

The President's News Conference With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in Vancouver *April 4, 1993*

President Clinton. Good afternoon. I have just completed 2 days of intensely productive discussions with President Boris Yeltsin. I want to join him in thanking Prime Minister Mulroney and the people of Canada for their hospitality. The beauty of Vancouver has inspired our work here, and this weekend I believe we have laid the foundation for a new democratic partnership between the United States and Russia.

The heroic deeds of Boris Yeltsin and the Russian people launched their reforms toward democracy and market economies and defended them valiantly during the dark days of August of 1991. Now it is the self-interest and the high duty of all the world's democracies to stand by Russia's democratic reforms in their new hour of challenge.

The contrast between our promising new partnership and our confrontational past underscores the opportunities that hang in the balance today. For 45 years we pursued a deadly competition in nuclear arms. Now we can pursue a safe and steady cooperation to reduce the arsenals that have haunted mankind. For 45 years our Nation invested trillions of dollars to contain and deter Soviet communism. Now the emergence of a peaceful and democratic Russia can enable us to devote more to our own domestic needs.

The emergence of a newly productive and prosperous Russia could add untold billions in new growth to the global economy. That would mean new jobs and new investment opportunities for Americans and our allies around the world. We are investing today not only in the future of Russia but in the future of America as well.

Mr. President, our Nation will not stand on the sidelines when it comes to democracy in Russia. We know where we stand. We are with Russian democracy. We are with Russian reforms. We are with Russian markets. We support freedom of conscience and speech and religion. We support respect for ethnic minorities. We actively support reform and reformers and you in Russia.

The ultimate responsibility for the success of Russia's new course, of course, rests with the

people of Russia. It is they who must support economic reforms and make them work. But Americans know that our Nation has a part to play, too, and we will do so.

In our discussions, President Yeltsin and I reached several important agreements on the ways in which the United States and the other major industrialized democracies can best support Russian reforms. First are programs that can begin immediately. I discussed with President Yeltsin the initiatives totaling \$1.6 billion intended to bolster political and economic reforms in Russia. These programs already are funded. They can provide immediate and tangible results for the Russian people.

We will invest in the growth of Russia's private sector through two funds to accelerate privatization and to lend to new small private businesses. We will resume grain sales to Russia and extend \$700 million in loans for Russia to purchase American grain. We will launch a pilot project to help provide housing and retraining for the Russian military officers as they move into jobs in the civilian economy.

Because the momentum for reform must come upward from the Russian people, not down from their government, we will expand exchanges between American farmers, business people, students, and others with expertise working directly with the Russian people. And we agreed to make a special effort to promote American investment, particularly in Russia's oil and gas sectors. To give impetus to this effort, we will ask Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin to chair a new commission on energy and space.

Second, beyond these immediate programs, the President and I agreed that our partnership requires broader perspectives and broader cooperative initiatives, which I will discuss with the Congress when I return home. We expect to do more than we are announcing today in housing and technical assistance, in nuclear safety and cooperation on the environment, and in important exchanges.

Third, this challenge we face today is clearly not one for the United States and Russia alone. I have asked our allies in the G-7 to come

forward with their own individual bilateral initiatives. Canada and Britain have already done so, and I expect others to follow.

President Yeltsin and I also discussed plans for the G-7 nations to act together in support of Russia's reforms. The foreign and finance ministers of the G-7 are meeting in Tokyo on April 14th and 15th. Coordinated efforts are required to help Russia stabilize its economy and its currency. The President and I agreed that Russia and the G-7 nations must take mutually reinforcing steps to strengthen reform in Russia. And those will be announced on the 14th and 15th in Tokyo.

Beyond these economic initiatives, the President and I discussed a broad agenda of cooperation in foreign affairs. We reaffirmed our commitment to safe dismantlement and disposal of nuclear weapons. We discussed the need to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to assure that Ukraine along with Belarus and Kazakhstan ratify the START Treaty and accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapons states. I stress that we want to expand our relationships with all the new independent states.

We also agreed to work in concert to help resolve regional crises, to stem weapons of proliferation, to protect the global environment, and to address common challenges to international peace, such as the tragic violence in Bosnia, advancing the promising peace talks we have cosponsored in the Mideast, and continuing our cooperation to end the regional conflicts of the cold war era.

