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NEWS
FROM:

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U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS:
BENCHMARKS FOR AMERICAN
POLICY

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL DINNER
NEW YORK HILTON HOTEL
NEW YORK CITY

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV -- PROBABLY TOO LATE -- HAS GRABBED THE WHEEL OF PERSONAL POWER; HE'S TAKEN OFF WITH MORE VELOCITY THAN ANY CLEAR PLAN OF HOW TO GET WHERE HE WANTS TO GO; AND, WHEREVER THAT IS, THERE ARE A LOT OF "COPS" -- IN THE FORM OF THE MILITARY, THE PARTY, THE DEMOCRATIC REFORM MOVEMENT -- WHO KEEP PULLING HIM OVER AND TELLING HIM: NOT SO FAST, BUDDY.

OF COURSE, NONE OF THIS IS REALLY A JOKE -- NOT FOR GORBACHEV, WHO'S IN A LIFE-AND-DEATH STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL POWER; NOT FOR THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH IS IN IT'S OWN LIFE-AND-DEATH STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE AS A NATION STATE; AND NOT FOR US -- NOT WHEN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS REMAIN OUR SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

SO I'M GLAD TO HAVE THE CHANCE THIS EVENING TO SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE SOVIET UNION, AND THE CURRENT STATE OF U.S. SOVIET RELATIONS.

IT'S TIMELY FOR ME, NOT ONLY BECAUSE THESE ARE PERENNIAL FRONT-BURNER ISSUES -- BUT BECAUSE THE LAST THREE OR FOUR WEEKS HAVE BROUGHT A NUMBER OF ISSUES AND EXPERTS ON THESE SUBJECTS INTO MY OFFICE.

HIGH-LEVEL INPUT

I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO CHAT WITH MR. SHEVARDNADZE; THE RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER, MR. SILAEV; A SENIOR LEVEL ECONOMIC DELEGATION FROM THE SOVIET CENTRAL GOVERNMENT; THE BALTIC LEADERS; AND A STEADY STREAM OF OTHERS. LAST THURSDAY, I HAD BREAKFAST WITH JIM BAKER, JUST BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST. I KNOW THAT ONE IMPORTANT EVENT ON HIS AGENDA IS A MEETING WITH THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER, TO DISCUSS AMONG MANY OTHER ISSUES THE FUTURE SOVIET ROLE IN THAT REGION.

MOST IMPORTANT TO ME, IN TWO SEPARATE MEETINGS, I'VE ALSO HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR AT LENGTH FROM FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, AND HIS CURRENT VIEWS OF EVENTS IN THE U.S.S.R. AS SOMEONE IN ONE OF THE MEETINGS REMARKED, PRESIDENT NIXON TRULY IS A GREAT NATIONAL RESOURCE OF EXPERIENCE AND WISDOM ON FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS. CERTAINLY, HE HAS HELPED SHAPE MY OWN VIEWS ON WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE OUGHT TO GO WITH THE SOVIETS.

IT ALSO HAPPENS THAT, ON THE ISSUE FRONT, WE'RE GRAPPLING WITH A NUMBER OF IMMEDIATE SOVIET-RELATED QUESTIONS. THE BALTICS, OF COURSE, ARE AN ON-GOING CONCERN. AS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW, I HAVE A SPECIAL PERSONAL INTEREST IN ARMENIA, AND I AM TERRIBLY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE BORDER REGIONS WITH AZERBAIJAN AND IN YEREVAN ITSELF.

(MORE)

MIDDLE EAST PEACE

ANOTHER IMPORTANT ISSUE ON OUR PLATE WITH MOSCOW NOW IS THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS. SECRETARY BAKER IS IN THE MIDST OF AN IMPORTANT MIDDLE EAST MISSION WHERE HE WILL TEST THE WATER, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TEST THE REAL INTENTIONS OF SOME OF OUR ALLIES AND FRIENDS. AND IT IS NOT PURELY COINCIDENTAL THAT THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER HAS JUST COMPLETED HIS OWN REGIONAL MISSION, INCLUDING THE FIRST-EVER VISIT TO ISRAEL BY A SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIAL.

THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND WEEKS MAY TELL WHETHER OUR DESERT STORM VICTORY HAS INDEED OPENED A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR A BROADER MIDDLE EAST PEACE. IT WILL TAKE HARD WORK, PATIENCE, AND SOME HEAD-KNOCKING. IT WILL ALSO INVOLVE SOME RISK-TAKING -- BY US, BY ISRAEL, AND BY THE ARAB STATES.

THE SOVIETS HAVE AN IMPORTANT SUPPORTIVE ROLE TO PLAY. AND -- SO FAR, AT LEAST -- IT LOOKS AS IF THEY ARE PLAYING IT RESPONSIBLY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY.

FOOD CREDITS TO SOVIETS

FINALLY, WE'RE ALSO AT DECISION TIME ON THE QUESTION OF AGRICULTURAL CREDIT GUARANTEES TO THE SOVIETS. HOPEFULLY WE WILL TAKE THAT ISSUE TO THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS, AND LET THE WHITE HOUSE KNOW THERE IS STRONG SENATE SUPPORT FOR GOING AHEAD WITH A CREDIT OFFER, CONDITIONED IN A WAY THAT WILL ADVANCE NOT ONLY OUR OWN ECONOMIC INTERESTS, BUT OUR VERY IMPORTANT HUMANITARIAN, HUMAN RIGHTS AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS.

BUT I WANT TO MAKE JUST A FEW COMMENTS TONIGHT NOT ABOUT THESE IMMEDIATE ISSUES, BUT ABOUT THE BROADER SCOPE OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. AND I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST SOME BENCHMARKS FOR SHAPING OUR POLICIES IN THIS VITAL ARENA.

U.S. POLICY BENCHMARKS: AMERICAN INTERESTS

THE FIRST BENCHMARK SOUNDS PRETTY SELF-EVIDENT: AMERICAN POLICIES OUGHT TO AIM AT ADVANCING AMERICAN INTERESTS. IN PRACTICE, THOUGH, POLICY-MAKERS AND POLICY-KIBITZERS SOMETIMES LOSE SIGHT OF THAT SIMPLE FACT.

LET'S NOT FORGET WHAT WE'RE AFTER IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION. I'D SUGGEST FOUR BASIC THINGS:

FIRST, WE WANT TO SEE SOME SEMBLANCE OF STABILITY IN THE SOVIET UNION. RIGHT NOW, THE SITUATION IS CHANGING RAPIDLY. AND RAPID, DRAMATIC CHANGE IS NOT NECESSARILY A BAD THING. CERTAINLY IN AREAS LIKE ECONOMIC POLICY IT IS NEEDED.

BUT NO ONE'S INTERESTS WOULD BE SERVED BY AN ABRUPT COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET STATE. THE NET RESULT OF THAT WOULD NOT BE DEMOCRACY, BUT A NEW DESPOTISM; WOULD NOT BE AN END TO THE SOVIET MILITARY THREAT, BUT THE SCARY PROSPECT THAT RAMPAGING RADICALS WOULD LAY THEIR HANDS ON NUCLEAR, OR CHEMICAL, OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS; WOULD NOT BE THE EMERGENCE OF A FREE MARKET ECONOMY, BUT AN ECONOMIC FREE FOR ALL IN WHICH THE BIG LOSERS WOULD BE THE PEOPLE.

SECOND, WE VERY MUCH WANT A CONTINUATION OF COOPERATIVE SOVIET POLICIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. ONE NEEDN'T LOOK BACK ANY FURTHER THAN THE GULF WAR TO UNDERSTAND THE SOVIET CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SAFER WORLD THROUGH RESPONSIBLE POLICIES -- OR ITS POTENTIAL TO JEOPARDIZE THE SAFETY OF THE WORLD SHOULD IT OPT FOR IRRESPONSIBLE POLICIES.

