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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS GUIDANCE

February 28, 2000

EUROPE

Kosovo Violence

Northern Ireland

Turkey/Arrest of HADEP Mayors

Turkey/HADEP Leaders Convicted

RUSSIA/NIS

Russia/Iran Legislation

Russia/Chechnya/Babitsky

Russia/Politics

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA

MEPP/Ross Travel

MEPP/Syria Talks

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ASIA

EU-China and PNTR

China-Taiwan and PNTR

China/White Paper on Taiwan

INTER-AMERICAN

Colombia

AFRICA/MULTILATERAL

Horn of Africa/Ethiopia Famine

MULTILATERAL

Human Rights Country Reports

PDD/CivPol

INTELLIGENCE

NSA, Echelon and 60 Minutes

UPDATE ON VIOLENCE IN KOSOVO

February 24, 2000

What is the situation in Mitrovica?

- We support KFOR efforts to restore calm and confiscate unauthorized weapons from potential troublemakers in Mitrovica and elsewhere in Kosovo. Those who seek to use violence to undermine the progress of the international effort to restore a stable and secure environment for all the people of Kosovo cannot be allowed to succeed in that endeavor.
- The situation in Mitrovica has improved with the deployment of additional KFOR soldiers and UN police officers; however Commander KFOR, General Reinhardt and SACEUR General Clark are working together to assess immediate and longer term needs in Mitrovica and the impact of those requirements upon KFOR deployments elsewhere in Kosovo.
- General Clark has asked that NATO's North Atlantic Council consider making additional forces immediately available to KFOR's northern sector, as well as reducing the response time for a portion of the NATO reserve force in the region. NATO Permanent Representatives will meet on Friday to receive a full report on the situation in Mitrovica and decide on how to best support the SACEUR's request and KFOR's needs.

NORTHERN IRELAND

February 24, 2000

Can you confirm that Senator Mitchell will not be playing a role in getting the Northern Ireland peace process back on track?

- We saw the Senator's comments in the press yesterday, and those speak for themselves. We have not asked the Senator to play a role, and neither has the British or Irish government, as far as we are aware. Our focus, along with the British and Irish, is on getting the process back on track as quickly as possible, hopefully without a protracted review of the sort that Senator Mitchell facilitated last year.

TURKEY: ARREST OF HADEP PARTY MAYORS

February 24, 2000

CONTEXT: *The three mayors of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democracy Party (HADEP) arrested on February 19 and 20 were formally charged today with "aiding a terrorist organization" (e.g. the PKK) and jailed pending trial. . The mayors -- Feridun Celik of Diyarbakir, Selim Ozalp of Siirt, and Feyzullah Karaaslan of Bingol-- are three of the 37 HADEP mayors elected in April 1999. A detailed indictment with specific charges has not yet been made public. The lawyer for Ozalp noted that doctors had found a "scrape" under one of Ozalp's armpits when they examined him. We should note the importance of ensuring that these and other detainees are not mistreated and have regular medical access.*

What is your reaction to the arrest of three HADEP Party Mayors in Turkey?

- We consider it a serious matter when elected officials are arrested and jailed.
- We are following the case closely. It is important that the mayors and others who have been arrested be accorded full due process and treated in a manner conforming to international human rights norms.
- It is also important that the details of the charges be established quickly and transparently..

IF ASKED:

Have you raised these points with the Turkish Government?

- The Turkish Government is aware of our views on this matter.

How are they aware?

- I am not going to get into the details of our diplomatic exchanges.

What about reports that doctors found a scrape in the armpit of one of the mayors?

- It is important that there be no mistreatment of these or other detainees and that all detainees receive regular access to quality medical attention.

What are the implications of this case for the motion filed by the Chief Prosecutor to close down HADEP?

[BACKGROUND: on January 29, 1999, the Chief Prosecutor of the Turkish appeals court filed a motion with the Constitutional Court to close the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democracy Party (HADEP). The Prosecutor accused HADEP of threatening the unity of the Turkish state, claiming that HADEP was controlled by the PKK.]

- Since we do not know the details of the charges against the three mayors, , it would be premature to address that question.
- As a general matter, the United States Government does not support or oppose any Turkish political party, nor does it interfere in Turkey's internal political or judicial process.
- However, the closure of legitimate political parties is a violation of international norms and standards regarding human rights and democracy.
- We note that the Turkish Parliament last year passed amendments to the Political Parties Law aimed at increasing protection for parties -- including pro-Kurdish and pro-Islamic parties -- that some would say espouse unorthodox or contrarian views. It is important that the spirit and the letter of those amendments be implemented.

TURKEY: HADEP LEADERS, MEMBERS CONVICTED

February 24, 2000

CONTEXT: On February 24, a Turkish security court sentenced 18 members of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democracy Party (HADEP) to three years, nine months imprisonment for assisting the PKK in 1999 by making press announcements and holding hunger strikes to protest PKK leader Ocalan's rendition to Turkey. Those convicted include the present HADEP Chairman, Ahmet Turan Demir, and his predecessor, Murat Bozlak. All 18 are free pending appeal. 29 other suspects were acquitted of the same charges. This case is separate from the recent arrest of prominent HADEP mayors.

What is your reaction to the conviction of 18 HADEP members in Turkey, including the party's current and former leaders?

- We are concerned by the convictions of 18 HADEP members, including the current chair of the party and his predecessor, for statements and non-violent actions at the time of PKK leader Ocalan's arrest.
- We understand that they have been sentenced to three years, nine months imprisonment but have not been jailed and are free pending appeal.
- All Turkey's citizens should be able fully to exercise their right to peaceful freedom of expression, as recognized by international human rights instruments.

RUSSIA/IRAN LEGISLATION

February 25, 2000

CONTEXT: *On Thursday, February 24th, the Senate passed the Russia-Iran Non-Proliferation Act (H.R. 1883) by a vote of 98-0. When the House of Representatives considered its version of the bill last September, the Administration issued a senior advisors veto threat because the bill contained several onerous provisions requiring extensive compilation of information regarding transfers to Iran by foreign firms and individuals. H.R. 1883 authorizes the President to apply sanctions under one or more of three available mechanisms (the WMD Executive Order, Arms Export Control Act, and the Export Administration Act). If the President were to decide not to impose such sanctions, he must provide a written justification for that decision to Congress.*

During Senate consideration, however, a "managers amendment" was adopted which addressed some of the concerns raised by the Administration. In particular, the managers amendment 1) clarifies that any sanctions or penalties under the bill would be discretionary, rather than mandatory; and 2)) adjusts the standard for certifying that the Russian Space Agency (RSA) may receive extraordinary payments for the purchase of goods and services of value to the United States for the International Space Station (ISS).

Although we believe that additional legislation is not necessary, the managers amendment makes significant improvements in the House version of the bill.

