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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN 10/8

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 7, 1993

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: Clarification on your October 5 Telephone
Conversation with President Yeltsin

I wanted to highlight for you two possibly confusing statements made by President Yeltsin in your October 5 telephone conversation.

First, Yeltsin mentioned that a gang of people from Riga (in Latvia) and the Transdnierster (in Moldova) had participated in the opposition's attempt to overthrow the government on Sunday. These men were from the elite Russian security forces stationed in Latvia and Moldova (against the wishes of both governments). Since Yeltsin did not fully explain who these people were, we wanted to be sure you understood that they were not connected in any way with the Latvian and Moldovan governments which actually supported Yeltsin throughout this crisis.

Second, you asked Yeltsin who will be able to participate in the December elections and which of the papers and press outlets will be free to publish. Yeltsin said in Russian that there would be no restrictions on the elections and that only those who faced criminal charges would be ineligible to run for office. Unfortunately, Yeltsin's interpreter mistakenly translated this to say there would be no restrictions on the press. Yeltsin did not say that and avoided altogether answering your question on press freedoms.

For your information, Yeltsin has banned ten right-wing newspapers under the current state of emergency which is due to expire on Saturday. We are unsure if he will choose to extend the emergency beyond that day. We have taken the position that we can understand temporary restrictions to restore order after the attempted coup against him but hope that they will be lifted as the situation returns to normal. We are concerned about this issue and have asked Ambassador Pickering to raise it directly with Yeltsin.

PHOTOCOPY
WJC HANDWRITING

Attachment

Tab A Memorandum of Conversation of your telephone call with President Yeltsin

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cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

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Handwritten notes:
OK - but it's unclear that this is the same group as the one mentioned in the newspaper article.
S.M. [unclear]

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