

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Boris Yeltsin

Interpreter: Dimitry Zarechnak
Notetakers: Katherine O'Loughlin,
Larry Wright, Trey Whitworth,
Ki Fort, Carlos Pascual,
Mike Hamel

DATE, TIME December 5, 1996, 9:35-9:50 a.m.
AND PLACE: Oval Office

President Clinton: Hello? (U)

President Yeltsin: Bill, hello. (U)

President Clinton: Hello, Boris. It's wonderful to hear your voice. (U)

President Yeltsin: It has been quite some time since I've heard your voice; I'm happy to hear you. (U)

President Clinton: I'm so happy your surgery was successful and that you are on the road to recovery. We just had Ambassador Vorontsov here for the welcoming home ceremony for the person who was on the Russian space mission, and we talked about how well you are doing. Al and Viktor also had a good meeting in Lisbon. (U)

President Yeltsin: Yes, I am grateful to you for the letter you sent with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin; it was a pleasure to read. The contents of it fully correspond with my views, and I want to have cooperation with you, with America, not just as good as it was in the past, but stronger. I instructed Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and Foreign Minister Primakov to prepare proposals on that account, and no NATOs should prevent our cooperation and mutual activity. I agree with you that we should pay more

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attention to our economic relations, including investment in Russia. I am very happy and satisfied you spoke about the Eight in your agenda. I believe the fact that because Russia's policy was, as it was played a supportive role in the election campaign.

(C)

I would like to say that one thing I miss is a personal meeting with you. I agree we can shame our skeptics and show them our partnership can work together in 1997. For that purpose, we should meet not later than March, and it makes no difference to me whether it is in your country or mine. (C)

I thank you for your continuous feelings and expressions of those feelings during the period of my surgery and recuperation. Your doctors are good -- great experts. They did a great deal. They were always there before and during the operation, and afterwards. I will never forget what you did for me. (C)

Maybe we should instruct the Chernomyrdin-Gore Commission to prepare, no later than February, the subject matter for an early meeting between you and me, because that would have significance for the next four years, and for the future as well. (C)

President Clinton: Boris, I think that is a wonderful idea. Because of your election, my election and your successful surgery, we have an historic opportunity to secure a free and peaceful future for our countries and all the world. The personal relationship between us is very important. I agree we can do even better than before. I agree we should meet early next year. Since I have a Latin American trip already scheduled for early next year, it would be better for me if you could come here, if you feel up to it. I would love to have you here in March, as you said. (C)

President Yeltsin: I have nothing against that. Let us meet in March in your country. In December, I will be back on the job. The doctors met yesterday and told me by December I would be capable of traveling great distances by plane and shouldering great amounts of work. (C)

President Clinton: That's good news to me, to our country, and to the world. I look forward to seeing you, and it is great hearing you sound so good today. Hillary told me to say hello, and she is pleased you'll be strong enough to give her a big hug when you come here. (C)

President Yeltsin: But please do embrace her on my behalf. (U)

President Clinton: I will be happy to do that. Thank you, Boris. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good, Bill. We shall plan for our meeting in March, have we agreed on that? (~~C~~)

President Clinton: Yes. Agreed. (~~C~~)

President Yeltsin: And in February the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission will take place? (~~C~~)

President Clinton: Yes. (~~C~~)

President Yeltsin: And they will prepare the whole agenda, so we can have a fruitful meeting. It was a pleasure talking to you, and I should tell you frankly, I miss you personally. (~~C~~)

President Clinton: I miss you too, Boris. Look forward to seeing you, and I expect we will be talking between now and March. (U)

President Yeltsin: Very good, Bill. (U)

President Clinton: Thank you, good-bye, Boris. (U)

President Yeltsin: Good-bye, Bill. (U)

-- End of Conversation --