Comment on Senate version of Russia-Iran Nonproliferation Act (HR1883)?

- The Administration is very concerned about Russian entities' cooperation with Iran's missile and WMD programs. The issue is at the top of the U.S.-Russian agenda; we're mounting full-court press.
- In meetings last week with President Clinton, APNSA Berger, and Secretary Albright, Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov highlighted Acting President Putin's determination to work cooperatively on Iran nonproliferation issue.
- I can address separately key results of Ivanov visit.
- With regard to HR1883, we indicated last Fall that the House-passed version of the bill was unacceptable
- We believe we have all the tools we need to address the problem of proliferation to Iran. We have demonstrated in previous cases that we are prepared to impose penalties on violators.
- Therefore, we believe additional legislation is not necessary.

- The “managers amendment” adopted by the Senate addresses many of the concerns we have raised about the House bill. In particular, the managers amendment :
- clarifies that any sanctions or penalties under the bill would be discretionary, rather than mandatory; and
- adjusts the standard for certifying that the Russian Space Agency (RSA) may receive extraordinary payments *for the purchase of goods and services of value to the United States* for the International Space Station (ISS).

If Asked:

Will the President veto the Senate version of the bill?

- The legislative process is not over – there are additional steps before any bill is sent to the President, and we will be watching that process closely. The Senate version, however, is a significant improvement over the House bill.

BACKGROUND: *The Russians have, opened an investigation into video footage that surfaced today of apparent Russian atrocities in Chechnya. Calls for an independent inquiry are mounting. But some Russian officials are skeptical about the authenticity of the video. Sergei Yastrzhemsky, the Russian presidential spokesman on the war in Chechnya, said that "[a]ccording to my information, [the video] is a complete fake." Fighting against rebels continued in the southern mountains. There is no new information about missing RFE/RL reporter Andrey Babitskiy. The Russians claim he is alive and in the hands of Chechen rebels. Radio Liberty President Tom Dine accused the Clinton Administration of not pressing Moscow hard enough on Babitskiy's behalf.*

Core points:

- Our position has been consistent: military solution not viable, will fuel cycle of violence. Russia has right to uphold territorial integrity, combat terrorism, but indiscriminate use of force against civilians is unacceptable.
- Urge both sides to exercise restraint, implement immediate cease-fire across Chechnya, avoid indiscriminate attacks, take meaningful steps toward political solution, ideally utilizing OSCE good offices. Want to see reestablishment of OSCE presence in region (Ingushetiya).
- Humanitarian toll of conflict considerable: loss of civilian lives, more than 200,000 people driven from their homes, thousands still trapped in Chechnya. Russia must provide for their well-being, ensure freedom of movement. International community willing to help via UNHCR/ICRC; U.S. generously supporting their activities.
- International community has spoken with one voice about opposition to Russian approach to conflict. Must be persistent, highlight that conflict is fostering Russia's isolation from international community.
- Worried about destabilizing impact of conflict throughout entire Caucasus region. Essential that Russia respect sovereignty, territorial integrity of Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Any comment on German video of mass Chechen grave?

- Haven't seen the video, so can't comment. But Russian and Western journalists told us they took it seriously enough to broadcast. Believe Russia also needs to take it seriously, investigate fully before dismissing it.

- We have, publicly and privately, called on the Russian government to launch serious and transparent investigation of such reports. Has an international obligation to do so. US officials made this point to Putin himself.
- Russia's appointment of special ombudsman to investigate human rights violations a response to our statements.

Do you believe that some of Russia's actions in Chechnya constitute war crimes?

- The conduct of both the Russian military and the Chechnyan rebels raises fundamental questions about compliance with international humanitarian law (e.g., reports of indiscriminate shelling of civilians and the treatment of detainees).
- We are very concerned about the human rights situation in Chechnya, particularly the allegations made by Human Rights Watch and other international observers.
- Russia has the responsibility to investigate allegations of human rights abuses by its forces in Chechnya. Allegations of abuses or atrocities in the conflict must also be subject to a thorough and transparent investigation.

Why doesn't the US use any of the tools at its disposal to stop the bloodshed in Chechnya, including pressing the IMF to suspend loans to Russia, as well as suspending bilateral assistance?

- As we look at effective levers to help bring the conflict to an end, we also need to be realistic about what will not work and when certain actions would be counterproductive since our economic engagement with Russia is fundamentally rooted in our self-interest to help Russia complete the transition to a market economy and safeguard sensitive technologies.
- Russia has not yet met the conditions for IMF disbursements. If it does meet those conditions, we will make our decisions based on our national interests, including the impact on democracy and stability in Russia.
- Regarding our bilateral assistance, two thirds goes to programs such as dismantling warheads, destroying missiles and protecting fissile materials; the vast majority of the rest goes to build civil society and promote change outside of Moscow. We continue to support these goals.

Why hasn't the U.S. Embassy visited the region to gather information on human rights violations alleged over the past four months?

- Our Embassy in Moscow reviews security conditions constantly. Our Ambassador has put a hold on travel by U.S. personnel to region for security reasons. We support that judgment.

- Question has been posed whether we have sufficient access to information about human rights situation. We do. Our people are in daily contact with international relief organizations, human rights NGOs, and journalists, all of whom have been compiling very valuable information.
- On this basis and our own information, we have pushed Russians to investigate all reports of human rights abuses, hold those responsible accountable for their actions.

What are you doing to help Chechen refugees? Aren't you appalled by conditions in camps?

- Very concerned by humanitarian toll of conflict. Hold Russians responsible for well-being of people displaced by conflict. International community doing its part as well, primarily through UNHCR and ICRC.
- Administration generously supporting their efforts; we have provided about \$6.5 million to support international relief efforts. Important that Russia cooperate with international relief groups, ensure free access and security for their operations.

An editorial in The Washington Post compares Chechnya with Kosovo, noting that circumstances of human misery are not that different. Why is the Administration pretending that what is happening in Chechnya is different than what happened in Kosovo?

- Have said repeatedly that we don't think comparisons between Kosovo and Chechnya are valid. Think the situations are fundamentally different.
- In Kosovo, NATO used force to reverse Milosevic's systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing, which deliberately singled out ethnic Albanian civilians for murder and expulsion from Kosovo.
- President Clinton and Administration officials have spoken out against Russian indiscriminate use of force in Chechnya, have made clear that means Russia is using are undermining its stated goals.
- Very concerned by humanitarian toll of conflict, impact on innocent civilians. Only way to end cycle of violence is immediate cease-fire across Chechnya, meaningful steps toward political solution, ideally utilizing OSCE good offices.

Is the Russians' destruction and sealing of Grozny what the President had in mind when he wrote in Time Magazine about Russian efforts to "liberate" the city?

