

we have this spiritual energy here. What do you think of that? You didn't mention anything about our cultural future. Thank you.

*The President.* Well, I mentioned a little bit about it, but I think you have enormous cultural power. I think you also have enormous spiritual power. There is a great energy in this country that communicates itself. It's always been here, I think. And in some ways it was repressed in the last several decades. And it's coming out now in all kinds of ways, not only in terms of creative culture but also in terms of new interest in religion and faith and all kinds of things that show the character and depth of the nation. And I would urge you to cultivate that, both in terms of culture and faith.

Someone ask a question. I can't pick anyone there. You'll have to be self-selected.

*Q.* Good day, Mr. President. This is the cradle of *perestroika*. This is the birthplace of the first and last President of the Soviet Union. This is a multinational area. We have all kinds of people here, students, workers, office workers, representatives from the Cossacks, also refugees from the hot points in the former Soviet Union.

Mr. President, on the territory of the former Soviet Union, civil wars go on without end. Russia, unfortunately, either cannot or doesn't want to settle the civil strife. What is your feeling? Does the United States of America plan to get involved in these conflicts? And if so, in what way? And more so because there is an example of Yugoslavia. There is a danger here of taking sides in the West; the West is supporting the Muslims in Yugoslavia.

Let me repeat the question: If there will be an involvement in the United States, what kind of involvement would this be?

*The President.* Well, first, I don't think it's entirely accurate that Russia has not been involved at all. There's no question that Russia and the Russian military was very instrumental in stabilizing Mr. Shevardnadze's position in Georgia. So I think there will be times when you will be involved, and you will be more likely to be involved in some of these areas near you, just like the United States has been involved in the last several years in Panama and Grenada near our area.

The thing I think that we have to try to do, as I said in my speech, that when there is an involvement beyond the borders of the nation, that it is consistent with international law and, whenever possible, actually supported

by other nations either through the United Nations or through some other instrument of international law.

Now, let us also frankly acknowledge that some of these conflicts, take the one in Yugoslavia, in Bosnia, for example, some of these conflicts represent longstanding conflicts that were actually repressed during the time when these countries were effectively controlled from above and when the various warring factions were, in effect, occupied.

What happened in Yugoslavia was when Mr. Tito died and then the central government's authority began to erode and then all the various parts of Yugoslavia began to try to be independent, Bosnia-Herzegovina, which always had these three different factions, basically degenerated back to the conflict which had been there for hundreds of years.

There is no perfect solution to any of life's problems, you know, and I still think, on balance, we're better off without empires, and countries are better off seeking their own determination. But in this case, the truth is people there keep killing each other.

Now, what I have done is—the reason that you say that we have supported the Muslims in Yugoslavia, we supported the multiethnic government in Bosnia because it was recognized by the United Nations. So the United States supported it because it was recognized by the United Nations. However, we also support a peace process which would give some territory to the Muslim-dominated government, to the Serbs and to the Croats. So what we're doing in Bosnia is to try to support the U.N. mission in trying to urge the parties to stop killing each other.

If you don't have an imperial army, if you don't just go in and take people over and tell them what to do, then you have to make some allowances for the fact that on occasion they'll do the stupid thing and keep on killing each other even when it doesn't make any sense. And there are some areas where you can stop it and some where you can't.

If you look at Africa, for example, in Brunei and Angola and the Sudan—never mind Somalia, just those three countries—hundreds of thousands of people have died in each of those countries just in the last couple of years because of civil wars. That is what I said in my speech. There is still too much ethnic and tribal hatred in this world, and we can't control it all, not