

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Boris Yeltsin of Russia on 5 July 1994

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Yeltsin
Interpreter: Kyrill Borissov
Notetaker: John Beyrle

DATE, TIME 5 July 1994, 9:31-9:49 (EDT)

AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Hello, Boris. (U)President Yeltsin: Bill, hello. (U)The President: It's nice to hear your voice. I am looking forward to seeing you in Naples. (U)President Yeltsin: Yes, we will have a couple meetings in Naples. I am planning to have a one-on-one meeting with you in Naples in addition to meetings with other people. (U)The President: I wanted to talk to you about my trip to Europe. I plan to stop in Riga and Warsaw and then go to Naples. (U)President Yeltsin: I'd like to make a few comments on the Baltics. (U)The President: Yes, I wanted to talk to you a bit about that and Naples before we meet there. (U)President Yeltsin: I wrote to you about that earlier. In Riga, I would like you to talk to the people in Estonia and Latvia and tell them that the U.S. is against any infringement on the rights of the Russian-speaking people there. I know you and the Secretary of State have been working on this, but there have been no results so far. We need a public statement from you that the U.S. will not support any infringement on the rights of the Russian-speaking people. If you do so, the people in Estonia and Latvia and some officials in their Parliaments will act differently. There was a new Latvian law enacted that will push out retired Russian military people and officers. This is not good. This is not how one should act in a civilized world. You see we made a decision regarding the pullout of our troops from Lithuania and also made an agreement with Latvia regarding a pullout in August from Latvia. With regards to Estonia, the Estonian Deputy Foreign Minister and Minister Churkin have just concluded talks in Geneva. There is progress, but Estonia

continues to insist that all army pensioners under age 54 be withdrawn. This is unacceptable on both common sense and political grounds. We are prepared to show flexibility, but are not prepared to accept infringements on the rights of the Russian minorities. The U.S. has shown great understanding on this issue before. (S)

The President: I understand your concerns. In Riga I plan to meet with the three Baltic Presidents. I will raise the issue of the Russian minorities. You know my opinion on this issue: Russians and other ethnic groups must be included in the political and social life of these countries. I was pleased that President Ulmanis sent the bill back to Parliament. It's good to see progress on troop withdrawal. I hope the process will be completed by the end of August. I will continue to push them on the issue of Russian minorities rights. I hope that when we meet at the end of September this issue will not be on the agenda. (S)

President Yeltsin: Well, Bill, if they don't stop raising the question of Russian language minorities there, we will not be able to pull out our troops by August. If Latvia and Estonia enact laws offering equal status to the Russian language speakers there, then we will make every effort to pull out our troops by August. Bill, I'd like you to say this publicly so that world public opinion will know about it. World public opinion will not support their position on this issue. (S)

The President: I understand. I will do what I can. I will speak to President Meri in particular. I will try to be helpful. I hope that when we meeting in Naples, I will be able to report to you on this. It is important to continue to make progress. I will do what I can to push it. (S)

President Yeltsin: Good, Bill. (U)

The President: In Warsaw, I want to emphasize the importance of Partnership for Peace and our willingness to help all partners develop the capability to take part. In January already I said that NATO's role will eventually expand. But I set forth no timetable and no requirements. I would like us to concentrate our efforts on the Partnership for Peace program so that we can achieve a united Europe where people respect each other's borders and work together. (S)

President Yeltsin: I have to say candidly, Bill, that with respect to Poland, the position they take on this does not correspond very closely with ours. Bill, I know there was a great propaganda campaign in Poland to incite Belarusians to unite with Poland. They keep saying Belarus belonged to Poland in history. In addition, I hear they are encouraging migration from the east to Poland. People say they want to join NATO to become stronger and stronger. They talk about threats. Russia is not a threat to anyone. There are a lot of other issues which

we need to discuss in Naples. I don't think we need to discuss them now on the phone. There are many problems to discuss. (S)

The President: I agree. I just wanted to review my Riga and Warsaw stops with you. I look forward to seeing you in Naples. I am pleased you and Russia will have a more leading role this year. I think this partnership has been working out well. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good, Bill. I believe this will be a very crucial trip -- very important for Europe and the world. (U)

The President: I'll see you soon. Thank you for taking the call, Boris. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good luck. Till we meet again. (U)

The President: Good-bye. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good-bye. Thank you. (U)

-- End of Conversation --