Many of the dreams Americans and Russians hold for their children and for generations to come rest on the long-term success of Russia's reforms and, thus, on the long-term partnerships between our two nations. Our new democratic partnership can make an historic contribution for all humanity well into the next century. Both of us know that it requires effort and vigilance to make progress along the path toward democracy's ideal. And I believe we both see those ideas as rooted deeply in the human spirit.

I think of the words of one of the great poets of democracy within our own country, Walt Whitman. In a poem about crossing the East River in New York where the Brooklyn Bridge now stands, he commands, "Flow on, river; flow on." Of course, the river hardly required his permission. It has flowed on for centuries and will continue to, whether old Walt Whitman decreed it or not. Yet, he bellowed his enthusiastic support for the river's timeless journey.

Russia's struggle for democracy and America's support are much the same. We know that the attraction to freedom that animates democracy flows powerfully through the human spirit like a river. Our words do not cause that river to flow, and history has now proven that in the long run no tyrant can cause the river to stop. Yet, we bellow our support because it is right and because democracy's river can carry both our nations toward a better future.

As we have looked out across the Pacific to the shores of Russia and its far east over the last 2 days, we have committed ourselves anew to that journey. I now return to the United States with a reaffirmed commitment to that course and a determination to engage Members of Congress in both parties and the American people in a rededication to the prospect that a successful and strong and democratic Russia is very much in the best interest of America and the world.

President Yeltsin. First of all, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words addressed to Russia. I should like to thank Canada's Prime Minister, Mr. Mulroney, for the excellent way in which this summit of two Presidents of two great powers was organized. I'd like to thank the people of Vancouver for being so hospitable, for having so warmly welcomed our delegations and us personally, the Presidents. I should like to thank the journalists, who, it seems to me, kept a round-the-clock watch at their posts.

I am fully satisfied by the results and by the spirit and atmosphere of my encounter with President Bill Clinton. It was in all senses out of the ordinary. But it was made extraordinary by processes transpiring in the United States and Russia, conditioned by very special relationships developing between ourselves and Mr. Bill Clinton. We met for the first time but yesterday, but became partners back at that meeting in Washington.

When Bill Clinton became President, we rapidly established good working contacts over the telephone. We candidly discussed the most intricate issues and stated at the outset that there would be no pauses in our dialog and that we would rapidly manage to find time to meet and established that right at the beginning, as I say, several months ago.

We had no right to further postpone personal encounter in the face of this world emerging

from a wounded past, its thoughts preoccupied by what has occurred in two great countries, the United States and Russia. We immediately found common language in Vancouver, probably because we're both businesslike people and at the same time, to some extent, idealists, both.

We also believe that freedom, democracy, and freedom of choice for people are not mere words and are prepared to struggle for our beliefs. We understand that everything that happens in the world is interlinked, that cooperation is not concession-making but a vital necessity, a contribution to our future.

At previous meetings, the nations' leaders discussed primarily the disassembly of confrontational structures, but here in Vancouver, we talked about building the new, laying the foundations of a future economy. This was the first economically oriented meeting of the meeting of the two great powers. We adopted some signal decisions in the interests of the people of the Russian Federation, in the interests of the people of the United States of America, in the interests of the world's people.

We decided to eliminate discriminatory limitations on trade with Russia. We, in fact, said that we were simply hurt. Russia had embarked upon the path of democracy, whereas America was still treating us as though we were a Communist country. In fact, we're struggling against communism. I stated that quite clearly, and Bill Clinton agreed. We are prepared to compete but compete honestly. We decided to alter our approach to trade in Russian uranium, space technology, access to Russian military technology. We decided to do away with the Jackson-Vanik amendment and to resolve other legislative issues. There is considerably greater interest on the part of American investors in the fuel sector, in Russia space technology. We decided to cooperate in this area and decided to join forces, the U.S. and Russian administrations.

The economic package of Bill Clinton—this is what it's going to be called from here on in—Bill Clinton's economic package is predicated on the fact that America wishes to see Russia prosper with a blooming economy. America intends to support Russian entrepreneurs, particularly small and medium farmers, Russia's youth. It's going to cooperate in housing construction for the military and in other areas. All of this is in support of Russian reforms, a part of the strategic form of cooperation be-

tween us, stressed Bill Clinton. Now, that figure, the figure that reflects that cooperation is a \$1.6 billion. We're looking forward to other steps to be undertaken by the United States of America and other major industrial countries to support real reform in Russia.

