

Apr. 19 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1996

Q. [*Inaudible*—house, Mr. President?

*The President.* Well, she didn't have to run for election. [*Laughter*]

Q. Are you going to see the Rembrandts here?

*The President.* Perhaps, yes. I love the desks. The thing that strikes me is the woodwork. I hadn't counted on seeing all that. You ought to go back and see all the secret chambers in the desk back there. He put everything he had in there.

Q. Mr. President, you've seen some religious symbols today that have been opened in the last few years to the Russian people. What are

your thoughts on seeing things that didn't used to be open during the Soviet era?

*The President.* That's a very good thing, not only making it available to the people but also making religious expression legitimate again and making it—encouraging and nourishing it. I think it's a real sign of the health of the Russian democracy that religion is respected and people are free to pursue it and express their honest convictions.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 2:30 p.m. in the White Hall Room at the Hermitage Museum. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom in Moscow, Russia April 20, 1996

### *Chechnya*

Q. Mr. President, did you and the Prime Minister discuss Chechnya and the ongoing crisis with President Yeltsin?

*The President.* No, we just got here. We're just starting a discussion.

Q. [*Inaudible*—together, was Chechnya brought up?

*The President.* Chechnya was not brought up. We discussed the Middle East and we discussed Bosnia, because we have common efforts there. But the rest of our time was devoted to the nuclear summit.

And I'm looking forward, I might say, to this meeting because of all the good work the Prime Minister has done for peace in Northern Ireland with the Irish Prime Minister. And I think that the proposal for all-party talks and the elections

as a way to get into it is a very good thing. And I think the cease-fire should be reestablished by the IRA immediately.

### *Middle East Peace Process*

Q. What about the Middle East, sir? Have you heard anything from Secretary Christopher or other people involved, any updates?

*The President.* I'm in regular contact with him, but I have nothing to add right now. We're working at it hard and we may have something to say in the next few hours, but I just don't know.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10 a.m. at the Kremlin. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland.

## The President's Radio Address April 20, 1996

Good morning. Today I speak to you from Russia, the final stop in a journey that has focused on my first priority as President: increasing the security and safety of the American people. Today, though the cold war is over, serious

challenges to our security remain. In fact, the very forces that have unlocked so much potential for progress—new technologies, borders more open to ideas and services and goods and money and travelers, instant global communications,

and instant access to unlimited amounts of important information all across the world—these very forces have also made it easier for the forces of destruction to endanger innocent lives in all countries.

Because so many threats to America's security are global in scope and because no nation is immune to them, we simply must work with other nations more closely than ever to fight them. Whether the threat is the aggression of rogue states or the spread of weapons of mass destruction or organized crime or drug trafficking or terrorism, no nation can defeat it alone. But together we can deal with these problems and we can make America more secure. That's what I have worked hard to do this week.

In Korea, President Kim and I proposed a new initiative to promote peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, where 37,000 American troops stand watch on the last cold war frontier. In the last 3 years we have dramatically reduced North Korea's nuclear threat. Now the four-party peace process we call for among North and South Korea, China, and the United States can lead to a permanent peace. We hope and we expect that North Korea will take it seriously.

In Japan, Prime Minister Hashimoto and I signed a Joint Security Declaration adapted to the 21st century, after a year of very hard work. It strengthens the commitment of the world's two largest economies to work together to maintain peace in the Asia-Pacific region, a region that buys one-half of America's exports and supports over 3 million American jobs.

Here in Moscow, I am working with other world leaders in a summit to improve nuclear safety, protect the environment and public health against nuclear accidents, and prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands. Again, in the last 3 years we've done a great deal to reduce the number of nuclear weapons, the number of countries holding nuclear weapons; and there are no nuclear weapons pointed at the American people anymore. Still, there is a great deal of work to be done. We need a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, greater protections against environmental and public health damage, and we have to do even more to ensure the security of the nuclear materials that are out there now.

Just as we work with our friends and allies to protect the security of our people, we also must do our part at home, making sure that

we're as well-prepared as possible to do what needs to be done to combat the forces of destruction, whether they are homegrown or whether they come from beyond our borders. This is especially true of our efforts against terrorism. That's why I'm very pleased that Congress has agreed to give the American law enforcement people important new tools to fight terrorism.

