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The President's News Conference With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in Naples

July 10, 1994

President Clinton. Good afternoon. As you know, this was a very important day in which President Yeltsin joined us as a full partner in the G–8 for political discussions. And we followed that meeting with a bilateral meeting, continuing our good personal relationship, which made some significant progress.

I'd like to make a few comments on the G–8 and on our bilateral meeting and then have President Yeltsin make any statement he'd like to make. And of course, we'll take some questions.

First of all, today's statement read by Chairman Berlusconi on behalf of all eight of us makes it clear that we share fundamental foreign policy goals: support for democracy, free markets, building new security relationships. On these matters, we spoke as one. If you read each of the items in that statement, I think it is remarkable that these eight countries have together agreed on these things.

In the wake of the death of Kim Il-song, we also expressed our strong commitment to continuing talks with North Korea and our support for the holding of the summit which had previously been scheduled between leaders of North and South Korea. We also strongly agreed on the importance of pushing ahead with a resolution of the crisis in Bosnia.

Finally, the United States and Russia joined all of the nations in expressing regret over the death of the Italian sailors at the hands of terrorists in Algeria and reaffirmed our opposition to terrorism anywhere, anytime.

With regard to my meeting with President Yeltsin, let me just mention one or two issues. First of all, there has been a promising development in the Baltics. After my very good discussion with the President of Estonia, Mr. Meri, I passed on his ideas to President Yeltsin today in effort to break the impasse between the two nations over troop withdrawals.

I believe the differences between the two countries have been narrowed and that an agreement can be reached in the near future so that troops would be able to withdraw by the end of August. But now that is a matter to be resolved between President Yeltsin and President Meri, which President Yeltsin has promised to give his attention and for which I am very grateful.

When the Russian troops withdraw from the Baltics and Germany, it will end the bitter legacy of the Second World War. I want to say publicly here that none of this could have been accomplished without the emergence of a democratic Russia and its democratic President. And I thank President Yeltsin for that.

We talked about Ukraine, its importance to Russia, to the United States, to the future. And we agreed on continuing to work on the issues that we all care about, including economic reform and continuing to implement the agreement on denuclearization which has so far been implemented quite faithfully. We talked about our security relationship, and I must say again how pleased I am that Russia has joined the Partnership For Peace.

And finally, I'd like to congratulate President Yeltsin on the remarkable, steadfast and success of his economic reform efforts. Inflation is down. The Russian deficit is now a smaller percentage of annual income than that of some other European countries. Over half the workers are now in the private sector. There's a lot to be done, and the rest of us have our responsibilities, as well. And we talked a little bit about that and what the United States could do to increase trade and investment.

Looking ahead, I have invited President Yeltsin to come to Washington to hold a summit with me and to have a state visit on September 27th and 28th, and he has accepted. I'm confident that would give us a chance to continue the progress we are making and the friendship we are developing.

Mr. President.

President Yeltsin. Thank you, Mr. President Bill Clinton, for the kind words that you said toward Russia and its President.

I of course am very satisfied by the summit, the political 8, which has taken place today. I think that this of course is just a beginning. But as I said, the Russian Bear is not going to try to break his way through an open door, and we are not going to force ourselves into

the full G–8 until it is deserved. When our economic system, our economic situation, will become coordinated with the economic systems of the other seven countries, then it will be natural and then Russia will enter as a full-fledged member of the 8 then.

Nonetheless, I am grateful to the chairman, Prime Minister of Italy, Mr. Berlusconi, and to all the heads of the states of the seven for the attention which they showed towards Russia, the welcome, including yesterday's statement by the chairman and today's statement on political issues.

Together, today, we held a discussion on political, international issues around the world, and we found common understanding, which says a lot about the fact that we can find this mutual understanding and in realistic terms cooperate and help in the strengthening of peace on this planet.

I believe that this meeting and—yesterday's, I mean—and today's is yet another large step towards the security of Europe, for a much more economically stable situation, and an order that, really, the world can live in peace and in friendship. And we should all help in this endeavor, and I think this meeting is yet another large step to full security of peace on Earth.