The linkage between that set of measures and other political measures was avoided. Of course, military and political problems could not be skirted. We discussed what might be done to see to it that all participants in the Bosnian conflict support the U.N. position. Here, our positions match as to the main points. We devoted quite a lot of attention to problems of nonproliferation. We decided to extend our agreements on the avoidance of accidents, such as the near accident involving submarines very recently. We decided to strengthen cooperation between various areas of the military. All of this is reflected in the Vancouver declaration, some of the principal elements of that declaration.

Members of our delegation felt that the U.S. side did appreciate that support for Russia had to be timely. Our partners make it their goal to support Russia's reforms, which are not yet yielding major results as far as ordinary Russians are concerned.

The meeting in Vancouver signals a shift from general assurances of support to Russia to pragmatic, specific, nitty-gritty projects. What we see dominating here are economic and not military strategic issues dominant.

Another very important result is that we, with President Bill Clinton, did establish some pretty close personal contacts. Bill Clinton is a serious partner. He is prepared to tackle the major problems confronting our two countries in the interest of our two countries, in the interest of all free people throughout the world. I have invited Bill Clinton to visit Moscow, to render us an official visit at a time convenient to himself.

Thank you very much.

Nuclear Disarmament

Q. President Clinton, after 45 years of deadly competition in nuclear arms and now a new spirit of democratic partnership, in this new spirit of democratic partnership, did you discuss whether Russia and the United States—[inaudible]—

President Clinton. We did discuss that, and we discussed that within the framework of the

START agreements and the timetables established—[inaudible]—and we agreed that we would reexamine that at an early, early time. We did not resolve that issue, but we agreed to take it up again.

Aid to Russia

Q. A question, Mr. President, for you and President Yeltsin. Much of Bill Clinton's economic package is old wine in new bottles, and it's money that was previously authorized and appropriated by Congress. Why will it make a difference now, more of a difference now than it would have when it was approved last year? And what guarantees are there that it will be delivered this time, when it was not, when originally approved?

President Clinton. I'd like to make two points. First of all, the nature of this package is, I think, somewhat different than the one which was discussed last year. First, three-quarters, three-quarters of this money will be distributed not government to government but will go to benefit the private sector, the emerging private sector in Russia, and will go outside of the central apparatus in terms of supporting privatization, helping to start new businesses, establishing a democracy corps at a really significant level.

If you look at all the things that are down here, they are very specific; they are tangible; they are designed to develop concrete benefits for the people who will be involved. And as President Yeltsin reiterated to me in our last meeting, in each of these categories we have a proven mechanism for distributing the assistance so that we know how to get the money to its intended purpose.

The second point I would like to make is that we intend for this to be leveraged in two ways: first, because I intend now to go back to the Congress, to the leaders of both parties with whom I met extensively before I came here, and discuss a second package of bilateral assistance which will be more aggressive in the areas of energy and environmental cleanup, areas which will be dramatically helpful in supporting the economy of Russia, and more aggressive in the whole issue of housing for returning soldiers, which is a very important issue socially and politically as well as economically in the country, and in several other areas. And we have asked the other G-7 countries each to do something on their own. And those messages are coming in now.

And finally, I would remind you that we want a different kind of multilateral agreement to come out of Tokyo. That is, last year when the figure \$24 billion was floated all across the United States and the world and Russia, a lot of it was contingent on all kinds of things which never happened and could not reasonably have been expected to happen. We are going to try to make sure that anything we say will be done, in fact, will be done. And that will be a big difference.

President Yeltsin. I should like to stress a major difference between that which was decided upon in the past and that which was decided upon, economically speaking, in Bill Clinton's economic package: first, a close linkage to specific sectors in terms of sums earmarked, which will enable us to monitor the expenditure of each and every line item; second, a close connection to deadlines, which had never been done in the past. The figure of \$24 billion was moot at, say, by the year 2000, but now we've stated the 25th of April, 27th of April, 1st of May, the month of May, the month June, the month of September, the month of October, and throughout the remainder of 1993. That is the principal set of differences.

Q. You somewhat anticipated what I had intended to ask. I see here a clear break in the type of assistance being rendered to reform, about which so much had been said by way of lipservice in the past. So what do you expect of the G-7 meeting in Tokyo, then?

