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The President. This is the Ukraine press.

[*At this point, a question was asked in Ukrainian and no translation was provided.*]

President Kravchuk. We're just recalling our meetings, but we haven't started talks yet. But we recalled our Kiev meetings.

Q. What is the opinion of this meeting, Mr. Clinton?

The President. I thought they were very good meetings. We made, as you know, a very important agreement which we then signed in Moscow the next day. And I also very much enjoyed being in your country a brief time. We also had a wonderful meal. And we'll have a good meal today, but there won't be so many courses as there were when we were in—[*laughter*]

President Kravchuk. And the newspapers were covering it for a long time.

The President. Yes.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:42 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Kravchuk spoke in Ukrainian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine

March 4, 1994

President Clinton. Good afternoon. It's a great pleasure for me to welcome President Kravchuk and his entire delegation from Ukraine to the White House today. Before I go forward, I think I should acknowledge the presence in the Ukrainian delegation of two of the Ukraine's Olympic athletes, Victor Petrenko and the Olympic gold medalist in skating, Oksana Baiul. Welcome to the United States. Please stand up. [*Applause*] Thank you. I'm pleased that President Kravchuk brought them with him today. We all enjoyed meeting them, and we're looking forward to the entire American Olympic team being here in just a couple of weeks.

When I first met President Kravchuk in Kiev on January 12th, the hour was late, and the weather was icy. But at that brief meeting we marked the dawn of a new and warm era in relations between the United States and Ukraine. Two days after that meeting, we signed an historic accord with President Yeltsin to eliminate some 1,800 Soviet nuclear warheads left in Ukraine. Since then, Ukraine's Parliament has approved the trilateral agreement and unconditionally ratified the START Treaty and the Lisbon Protocol. And last month, Ukraine joined the NATO Partnership For Peace. These steps represent a tribute to the statesmanship and leadership of President Kravchuk and to the vision of the Ukrainian people, who understand that integration into a broader, peaceful, and democratic Europe is Ukraine's best path to lasting security and prosperity.

In our meeting today, I strongly reaffirmed American support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. I urged President Kravchuk to continue to work to achieve Ukraine's accession to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We shared views on developments in Russia and their impact on Ukraine. We discussed ways to expand cooperation between our two nations. At the core of our agenda is developing a closer economic relationship.

While Ukraine is going through a difficult period of transition, it remains a nation with enormous economic potential, endowed with abundant natural resources and human talent. To develop the full measure of these resources, Ukraine's most promising future clearly lies with market reform. That's why I was pleased that President Kravchuk today expressed his determination to move forward toward comprehensive market reform.

As Ukraine proceeds with reform, the United States is prepared to mobilize support from the G–7 nations and from international financial institutions. We're also prepared to increase our bilateral economic assistance to $350 million this year for privatization, small business creation, and other priorities. And to help Ukraine dismantle nuclear weapons, we've committed $350 million in Nunn-Lugar funds. Total U.S. assistance available to Ukraine this year will, therefore, be $700 million. This represents a major increased commitment to an important friend in the region.

Ultimately, the best way to bolster Ukraine's reforms is to facilitate private trade

and investment. I told President Kravchuk today that the United States will support Ukraine's membership in GATT and will lower tariffs on a number of Ukrainian products.

We've also signed treaties to promote investment and prevent double taxation. And we established a joint commission on trade and investment that will strengthen further our commercial ties. These ties are part of a richly woven fabric that binds our two nations.

From the time of our own revolution, Ukrainian immigrants have helped to shape the United States. Now America and Ukraine are dedicated to building a new relationship, to shaping a better future for all our people and for all the world. I look forward to working with President Kravchuk in that endeavor.

Let me again thank the President for coming here with the entire delegation, including his Olympians, and to say to all the Ukrainians, and to you especially, Mr. President, thank you for giving us the opportunity to work together and to make a better future for our peoples.

President Kravchuk. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, we have just signed a number of important bilateral documents which lay down the legal foundation for cooperation in the areas of economy, trade, and other areas. That—what happened several minutes ago before your eyes could be, without exaggeration, called a historic moment in relationship between our two states.