In developing my thoughts, I wanted to add that this meeting was a meeting, bilateral meeting, that we had with the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. But our meetings are always held in a very dynamic and interesting way; we get very specific. We don't have a lot of philosophizing there now. Say if it's 1:15 p.m., 1:20 p.m., we get in and start discussing about 30, 35 different issues, at least, on one side, on the other side. And we find—of necessity, we sit down and we find some kind of compromise solution to find an answer.

And I have to say, yet again, this time we were able to summarize after the last summit meeting, where Bill came to Russia, we were able to summarize all the things that happened. Many, many things took place, very positive things, and we expressed satisfaction to the fact of how our relationship is developing and growing, our partnership, our friendship, our cooperation.

At the same time, of course, as people who are sincere, both of us could not but touch upon some of the issues which, unfortunately, are yet unresolved, which still we could not have found answers to up until now. This has to do with certain discrimination toward Russia in trade, for example.

This time at the 8, Russia did not ask for money. It said—I said—let's all together take certain measures and steps and decisions in your individual countries, included among them the United States of America, so that Russia on an equal basis, equal basis, could trade with everybody. We're not asking for any preferential conditions, we're not asking for any special circumstances for us alone. No. We're saying let's give us equal rights, get rid finally, once and for all, of this red jacket. Take that red jacket from the President of Russia, which I don't wear now for 3 years; I've taken that red, besmirched jacket off of myself. You understand what I'm talking about, right? You understand.

You earned the right of asking the first question. [*Laughter*]

Russian Troop Withdrawals

Q. I said, you're not going to like my first question. Will you have all the Russian troops out of the Baltics by August 31?

President Yeltsin. No. I—nice question. I like the question, because I can say no. [*Laughter*] We took out of Lithuania—we removed 31st of August with drumbeat, we're going to take under his arms and take that last soldier from Latvia. Now Estonia, somewhat more difficult relationship since there in Estonia, there are very crude violations of human rights, vis-a-vis Russian-speaking population, especially toward military pensioners.

Bill Clinton, when he was there in Riga and he met with a large group of people, about 40,000 people, and the heads of three Baltic States, he expressed his point of view that you have to maintain and protect human rights. And I think that after his saying so, the President of Estonia will begin to listen. I promised Bill that I personally will meet with him, with the President of Estonia. We're going to discuss these issues, and after, we're going to try to find a solution to this question.

Russian Trade Limitations

Q. Boris Nikolayevich, you said that at the 7, now 7—where you're not with the political 8—but with the 7, you talked about removing discriminatory measures. Do you feel that this is a task that is a timely task, vis-a-vis relations with the United States? In other words, Russian

high technology had access to the marketplace included among the United States market.

President Yeltsin. I have to say that we signed with the European Union at Corfu, we signed an agreement in Greece where all the discriminatory measures are removed from Russia. Now, as far as other countries are concerned, some of those provisions remain.

Now, let's talk about COCOM, export of high technologies, et cetera, except for weapons. Today Mr. President of the United States, at the 8 and then later when we talked together, he stated that when I come to the United States with an official visit on the 27th and 28th of September, he's going to make an official statement that these limitations are being removed altogether.

But in the new post-COCOM organization, our specialists are going to participate in the development of lists of all those materials and technologies which are not going to be allowed for export in the whole world, and that will also have to do with Russia. In other words, we're going to be on an equal footing.

President Clinton. Just a minute, I'd like to just clarify and support what President Yeltsin said on that and make a couple of points.

First of all, the United States is committed to joint economic activities that advance Russia's interests. The most significant one that's been ratified recently is the overwhelming support in the United States Congress for the space station program, which now is a partnership between Russia, Europe, Japan, and Canada.

Secondly, what happened when the COCOM was even out of existence is a lot of the countries' individual laws were still in existence. So we need a new order to replace COCOM. And what I said was, as he said, was we want Russia to be a part of that, so that there will be no discrimination in trade between Russia and other countries, except insofar as we all accept restraints that tend to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The third thing I want to say is, I was glad to see Europe sign that agreement with Russia at Corfu. But if you look at the facts of who's done what kind of business, I think you'll see that the Americans stand up very well against the Europeans on that.

Bosnia

Q. President Yeltsin, the Americans are looking to Russia for help on persuading the Serbs to agree to the new map for Bosnia. Will you provide the help? I know, of course, Russia joined in the statement, but how aggressive will you be about that? And I'm going to throw in a quick second question. What is the state of Russian trade with terrorist-supporting countries? The communique today, of course, took a strong stand against terrorism.