THIRD, WE WANT TO SEE GREATER FREEDOM, GREATER RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GREATER RELIANCE ON THE MARKETPLACE TO MAKE ECONOMIC DECISIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION. WE WANT ALL THOSE THINGS NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY ARE RIGHT, IN A VALUE SENSE, AND BECAUSE THEY ARE THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE THE LOT OF THE LONG-SUFFERING SOVIET PEOPLE, IN A HUMANITARIAN SENSE.

WE WANT FREEDOM AND FREE MARKETS IN THE SOVIET UNION BECAUSE THEY WILL DIRECTLY SERVE TO ADVANCE CONCRETE AMERICAN INTERESTS; BECAUSE THEY WILL MAKE THE SOVIET UNION LESS OF A THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES, AND MORE OF PARTNER IN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

FINALLY, AS I JUST INDICATED, WE WANT TO ADVANCE OUR OWN ECONOMIC INTERESTS. THE POTENTIAL FOR MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL INVESTMENT AND TRADE RELATIONS WITH A STABLE, FREE MARKET-ORIENTED SOVIET UNION IS ENORMOUS.

IT SEEMS TO ME THESE ARE WHAT OUR POLICIES ARE ALL ABOUT -- OR, AT LEAST, OUGHT TO BE.

REALISTIC APPROACH TO SOVIET UNION

A SECOND BENCHMARK TO MEASURE OUR POLICY-MAKING IS REALISM. LET'S BE REALISTIC AND BALANCED ABOUT OUR LEVERAGE.

(MORE)

WE CAN HAVE SOME IMPACT ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION, BUT OUR IMPACT IS INEVITABLY GOING TO BE FAR LESS SIGNIFICANT THAN THE IMPACT ON FACTORS INTERNAL TO THE SOVIET UNION.

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT OUGHT TO DISCOURAGE US VERY MUCH. BECAUSE, AS YOU RUN DOWN THOSE BASIC AMERICAN INTERESTS I HAVE JUST ENUMERATED, NONE OF THEM DEMANDS THAT THE SOVIET STATE, AS CURRENTLY CONSTITUTED, SURVIVE OR DISSOLVE; NONE OF THEM DEMANDS THAT, IN THE LONGER RUN, AT LEAST, GORBACHEV HANG ON OR FALL.

THE FACT IS, OUR INTERESTS ARE NOT TIED TO ANY ONE SPECIFIC POLITICAL OUTCOME IN THE SOVIET UNION. OUR INTERESTS ARE TIED TO AN OUTCOME IN WHICH THE "GOOD GUYS" WIN; AND THEY ACHIEVE THEIR VICTORY IN A MANNER THAT DOES NOT LEAVE IN ITS WAKE A LOT OF DEAD BODIES AND CHAOS.

BUT, LET'S NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT WHAT WE DO MATTERS, AND PARTICULARLY IN A NEGATIVE SENSE.

THE ISSUE OF GORBACHEV'S FUTURE IS THE PRIME CASE IN POINT. WE CAN'T SAVE HIM -- BUT WE VERY WELL MIGHT BE ABLE TO PULL THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER HIM.

HAVING ONCE MADE A TRIP FROM IOWA TO NEW HAMPSHIRE, I KNOW HOW POLITICAL FORTUNES CAN RISE AND FALL. BUT NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ON A ROLLER COASTER RIDE LIKE THE ONE GORBACHEV HAS TAKEN.

A YEAR AGO, HE WAS VOTED "MAN OF THE DECADE." TODAY, HE COULDN'T BE ELECTED DOGCATCHER IN MOSCOW.

A YEAR AGO, HE WAS EVERYONE'S HERO. TODAY, THE GROWING FEELING IN THE CONGRESS AND IN MOST OF THE MEDIA, IS THAT HE IS SPROUTING NEW HORNS.

WELL, LET'S NOT FORGET THE OLD SAYING ABOUT DEALING WITH "THE DEVIL YOU KNOW, INSTEAD OF THE ONE YOU DON'T."

