

Serbia

Q. Mr. President, metaphorically speaking, you are the voice of America. [Laughter] I can't help but make the link now——

The President. Except for a few days ago. [Laughter]

Q. I can't help but make the link to Eastern Europe and the Serbia situation. What would you say to Mr. Milosevic?

The President. That elections should be respected and that the voice of the people should be heard, and that the human, political, and civil rights of the people should be respected. The United States has made its statement and its position clear. Neither we nor anyone else would seek to interfere in the internal events in Serbia, but our sympathies are always with free people who are struggling to express their freedom and want to have the integrity of their elections respected.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:54 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia.

Statement Announcing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit December 10, 1996

Today, America and its NATO allies agreed to hold a NATO summit on July 8–9, 1997, in Madrid to take the crucial next steps on the enlargement and adaptation of the North Atlantic alliance for the 21st century. This marks an important milestone on the road to an integrated, democratic, and secure Europe.

The summit will seek to advance a strong and enduring NATO-Russia partnership; to strengthen partnership with all of Europe's new democracies; to approve adaptations within NATO to prepare the alliance to meet the challenges of the coming century; and to invite the first aspiring NATO members to begin accession talks to join the alliance. My goal is to see NATO take in its first new members by 1999, the 50th anniversary of NATO's founding and the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

From the beginning of my administration, I have worked hard to end the cold war division of Europe and to create, for the first time in history, a Europe united in democracy, security, and free market prosperity. Now, we must continue to reach out to Russia, and include this great nation in the fabric of Europe's emerging community of democracies. We must open the doors of Europe's institutions that nurtured peace, prosperity, and security throughout the cold war to Europe's new democracies, excluding no nation that shares our values and is willing and able to shoulder our common responsibilities.

NATO has never threatened any other nation, nor will an enlarged NATO do so in the future. While NATO's new members will be full members of the alliance, NATO has no intention, no plan, and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members.

We have made tremendous progress over the last 4 years in realizing our vision of an undivided Europe at peace, and no one deserves more credit than Warren Christopher. Thanks to his efforts, Secretary-designate Madeleine Albright and my new national security team will have a strong foundation on which to achieve that important goal.

Remarks at a Democratic Leadership Council Luncheon

December 11, 1996

Thank you. The last person clapping is my first new Ambassador in the new term. [Laughter]

Thank you, Bernard Schwartz, for that wonderful introduction and for your life of private and public achievement. I was hearing you say all those terrific things, and I thought to myself, I'm glad you did what you did, but I'd like you even better if you owned a newspaper. [Laughter]

I want to thank my longtime friend Senator Lieberman and Governor Romer for their work for the DLC. And I see my predecessors as chairs out there: Senator Chuck Robb and Congressman Dave McCurdy. I thank them for the work they did at the DLC.