President Yeltsin. As far as the map is concerned, the Bosnian map, Croatia, and between Serbs and the Muslims, 51–49, the contact group has developed these proposals. The ministers of foreign affairs, including Minister Kozyrev of Russia, have agreed with this proposal, and that's why we are going to act, and I personally, very decisively, as much character as we have in our bodies.

Now, as far as trade is concerned from the countries where terrorism stems from, we're going to attempt to limit—we're moving in the direction of limiting trade with those terrorist countries.

Russian Role in Economic Summit

Q. What do you feel is the principal difference between the Tokyo summit last time and this one? And how do you feel the next meeting of the 7, or maybe we can call it the 8, from the Naples session—how is the next one going to differ?

President Yeltsin. Well, I will say that this one differs significantly from the Munich and the Tokyo summit very significantly. Russia, for all practical purposes, has been accepted into the world community. It has been recognized as a democratic state. For us, this is the most important.

Of course, it hurts a little bit that that amount of money which we're calling support back in Tokyo and we weren't even able to get half of it—but in the final analysis, I said that today the most important thing is not to ask money, but that we be accepted and recognized as equal. And then we, together, are going to go out and earn.

Now, as far as from the perspective of the Halifax meeting next year—I received an invitation today from Prime Minister of Canada, and he said that from the point of view of the 8, this is going to be a much more official and stronger, more cohesive meeting.

Press Secretary Myers. Last question.

Haiti

Q. Did you discuss at all with the other leaders of the 8 the possibility that the United States might take military action in Haiti at some point? And do you still maintain that you would discuss such action with the United States Congress, or can you foresee a situation, sir, in which you would judge American lives to be in danger and therefore feel that you could move immediately?

President Clinton. The answer to your question is that I did not discuss that with the 8. The thing that I appreciated was that they were all very vigorous in saying that the military leaders should keep their commitment and should leave and that we should restore democracy to Haiti and that they supported that. That was the full extent of the conversation.

NOTE: The President's 64th news conference began at 3:40 p.m. in the Palazzo Reale. 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 news conference.

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany in Bonn
July 11, 1994

Chancellor Kohl. President Bill, ladies and gentlemen, it's the very great pleasure for me to be able to welcome you, Mr. President, here to Germany, here in the Chancellery of the Federal Building of Germany.

I salute the President of the United States, the country to which the Germans owe so much after the war, more than any other country in the world. American soldiers brought freedom to Germany. American soldiers were those who brought us freedom, and the United States of America helped us in those difficult times. And Bill as a representative of a generation that experienced that. I was 15, 16 years old then—those who, until the monetary reform here in Germany, had firsthand experience of hunger and starvation, had experience of the kind of rubble in which our cities had fallen and the destruction that had been wrought through the war. As someone of that generation, I say to you how much that means, friendship and partnership with the United States, to us here in Germany. And we have not forgotten the millions of American soldiers who, over a period of more than 40 years, defended freedom and peace and security for us here in Germany, who were here, far from their homes, together with their relatives, with their family members.

And we have certainly not forgotten—certainly I have not forgotten—that all American Presidents, ever since Harry S Truman, the unforgettable Harry S Truman, and George Marshall always were ready to help us in difficult times. And all Presidents of the United States, from Harry S Truman onward, all the way to George Bush, and to you, to you, Bill, and to your term in office, all of you have helped us along the way.

I will never forget the German unity in those dramatic days and months, 1989, 1990, and the years after that, that this would not have been brought about without the assistance and help of our American friends. And in this dramatic moment of change in the world, where I feel it is changing for the better, it is of tremendous importance that we should continue this good cooperation.

Tomorrow you will go to Berlin. And that is something for which I am highly grateful, because for us Berlin is the symbol of the free world. And without your assistance throughout the years—the airlift is just one case in point—people would not have been able to live freely in peace and freedom in Berlin.

For the future, we want to adhere to the clear maxim of Konrad Adenauer, who said again and again that German security, German future rests on two pillars: the unification of Europe and transatlantic partnership and friendship. And this basic tenet of our foreign policy will not change, which is why I am grateful that the President of the United States, once again, on the 9th of January of this year in Brussels made it very clear in his speech that