President Yeltsin. Reform, of course, is proceeding, but it's a young reform process. It's really only a year old. It's only for a year that we have reform underway in Russia. Now, in that one year we have had 60,000 private enterprises set up. In over 70 years not a single one was established. We must remember that over 50,000 major stockholding companies in that one year. These are perhaps minor successes, but they are signal successes nonetheless.

But of course, certain quarters are putting on brakes on the process. Russia tends to run out of breath from time to time. It needs a transition period, a breather of, say, 2 years. And in that period of breather, we need this kind of support; not aid, I would stress, not in assistance but support, because in supplying food, technologies, goods, et cetera, et cetera, you do create additional workplaces, additional jobs in the United States of America, additional

use of American industrial plant capacity, a fuller use of U.S. economic potential. So these are not Christmas presents, I put it to you, not at all. This is policy and major policymaking. I put it to you. Thank you.

Q. President Yeltsin, President Clinton, you've all indicated your devotion to democracy, but that you're both idealists at the same time. But what we're hearing about right now is a very pragmatic, a very down-to-earth set of measures, a very down-to-earth program. Now, President Yeltsin, how is this assistance to be rendered to particular sectors? You've indicated that there is a definite time, a place for delivery of the assistance. Now, you've also indicated that jobs will be created in America. But what will actually happen on the ground, so to speak, in Russia?

President Yeltsin. Let's say we're going to spend 300 billion rubles on health in Russia, that will reach every single Russian—100 million in medicines that will reach every Russian. Technology—after all, new technologies will generate new consumer goods for each and every Russian. Everything is people oriented. This is Bill Clinton's policy. It is Yeltsin's policy. That is, that we work for people's benefit, for the benefit of each and every free individual.

Aid Coordination and Trade Restrictions

Q. What assurances do you have from President Yeltsin that this medicine, this food, these housing guarantees, that any of this can really be delivered through a system that we've been told is very bureaucratic and somewhat corrupt? What assurances have you given him that there won't be logjams on the American side? And could you tell us, do you agree with his opening statement that there is agreement here between the two leaders about ending the Jackson-Vanik amendment and about the technology transfers through COCOM?

President Clinton. Let me answer the first question first. On the delivery systems, we have reached a tentative agreement, pending the acquiescence by other G-7 countries—I say that because I have not had a chance to discuss this with any of them—that there were logjams in the past, both within the government agencies of the United States and other countries and within Russia itself, and that we have now asked in a very carefully coordinated fashion all the G-7 to do two things: to commit to more bilateral assistance in terms of development and

partnership and to work for a multilateral development package.

So we have tentatively agreed, the two of us have—but again, I say nobody else has agreed to this—that we should establish a coordinating office in Moscow to make sure, number one, that each of us in the G-7 does what we promise to do on time, without delay, and number two, that our efforts are coordinated within Russia, both so that we are not in conflict with each other and so that the money can actually go where it's supposed to go. So we devoted quite a bit of time to the whole business of implementation.

As to your second question, we discussed Jackson-Vanik, COCOM, and a number of other issues. And I told President Yeltsin that in my meetings with the Congress before I left, we agreed that certain Members of Congress with an interest in this—I might add, in both parties—would actually compile a list of every one of the cold war legislative and other restrictions that are still being applied to Russia, even though it is now a democratic state, that I would listen to President Yeltsin on these issues, and that I would then return home and we would make as many changes as we could.

But with regard specifically to Jackson-Vanik, I think the issue there is whether—it's a fact question from my point of view: Are there any more people who wish to emigrate who have not been allowed to? The President says he doesn't think so. He's going to look into that. I'm going to go back and raise that issue with Congress, along with the COCOM issue and a whole range of others. And I would expect within a matter of a few days, we'll be able to give to the American press and public a comprehensive answer to what the position of the administration on that will be.

Q. COCOM?

President Clinton. Including that. We are reviewing that, too.

Go ahead.

Areas of Cooperation

Q. My question is directed both to President Yeltsin and to President Clinton. It goes as follows: The elimination of restrictions on trade with Russia, if that does happen, what perhaps should be the harbinger of the establishment of those relations of partnership which we've been talking about for so long. Now, I'd like to ask you, gentlemen, what particular priority

areas are up for partnership and cooperation? And President Clinton, how do you feel? Are there particular areas which the U.S. might like to stress in building up business cooperation with the Russians?