- We've been quite clear that a purely military solution to conflict is not possible and think it will only fuel the cycle of violence.
- Urge both sides to exercise restraint, implement immediate cease-fire across Chechnya, avoid indiscriminate attacks, take meaningful steps toward political solution, ideally utilizing OSCE good offices. Want to see reestablishment of OSCE presence in region (Ingushetiya).
- Regarding the President's Time Magazine article, we have consistently recognized that there are terrorists in Chechnya, and Russia has a right to combat terrorism. The President used the word "liberate" in this context. The article also stressed that Russia's campaign in Chechnya is killing innocent civilians, and we have a profound disagreement with the means Russia is using.

Explanations by the Russian Government on Babitsky's whereabouts have been inconsistent and contradictory. He has been missing for over five weeks – why isn't the Administration doing anything?

- We are very concerned about Babitskiy's safety. His whereabouts remain unclear. Administration believes Russian Government is responsible for Babitsky's safety and well-being. It's time for Russian officials to come clean.
- Secretary Albright raised Babitsky's case on February 15 with the Russian Foreign Minister. Deputy Secretary Talbott, Ambassador Collins, other senior officials from our Embassy in Moscow continue to raise Babitsky's case with Russian authorities.
- Treatment of a non-combatant as a hostage or prisoner of war is completely unacceptable and incompatible with Russia's adherence to its international commitments and obligations. Expect Russians to live up to international commitments regarding treatment of noncombatants.
- We call on Russian government to conduct an unbiased, thorough investigation and, where necessary, to punish those guilty of wrongful acts.

Russian journalists are increasingly concerned about Kremlin efforts to steer news coverage of the war in Chechnya, noting a pattern of misuse and mistreatment of the press. Any comment?

- Administration strongly supports freedom of the press in Russia, and believes development of independent media is one of Russia's major gains in post-Communist period.

- We've been concerned by Russian efforts to curtail press access inside Chechnya or to limit critical coverage of the war. We are urging the Russians to ensure that journalists are able to do their work without unnecessary constraints.

RUSSIA -- POLITICS UPDATE

February 25, 2000

BACKGROUND: Various editorials have criticized the President's comments in a recent CNN interview about Acting President Putin. Putin launched his presidential election campaign with promises to combat crime, build a strong state, streamline the government, and lower taxes.

The Washington Post (2/18/00) reports that President Clinton seems to have lined up behind the candidacy of Acting President Putin in the upcoming Russian presidential elections. In an interview with CNN, President Clinton stated: "Based on what I have seen so far, I think that the U.S. can do business with this man." Any comment?

- President Clinton's comments on Acting President Putin were straight-forward, should not be misinterpreted.
- Not for us to handicap Russian presidential elections or express preferences. That is a choice for the Russian people. Important that upcoming campaign be free and fair and that conduct of elections be consistent with international democratic norms.
- Hope Putin will follow through on early statements about his goals and objectives, demonstrate government's commitment to strong reform agenda, including on economic track.
- In public statements Acting President Putin has repeatedly emphasized importance of democratic process, adherence to Russia's constitution, freedom of speech/press, etc. Obviously, real test will be actions his government takes -- Russian people, Russia's friends in international community will judge him on that basis.

Do you think that the head start Putin has received is healthy for Russian democracy and that the results aren't predetermined, because viable candidates simply do not have the resources and time to organize effective campaigns?

- Not for us to handicap Russian elections. That is a choice for the Russian people. There will be more developments over the coming days and weeks.
- Key point here is that procedures for electing a new president are laid out in Russian Constitution and those are being respected. Important that upcoming campaign be free and fair and that conduct of elections be consistent with international democratic norms.
- Note Acting President Putin's statements emphasizing the importance of free and fair elections, democratic process, adherence to Russia's constitution, and freedom of speech and press.

Is the Administration worried that a Putin presidency will pursue more authoritarian approaches to domestic problems (such as crime and corruption) and greater nationalist adventurism abroad?

- Yeltsin's place in history is marked by the steps he and the Russian people took to dismantle the communist system and create an enduring democratic process within a constitutional framework.
- Welcome Acting President Putin's initial statements emphasizing the importance of democratic process, adherence to Russia's constitution, and commitment to protect freedom of speech, conscience and press and right to private property.
- Important that President Yeltsin's resignation occurred in accordance with Russian constitution. As Yeltsin said, his intent was to accelerate a competitive electoral process, not to circumvent it. Now look to Putin to oversee the democratic transfer of power from first democratically elected Russian president to the next.
- As Putin himself has suggested, both Russian and international opinion about Putin will be shaped by his actions and steps taken by the Russian government. Hope Putin will act on this opportunity to set a strong reform agenda and pursue it.

MEPP: ROSS TRAVEL

February 24, 2000

Comment on Dennis's visit to Egypt. What was he doing there? Where's he going next? What's the status of his talks with the parties?

- Ambassador Ross was in Cairo today to consult with Egyptian President Mubarak and Foreign Minister Moussa
- Both the U.S. and Egypt agreed that while the parties are facing certain difficulties, there are also real opportunities to move forward on both tracks. Our discussion focused on how we could work together to do so.

Where's Dennis going next?

- Ambassador Ross has returned to Israel to continue his talks with Palestinian and Israeli officials.

MEPP: SYRIA TALKS
February 24, 2000

Comment on reports that there are secret contacts being brokered by the U.S. between Israel and Syria. True?

- We've seen these reports.
- We have no idea where they came from.
- They're not accurate.

So there are no contacts?

- I'm not going to get into the details of our communications with the parties. These reports are wrong.

LEBANON/ISRAEL: LEVY REMARKS

February 24, 2000

What's your reaction to Israeli FM Levy's remarks that Lebanese soil will burn and Israel will respond blood for blood, child for child to attacks launched from Lebanese territory? Lebanon's Prime Minister called Levy an evil minister. Are you going to condemn what Levy said?

- This kind of comment is inappropriate.
- We don't need rhetoric from anybody that inflames the situation.
- What we want to do is to create a climate where tensions are defused.
- Such comments make our efforts extremely difficult.

IRAQ: WP ARTICLE ON IRAQ SANCTIONS

February 25, 2000

Are you considering easing sanctions on Iraq?

- No. Sanctions will remain fully in force until Iraq has met its obligations to the Security Council.
- Resolution 1284, the new omnibus resolution on Iraq, calls for an expansion and improvement in the functioning of the oil-for-food program to better meet the needs of the Iraqi people. For example, the resolution sets a new target date of two days for the UN Sanctions Committee to approve oil-for-food contracts to Iraq in an effort to reduce the number of contracts on hold.
- In addition, the UN's Office of the Iraq Program recently reported that additional imports of oil spare parts would be necessary to avoid a future shortfall in Iraqi oil production.
- The United States strongly supports Resolution 1284, the oil-for-food program, and the relief it provides for the Iraqi people from the depredations of the Baghdad regime. We are currently studying how best to implement the provisions of Resolution 1284 to meet the anticipated future needs of the Iraqi people as reported by the UN and its agencies.

