

to achieve what twice before this century has escaped our grasp. It is the vision that perished twice in the battlefields of Europe, the vision that gave us hope through the long cold war, the dream of a new world of freedom.

Mr. President, when we think of the world our children and theirs will inherit, no single factor will shape their future more than the fate of the revolution now unfold-

ing in Russia. Your Russian revolution, like our American Revolution, simply must succeed.

Once again, my friend, welcome to the White House. And may God grant a peaceful future to the American and the Russian people. Welcome, sir. Glad you're here.

Note: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

June 16, 1992

POW-MIA's

Q. Mr. President, do you think there are any POW's in the Soviet Union, Americans? This to President Bush first and then Yeltsin.

President Yeltsin. It is possible.

Q. Are they alive?

President Yeltsin. An investigating commission is working, led by Mr. Volkogonov. Many things have been revealed after the examination of the archives of the KGB and the Central Committee of the Communist Party. But that work is continuing both in the archives and in the places where the POW's were. We shall try to investigate each individual case. And all the information will be, of course, handed over to the American side. The initial information has been handed over to the Senate.

Q. Would you expect more information this week?

President Bush. Let me just thank President Yeltsin for this because this is a matter of grave concern to the American people. He has made these observations, pledged full cooperation and support. I think this really expresses as well as anything else this new era that we were both talking about on the lawn. And I have every confidence that what he says here is true, that they will get to the bottom of it. And if any single American is unaccounted for, they will go the extra mile to see that that person is accounted for. And I think that's what the American people need to know. I think

that's what President Yeltsin has clearly pledged to do. So we are grateful to him for that.

Q. Does it come as a complete surprise to you, Mr. President?

President Bush. Yes, it comes as a—

Q. You had no idea?

President Bush. Thank you all very much.

Q. Have you got an arms agreement yet?

President Bush. Out of here, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Q. —additional information on the American POW's.

President Yeltsin. As I just answered that question.

Q. We were behind the doors.

President Yeltsin. The commission headed by Volkogonov was working and is continuing to work, and they're opening up all the data. If they said this issue doesn't exist, that there are no POW's there now, there are a lot of factors being opened up and discovered. And it's very possible that there are a few of them still left alive, even on our own territory perhaps. So the commission is continuing its work, and we are going to carry this all the way to the very ground to find out the fate of every single last American who might be on our territory.

Q. How much time will that require? What new ideas and projects were you talk-

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ing about in your opening statement?

President Yeltsin. That's ahead. That's for our negotiations.

Nuclear Arms Agreement

Q. Boris Nikolayevich, tell us please, and you, Mr. Bush, both agree that the program is very, very intense, a lot on the plate, 20 different issues. What are you going to be concentrating your attention on with Mr. Bush?

President Yeltsin. First of all, national security and deep cuts in nuclear arms. As a matter of fact, up until now we have not yet finalized this issue, but we have met with the President and with our delegations, of course, and the Secretaries of State and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to sit down

and finalize this today. And I'm sure that we will find a solution, and we shall sign a balanced, equal agreement. I'm sure of that.

Q. Do you think you will be able to announce a new arms control agreement by the end of the day?

President Bush. As soon as you get out of here, we're going to talk about it.

Thank you all.

Note: The exchange began at 10:35 a.m. in the Oval Office. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia Announcing Strategic Arms Reductions and an Exchange With Reporters

June 16, 1992

President Bush. Mr. President. Let me just say that I'm pleased to announce that President Yeltsin and I have just reached an extraordinary agreement on two areas of vital importance to our countries and to the world.

First, we have agreed on far-reaching new strategic arms reductions. Building on the agreement reached with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Byelarus, our two countries are now agreeing to even further dramatic strategic arms reductions, substantially below the levels determined by START. We've agreed to eliminate the world's most dangerous weapons, heavy ICBM's and all other multiple warhead ICBM's, and dramatically reduce our total strategic nuclear weapons.

Those dramatic reductions will take place in two phases. They will be completed no later than the year 2003 and may be completed as early as the year 2000 if the United States can assist Russia in the required destruction of ballistic missile systems. With this agreement the nuclear nightmare recedes more and more for ourselves, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

Just a few years ago, the United States was planning a strategic nuclear stockpile of about 13,000 warheads. Now President Yeltsin and I have agreed that both sides will go down to 3,000 to 3,500 warheads, with each nation determining its own force structure within that range.

I'd like to point out that this fundamental agreement, which in earlier years could not have been completed even in a decade, has been completed in only 5 months. Our ability to reach this agreement so quickly is a tribute to the new relationship between the United States and Russia and to the personal leadership of our guest, Boris Yeltsin.

In the near future, the United States and Russia will record our agreement in a brief treaty document that President Yeltsin and I will sign and submit for ratification in our countries. President Yeltsin and I have also agreed to work together, along with the allies and other interested states, to develop a concept for global protection systems against limited ballistic missile attack.

We will establish a senior group to explore practical steps towards that end, in-