President Yeltsin. On that first point, I should like to say that we discussed something like 50 issues yesterday and today, and practically all of those issues had to do with partnership. We would not manage to tackle any one of those issues if we were not partners, if we were rivals in each other's eyes, adversaries in each other's eyes. No, we are partners and future allies. That was the way our relationship unfolded. That's the way the negotiations went. That's the way we went about resolving issues. And in discussing those approximately 50 issues, we didn't sweep anything under the table; we didn't set anything aside. We decided either to pass them on for further investigation and analysis, or else we resolved them on the spot.

President Clinton. I'd like to answer the question also, and respond to what President Yeltsin said. Among the areas in which the United States sees real opportunities for joint activity are energy, space, the environment, nuclear safety. These are some of the areas that we believe we can work together on in ways that would benefit Russia economically in a very short time and also be beneficial for the United States. Over and above that, we discussed but did not settle on a range of possible actions that we could take to make private investment in Russia more attractive to American investors because, after all, in the end a market economy is built by private investment and not just public investment alone.

The second point I'd like to make in response to the comment by President Yeltsin: We did discuss a phenomenal number of issues. I think it's fair to say we discussed more issues than either one of us thought we would when we came here. We did not agree on everything. You would not expect the leaders of two great nations, even in partnership, to have total agreement. But we did come to agreement on how we would handle these issues, how we would try to work through our disagreements, and what we would do in the future. And I appreciated the extreme candor with which President Yeltsin treated all our discussions, including those areas where there is still some gap between our two positions.

Submarine Incident and Baltic States

Q. I have a two-part question, one for each of you. Mr. President, on another irritant in the U.S.-Russian relationship that was pointed out to us yesterday by your Communications Director, George Stephanopoulos, the patrolling off the Russian coast by U.S. submarines: What have you agreed to now to prevent these kinds of accidents from recurring down the road? Is this another case of old habits dying hard, that the U.S. still finds a need to keep these kinds of submarines off the Russian coast?

And for President Yeltsin: An irritant in the U.S.-Russian relationship is the slow withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic States and from Eastern Europe. Are you committed to withdrawing the Russian soldiers as quickly as possible from those independent nations?

President Clinton. Let me answer first. I don't mind saying to this whole assemblage that I told President Yeltsin I very much regretted the submarine incident, and that I had ordered a thorough review of the incident as well as the policy of which the incident happened to be an unintended part, and that as soon as that review was completed, I would engage Russia at the appropriate levels to discuss whether the policy should be changed and where we should go from here. That was a regrettable thing, and I don't want it to ever happen again.

President Yeltsin. On the first point I'd add just a couple of words. We did agree that somewhere late in May or early in June the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, Grachev, would visit the United States of America to discuss the entire gamut of issues of this sort, including close passage of submarines, so that such incidents might be avoided in the future.

Now, with regard to withdrawal of troops from the Baltic States, we are adhering very closely to the schedule on troop withdrawals from Lithuania, and we are completing work on that schedule since Lithuania does not violate human rights and treats the Russian-speaking population fairly. If Latvia and Estonia violate human rights, if their laws are presently so structured that in fact some national minorities continue to be persecuted, and that involves basically Russians, we have, on the whole, adopted a political decision, a policy decision to withdraw troops from those states. We will be scheduling the actual withdrawal in line with what they decide in the human rights area.

Russian Referendum

Q. I have a question that I would like to address to President Yeltsin and also to President Clinton.

President Yeltsin, you indicated that Bill Clinton's economic package lays the groundwork for partnership between the United States of America and Russia and will provide considerable impetus to the reform process in Russia. In April, we're going to have a referendum in Russia. How, here today in Vancouver, would you forecast the situation unfolding on the basis of agreements reached here in Canada?

Now, President Clinton, the personal factor is a major element in politics. Now, what would you indicate by way of your personal contact with President Yeltsin in regard to the referendum?

President Yeltsin. That's our internal domestic issue. Whether it will be impacted directly or indirectly is another issue, but it's up to us to deal with the referendum issue. It's up to us to work with our people. It's up to us to persuade the citizens of the Russian Federation that if they do not vote in favor of confidence on the 25th of April, they will be dealing a major blow not only upon Russia but also upon the United States of America, upon the other countries of the world. This would be a loss to democracy, a loss to freedom, a rollback to the past, a return to the Communist yokes, something which is entirely inadmissible.