But doesn't that really mean that you are considering easing the sanctions?

- No. The United States has supported the oil-for-food program since President Bush first suggested it in 1991. We continue to believe it is the only way to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.
- On several occasions the UN has reported that the oil-for-food program was not adequately addressing the needs of the Iraqi people, and on every one of these occasions we have supported the efforts of the Security Council to expand or improve the program.
- Our efforts to improve the oil-for-food program hardly constitute an easing of sanctions since they deny Saddam control of Iraq's revenues.

Are you considering allowing Iraq to import dual use items as part of the options you're studying?

- As I have said, we are studying how best to implement the provisions of UNSCR 1284. It would not be appropriate for me to comment any further at this early stage.
- (If pressed) We will not clear dangerous dual-use items to Iraq.

How long do you think you can hold sanctions on Iraq together?

- Sanctions will remain on Iraq until Iraq fulfills its obligations to the Security Council.

IRAQI DEFECTOR AND WMD

February 23, 2000

CONTEXT: *The London Times (20 Feb 00) indicated that an Iraqi defector last week provided the first real evidence that Iraq has continued building a clandestine chemical weapons since United Nations inspectors left more than a year ago. Article key points:*

The defector said his unit had delivered warheads to a secret launch site where they were loaded with chemicals, then returned them to their hiding place in the Baghdad area. The operation appeared to be a "practice run" for a future attack. He said, "The last time we trained on the warheads was just last summer. We collected from a site near Baghdad six warheads containing sarin and also GF (gas). We drove the trucks to a remote desert location, where the experts prepared the warheads. I know that the warheads contain one component of the sarin gas and the GF gas. For safety reasons, the rest has to be added a short time before the actual launch. In the morning we returned the warheads to the Baghdad region.

The defector said he was told that the weapons he transferred were a type called "muzdawage," Arabic for binary weapons.

A (unidentified) military source who reviewed the defector's testimony said: "It seems that he is credible. From the terms he uses, this is obviously a man who is knowledgeable about this subject."

The defector, whose name is being withheld for security reasons, is traveling with his wife and children to what he hopes will be a better life in another Arab country. Now 37, he has served in the Iraqi army since he was 17 and until his defection worked in Amn-al-Khas, Saddam's special security organization.

We do not have any first hand knowledge that this account is true or that there even is a defector as the article indicates. We are making efforts to determine if there is a defector and if so, obtain any information that we can. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT WANT TO GET INTO THE SPECIFICS WITH THE GETNERL PUBLIC.

What's your reaction to the defector's comments on Iraq building clandestine chemical weapons?

- There is abundant evidence, including from UNSCOM reporting, of unresolved issues regarding Iraq's programs to develop weapons of mass destruction—including chemical weapons.
- The United States is constantly working to develop accurate and up-to-date information on Iraqi WMD activities, despite the fact that UN inspectors have been barred from Iraq for more than a year.

- We view any report that Iraq is building a clandestine chemical weapons program as a serious matter.
- This report is one more reason that we need to see UNSC Resolution 1284 implemented and UN inspectors' back on the ground in Iraq.

Are you looking for the defector since if true, would be a valuable resource for information?

- As I said yesterday, we are always ready, willing and able to try to develop information with respect to what weapons of mass destruction Saddam Hussein's regime has and has been hiding.

Can you be more specific?

- As you know, we do not discuss our ongoing intelligence activities but again, we would welcome any information on Saddam's weapons programs.

EU-CHINA AND PNTR

February 25, 2000

Have EU-China talks broken down? Are you worried. What does this mean for PNTR?

- We understand the latest round of talks has concluded without agreement, and that the European negotiators will be returning to Brussels.
- We are not worried. All negotiations have ups and downs. Ours did.
- The talks between the EU and China cannot adversely affect the strong, comprehensive, and enforceable bilateral accession agreement that the United States negotiated with China.
- The bottom line is this. If we want to enjoy the full benefits of this agreement, Congress must grant PNTR. We seek passage of PNTR as soon as possible, and are actively working toward that goal.

Have they set a new date for talks?

- We do not believe so, but you best ask the Europeans and Chinese.

Does this mean remaining work necessary to bring China into the WTO (e.g., protocol and working party report) cannot proceed?

- We have been working informally on these matters, and will continue to do so.
- We are prepared to move expeditiously to complete the work required to bring China into the WTO.
- Again, ongoing bilateral talks can not adversely affect the comprehensive and enforceable bilateral accession agreement that the United States negotiated with China.
- If we want to enjoy the full benefits of this agreement, Congress must grant PNTR. We seek passage of PNTR as soon as possible, and are actively working toward that goal.

Taiwan Strait and PNTR

Why should we provide permanent Normal Trade Status to China as long as it is intimidating the democratic people of Taiwan with threats of the use of force?

- We have made clear to the Chinese we reject the use of force. Issues between the two sides should be resolved peacefully.
- Question is whether China's accession to WTO and our provision of PNTR that goes with it will push the PRC in the right direction on cross-Strait issues.
- This trade agreement will increase China's participation in a predictable, transparent, and rules-based international system and increase its stake in regional peace and stability.
- And the combination of Taiwan and PRC accessions to WTO will create opportunity for Taiwan to increase its economic influence in the PRC, build trust and confidence through expanded trade and investment, and lower barriers to freer flow of ideas between the two sides of the Strait.

Human Rights and PNTR

Why grant PNTR while Administration is condemning China's human rights practices? Selling out to commercial interests?

- Economic benefits just the beginning of this agreement.
- Membership in WTO will accelerate economic changes in China that are diminishing authority of government over people's daily lives, unleashing forces beyond government's control. Agreement will also advance information revolution in China.
- At the same time, made clear that WTO agreement is not itself a human rights policy. Must and will continue to speak out on behalf of the people of China as we do in our human rights report, as we will in Geneva this spring.
- With or without WTO agreement will work for cause of human rights in China. Our strong belief is that the agreement will reinforce and complement our work on human rights and help move China in the right direction in fundamental ways.

CHINA'S WHITE PAPER ON TAIWAN

February 22, 2000

Any comment on China's White Paper on Taiwan?

- We have long-standing position that we reject the use of force or the threat of the use of force to resolve the Taiwan question. Issues between the two sides must be resolved peacefully.
- We do not support actions that raise tension in the Strait.
- PRC authorities must accept that Taiwan is a democracy. PRC proposals in cross-Strait dialogue will have to meet the test of the will and aspiration of the people of Taiwan. Don't believe the White Paper adequately addresses this fact.
- Ultimately up to Taiwan and PRC to determine terms by which direct dialogue can be advanced.
- Reiterate our long-standing policy: we strongly promote direct dialogue between Taipei and Beijing, will maintain our "one China" policy, and insist on peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question.

