

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,