

**Record of the Main Content of the
Meeting with American Minister of Defense William J. Perry
March 8, 1994**

W. Perry. I am interested in the contacts with the leadership of the State Duma primarily in the spheres of national security and foreign policy. It is necessary to ensure constructive cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of government [in these spheres]. This is not about a subordination of one branch to another. It is important that the difficulties inherent in these relationships do not interfere with moving forward in solving one problem or another.

I hope it was useful for you to learn about the model of interaction between branches of government that you were able to observe during your meetings in Congress. I consider your conversation with the Chairman of the Senate Commission on Armed Forces S[am] Nunn, who has extensive experience in these matters, to be especially valuable.

In a week and a half, I'm going to come to Moscow for meetings with the government and the Ministry of Defense of Russia. I would also like to visit the State Duma. I consider it important to maintain constructive relations and cooperate with both the government and the legislature in Russia. Similar cooperation would be useful for the Russian side.

I.P. Rybkin. First of all, I would like to affirm the continuity of Russia's defense and foreign policy.

We will be glad to see you as a guest of the Duma during your upcoming visit to Moscow.

The State Duma is an unusual phenomenon in our reality. Even though we already had four Dumas prior to 1917. Now we are studying their experience.

For our part, we are ready for interaction between all three branches of government— legislative, executive, and judicial. We are trying to find a golden mean that would define this relationship.

For decades, the representative government served the leaders. The experience of recent years shows that a tough confrontation can escalate into a direct clash. This bitter experience has convinced us that the experience of all authorities is a prerequisite for continuing reforms. We talk about this openly and practice it in concrete actions. We hope that last October we received a long-term inoculation against confrontation between the branches of government.

S.N. Yushenkov. As Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Defense, I am interested in a whole range of issues. These include U.S. military doctrine, military legislation, the nature of the relationship between the Ministry of Defense and the relevant congressional commissions, NATO's prospects in connection with the end of the Cold War, issues of our collaboration in peacekeeping actions, concrete approaches to the implementation of the Partnership for Peace program (which I consider a thin veil for NATO expansion), prospects for the ratification of START-2 and the implementation of START-1 and other issues. Unfortunately, the format of the meeting is such that we will not be able to discuss of all these problems right now. I hope we can discuss them in detail in the future. Your principal assessments, at least of some of them, would be important to us.

W. Perry. First of all, about the Partnership for Peace. We offer this program for all countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Russia. It is aimed at cooperation of all countries in the interests of maintaining peace. There are at least two advantages to joining the program for

Russia. First, establishing additional trust between Russia and the United States by increasing openness and strengthening contacts between the armed forces of the two countries. Second, the practical benefits of participating in joint training and exercises of Russian, American, and European armed forces to solve operational problems. Even if Russia does not join the program, benefits can be obtained through joint exercises of the armed forces of the two countries. The program is essentially proposing expanded implementation of what is already being done at the bilateral level.

A. Carter. About START- 2 treaty. We believe that START-2 is necessary both for the implementation of our long-term plans to reduce strategic forces and from an economic point of view. We support a speedy solution to the issue of ratification of this treaty, although we understand the organizational difficulties you have in connection with the start of the work of the new parliament. We look forward to working with you to expedite this process. We hope that the Nunn-Lugar legislation may be used in its implementation. We believe that this is a very good agreement, and it is in the interest of both countries. We proceed from the fact that the process of ratification of this agreement will not create additional obstacles in the form of reservations or amendments to it.

Like you, we consider it important for the Ukrainian side to fulfill the terms of the START-1 treaty as soon as possible. Here, we need to further strengthen cooperation between the United States, Russia, and Ukraine.

V.P. Lukin. Currently, the Committee on International Affairs in the State Duma is actively working on issues regarding the priority of ratification of international agreements. There are more than sixty of them in the list provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We are inclined to agree with the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that we should start with the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Open Skies Agreement. Despite the importance of the START-2 treaty, we still have time for its ratification, since work is currently underway to implement START-1. However, there is no time to waste. It would be important to combine our efforts and work with the public and parliamentarians of both countries to emphasize the themes of fairness and mutual benefit of this treaty. Joint hearings with participation of yours and our experts could play a positive role here.

A. Carter. I agree that all possible means must be used for the successful ratification of START-2, including joint sessions of the relevant committees of the U.S. Congress and the State Duma of Russia with the participation of experts.

I.P. Rybkin. I would like to emphasize here that the priorities regarding START-2 could have been different if the issues with Ukraine were decided faster.

W. Perry. We are also interested in your assessment of the Russian and U.S. roles in resolving the Bosnian conflict.

I.P. Rybkin. Eventually, we spontaneously came to the proper interaction in Bosnia. I would like to achieve such interaction consciously, as a result of consultations and mutual discussions. This is important for the reputation of our two countries. There will be many more hotspots that would require [our] close cooperation. With this approach, it will be easier for us to find the right solutions, to convince the Duma and the Federal Assembly of the government and the entire world of the correctness, accuracy, and wisdom of those solutions.