If pressed on whether our position means that we reject the White Paper because it raises tensions:

- We urge that PRC refrain from actions or statements that increase tension or make dialogue more difficult to achieve. Urge Beijing to take steps that foster dialogue, reduce tensions, and promote mutual understanding.

If pressed on whether that means we "reject" the White Paper:

- Up to Taiwan and the PRC to determine what constitutes the basis for dialogue; our abiding interest is that any resolution be peaceful.

COLOMBIA: REACTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS

February 25, 2000

The Human Rights Watch [and your own annual human rights report] has highlighted Colombian Army ties to paramilitary groups that commit human rights abuses.

[Especially in light of your own report on human rights abuses in Colombia,] why are you proposing military assistance to Colombia?

- Human Rights Watch's letter to Secretary Albright and the accompanying report represent an important contribution to the continuing discussion of the human rights situation in Colombia. The information is provided by a credible non-governmental organization, citing Colombian government investigators for much of its information.
- I would add that what distinguishes the situation today from past years is the clear commitment of the Administration of President Pastrana to improving the GOC's human rights record. Pastrana has stated repeatedly that he will not tolerate collaboration, by commission or omission, between security force members and paramilitaries. He has backed this policy up with direct action, removing from service last year four general officers and numerous mid-level officers for links to the paramilitaries or failure to confront them aggressively.
- We have commended this action, while at the same time emphasizing that serious systemic weaknesses remain that must be addressed before the human rights situation in Colombia will improve markedly. In particular, Colombia's longstanding internal conflict, booming drug trade, limited governing capacity in the country's interior, and weak penal system all contribute to an aura of impunity and vigilantism.
- President Pastrana recognizes that he needs to do more to change these systemic weaknesses. Indeed, this is one of the clear motivations for his "Plan Colombia" – and for our proposed two-year, \$1.6 billion assistance package. We are very committed to helping Pastrana address the conditions that breed human rights abuses in Colombia, whether by paramilitaries, guerrillas, drug traffickers, or elements of the security forces. Our assistance will be governed by the Leahy amendment and other statutory restrictions designed to ensure that no assistance reaches those who are guilty of human rights abuses.
- I note that the Latin America Director for Human Rights Watch said that his group was not calling for Congress to reject the assistance package.

At a minimum, shouldn't USG assistance to Colombia be subject to more stringent human rights conditions as the Human Rights Watch report recommends?

- All our assistance to the Colombian security forces is already subject to rigorous requirements under U.S. law. Consistent with these requirements, we have instituted stringent vetting procedures, and work closely with the GOC, non-governmental

organizations, and others to investigate and follow-up on any allegations of human rights violations. No unit of the Colombian security forces for which there is credible evidence of involvement in gross human rights violations may receive U.S. assistance, unless the Secretary of State determines that the GOC is taking effective measures to bring the responsible members of the security forces unit to justice.

- We will of course continue to monitor the human rights situation very closely.

FOOD CRISIS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA/ETHIOPIA

February 24, 2000

BACKGROUND: *The NYT reported this morning that as many as eight million people are threatened by possible famine in Ethiopia, an estimate that tallies with our own assessment. Led by USAID, the U.S. government has been and continues to be a leading provider of food assistance to Ethiopia and is also assisting other affected countries in the region - Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and Kenya - although Ethiopia is the worst affected. A shipment of 90,000 metric tons of grain is now en route to Ethiopia, and we have recently agreed to an additional 145,000 metric tons of food commodities. The Ethiopians are aware of our intention to deliver this assistance but we are not publicly announcing the total figure. The biggest challenge to preventing a major famine is logistical, particularly with regard to regional port capacity and transport capacity.*

What is the U.S. doing about possible famine in Ethiopia?

- Our USAID mission in Ethiopia has tracked this problem closely.
- The U.S. has worked closely with other donors and the Ethiopian government's relief commission to assess needs across the country. 90,000 metric tons of food is now en route to Ethiopia, and we are now in the process of allocating additional food assistance.
- We are also working with other donor nations to make sure they do their part to prevent famine, and we will consider additional allocations of food, if needed.
- Including our assistance to Ethiopia, the USG, overall, is providing 585,000 metric tons of food assistance to the Horn of Africa in calendar year 2000.

Will we see a repeat of 1985?

- Clearly, the risk of famine in Ethiopia is high. The biggest challenge to the response is logistical - ensuring sufficient port and transportation availability is difficult in the Horn of Africa, and in a country the size of Ethiopia.
- We have urged that the government do all it can to ensure maximum distribution across affected parts of the country. The government has recently announced that it will purchase surplus food stocks from unaffected parts of the country and make those available to people in need.

Isn't the war with Eritrea part of the cause of the famine?

- The primary cause of the famine is recurrent drought. However, it is clear that the risk of famine makes the need for a peaceful solution to the conflict with Eritrea all the more urgent.

1999 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

February 25, 2000

BACKGROUND: *On Friday, February 25, Secretary of State Albright and Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Harold Koh will introduce and release the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999.*

The country reports, which constitute a massive compilation of information, have for many years been regarded as the single most authoritative and detailed worldwide survey of human rights practices. The Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999 are submitted to Congress in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act and the Trade Act.

The goal of the reports is to tell the truth about human rights conditions around the world through an objective, comprehensive, permanent and accurate record of human rights conditions worldwide for calendar year 1999.

The reports form the heart of U.S. human rights policy and are a fundamental component of the U.S. Government's efforts to promote human rights worldwide.

Notes for Briefers: As Secretary Albright and AS/DRL Koh are holding a full-dress briefing at State on these country reports, White House and NSC briefers may direct most questions about specific country reports to the State Department.

- (If asked) There are no efforts made to shade the report based on foreign policy or other considerations.

China (PNTR):

In light of the slew of human rights abuses documented in the report, including the crackdown on leaders of the China Democratic Party, harassment, beating and arrest of Falun Gong adherents and stepped up persecution of unregistered religious leaders, what sense does it make to reward China with PNTR? Aren't you just selling out to commercial interests?

- The condition of human rights in China remains a very significant barrier to our relationship ever reaching its full potential. From the President on down, we will continue to speak out at every opportunity on behalf of those in China who are systematically denied the most basic political and religious freedoms.
- As you know, we have already announced our intention to seek a resolution that will shine a spotlight on Chinese human rights abuses at this spring's UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

- We believe that cutting off normal trading relations with China would undercut the very forces for constructive change in China that we wish to promote. It is through our ties with China, including our trading ties, that we increase the prospects for progress.
- Joining the WTO will add to the pressures welling up from within China for greater personal and political freedom. That's why democratic leaders such as Hong Kong's Martin Lee have expressed strong support for the WTO agreement on *human rights grounds*.
- While a WTO agreement is not itself our human rights policy, WTO accession will encourage China to advance economic reform and deepen the rule of law.
- With or without WTO agreement, we will continue to work for the cause of human rights in China. Our strong belief is that the agreement will reinforce and complement our work on human rights and help move China in the right direction in fundamental ways.