President Clinton. My personal reaction to President Yeltsin based on these 2 days is, first, that he is very much what he seems to be—he's a person who rose from humble beginnings, who has never forgotten where he came from—and second, that his enduring virtue is that he trusts the Russian people.

The great courage involved in all democracies is that in the end you have to trust the people, including you have to trust the people if they decide to throw you out. You have to trust the people.

Boris Yeltsin has put the fate of the Government of Russia into the hands of the people of Russia. That is a unique thing in your history. There are few nations in the world that have the spirit, the culture, the richness that the Russian people can claim. And yet, for too long, they were never given control over their own destiny. My belief is that deep down inside he actually does trust all the people who live in

those communities in the 12 time zones that make up Russia. And that is a very great thing. Yes.

Exchange Programs

Q. Mr. President and Mr. President, definitely we are interested if there is any part of the package which deals with Russia's far east and Pacific Northwest of the United States of America as far as economic reform and development is concerned and people-to-people relationships in particular.

President Clinton. Yes, we agreed to have a substantial increase in the exchanges of people, particularly in the area of increasing the number of people we might bring to this country for training in business management, and big increases in student exchanges and a whole range of other things, including agriculture and other areas that we are still going to identify.

Let me say that it is easy to minimize such things because they often do not cost as much money as some other parts of a long-term development package. But no one who has lived through the second half of the 20th century could possibly be blind to the enormous impact of exchange programs on the future of the countries.

You know, when I was a young man I worked for the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Fulbright. There is a scholarship program that carries his name that, literally, in my judgment, has changed the whole direction of policy in country after country after country. So I believe this is a very important thing, and I'm going to do everything I can to see that there is a major, major increase in the number of broad-gauged exchanges. And I might say I think that has great support in the United States Congress.

President Yeltsin. I'd like to add a few words to that. This package, which I would like to call a very large and wise package which is going to make history, involves yet another question mark, and that is that of assisting the native populations in the northern reaches of Russia. It's a very, very important issue to tackle that one.

Russian Referendum

Q. I would like to know what is your deep feeling, because everybody tries to help you, and I think everybody is right to help you because you represent democracy. But the ques-

tion I will ask you is that, after you, do you think there is an alternative that maybe our American friends, President Clinton, has been obliged to think about in case your enemies, your adversary oust you from power after the referendum on the 25th of April?

President Yeltsin. My first point to that would be this: I intend to do everything I can in my power—and, by the way, I do believe in the Russian people making its proper choice on the 25th of April. At the moment, today I say there is no alternative to Yeltsin. Perhaps there will be one tomorrow, but certainly not one today.

President Clinton. If I were on the ballot, I would make exactly the statement. The answer to your question is simple, I think. I have made it clear that the United States is committed to democracy, to human rights, to market economics, to reducing the nuclear threat, to respecting national sovereignty of the other newly independent states. We have interests and values. They are embodied by the policies and the direction of President Yeltsin. They are enduring. He is the duly elected President of Russia. And as long as he is, I intend to work with him and support him because he reflects those enduring values.

Aid to Russia

Q. I have a question to the President of Russia. The overall sum of this is that this is perhaps not so great. For example, when we had the Los Angeles riots we had a package twice that size set up. Now, what sort of projects in Russia do you think will yield the most immediate results and will have the greatest impact socially in the short run?

President Yeltsin. I feel that we do not need astronomical figures, headline-making figures. What we need are real figures. These are real figures which are do-able, which are implementable in terms of things that we can do.

Q. Well, what specific projects would you regard as the most effective ones?

President Yeltsin. Well, the first priority would be fuel, which would enable us to replenish, to top off our hard-currency reserves. I'm talking about oil and gas, its revitalization, and we addressed that topic in very specific terms. The next issue would be immediate delivery of goods to the people.

Cuba

Q. I have a two-part question, one for Mr. Clinton and one for Mr. Yeltsin, please. Before leaving the United States, Hispanic Congressmen requested that you talk about the nuclear plant of Cienfuegos in Cuba, trying to get the commitment of Mr. Yeltsin not to continue or not to help in continuing the construction of that plant. Did you get that commitment?