IT IS HARD TO SEE A SHORT TERM SCENARIO IN WHICH GORBACHEV PASSES FROM THE SCENE IN ANY ORDERLY MANNER, OR IS REPLACED BY ANYONE WHO IS AS COMMITTED, OR MORE COMMITTED, THAN HE IS TO REFORM AT HOME, AND RESPONSIBLE POLICIES ABROAD.

WE HAVE TO KEEP PUSHING ON FREEDOM FOR THE BALTICS -- BUT IT WON'T BRING FREEDOM TO THE BALTICS IF WE PUSH GORBACHEV OFF A POLITICAL CLIFF.

WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN SUBSIDIZING RECKLESS SOVIET POLICIES IN THE BALTICS, OR REPRESSIVE SOVIET POLICIES INSIDE THE COUNTRY -- BUT FOOD RIOTS IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD ARE NOT GOING TO PUSH THE SOVIET UNION DOWN THE PATH OF DEMOCRACY AND FREE ENTERPRISE. THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I AND MANY OTHER SENATORS THINK WE SHOULD RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE SOVIET REQUEST FOR AGRICULTURAL CREDIT GUARANTEES.

WE MAY WANT TO PLAY HARDER BALL ON AN ISSUE LIKE CUBA -- WHERE THE SOVIETS KEEP TELLING US THEY'RE GOING TO PULL THE PLUG, BUT NEVER QUITE GET AROUND TO DOING IT -- BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER HAS MADE A FIRST-EVER VISIT TO ISRAEL, AND WITH SOVIET HELP WE'VE FINALLY HAD BREAKTHROUGHS FOR PEACE IN ANGOLA AND EL SALVADOR. THOSE ARE THE KINDS OF POLICIES WHICH WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY IF GORBACHEV WERE SUDDENLY REMOVED FROM THE SCENE.

SO, IN SUM, LET US UNDERSTAND THAT GORBACHEV'S FATE IS PRIMARILY IN GORBACHEV'S HANDS; BUT WE DO HAVE THE POTENTIAL, SOMETIMES, TO LEND HIM A HAND -- OR BY ACCIDENT OR DESIGN TO GIVE HIM A SHOVE OVER THE SIDE. AND WE OUGHT TO USE THAT LEVERAGE WISELY.

U.S. TIGHTROPE WALKING -- KEEP OPTIONS OPEN: YELTSIN ET AL

A THIRD AND FINAL BENCHMARK FOR OUR POLICY IS TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T PUT ALL OUR EGGS IN ANY ONE BASKET.

THE VERY FACT THAT GORBACHEV IS SO VULNERABLE IS REASON ENOUGH TO BUY ALL THE POLITICAL INSURANCE WE CAN BY EXPANDING OUR RELATIONSHIPS -- WITH OTHERS IN THE CURRENT POWER ELITE, WITH OPPOSITION POLITICAL LEADERS, AND WITH LEADERS OF THE CONSTITUENT REPUBLICS OF THE SOVIET UNION.

THIS DOES INVOLVE SOME TIGHT-ROPE WALKING. GORBACHEV SPEAKS FOR THE SOVIET UNION, AND WE NEGOTIATE WITH HIM ON U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS, PERIOD.

WE MUST AVOID LEAVING ANY IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE TRYING TO SET UP BORIS YELTSIN OR ANYONE ELSE AS OUR INTERLOCUTOR ON U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS, OR AS, QUOTE, "OUR CANDIDATE," UNQUOTE, TO SUCCEED GORBACHEV.

BUT THERE IS NO REASON NOT TO TALK TO MR. YELTSIN, AS THE LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC; OR TO ANY OF THE OTHER LEADERS OF THE OTHER REPUBLICS; OR TO ANY RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL LEADER IN THE SOVIET UNION.