Russia (Chechnya): also see standing guidance package "Russia/Chechnya/Babitsky"

What is the US doing about Russian human rights violations in Chechnya, as detailed in the human rights report?

- Since the inception of this conflict, we have been very critical of Russia's military actions in Chechnya and have consistently called for a halt to the indiscriminate use of force. The US has asserted to Acting President Putin, Foreign Minister Ivanov, and Security Council Secretary Ivanov, among others, the need for Russia to investigate reports of human rights violations.
- The Russian government has a clear obligation to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation of the numerous credible reports of civilian killings and misconduct by its soldiers without delay.

Cuba (Elían Gonzales): also see standing guidance package "Cuba Boy"

How can you possibly justify sending Elían Gonzalez back to Cuba, given the fact that your own human rights report cites the Cuban government for violations of the most basic civil and political rights of its citizens, including official harassment, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment?

- This is not a political case. This case is about the bond between a parent and child. INS determined, after careful review under the governing law and procedure, that Elían Gonzalez's father speaks for the child in immigration matters, and that he wishes to be reunited with his son.

Hasn't your opposition to the Castro government in any way skewed the report to overlook the changes, admitted small, that have occurred in Cuba and doesn't your anti-Castro mentality cause the overstatement of imperfect human rights conditions in Cuba?

- It is hard to overstate the poor state of human rights conditions in Cuba. We have repeatedly called on the Cuban Government to respect the rights of its citizens and have seen no significant improvement at all.

Colombia: also see standing guidance package "Colombia Human Rights"

In light of your own report on human rights abuses in Colombia, why are we proposing military assistance to Colombia? At a minimum, shouldn't USG assistance to Colombia be subject to more stringent human rights conditions?

- All our assistance to the Colombian security forces is already subject to rigorous requirements under U.S. law. Consistent with these requirements, we have instituted stringent vetting procedures, and work closely with the GOC, non-governmental organizations, and others to investigate and follow-up on any allegations of human rights violations. No unit of the Colombian security forces for which there is credible evidence of involvement in gross human rights violations may receive U.S. assistance, unless the Secretary of State determines that the GOC is taking effective measures to bring the responsible members of the security forces unit to justice.
- I would add that what distinguishes the situation today from past years is the clear commitment of the Administration of President Pastrana to improving the GOC's human rights record. Pastrana has stated repeatedly that he will not tolerate collaboration, by commission or omission, between security force members and paramilitaries. He has backed this policy up with direct action, removing from service last year four general officers and numerous mid-level officers for links to the paramilitaries or failure to confront them aggressively.
- We have commended this action, while at the same time emphasizing that serious systemic weaknesses remain that must be addressed before the human rights situation in Colombia will improve markedly. In particular, Colombia's longstanding internal conflict, booming drug trade, limited governing capacity in the country's interior, and weak penal system all contribute to an aura of impunity and vigilantism.
- President Pastrana recognizes that he needs to do more to change these systemic weaknesses. Indeed, this is one of the clear motivations for his "Plan Colombia" – and for our proposed two-year, \$1.6 billion assistance package. We are very committed to helping Pastrana address the conditions that breed human rights abuses in Colombia, whether by paramilitaries, guerrillas, drug traffickers, or elements of the security forces. Our assistance will be governed by the Leahy amendment and other statutory restrictions designed to ensure that no assistance reaches those who are guilty of human rights abuses.

- We will of course continue to monitor the human rights situation very closely.

Israel

The report is critical of Israeli police methods (torture) and Israeli treatment of Palestinians living in the occupied territories, but aren't Israeli actions driven by the very serious and deadly terrorist threat Israel is faced with everyday?

- We are obviously very cognizant of terrorist and other threats to Israel's security. We also believe that Israel needs to be respectful of international human rights norms. This view in no way detracts from their right to meet their security interests. We believe that they can meet their security needs without infringing upon the human rights of the Palestinians living in the occupied territories. Since the landmark decision made by the Israeli High Court of Justice in September to prohibit the use of onerous domestic security practices, there has been a significant decrease in allegations of such abuse by Israeli security forces.

Palestinian Authorities

Don't the human rights abuses committed by the Palestinian Authorities, as documented in the reports, cast serious doubt upon the ability of the Palestinians to run their affairs consistent with international human rights norms?

- The promotion of human rights is an important issue that we are pursuing with the Palestinian authorities as we are continues working with them to help them build the necessary institutions of human rights and accountability.

Haiti

The human rights report on Haiti details a number of serious human rights problems including illegal detentions and police abuses as well as ongoing political paralysis. How can the Administration continue to promote involvement in Haiti as a success when human rights conditions are generally poor?

- Haiti has made a great deal of progress since the restoration of democracy in 1994. The abuses highlighted in the report are largely attributed to excessive force and a dysfunctional justice system, a far cry from the average 70 extra judicial killings a month during the period of de-facto military dictatorship. We, and the international community, are working closely with the government of Haiti to assist the police and judiciary to remedy these problems. Local and legislative elections scheduled to take place beginning in March will resolve the political impasse and permit progress in many of the areas addressed in the report.

Turkey

How can the US countenance continued arms sales to Turkey, given the numerous human rights abuses documented in the report -- including torture of prisoners and repression of free speech and assembly?

- Ankara's performance on human rights remains an important element in our review of any U.S. munitions exported under our Conventional Arms Transfer Policy. As an ally of the United States, Turkey has legitimate security concerns and duties both to us and to its NATO partners. However, the United States does not supply Turkey – or any country – with arms indiscriminately. We will continue to monitor Turkey's human rights record, including the potential for abuse of U.S.-origin equipment against civilians and to encourage further progress on human rights.
- The report indicates that there are still serious human rights problems in Turkey. It also notes, however, that the government of Prime Minister Ecevit has taken significant steps to begin addressing these problems. We continue to encourage Ankara to expand democracy and human rights protections for all Turkish citizens.

NEW PDD ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES IN PEACEKEEPING

February 25, 2000

BACKGROUND: The President signed PDD-71 yesterday. A SBTP was issued and Secretary Albright gave a press conference on the PDD with representatives from Defense, Justice, USAID, and NSC. Press coverage has been minimal.