Today we, in fact, turned the page of a still brief history of our bilateral relations which seem to have linked us forever with colossal and complicated problem of nuclear weapons, which Ukraine inherited from the former Soviet Union. Although the problem remains to be as complicated today, we managed to get closer to a successful resolution of this problem today.

The new balance of forces on the political map of the world clearly indicates the need to create a global security system which would be based on entirely new principles. We understand that the complicated processes of international security and peace are intertwined and cannot permit gaps and vacuum to exist in this or that part of the world, especially on the European Continent. Therefore, President Bill Clinton and I agreed that the political and economic security of Ukraine, which is playing an important stabilizing role in its area—and this idea is shared by many others—has an exceptional significance for both the people of Ukraine and for the people of the United States of America. Proceeding from this basic idea, we believe that relations between Ukraine and the United States should develop as relationships of friendly states which have much more common interests than controversies.

During our talks with President Clinton we became confident that the American side understands the problems that we have and is concerned over the serious economic situation in Ukraine. We saw that the administration in the United States does not only welcome steps of the Ukrainian Government to overcome the economic crisis but also expresses readiness to provide necessary assistance to Ukraine in the main areas of economic transformation, which the President indicated.

Today we signed a package of economic accords and agreements which I hope will help Ukraine considerably facilitate and speed up its progress towards the market and ease the tension in the economy and also the daily life of the people. We are convinced that we found the right friend at the right time in America. Today Ukraine is a friend in need, but it is a friend, indeed, as your saying goes. I believe that the day will come when we will be remembering these days as the era of the birth and formation of a true friendship between the two nations and states, Ukraine and the United States of America.

Thank you very much for attention.

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. President.

Now, we'll attempt to alternate between the American press and the Ukrainian press on questions. So we'll start with Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Whitewater Investigation

Q. Mr. President, is Mr. Nussbaum leaving your staff, and have you decided how you're going to approach these daily spate of stories concerning Whitewater—been likened in

Post cartoons to torture, Chinese torture, and so forth?

President Clinton. Well, I think that's a decision more for you than for me, whether there will be a daily spate of stories. Most of the newspapers in the country asked me to have a special counsel appointed. That's what I have done; I did it so that I could go on with my work. It's been an interesting thing since no one has still accused me, as far as I know, of doing anything wrong in this whole encounter. So we have a special counsel, and I intend to let the process unfold.

Yesterday, I said what I had to say about the meetings that had occurred or the conversations that had occurred. I think we have constructed a clear and appropriate fire wall between the White House and any Federal regulatory agency that might have anything to do with this, as I think it is absolutely imperative to do. And I have told again everybody on my staff to just bend over backwards to be as cooperative as possible. I want a full investigation. I want this thing to be done fully, clearly, and to be over with. That is my only interest, and I intend to pursue it with great vigor.

Q. How about Mr. Nussbaum?

President Clinton. I have nothing more to add to what I said yesterday.

Ukraine

Q. The voice of Ukraine, the parliamentary newspaper of Ukraine. It was said that the moment is historic in the history of Ukraine. Is this historic moment different from any other historic moment in the history of Ukraine?

President Kravchuk. I do understand your question. Every country lived through a historic period of—the time that we are living through is very complicated. It's a period of transformation, of transfer from one system to another. Ukraine is in a very bad, very difficult situation. And friendly relationship with the United States of America, the good neighborly relations in all areas of political and economic life, is really the true historic moment. And the fact that United States of America and Ukraine signed documents which open up the way to market reforms and stronger democracy, which still have to take place on the territory of the former republics of the former Soviet Union, this is truly a historic moment.

Yes, the word has its own history, but it cannot be interpreted as an archaic word. This is the word of a very high, lofty sounding.

Q. President Kravchuk, the Ukrainian Parliament has failed to ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Are you confident that it will ratify this treaty? And will the $700 million of aid that you talked about today go forward if the Parliament fails to take that step?

