

The President. Yes. I hope it will happen a lot more as we go along.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, did the latest events in Moscow give you pause about your previous support that you've expressed for Mr. Yeltsin?

The President. No. It is a tense and difficult issue, and how to defuse what I understand to have been the circumstances around the Moscow White House was a difficult call. I don't think that any of us should be here basically armchair quarterbacking the unfolding events.

When I talked to Boris Yeltsin a few days ago, I told him very strongly that I hoped that he would be able to manage this transition in ways that really promoted democracy, respected human rights, and kept the peace. And he said that would be exactly his policy. And so far he has done that, under very, very difficult, intense circumstances. I mean, a lot of you have talked about just the difficulty of managing this and keeping up with what's going on in the countryside and the pressures and all the various interest groups. And I think so far they've done quite well.

Now, I'm going to have a meeting with Mr. Kozyrev later today, and we'll have a chance to talk about this in greater detail. But he's already made a statement that they're still committed to a peaceful transition, and I have no reason to believe he's not. And I think that the United States and the free world ought to hang in there with a person that is clearly the

most committed to democracy and market reform of all the people now operating in Russia. Until I have some reason to believe otherwise, I'm going to hang right where we are. I think we're in the right place.

Q. What are your concerns about the human rights implications of having the Parliament building there surrounded by armed troops?

The President. I think it depends on what the facts were. If there were a lot of people armed in there and he was worried about civil disorder and unrest and people being shot, I think that when you're in charge of a government, your first obligation is to try to keep the peace and keep order. So I think so far they seem to have acted with restraint but with dispatch in trying to defuse what otherwise might have become a very difficult situation.

Now, I don't have all the facts, and neither does anyone else. But nothing has happened so far that has caused me to question the commitment that was made to me by the President and to his own people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth D. Brody, President, Export-Import Bank of the United States. The related Executive orders of September 30 on export controls and the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev of Russia

September 29, 1993

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, is there anything the United States can now do to bring peace in Bosnia since the Bosnian Parliament has voted against the peace plan?

The President. Well, you know, this process—this goes on day by day. We're just going to have to see what happens. They want some more territory. You know, I think they're entitled to some more territory, but I don't know if they can get it. I think that the price of

passing up this peace may be very high. And I think they'll probably consider that over the next few days. But we'll just have to wait and see what happens. We haven't had time to examine what our options are.

Q. Is the only alternative more war?

The President. Well, that's up to them. All of them.

Q. Are you encouraging them then to accept this treaty, or do you think that they should go ahead with their demands for more?

The President. Well, I have encouraged them to try to make peace. That's what I've encouraged them to try to do. I hate to see another winter come on for all of them there. But that's a decision they'll have to make, their country, their lives, they'll have to make the decision.

Russia

Q. Sir, what assurances are you hoping to receive from Mr. Kozyrev about the situation, and what message might you be sending to Mr. Yeltsin through him?

The President. Well, I think he's already given the assurances that all of us hope. They're doing everything they can to preserve peace. And there's a commitment by President Yeltsin to move to a truly democratic system, through truly democratic means. That's about all the United States or anyone else could ask for.

Q. Mr. President, one more question. Is this meeting of yours with the Russian Foreign Minister, is this meeting of yours a meeting of support or is it a meeting of concern?

The President. Well, it's a meeting of support. I'm concerned about events in the sense that I hope they go well, and I hope that everything works out all right. But I am firmly in support of the efforts that President Yeltsin is making to hold democratic elections for a legislative body and to have a new constitution and to present himself for election again. I think that the United States clearly has an interest in promoting democracy and reform in Russia.

And as you know, I have aggressively supported efforts in our Congress to get more aid for the process of reform and for economic opportunity in Russia, and I will continue to do that.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:54 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Nomination for an Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs September 29, 1993

The President announced today that he intends to nominate career Veterans Affairs official Raymond John Vogel, to be the Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Benefits. Vogel, a disabled Vietnam-era Army veteran, would head the Veterans Benefits Administration, the VA Agency responsible for delivery of nonmedical benefits to the Nation's 27 million veterans.

In making his announcement, the President said, "John Vogel is uniquely qualified to apply

his indepth expertise to the VA's new commitment to serve America's veterans during a new era of efficiency and sensitivity. He will ably assist VA Secretary Jesse Brown in his plans to modernize and streamline the VA claims process."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks on Signing the Executive Order on Regulatory Planning and Review and an Exchange With Reporters September 30, 1993

The President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to another action-packed meeting of our action-packed administration.

Today I am signing an Executive order to create a fair, open, streamlined system of regulatory review for our Government to eliminate

improper influence, delay secrecy, and to set tough standards and time limits for regulation.

It's a move in keeping with everything else we've tried to do since Inauguration Day. The philosophy of this administration has always been consistent when it comes to regulation.