General Points:

- PDD has been in development for a long time based on lessons the Administration has been learning from Haiti, Bosnia, and most recently Kosovo. Is not in response to current events in Kosovo, but when implemented, will help deal with problems like those in Kosovo currently.
- Taken together, the initiatives contained in the PDD will help to make possible an earlier transition from the military to civilian police of law enforcement-type responsibilities in peace operations, and will contribute to the overall success of (and earlier conclusion of) the peace operation.
- The PDD deals specifically with international civilian police (CIVPOL) activities and related justice and penal system development. A detailed White Paper is available.
- **Consistent with the theme of the PDD, the State Department intends to identify a pool of approximately 2,000 individuals who could serve as international police in peacekeeping missions. These individuals would be screened, trained, and maintained on a roster. When an operation arises, certified members of the pool could volunteer to serve in the operation. there would be no obligation for their service—it is completely voluntary. This would greatly speed the process we use in the U.S. to participate in these missions.**
- PDD directs that:
 - State create lead office for coordinating all aspects of US participation in criminal justice activities in peace operations;
 - US improve our capacity to provide US police personnel to field operations and to participate in Standby Arrangements; and
 - Enhance capacities to train US police for work as CIVPOL abroad and to train local police in crisis areas to operate according to democratic policing principles and human rights.
 - Establish partnership b/w Department of Justice and AID to better develop and ensure delivery of rapid response assistance to justice sector.

Q&A

What is the PDD's direct impact on the U.S. military? Does it change any of DoD's roles or missions?

- The PDD does not assign DoD with any new functions or responsibilities beyond those which DoD already possesses.
- The PDD calls for greater coordination and, as appropriate, direct support between the CIVPOL and military components of peace operations, to ensure maximum support of the overall objectives of the operation, and speed its conclusion.
- Because some peace operations will require that military forces carry out limited constabulary functions for a short period, the PDD calls for U.S. military forces to maintain the capability to support constabulary functions abroad—like what U.S. and other NATO forces have been doing recently in Mitrovica.

Does the PDD require the military to train police?

- No. It directs that the Justice Department, in concert with State Department, provides training to overseas police, as has been our practice for many years.

Is the President taking U.S. police off our streets to work overseas instead of here?

- The U.S. has had a longstanding policy of participating in CIVPOL peace operations when we deem it in our interests. The PDD doesn't change that policy. Rather, when implemented, it will improve the efficiency and speed of our participation.
- I should point out that police officers are not military forces. The President does not order them into peacekeeping missions overseas. When it is in our interests, the State Department, via a private contractor, hires qualified individuals. Most of those hired are either current police officers on leave of absence or former/retired police officers. It is totally voluntary.

How many Americans are participating in CIVPOL? Where are they? Where do they come from? Do we have enough qualified people interested in this work?

A: Currently, US CIVPOL serve as follows:

- **Bosnia** – 200 (150 now deployed; the remainder will be deployed by next week)
- **Croatia** (Eastern Slavonia) – 17
- **East Timor** – 45
- **Haiti** – 23 (uniformed/armed CIVPOL mission transitions to technical advisor program on 3/15/00)
- **Kosovo** – 550 (approximately 500 deployed to date; remaining 50 will be deployed in the next three weeks)

These officers come from all over the United States - from state and local police departments and the ranks of recently retired and former police officers. They currently are recruited and selected by a private contractor, DynCorp, based on rigorous criteria that the State Department has established.

To date, approximately 6,000 qualified individuals have expressed interest in participating in CIVPOL mission overseas.

IF ASKED Q&A re: Kosovo

KFOR, the military force in Kosovo, continues to have primary responsibility for law enforcement. Had this PDD been in place one or two years ago, would the situation on the ground in Kosovo be different?

- A major goal of this PDD is to enhance U.S. and international capacity to rapidly provide CIVPOL officers to field operations. Had this PDD been in place and implemented, the international community would have been better able to respond effectively in the area of civilian policing, and the military's role in law enforcement-related activities would probably have been less than it has been.

Why is the military so deeply involved in law enforcement in Kosovo? Why has the UN been so slow in responding to the CIVPOL requirements in Kosovo?

- Had Milosevic accepted the terms offered at Rambouillet, we would have seen a more typical CIVPOL organization in Kosovo, providing training and transition oversight, but not being responsible for enforcing local laws. However, Milosevic refused. The result was an unprecedented requirement for an unusual CIVPOL organization in which full policing responsibility will be assumed by international police. This is a huge task.
- One also must keep in mind that in the past year, the CIVPOL requirements for Kosovo and East Timor have more than doubled the numbers of CIVPOL needed in UN peacekeeping operations.

What is the role of the US and other KFOR military forces in Mitrovica?

- KFOR troops have been tasked with gaining complete control over the situation in Mitrovica and creating a secure environment for future progress. KFOR is providing crowd control and is conducting searches for illegal weapons. At the same time, the UN Mission in Kosovo is in the process of increasing the numbers of CIVPOL in Mitrovica with the goal of assuming responsibility for law enforcement duties.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 7, 2000

As Prepared for Delivery

REMARKS BY SAMUEL R. BERGER
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS
TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

National Press Club Building
Washington, D.C.

American Leadership in the 21st Century

This is a historic milestone for me – my first chance in years to give a speech without alluding to the bridge to the next century or evoking the next millennium. Instead, I want to look back with you on some of the things our Administration did in foreign policy back in the 1900's and reflect on challenges of an era that is already upon us.

1999 was a busy, intensive and generally successful year for American foreign policy. Indeed, it's hard to imagine it all happened in one year: A revitalized Middle East peace process, with the Wye accords being implemented, and genuine engagement on peace between Israel and both Syria and the Palestinians at the same time. The defeat of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, with NATO united, Russia helping us make and keep the peace, and Balkan integration into Europe now high on the international agenda. A WTO agreement with China. Economic recovery in Asia, much aided by strong US economic growth and the President's commitment to keep our markets open. With the democratic transitions in Nigeria and Indonesia, the passage of more people to freedom in 1999 than in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. Independence for East Timor after a quarter century of conflict. The peace process in Northern Ireland moving forward again. Talks resumed on the future of Cyprus. A Caspian pipeline agreement that can help assure our energy security and reinforce the independence of the new nations of central Asia. A historic debt relief initiative for the poorest countries of the developing world.

Imagine the questions you'd be asking me today had we made a different set of choices last year: You'd want to know how we could justify letting a million Kosovars spend the winter despairing in refugee camps. You might be asking how we could have let a regional economic downturn spark a global depression, or whether our failure to reach a WTO agreement with China would make that country more recalcitrant on the world stage, or what happened to the hope for a comprehensive peace in the Holy Land?

We had our share of disappointments last year, too, from CTBT to Seattle. But I am pleased with the progress we have made, and satisfied that an active year in foreign policy has sparked a constructive discussion about America's role in the world.

One reason we are where we are today is that we -- the Congress and the Administration, led by the President and Secretary Albright -- generally have maintained a bipartisan

consensus about the need for American leadership, though for five of the last seven years we have had divided government. Without that consensus, we could not have opened NATO to new democracies, or approved aid to dismantle former Soviet weapons, or approved NAFTA, or created the WTO, or ratified START II, or given our armed forces the backing they needed from the Balkans to the Persian Gulf. I think one reason the protests in Seattle seemed so unusual is that we have gotten used to having more consensus about our role in the world in this decade, or at least less contention, than we had over the last three decades of the Cold War.