President Clinton. First, I am confident it will ratify the treaty. Perhaps I should let President Kravchuk speak for himself on this. I believe that because the Parliament has supported the trilateral agreement, the START Treaty, the Lisbon Protocol, which is the first step toward becoming a nonnuclear—I mean, agreeing to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. I'm also confident because this country has already begun to implement its commitment to reduce the nuclear presence. And the Nunn-Lugar funds, in particular, as you know, are tied to making sure that countries can afford to do it and can reduce their nuclear capacity in a technically competent and safe way. So I feel a high level of confidence in this.

President Kravchuk again assured me today that he thought the NPT would be acceded to by the Rada and that the real problem, the reason it hasn't happened just before his coming here, is because so many people are out campaigning, something that we all understand in this country. But I think it would be good to let him make a comment about this.

President Kravchuk. The thing is that having ratified START I and removing the reservations as to Article V of the Lisbon Protocol, the Ukraine has committed itself, the political commitment, to accede to the NPT as a nonnuclear power. This question is now open as a committing task for Ukraine. So you shouldn't have doubts about the ratification or nonratification of the NPT. As to the money which is allocated to Ukraine, that money is allocated for dismantling the weapons. And we have already started dismantling the nuclear weapons in Ukraine.

Q. This is a question to President Clinton. You have already landed in Ukraine, and that was a very short stopover. Are you planning an official state visit to Ukraine?

President Clinton. I would very much like to come back. This year I have a full schedule of travel, perhaps as much as I can accommodate this year. But I certainly wouldn't rule it out. I had such a good time on my brief stay, I wanted to do more and to see more.

Trude [Trude Feldman, Trans Features].

Q. Mr. President, I have a question for both Presidents. Are you satisfied with the progress on removing nuclear missiles from the Ukraine under the January Moscow agreement?

President Clinton. I personally am. I think they're making good progress and proceeding just as they agreed to do. Obviously, there are always technical details to be worked out. And this is a delicate matter that has to be handled with great care. But I'm personally well satisfied.

Mr. President, do you want to answer that question?

President Kravchuk. As I've already said, answering to the part of that question, the Ukraine has already begun the practical implementation of that issue. But speaking more definitely, a whole trainload of nuclear warheads is on the way to Russia. The treaty has been signed between Russia and Ukraine because this is a joint issue of removing the weapons to Russia. And Ukraine will fulfill its commitment. I also believe that other sides, other parties, would fulfill their obligations. And Ukraine would certainly stick to its commitments.

President Clinton. If I might just add one other thing, too. I think that it's important for us here in the United States to note that one of the big issues when I went to Ukraine and to Russia in January has been resolved, and that is the question of how Ukraine will be compensated for the highly enriched uranium in its nuclear arsenal.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—your recent statement about the resurrection of the Russian imperialism, would they bring damage to Ukraine?

President Clinton. Well, the United States supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine. And I personally have been very impressed that all the parties involved in the Crimean issue seem to be very responsible in their comments and their policies recently. So I think you're asking me a hypothetical which doesn't seem too probable in light of the policies and the statements which have been made.

Ann [Ann Compton, ABC News].

Terrorism

Q. Mr. President, the defendants in the World Trade Center bombing were all convicted today. Do you think Americans have any reason to feel any more secure against terrorism now than they did one year ago?

President Clinton. Well, I think the authorities did a terrific job in cracking the case. And I'm glad to see that it has been handled in this way. I think that the signal should go out across the world that anyone who seeks to come to this country to practice terrorism will have the full weight of the law enforcement authorities against them, and we will do our best to crack the cases and to bring them to justice, just as they have today. This will send a very important signal around the world. And I am very gratified by the work that was done.

Ukraine

President Kravchuk. I didn't answer the question which was raised previously. I believe that our integration within the limits of the CIS does not contradict the integration in the political and economic area with the countries that make up the New Independent States. This has been foreseen by many documents in the CIS.

Ukraine does not make a task of leaving the CIS or curtailing relationship with the countries that have been created on the territory of the former Soviet Union. We believe that the joint efforts of the CIS countries and their cooperation with the Western states will give an opportunity to avoid the burdensome and heavy processes which are now taking place in Russia and in many other countries.

