason to hope that we are making progress, thanks to the determination of NATO and the United Nations, in securing Bosnian Serb compliance with the conditions the U.N.

and NATO have set forward for the cessation of the bombing campaign. And we are working on that, will continue to work on it hard today. And obviously, if there are any developments, we will announce them.

Bosnia

Q. Do you have Russian acquiescence to place troops around Sarajevo?

The President. Well, let me say, first of all, we are working on the details of the agreement. When they are worked out, we will then say what they are and answer all the questions.

Q. But sir, is there an agreement for the Serbs to pull their artillery from the positions around Sarajevo?

The President. That is what we are attempting to secure at this moment. We are working through that. There's been some progress in the last—there's been some reason to hope for progress in the last several hours, beginning last night our time. But we're not prepared to make a final announcement yet. When we are, we will, and we'll answer all the questions.

Medicare

Q. The Speaker of the House today said that the Democratic position on Medicare is to scare 85-year-olds, and he called the party morally bankrupt.

The President. Well, you know, I think it's questionable to use words like "morally bankrupt," but let's look at the facts. For 2 years, I said the Medicare Trust Fund was in trouble,

and Mr. Gingrich and others mocked me and denied that it was in trouble. All by ourselves, with no help from them, we added 3 years to the life of the Trust Fund. We have proposed legislation which would add 10 years to the life of the Trust Fund and will get Medicare out of trouble.

I don't want to use a term like "morally bankrupt," but I think it is morally questionable at least to propose vast Medicare cuts which would increase the cost of Medicare to elderly people living on under \$24,000 a year and claim that it's going to the Trust Fund when they know not one red cent of the money being paid by seniors will go to the Trust Fund. It will go to fund a tax cut that is too big. And they should tell the truth to the American people that they want to charge the providers more money and put that in the Trust Fund. They want to charge the elderly people of this country more money and put that into the tax cut.

Now, that is the truth. And if we're going to talk about what morality requires, morality requires them to tell the truth to the American people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Following his remarks, the President met with Greek Ambassador to the United States Loukas Tsilas and Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Agreement To End Air Strikes in Bosnia and an Exchange With Reporters

September 15, 1995

The President. Good morning. I welcome the agreement by the Bosnian Serbs to comply with a condition set by NATO and the United Nations for ending the NATO air strikes.

American pilots and crews and their NATO colleagues have been carrying out those strikes to prevent further slaughter of innocent civilians in the Sarajevo area and in the other safe areas of Bosnia. Now, the Bosnian Serbs have stated that they will end all offensive operations within the Sarajevo exclusion zone, withdraw their

heavy weapons from the zone within 6 days, and allow road and air access to Sarajevo within 24 hours. NATO and the U.N., therefore, have suspended air operations temporarily and will carefully monitor the Serb compliance with these commitments.

The suspension is appropriate. But let me emphasize, if the Bosnian Serbs do not comply with their commitments, the air strikes will resume.