

This is a serious case. It is an unusually serious one because of factors I cannot discuss. But I also believe that, given all the facts as I understand them—and I know, I think, quite a bit about it—that we are pursuing the proper policy. And at this time, I think we have lodged the formal protest and a strong one. I think we should wait and see what the full response of the Russians is before we make any other determinations.

Q. Have you had any response yet? And what do you expect them to do? I mean, what gesture are you waiting for?

The President. Let's give them a chance to make an adequate response, and we'll see what happens.

Q. Have you instructed Director Woolsey to begin a damage assessment? And have you been given any preliminary briefing as to the scope of damage?

The President. The answer to the first question is, yes, the damage assessment is ongoing. The answer to the second question is, I have gotten a preliminary assessment. They are working on it. I had a good discussion with Mr. Woolsey today. I am satisfied, by the way, that the CIA worked with the FBI very well over a considerable period of months. Keep in mind they have been working against the worst consequences for some considerable period of time now while they've been attempting to complete the investigation and wrap up the case.

Q. Sir, do you intend to discuss this with Mr. Yeltsin? You've had a lot of personal discussions with him. Is it going to put this on a personal level?

The President. We may well discuss it, but I can't make a decision on that at this time

until we see what the official reaction of the Russians is and until I have a little bit more time to reflect on what our options are, sir. I don't think I'm in a position to make that decision right now.

Q. So far the reaction has been, what are we making such a fuss about, since we spy and they spy and we both know each others spies. Is it hypocritical of the United States to make this fuss?

The President. First of all, we're making a fuss about this man. This man was not just a spy; this is a person who is a 31-year veteran of the CIA. So quite apart from the Russians, this was a very serious offense against the United States of America by one of its citizens. So this is a very serious matter. Also, it is a serious matter because of issues which I am not at this moment at liberty to discuss. What I said yesterday is this was a serious case going back several years. I do not think the facts of this case at this time undermine in any way, shape, or form the policy we have followed for the last year toward President Yeltsin and his Government and the forces of change in Russia; I do not believe that. But this is a very serious case, and it has to be pursued aggressively, and we will do that.

Q. Don't you think there was a real lapse in finding these people?

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Pete Wilson of California; Willie Brown, California Assembly speaker; and Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles.

Statement on the Technology Reinvestment Project

February 23, 1994

This marks another major step in our effort to protect our national security and promote our economic security in the post-cold-war world. We are investing in projects that will create the jobs of the future by exploring ideas, developing technologies, creating products, and

strengthening skills that will keep America strong, militarily and economically.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing the fourth group of awards in the technology reinvestment project.