We cannot limit the process towards the process in Russia or Ukraine. These are universal processes, and we have to interact on them. But there is a tendency of creating difficult processes including the extremist or ex-

pansionist character. There are such tendencies, but if we act together we would be able to avoid such developments.

Q. Mr. President, this is the Ukrainian wire service. Did you discuss today with the President of Ukraine a question of providing additional material assistance to Ukraine except for the provision of assistance for the denuclearization?

President Clinton. Yes, we did. And the United States agreed to do two things. One is, we are increasing the assistance that we had previously pledged not only in the denuclearization area but in economic assistance as well, so that we will have about $350 million in each category.

Now, over and above that, we agreed to send an economic team to Ukraine as quickly as President Kravchuk says you are ready to receive them to discuss what we might do to get more countries involved in assisting Ukraine, and to speed up the timetable by which Ukraine can receive assistance from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Andrea [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News].

Whitewater Investigation

Q. Mr. President, in Annapolis today, Republicans were calling upon Speaker Foley to hold hearings on some of these latest meetings. Would you object to such hearings? Do you think they're necessary? And secondly, do you think a stronger signal needs to be sent from the White House that you are, indeed, so sensitive to these ethical distinctions? Do you need to make other changes beyond the memo that was issued yesterday?

President Clinton. Let me say, first of all, it's up to the House to do whatever they think is appropriate to do, not for me to tell them what to do. I think that it is clear that the Republicans have behaved in a fairly blatant, bald, and totally political way in this regard. And since there is no evidence of abuse of authority on my part as President, or any of the kinds of things for which their parties and administrations were accused, and since they have often complained in the past of political motivation, I think that they would show a little more restraint and judgment in this case.

All I can tell you is, even the editorial writers, you know, they say, ''Well, there is no evidence Bill Clinton did anything wrong; we're spending millions of dollars to dig around in all of this, but no one has ever accused him of doing anything wrong. We're just going to do it anyway. Now, they better not mess up the process.'' So I sent the message to the people who work here, ''Don't mess up the process. Nobody thinks we've done anything wrong, but we, because I'm President, have had to launch this massive, hugely expensive, unusual inquiry, while everybody says, 'I really don't think anything happened wrong, but let's have this massive inquiry. Now, let's make sure they don't mess it up, and if they do, let's find them.' '' So I said, ''Let's don't mess it up.''

I mean, I've made it as clear as I can: Bend over backwards to avoid any appearance of conflict; set up a fire wall between the White House and any of the appropriate agencies; have a central point of contact if anyone calls us. You know, one of these disputed meetings arose out of press questions, for example. We have to be careful.

I think I have sent a very clear and unambiguous signal that there is no point in letting a process mess this White House up when we have not yet been accused of any wrongdoing. Since there was no wrongdoing on my part, I want a full, complete, thorough investigation. And I want it to go forward unimpeded and then to be over. I think that is in the national interest. And I'm going to do my best to make it abundantly clear that that is precisely what happens.

Yes, sir?

Ukraine

Q. Mr. Clinton, the newspaper Kiev Herald. Has there been a change in the last 5 years of your understanding of the Ukrainian situation in Europe? And if there has been a change, please present your arguments.

President Clinton. Well, I'll attempt to answer the question as I understand it. I certainly, over the last half year, have come to have higher hopes for the prospect of a full Ukrainian partnership in a democratic Europe where all the countries respect each other's territorial integrity and work together

in an atmosphere of free markets, and respect for democracy and human rights.

I think that is due in no small measure to the leadership of President Kravchuk in concluding the nuclear agreement with the United States and Russia and in the efforts in Ukraine to support the START Treaty and Lisbon Protocol. I also know what a very difficult economic time Ukraine is going through. And I see the beginnings of a real effort to restructure the economy. And I believe the United States should support that.

Finally, let me say one point which has not been made yet: I was very pleased that Ukraine so quickly accepted the invitation from NATO to join the Partnership For Peace. This is just what we conceived could happen, that we could literally build a united Europe where the parties respect each other's borders and integrity and commit to work with one another to promote the peace and to protect the people of all the countries involved.

