

Prime Minister Drnovsek. [*Inaudible*]*—to visit, the first time we have the President of the United States in Slovenia, and I think it is confirmation of excellent relations that we established during the last year. And we cooperated in southeast situation; the Kosovo crisis was another crisis.*

So I think this is a confirmation for Slovenia, for our partnership, because of our role in this part of the world.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, yesterday you had a chance to sit down across the table from Boris Yeltsin. We saw him get off at the airport. He looked

very frail; at times his speech sounded slurred. You sat across the table, eyeball-to-eyeball. How would you assess Boris Yeltsin today?

President Clinton. Yesterday, I can say, his movements were halting, but his mind was quite clear. He was very precise, very strong, and very eager for us to resolve our past differences and go on into the future. I actually was reassured by the meeting. I thought he was quite strong and quite clear yesterday.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:55 p.m. in the Presidential Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to the People of Ljubljana June 21, 1999

Thank you, Thank you. *Dober dan!* You have certainly provided for me a welcome to Slovenia I will never forget.

Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mayor Potocnik; to the young lady who introduced me, Irena Majcen; and to your famous Olympian Leon Stukelj; and to all the people of Slovenia, thank you very much.

I would also like to thank the Big Band of RTV for playing my national anthem and yours. Let's give the band a hand, there. [*Applause*]

I have wanted to visit your country for a long time. The whole world admires Slovenia's success in building freedom and prosperity, and now we look to you to play a crucial role as we build a better future for all of Europe. Your great Olympic champion Leon Stukelj has now lived 100 years. He has lived throughout this century, the bloodiest and most turbulent in history, from the collapse of Austria-Hungary to the first Yugoslav State, from fascist invaders to Soviet forces to Tito's Yugoslavia. Think how many armies have marched through this square, how many flags have been raised over your city.

Now, at last, the flag flying in this capital stands for independence and democracy and the better life you are building. Congratulations, and God bless you.

All over the world, people seek the same kind of freedom and justice and peace that you have brought here—from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, to southern Africa, and in central

and southeastern Europe. But we know these gains are fragile, for freedom's enemies hope for our failure. Therefore, we must keep moving forward to deepen democracy and widen opportunity, to build genuine communities and lasting peace.

To succeed, we must begin with a simple truth: Racial and religious hatred has no place in a civilized society. That is why free nations stood against Mr. Milosevic's ethnic cleansing and killing in Kosovo. Now the Serb forces have left, the international security forces are moving in, and the Kosovars are going home. This is a great day for freedom.

I thank Slovenia for standing with NATO and for providing vital aid to the refugees. For all you have done, I am very, very grateful. Thank you.

Eight years ago Mr. Milosevic triggered a military assault on your nation. But you resisted. You secured your freedom, and you proclaimed: It will never be the same again. Now, all the people—all the people of every part of Europe must be able to say the same thing. Democracy, tolerance, and human rights must prevail everywhere. For no nation is safe, no prosperity is stable if conflict and refugees and crime and terrorism can be pushed across borders.

We must build a Europe with no frontline states, a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. And Slovenia can lead the way. And America will help.

Today America and Slovenia have reached agreements to encourage more American companies to do business here, to expand trade, and to do other things which will help your economy. And let me say to people all over the world who will see this on television, do not be deterred by the rain. [*Laughter*] This a wonderful country. Come here and help them build a future.

We also want to build Slovenia's security. You have stood with us in Kosovo. You have made progress in creating a modern military. You have established a demining trust to remove landmines and aid their victims. You have been a good partner, and you are an excellent candidate for NATO.

Let me also say that we want Serbia to be a part of the new Europe. But Serbia must reject the murderous rule of Mr. Milosevic and choose the path that Slovenia has chosen, where people reach across the old divides and find strength in their differences and their common humanity.

A decade ago, just as Mr. Milosevic was launching his campaign of ethnic terror, Slovenia chose a new national anthem, with a verse from

your great poet and patriot France Preseren. Your anthem—your anthem tells what Europe's future should be. The anthem praises those who work for the day when all will be free; when nations live as neighbors, not enemies; when war is banished from the world.

Your vision is our vision. Let us pursue it together, for all of Europe, so that for all your peoples, it will never be the same again.

Thank you, and God bless you.

On behalf of our delegation, my wife, my daughter, all of us, thank you for making us feel welcome. We never will forget this. I hope you won't either.

God bless you, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:22 p.m. in Congress Square. In his remarks, he referred to President Milan Kucan and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia; Mayor Viktorija Potocnik of Ljubljana; 1924 Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Leon Stukelj; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to RTV, Radio and Television of Slovenia.

Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President Milan Kucan of Slovenia in Ljubljana June 21, 1999

Mr. President, Mrs. Kucan, Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished government officials, and citizens of Slovenia: It is a great honor for me, for Hillary, for Secretary Albright, indeed, for our entire American delegation, to share this historic day with you.

Today we added a new chapter to the long story of our friendship. As you heard from the President, it is a friendship that goes back even before the history of the United States, when President Thomas Jefferson, the author of our Declaration of Independence, was looking for examples of democracy around the world, places where the people ruled.

The President gave you a—what I would call a delicate version of the example provided by the Corinthians to Thomas Jefferson. You see, Thomas Jefferson loved the fact that before assuming their titles, the old dukes of Corinthia

were ceremoniously slapped by a local present to symbolize the right of the people to rebuff their leaders. Thomas Jefferson liked that. So did all future generations of Americans. [*Laughter*] Except they wait until after you're in office to do it. [*Laughter*]

Well, democracy is going strong again in Slovenia, and still your efforts inspire Americans. We are grateful for the many contributions of Slovenians to the strength and texture of our country, and we are grateful for the partnership that unites us today.

This spring, as both the President and the Prime Minister have said, that partnership met a great test. For the fourth time in this decade, Mr. Milosevic and Serbia launched a brutal campaign of violence, threatening the progress the people of this region have worked so hard to achieve. As you know from the daily television