And for Mr. Yeltsin: I would like to know if you have a timetable for finishing the withdrawal of troops, Soviet troops, from Cuba?

President Clinton. First of all, let me say that the day of massive subsidies between Russia and the Government of Cuba is over. The lion's share of the trade which exists now between Russia and Cuba is a market-based trade. There is a nuclear facility being constructed there. The United States is concerned about it. We've expressed our concern about it. That was basically the extent of our discussions here at this meeting.

President Yeltsin. In regard to troop withdrawals, we have already initiated that withdrawal and are now finalizing a schedule for the final withdrawal of troops; nothing in terms of a specific timetable.

Characterization of Summit

Q. I have a question for President Clinton. Mr. President, even today, I think we can foretell that President Yeltsin's opponents will certainly be accusing him of making unilateral political concessions in exchange for Clinton's package. Perhaps we could anticipate their commentary and respond to that question even today.

President Clinton. First of all, I do not believe it would be fair to say that President Yeltsin made a lot of political concessions in return for the commitments made by the United States. We did clarify some positions on some issues. And I felt better about it. But basically everything President Yeltsin said in our private meetings was consistent with the direction in which he has tried to lead Russia since he has been President.

Secondly, I would remind you that the United States also has taken some steps that have nothing to do with money to try to reinforce the fact that we consider this a partnership of two great nations, that we want to work in partnerships. That's why I agreed to a comprehensive review of all the cold war statutes and other

limitations on our relationships with Russia. That's why I went out of my way to tell the President in our very first meeting how much I regretted the incident of the submarine bumping and how I was committed to reviewing our policy and to getting back with him on that.

So I would say that President Yeltsin's opponents might want to characterize this meeting in that way, but it would not be a fair characterization. In fact, it would be a distortion of the conversation that we had.

President Yeltsin. I am not frightened of possible reprimands or reproaches from the opposition because I see no single matter upon which it could hang such an accusation. There's nothing in any of the documents; there's nothing in what was said between us.

President Clinton. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's ninth news conference began at 1:45 p.m. at Canada Place. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Question-and-Answer Session With Russian Reporters in Vancouver April 4, 1993

Aid to Russia

Q. I had two questions for both Presidents, so you could probably answer for Boris, too. [Laughter]

The President. I'll give you my answer, then I'll give you Yeltsin's answer. [Laughter]

Q. The first is that this is the meeting of the Presidents. So the money that's being promised is Government money, and naturally it's going to be distributed through the Government. But you've indicated that three-quarters are going to be going to businesses. So the question is how the Russian businesses themselves are going to be consulted, if ever? What are the priorities, because there are several associations of Russian businessmen existing already. So will they be invited to participate in setting up priorities for investment? This is the first.

And second, to you: We know that polls, public polls in America do not show that Americans are very enthusiastic about giving this aid. Like Newsweek polls say that about 75 percent don't approve it, and New York Times published that 52 percent support if it just prevents civil war, 42 percent if it fosters democratic reform, and only 29 percent if it just personally supports Yeltsin. How are you going to sort of handle this problem that Americans themselves are not very enthusiastic?

Thank you.

Q. I have a question. I'm sorry, is there going to be a translation of everything into Russian? No, just the answers. Just the answers. Okay.

The President. The answer to the first question is, it depends on what kind of aid we're

discussing. For example, the funds that will be set up for financing new businesses will obviously go to those businesses who apply and who seem to be good risks and make the application. The privatization fund will be used to support the privatization of existing public enterprises. Then there are some other general funds in the Democracy Corps and other things which people in Russia will have some influence over the distribution of.

With regard to your second question, let me say that I would think that there would be people in both countries who would not feel too warmly toward simply the American Government giving money to the Russian Government. There's opposition to that in Russia. And in our country, throughout our whole history, there has been an opposition to foreign aid of all kinds. That is, this has nothing to do with Russia. If you look at the whole history of America, any kind of aid program has always been unpopular.

What I have tried to tell the American people is, this is not an aid program, this is an investment program; that this is an investment in our future. We spent \$4 trillion, trillion, on armaments, on soldiers, and other investments because of the cold war. Now, with a democratic government in Russia, with the newly independent states, the remainder of them, working on a democracy and struggling to get their economies going, it seems to me very much in our interest to make it possible to do whatever we