Yes, sir.

China

Q. Mr. President, Secretary of State Christopher is heading to China soon. Isn't the Chinese Government basically thumbing its nose at the U.S. by rounding up dissidents on the eve of his visit and, of course, with Congress getting ready to kick around the most-favored-nation status?

President Clinton. I wouldn't presume to know what motivated the Chinese Government. All I can tell you is that we have sent a very stern statement. We strongly disapprove of what was done, and it obviously is not helpful to our relations. I have done what I could to make it clear that the United States does not seek to isolate China economically or politically and that we want a constructive and strong relationship with them, but that the observance of basic human rights is an important thing to us, along with nonproliferation, along with fair trade rules. And that was certainly not a helpful action.

Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, this is Ukrainian Television. I have a question to both President Kravchuk and President Clinton.

Mr. Kravchuk, the Ukraine is living through a very difficult period of time. We are very active in the denuclearization policy, and Ukraine is called at the same time the stabilizing factor. What is your opinion on that? What would be the development of that issue?

President Kravchuk. We should take a look at Ukraine, not only from the position of today but also take into consideration its great economic, spiritual, human, and natural resources. The relations which are now developing between the United States and the Ukraine and the understanding which President Clinton showed and the administration of the United States demonstrated, show that they take into account exactly that perspective view, not the view of today but the view of tomorrow.

From that point of view, Ukraine can play a great stabilizing role in the future; that is one thing. Secondly, Ukraine can, with the help of rapid economic and political reforms, can introduce such principles of coexistence which are in the limits of highest standards. For instance, we do not have any problems with human rights or ethnic or interethnic or international conflicts in the Ukraine. We preserved the political calm and stability in the conditions when we are getting ready for the elections.

The most important is the economic situation. If Ukraine, by itself, and with the help of the United States and other states, will manage this economic crisis, it would be ready to use the economic potential that it has and will be able to perform its role in Europe.

President Clinton. I agree with what President Kravchuk said. I might just add one point. The United States recognizes that it is very important to be supportive as Ukraine tries to reform and get through this period of economic transition. One of the things that we've been able to do in the last year or so is to take a broad view of the need for defense conversion measures as the denuclearization occurs.

So, for example, tomorrow the President and the Ukrainian delegation will go and meet with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Perry, to talk about what kinds of defense conversion things, that will help the

long-term Ukrainian economy, can be done as part of the process of denuclearization. And that, I think, is some evidence that the United States believes that the potential of Ukraine is enormous and that we have to have a long-term view of our partnership.

Yes, sir.

Singapore

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to ask you a question about a human rights case. An American young man living in Singapore has been convicted of petty vandalism there and sentenced to a caning, a punishment that is said to leave permanent scars. This would seem to outweigh the crime. And since Singapore is an ally of ours, is there anything the United States can do about this?

The President. This is the first I've heard of it. I'll look into it.

Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News].

Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. President Clinton, just a little while ago, Nabil Shaat, the envoy from the PLO, said that the United Nations is close to agreement, with U.S. backing, on some kind of international security force in the occupied territories. Can you tell us a little bit about that and what the U.S. participation in that would be?

President Clinton. I can't because we haven't made the agreement yet. I can say that there is—I believe we have some more movement in the Middle East. There is still some—I am encouraged in a way by what he said, but I wouldn't overstate it. We are continuing to inch ahead, but I don't want to jump ahead of actual developments. And I think I'd better wait and see what actually is agreed to before I can comment.

Ukraine

Q. Mr. Kravchuk, supplies of Russian gas are supposed to be cut off today because of Ukraine's inability to pay. Did you discuss this issue today with Mr. Clinton? And, Mr. Clinton, did you have any suggestions; were there any moves to help Ukraine in this instance?

President Kravchuk. Yes, I informed President Clinton about this case. We discussed this matter together, but it's hard to tell you any definite steps. But I believe that we would find a joint resolution of that process because it is related not only to the economic issues but also related to a number of treaties, including matters related to the production in the Ukraine. So far, it is very hard to answer your question.

