

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Presidential Telephone Call

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
President Yeltsin  
Interpreter: Peter Afanassenko  
Notetakers: John Beyrle, Kenneth Baldwin,  
Karen Dragone

DATE, TIME 27 April 1995, 9:31 - 10:04am  
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Boris? (U)

President Yeltsin: Mr. President, I am listening. (U)

The President: Hello Boris. (U)

President Yeltsin: As always a pleasure to listen to you and hear your voice. (U)

The President: Good to hear your voice. I hope you had a relaxing vacation in the south. I thought it was important to be in touch with you as we plan for our meeting in May. I was pleased to get your letters on our May meeting and on NATO issues. I share your commitment to a successful summit. Part of that entails staying in close touch like this, by letter and phone. I have just finished a very good meeting with Foreign Minister Kozyrev here in the Oval Office. Of course, he passed along your best wishes and reiterated your desire for a successful meeting. (U)

I believe that this summit must be a reaffirmation of our joint commitment to Russia's integration into multilateral economic and security and political systems. We have come a long way in two years. Russia's participation in the G-7/P-8 process and our cooperation in the U.N. and OSCE are good examples of this kind of integration we can have. We don't always agree on everything, but we work together as partners, not opponents. Of course, the press and critics of our relations continue to focus on problem areas. We need to make progress in those at our meeting, but we also need to highlight our successes. (U)

I understand Gore and Chernomyrdin are working out an understanding on Russia's joining as a founding member of the post-COCOM regime and your arms sales to Iran. I hope we can announce this as settled in Moscow on May 10. I'm also told we should be able to announce agreement on principles on the ABM Treaty and theater missile defense, which may ease some of the Duma's criticism of START II. They also tell me that two big oil deals, Sakhalin-One and Timan-Pechora, can be finished by May 10. The combined value of these projects is about 24 billion dollars. That is a huge amount and nothing could be a better symbol of our commitment to implement the economic partnership we signed last September. Let's instruct Gore and Chernomyrdin to look into this so we can announce these agreements when we meet in Moscow as well. (S)

President Yeltsin: I fully share your vision of our work to do and your program of accomplishments at the meeting in May. We have to counteract perceptions so that world public opinion views our relationship as stable, reliable and predictable, with no changes or worsening. And we are resolved to continue in that vein. I'm confident that in our upcoming summit in Moscow we'll be able to agree on all outstanding issues, because the personal relations between us are based on mutual respect and friendship. I view you to be a very good friend. There is no question we cannot agree upon. I can assure you of that. That is why I am grateful to you for your bold step in deciding to come to Moscow for our celebration. I fully agree with the program you have proposed, and we fully support and accept it. I'm looking forward to our next meeting. I've actually missed seeing you (*skuchals'ya po tebye*). Will Hillary be there? (S)

The President: Yes, she will. She is looking forward to it. I wanted to raise with you the NATO question. We recognize how sensitive this issue is for you. That is why I want to assure your that this process is proceeding along a path that is consistent with what you and I agreed upon last September and that Vice President Gore reiterated to you when he saw you in December. (S)

President Yeltsin: I fully agree with you on that. (U)

The President: For the future stability of Europe, it is important that Russia be a vital part of the new security structures that are emerging. That means OSCE, the post-COCOM regime, the new NATO -- all of them. None of this can develop normally unless Russia is involved in the process. (S)

President Yeltsin: We'll both have difficult discussions with regards to NATO, but I'm confident we will be able to find an

acceptable solution for this issue. It is impossible to keep the whole world in uncertainty in a situation where two great powers fail to agree on such a vital issue. (S)

The President: Christopher and Kozyrev have just described to me a proposal they discussed yesterday. It offers a way to deal with European security and the NATO question in a way that I think respects your position and ours. I think it is an excellent plan that could give a fresh impetus to the development of the NATO-Russia relationship at the NATO ministerial meeting at the end of May, in connection with your approval of Russia's two agreements with NATO. I want to say to you that this proposal has my personal support. I hope you will be able to support it, too. I will let the translation proceed then explain my understanding of it. (S)

The agreement has three parts: At their May meeting, NATO ministers would reaffirm the deliberate pace of expansion and that there is no desire or intention to accelerate the pace. Second, we would reinvigorate the Partnership for Peace, to demonstrate that we are strengthening this program. And third, in May we would start discussions about a new special relationship between Russian and NATO. All three of these things can be done if you can agree to go ahead with the signing of the two NATO documents. Signing these documents does not mean you endorse NATO's taking in of new members. I am not asking you to make such a public endorsement. I realize you can't do that. What I am asking is that you not let concern over the future process of NATO expansion stop us from building a strong Russian-NATO relationship now. So this is the plan -- "May for May." It is a good one. We can accept it and hope you can accept it.

(S)

[At this point it was discovered that the communications link had been broken during the Russian interpretation of the foregoing remarks by the President. After the link was re-established, the American interpreter repeated the preceding paragraph describing the plan and received confirmation that Yeltsin had heard it.]

(S)

President Yeltsin: I agree with what Kozyrev described. On a preliminary basis I do agree with this, but during our personal meeting you and I can discuss it and seek some clarifications with you. (S)

The President: Well, that's fine. We can further discuss it during our meeting. I hope that you'll be able to confirm your agreement to go ahead with the documents. That will make it possible for me to work with our Allies on this concept before we meet. (S)

President Yeltsin: Yes, I do agree with you, Bill. (U)

The President: That's great. (U)

President Yeltsin: Sure, Bill, I am looking forward to seeing you in Moscow. (U)

The President: Me, too. One more thing before we end our conversation, if I might. (U)

President Yeltsin: Okay, Bill. (U)

The President: I was pleased by reports that you will declare an end to military action in Chechnya. It's very important that this becomes a permanent cessation that leads to a political solution. We need to intensify the search for a political solution. As you know we have a U.S. assistance worker, Fred Cuny who has been missing in the region since April 9. We've been in close touch with your government, but I would appreciate anything that you could do to help us determine his welfare and whereabouts.

(C)

President Yeltsin: Bill, I today signed the decree on a moratorium on military activity in Chechnya until around the 15th of May [foregoing is what Yeltsin actually said. Russian interpreter misrendered this in English as "...moratorium on military activity in Chechnya for the indefinite future."] (C)

The President: Great. That's great. Let's stay in touch. Hillary and I are looking forward to seeing you and Naina on Victory Day. (U)

President Yeltsin: Very well, Bill. Because of the significance of these holidays, I think the meeting will be fine and useful. (U)

The President: Fine; see you then. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good-bye. (U)

The President: Good-bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, [nsarchiv@gwu.edu](mailto:nsarchiv@gwu.edu)