

President Clinton. If I might add just one point. Sometimes in discussions with nations, financial guarantees do not materialize because they are dependent on decisions made by other parties, usually the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. In this case, every part of our agreement depends only upon the three Presidents and their Governments to keep their word. The first thing I said to President Kravchuk tonight is that I would do everything I could to make sure that all three of us did exactly what was in the agreement. And I am confident that we will.

President Kravchuk. I'm sorry, as a press secretary I would ask for some more questions, but here is a protocol, so the last question, please.

Russia and NATO

Q. Mr. President, Mr. President Clinton, you mentioned the PFP, the Partnership For Peace. And there are some people who say that Russia has been using a type of passive imperialism in order to keep countries of Eastern Europe and Central Europe out of NATO for the time being. Do you—by threatening destabilization. Do you agree with that? And I would be very interested in what President Kravchuk has to say.

President Clinton. No, I don't. The short answer to the question is, I do not agree with that, although President Yeltsin himself has expressed reservations about NATO membership for other countries if Russia is excluded. You know, he has expressed an interest in being a member himself.

The leaders of NATO concluded that they should not offer membership at this time to any country because they weren't sure any country was ready to assume the responsibilities of membership and because they didn't want to exclude anyone else.

The Partnership For Peace offers a genuine concrete military security cooperation, joint planning, joint training, joint operations to all the states of the former Soviet Union and to all of the members of what was the Warsaw Pact. And we are genuinely interested in reaching out to all these nations.

I can assure you that no one has a veto over NATO membership. It is anticipated that the Partnership For Peace will lead to NATO membership for many of those who participate in the Partnership who want to go through and

assume the responsibilities of membership, ultimately.

That's how I see it. President Yeltsin only said that he didn't, at this time, want another line drawn across Europe. He wanted to have a chance to be part of an integrated European security network in which every nation would have to respect the territorial boundaries of every other state.

President Kravchuk. Mr. President Clinton, and I'll give one more question to the Ukrainian side.

Denuclearization Agreement

Q. The question to President Clinton: What assurances of security will the United States give and Russia give to Ukraine after it will have the nonnuclear status?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, what goes with the Non-Proliferation Treaty adherence is the absolute security that no one who has nuclear weapons will ever use them against any nation that is part of the NPT. That is the first security.

But let me make two other points, which I think are more important, at least as a practical matter, to Ukraine's security. Number one, the Partnership For Peace gives Ukraine the opportunity to work with the military forces of the United States and all of NATO in planning and working together and in establishing patterns of conduct which clearly will increase the security of this nation.

Second, and perhaps even more important, Ukraine's decision to become a nonnuclear state opens the possibility of receiving significant economic assistance, not just from the United States but from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the G-7 nations, and other nations who understand the greatness of this nation, its strategic importance and its economic potential. And I believe that in the 21st century, it will be difficult for any nation to be secure unless it is economically strong.

So perhaps that is the most important thing of all, the whole range of possibilities that are now open to Ukraine because of this courageous decision by the President.

President Kravchuk. Ladies and gentlemen, we would compensate what we haven't time to do, when we'll be implementing our program. And you will be compensated with an objective description of the role and the processes in