President Clinton. Yes, we discussed it and we discussed it in some detail. I said that I would have the United States explore two or three options to see if we could find some way to avert an even worse crisis. It's a serious problem. We didn't achieve a total resolution today.

Thank you very much.

George Mitchell

Q. Mr. President, have you heard about George Mitchell?

Q. Do you think you can work without him, sir?

President Clinton. I have. I would like to make a statement about Senator Mitchell, if I might.

We had a long talk about this last night. He came over for dinner and asked if he could stay afterward, and asked if I would not tell anybody. So I didn't, and it didn't leak.

I didn't know George Mitchell very well when I became President, and therefore, I didn't know what to expect. After the last 14 months, I can tell you that I think he is one of the finest, ablest people I have ever known in any kind of work. There is no doubt in my mind that we would not have had the success we had last year had it not been for his incredible persistence and patience and strength. And he will be very difficult to replace. But he made this decision, I am convinced, for exactly the reasons that he will say, as he goes home to Maine to make this statement. And I think I should let him speak for himself.

He is a wonderful man. He has made a very personal decision. I will miss him a lot, and America is deeply in his debt.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 51st news conference began at 2:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Kravchuk spoke in Ukrainian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement on Development of U.S.-Ukrainian Friendship and Partnership

March 4, 1994

On the occasion of their March 4, 1994 meeting in Washington, D.C., the President of the United States of America, William J. Clinton, and the President of Ukraine, Leonid M. Kravchuk, agree to open a new era in relations between their two nations.

In doing so, they agree to undertake to broaden the context of bilateral relations on the basis of partnership and mutual trust and respect; shared commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law; common goals in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and, in the joint interest of promoting free trade, investment, and economic cooperation between the two countries.

By embracing these principles, the United States and Ukraine agree to work in friendship in the interests of the mutual well-being of their peoples and in pursuit of an enduring global peace. Embarking on this new era, the two leaders agree to work actively to implement the following comprehensive program of cooperation:

I. Security Assurances

President Clinton and President Kravchuk discussed security assurances for Ukraine and agreed on the importance of such assurances. The sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Ukraine are of key importance to the United States. In this regard, as agreed in the January 14 Trilateral Statement, the United States and other nations are prepared to extend in the form of a multilateral document security assurances to Ukraine once the START I Treaty enters into force and Ukraine becomes a non-nuclear-weapon state party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

II. Nuclear Arms Reduction Assistance ("Nunn-Lugar")

Under the framework of the Agreement Between the United States of America and Ukraine on the Elimination of Strategic Nuclear Arms, and the Prevention of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction of October 25, 1993, the United States of America has committed 177 million dollars in assistance to Ukraine. The United States intends to provide an additional 175 million dollars in Fiscal Year 1994 and Fiscal Year 1995. Of this, 100 million dollars will be made available in Fiscal Year 1994 for projects in the following areas:

—the conversion of the defense industry of Ukraine to civilian activities;

—the elimination of strategic nuclear arms;

—the establishment of a system of export control for the prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and,

—the development of state systems of control, accounting, and physical protection of nuclear materials.

The United States will also seek an additional 75 million dollars in "Nunn-Lugar" assistance for Ukraine in Fiscal Year 1995.

The Government of the United States of America, in consultation with the Government of Ukraine, shall expeditiously decide on the appropriate allocation of proposed assistance among these four areas. Once this decision has been made, the two sides shall expeditiously seek to conclude an agreement and three amendments specifying this proposed increase in assistance.

For defense conversion assistance, the two sides shall work to conclude a new implementing agreement between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Ministry of Engineering, Military-Industrial Complex and Conversion of Ukraine.

For additional strategic nuclear weapon elimination assistance, including assistance for the elimination of SS–19 and SS–24 missiles and silos, for additional export control assistance, and for additional assistance relating to control, accounting, and physical protection of nuclear materials, the two sides shall work to amend the respective implementing agreements concluded in December 1993.

III. Economic and Commercial Cooperation

The two leaders agree that expanded bilateral economic ties and commercial coopera-