(MORE)

NOR IS THERE ANY REASON TO SHY AWAY FROM EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR CONCEPTS LIKE DEMOCRACY AND SELF-DETERMINATION AND FREE ENTERPRISE, OR EXPRESSIONS OF APPROVAL FOR THOSE WHO ADVOCATE THOSE IDEAS.

DIRECT AID TO REPUBLICS

WHY SHOULD WE NOT DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE REPUBLICS ON MATTERS WHICH EVEN GORBACHEV AND THE SOVIET CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ARE ACKNOWLEDGING AS WITHIN THEIR SPHERE OF RESPONSIBILITY, FOR EXAMPLE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS? IF GORBACHEV ACKNOWLEDGES, AS HE HAS, THAT THE MINES OF RUSSIA OUGHT TO BE WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC, THEN IT ONLY MAKES SENSE THAT WE DEAL WITH THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC ON THINGS LIKE INVESTING IN MINERAL EXPLORATION, OR PURCHASING MINERAL PRODUCTS. I HAVE PROPOSED PRECISELY THAT IN A BILL I AUTHORED AND INTRODUCED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, S.860.

AND SINCE WE HAVE THE RIGHT, AND IT MAKES SENSE, TO INSIST THAT ANY AID WE DO PROVIDE THE SOVIET UNION REACHES THE SOVIET PEOPLE ON AN EQUITABLE AND NON-POLITICAL BASIS, IT IS ALSO NATURAL THAT WE KEEP OPEN THE OPTION OF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE DIRECTLY TO THE REPUBLICS -- A PRINCIPLE SET OUT IN S.9, ANOTHER BILL I INTRODUCED AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS.

AS PRESIDENT NIXON SUGGESTED TO ME, GORBACHEV MIGHT IN FACT NEED AND BENEFIT FROM HAVING VISIBLE SIGNS OF U.S. APPROVAL OF MOVEMENTS FOR POLITICAL FREEDOM AND FREE MARKETS, AS HE GRAPPLES WITH AND BALANCES THE POLITICAL PRESSURES ON HIM.

YELTSIN: WHITE HOUSE MEETING

SENATOR MITCHELL AND I HAVE INVITED MR. YELTSIN TO VISIT WASHINGTON, TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE. I WOULD HOPE THAT -- IF SUCH A VISIT TAKES PLACE -- MR. YELTSIN WOULD ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT BUSH. I THINK IT WOULD BE EQUALLY VALUABLE IN REGARD TO THE LEADERS OF THE OTHER REPUBLICS.

IT WOULD NOT BE A SLAP AT GORBACHEV -- BUT A REFLECTION OF THE REALITY THAT POWER IN THE SOVIET UNION IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DISPERSED. AND, AS I SAID, IT IS ALSO GOOD POLITICAL INSURANCE -- TO MAKE SURE WE HAVE THE MAXIMUM INFORMATION ON WHAT IS HAPPENING, AND THE MAXIMUM CONTACTS WITH THOSE MAKING IT HAPPEN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: THESE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS HAVE BEEN AMONG THE MOST REMARKABLE AND EXCITING OF THIS CENTURY. THERE HAS BEEN AN EXPLOSION OF FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD; AN HISTORIC VICTORY OVER AGGRESSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST; AND A GROWING APPRECIATION OF THE FACT THAT WE NOW LIVE IN A WORLD OF ONLY ONE TRUE SUPERPOWER, BUT MANY POWER CENTERS.

THE OLD VS. NEW SOVIET UNION

IN THE MIDST OF ALL THESE CHANGES, THERE HAS BEEN A VERY REAL REVOLUTION GOING ON IN THE SOVIET UNION -- UNPLANNED; ONGOING; ITS IMPORT FOR US AND FOR THE WORLD PROFOUND, INDEED.

GRAPPLING WITH THE OLD SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY FOR 50 YEARS.

DEALING WITH TODAY'S SOVIET UNION, AS IT DEALS WITH ITS OWN REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES, WILL BE NO LESS CHALLENGING, AND NO LESS IMPORTANT, FOR US, AND FOR OUR CHILDREN.

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