Yesterday was the first anniversary of the bombing in Oklahoma City. We owe it to the fine Americans who were killed there, those who were wounded, and their families to do all we can to fight terrorism. Last year I sent Congress a bill to strengthen law enforcement's ability to protect Americans from terrorism. Right after the Oklahoma City bombing I strengthened the proposals, and congressional leaders promised swift passage of the legislation. This past Thursday, Congress passed the antiterrorism bill at last. Now, my fellow Americans, there will be no more delay. I will sign this bill into law early next week, and by Wednesday, law enforcement will have new tools to crack down, track down, and shut down terrorists.

Even though I'm pleased with what Congress, both Republicans and Democrats together, did, I am disappointed that some of my proposals were left out of the bill. I believe we should help police keep suspected terrorists under surveillance. I believe we should give law enforcement more time to investigate and prosecute terrorists who use machineguns, sawed-off shotguns, and explosive devices. These and other important antiterrorism measures were left on the cutting-room floor.

But this bill still makes important progress. It will make it easier for police to trace bombs to criminals who made them by requiring chemical taggants in some explosive materials. It will make it much harder for terrorists to raise the money they need to fund their crimes. It may not go as far as I would like, but it does strike a real blow against terrorism, and I will be happy to sign it.

From Egypt to England, from the Tokyo subway to the World Trade Center, from the heart of Jerusalem to America's heartland, terrorism ignores borders and strikes without discrimination. As we recognize crime victims everywhere this National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we must vow never to relent against these forces of destruction.

By working with other nations, we can put terrorists on the defensive and make the world a safer place. And by working together at home, we will keep America strong and secure as we move into the new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11 p.m. on April 19 at the Radisson Slavjanskaya Hotel in Moscow for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 20. The National Crime Victims' Rights Week proclamation of April 19 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## The President's News Conference in Moscow

*April 20, 1996*

*The President.* I would like to begin my remarks by thanking President Yeltsin for his leadership in first initiating and then hosting this conference. The work that we all did here in Moscow, for me, is a part of my most important duty as President: increasing the safety and security of the American people. At this nuclear summit, we have done that by reducing the grave dangers posed by nuclear weapons and the materials used to build them. The steps we have taken here today and the foundation of cooperation we've set for the future will make not only the American people but people all over the world more secure.

First, we resolved to complete a true zero-yield comprehensive test ban treaty this year. Never before have all our nations joined as one and embraced this goal which would ban any nuclear explosion, including weapons test explosions. American leaders since Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy have sought a comprehensive test ban to help stop the spread of nuclear weapons and to strengthen the security of the United States and nations throughout the world. Today, because of the progress made here in Moscow, we are closer to this goal than at any time since the dawn of the nuclear age. Our work will speed progress on the treaty, which we hope to sign in September at the United Nations. With more hard work we can soon see the day when no nuclear weapons are detonated anywhere on the face of the Earth.

In this time of rapid technological change and increasingly open borders, one of the greatest dangers we face is the possibility of nuclear materials falling into the wrong hands. Today we agreed to work together more closely than ever to prevent that from happening. We will strengthen safeguards on fissile materials and components that might be used to build a bomb.

We have created a joint program to fight trafficking in these materials by dramatically increasing cooperation among our nations' law enforcement, customs, and intelligence authorities.

Preventing the spread of nuclear material is a global problem that demands global cooperation. We want to enlist others in this effort as well. Already Ukraine has endorsed the program adopted here. We invite other nations to do the same and to join us in this crucial work.

We also took steps to make the civilian use of nuclear energy safer. The 10th anniversary of Chernobyl is only a few days off. We're determined to do more to increase reactor safety and prevent another tragedy from happening. We reaffirmed our agreement with President Kuchma to close Chernobyl by the year 2000, and we'll work to end the dumping of nuclear materials in oceans.

All our efforts here have been driven by a single principle: When we use nuclear energy, our first and highest priority must be safety.

From the beginning it has been a crucial goal, a central goal of my Presidency to further reduce the nuclear threat. I'm proud of what we've achieved so far. Because of my agreement with President Yeltsin, for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, no Russian missiles are targeted at United States cities. We secured the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, froze North Korea's dangerous nuclear program, cut existing nuclear arsenals by putting the START I treaty into force, and cleared the way for even deeper cuts by ratifying the START II treaty. And we persuaded Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakstan to give up the nuclear weapons on their soil.

There is more we must do. In this new era of possibilities we do have real opportunities to make all our citizens safer, but we know