V.P. Lukin. I completely agree with this formulation of the issue. Often, when I was the Russian ambassador to the United States, I found myself in an awkward situation. I was invited to the State Department and informed about a decision already adopted as a result of consultations between the USA, England, France, and other countries. Unfortunately, the last time information about the decisions already made was a bit too late. It is more natural for partners to consult each other and [try to] persuade each other regarding correctness of the proposed solutions, and only then to move on to joint implementation. The result of our uncoordinated actions in Bosnia was generally not bad. Although we may have achieved more together than we deserved. We did not agree with the American decision on the bombing, although we have to admit that the ultimatum did play a role. Our alternative solution worked just as well. Still, it would be better to consult in advance. We have a common goal to stop the bloodshed while taking into account the realities as they are. A significant departure from reality in favor of ideological constructions will not lead to the desired positive result. Let's cooperate. You now have a direct telephone number to the Russian ministry of defense. If other phone numbers don't work, this one should work for you.

W. Perry. I believe that the most important goal of both countries in Bosnia is to end the war and establish peace. We must work together, although we will not necessarily agree on other issues in the former Yugoslavia.

Russia could play a positive role in pushing the Serbs to participate in the agreement signed between Muslims and Croats through our mediation. Without Serb participation in this agreement there can be no peace in Bosnia. We need to discuss together how to make this agreement attractive to the Serbs.

A few words about our previous contacts on the Bosnian issue. I wanted to inform the Russian side about the proposed solution even before discussing it in NATO. For these purposes, President Bill Clinton tried to contact Boris Yeltsin by telephone. However, for reasons unknown to me, there was no communication for two days. I planned to call Pavel Grachev in the Russian Ministry of Defense on this issue but decided not to do this before the conversation between the two presidents. The loss of two days created misunderstanding. After the conversation between the presidents, we repeatedly talked on the phone with Grachev. If such a situation arose again, I would call Grachev myself. This is the model for the future. I intend to discuss the entire range of Bosnian issues with Pavel Grachev during my trip to Russia next week.

It is also important that you do not get the impression that the United States has narrow national interests in Bosnia. Our goals there are twofold. The first is the prevention of hostilities in Bosnia, and more broadly, nonproliferation of those hostilities beyond the borders of the former Yugoslavia or even the Balkans. The second is a decrease in violence against civilians. We are committed to achieving a peace agreement as soon as possible. We do not plan to use American or NATO armed forces to solve any military issues. We intend to use them only to reduce the suffering of civilians. We do not want to be seen as being against the Serbs. We have influence with the Muslims, and we will use it. Just as you, in turn, could use your influence with the Serbs.

I.P. Rybkin. I want to inform you that Karadzic heard the same thing during his visit to Moscow. We stated that both we and, as we understand, the United States have only one goal: agreement in Bosnia. We made it clear to the Serbs that they must be ready for territorial concessions, and for movement on all other obstacles to achieving lasting peace.

Returning to the idea of the importance of consultations, I would suggest that we think about [creating] a special mechanism for this purpose. Perhaps this role could be fulfilled by a joint military organization within the OSCE. I'm inclined to consider Partnership for Peace a step in this direction.

S.N. Yushenkov. The Weimar syndrome ([a need for] strong Russia) is currently very strong in Russia, and a simple accession to this program would be considered by many as a diminution of Russia's rights as a great power.

V.P. Lukin. Partnership for Peace seems to be a very interesting and constructive program. It's mostly about the style, "selling" it to Russia. It looks like Russia would join this program somewhere between eight and tenth country. For example, somewhere between Estonia, Latvia, or Ukraine. Given the current problems of the Russian-speaking population in these countries, which are recognized even by OSCE experts, this may be perceived very negatively by the destructive part of the Duma and by the public opinion. Ideally, we should announce this program together and invite everyone who wants to participate in it. Now, the Russian Foreign Ministry faces a serious problem of submitting this program to both the Russian parliament and the public opinion of the country.

S.N. Yushenkov. I share the goals and objectives of this program. I am fully satisfied with the independent position of each member of this new program. But a number of provisions raise serious objections. In particular, this concerns the issue of standardization of weapons. We are not against the fact that it is necessary to pay for participation in it, but we are against the restructuring of our military-industrial complex to NATO standards.

W. Perry. For the foreseeable future, the discussion is mainly about standardizing communications so that our armed forces can communicate with each other. The standardization of weapons is a long-term perspective. We understand your concern. I want to repeat myself here. Even if Russia does not want to join Partnership for Peace yet, the same significant benefits for Russia can be obtained as a result of joint exercises of the armed forces of our two countries, which are already planned.

The meeting was attended by: from the American side – US Secretary of Defense W. Perry, Deputy Secretary of Defense A. Carter, Deputy Secretary of Defense G. Allison.

On the Russian side – chairman of the state Duma of Russia Rybkin I. P., Chairman of the committee on international affairs of the state Duma Lukin V.P., Chairman of the Defense Committee of the State Duma S. N. Yushenkov, Attaché of Military Affairs at the Russian Embassy in the USA Mazurkevich A.I., Councilor of the Russian Embassy in the USA Tarasov A.L., First Secretary of the Russian Embassy in the USA Trepelkov S.V.

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