But that doesn't mean that the consensus isn't threatened, and it doesn't mean that there aren't competing visions of our role.

Today, just about everyone believes we need a strong military to protect our interests in a world of continuing, if shifting, dangers; unfortunately, some think that's about all we need – and undervalue and underfund our efforts to prevent conflicts. All agree we need friends and allies when the going gets tough; some seem to think we can afford to alienate them when they need us to play our part in international institutions and arrangements. That way of looking at the world is reflected in the radical cuts to our foreign affairs budget Congress proposed last fall, in the vote on the Test Ban Treaty that a small group of Senators forced against the wishes of more than 60 of their colleagues, in protectionist sentiments in both political parties. I have called that vision a new isolationism. It's one part go-it-alone and another part don't-go-at-all.

Of course, it is possible to agree that America must play an active role in the world, but still to disagree about how. Every Administration is tempted to deny that from time to time. Dean Acheson once sarcastically observed that the only way to run a country was to "say politics stops at the seaboard -- and anyone who denies that postulate is an SOB and a crook and not a true patriot. Now if people will swallow that," Acheson added, "you're off to the races."

The duty of internationalists in both parties is not to agree on every matter of policy, but to come together around the basic principle that Americans benefit when nations coalesce to deter aggression, to resolve conflicts, to open markets, to raise living standards, to prevent the spread of dangerous weapons, and to meet other dangers that no nation can meet alone. . . . and that a key to forging such coalitions is American leadership. That's what the bipartisan, internationalist center believes, and I am gratified that as 1999 ended, it reclaimed center stage. The Administration and the Congress agreed on a budget that restored funding for our global priorities. We agreed to pay our UN dues and arrears, bolstering America's credibility as a global leader.

Having advanced the argument that America should continue to lead, the beginning of a new century should cause us to reflect on the larger purpose of that leadership. For we are experiencing something more than just a changing of the digits on the calendar; this period in history has been a genuine changing of the times – a time of collapsing empires, expanding freedoms, eroding barriers and emerging threats. The success of our foreign policy in this new era is going to depend on our ability to help answer a few fundamental, long-term questions.

One critical question for the next generation and beyond is whether our former adversaries Russia and China will emerge as stable, prosperous, democratic partners of the United States.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union nine years ago, our engagement with a democratic Russia has produced concrete results -- the dismantlement of 5,000 former Soviet nuclear weapons, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltics, Russia's role in ending the

conflict in Kosovo on acceptable terms, and the cooperation our troops have forged in Bosnia and Kosovo. Russia itself is still struggling with demons that have bedeviled it for years: the legacy of totalitarianism, poverty, corruption, conflict in the Caucasus. But the way President Yeltsin left office last week reflected just how much has changed. For the first time in their thousand year history, the Russian people now know that leaders can voluntarily transfer power, under constitutional rules, instead of holding on till death or being forced from office. Just as important, their new government has promised to uphold basic liberties and Russia's break with communism, and to hold free and fair presidential elections. The world will be looking with great interest as the Russian government moves forward in meeting this pledge.

Acting President Putin enjoys strong support from the Russian people and a newly elected Duma. That's no guarantee of progress on the issues that matter most to us, but we certainly intend to seek it, including further reductions in strategic weapons as we work to develop a national missile defense system while preserving the ABM Treaty. Whoever is elected Russia's next President will also inherit a tough challenge -- to give Russians the sense of stability they crave after years of wrenching change and the hope their sacrifices will be rewarded. The question is whether stability and hope will be based on strengthening or weakening the rule of law? That question applies to Chechnya as well: We've made clear that Russia's fight against terrorism is right, but its use of indiscriminate force is wrong. And it is inviting far more serious problems for itself than it can possibly be solving. But we should not stop supporting those forces in Russia that are trying to strengthen the rule of law and build faith in democratic institutions. Russia is paying a price for its conduct in Chechnya; Russian democracy must not.

As for China, a sense of realism cautions us to be prepared for the possibility that this emerging power emerges as a threat. But we should not presuppose that outcome, or make it more likely by acting as if it has already happened. Realism also tells us to see China in all its complexity: as a country that has lifted hundreds of millions of its citizens from poverty and expanded personal freedoms, but whose progress is held back by resistance to political reforms vital to its growth and stability. We can protect our security and promote the right kind of change in China by continuing a policy of principled, purposeful engagement with China's leaders and people.

That is reflected in the deal we reached last fall to bring China into the WTO. It is a good agreement. Our market already is open to China's goods and services. This agreement gains us better access to China's market in every sector from agriculture to telecommunications to automobiles.

But the agreement is in our interest even apart from its economic benefit. There is simply no better way right now to encourage China to choose deeper economic reform and respect for the rule of law. To choose to play by international rules, instead of defying them. To choose integration with the world, instead of self-isolation. The only people who could possibly gain from China remaining outside the WTO are the most backward-looking, anti-democratic elements in China itself. That's why I am confident that when the debate is over and the votes are counted, the Congress will support this agreement by establishing Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China.

✓ A second question that will shape the character of the coming century is whether, as the first non-imperial global power in history, we can use our influence and strength to prevent and if need be to help end regional conflicts that threaten wider war?

To that end, we have worked hard in the last seven years to help complete the job of building an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe -- a Europe that embraces new democracies from the Baltics to the Balkans, a Europe that embraces Turkey as well as

Greece.

There is a great deal to do to advance this vision for the region: helping Kosovo through its first free elections while continuing to clamp down on violence; bolstering the democratic opposition in Serbia; promoting investment in the Balkans; encouraging progress in the Cyprus talks and greater cooperation between Greece and Turkey; helping more new democracies get ready for membership in NATO. Some of this will require money and the steady support of our Congress over many years. But if we're persistent, the payoff will be huge. Not just a post-Cold War Europe, but a durably post-war Europe where American soldiers are never again called to fight.

We also have a chance now to help the people of the Middle East to end 50 years of conflict that has threatened the peace of the world and isolated their region from the life of the world.

If you are hoping for an up-to-the-minute update on the Israeli-Syrian talks underway again this week in Shepherdstown, I will disappoint you by citing an old adage: When making peace in the Middle East, say nothing at all and you'll get misquoted only half the time. I will say that for the first time in several years, the parties -- Israel, Syria and the Palestinians -- have a common goal in sight, and the common sense to see that they have a historic opportunity to achieve it now. The President and Secretary Albright will spare neither time nor effort to help them succeed.

Building peace in the Middle East, in southeast Europe and elsewhere is a long-term challenge. In the meantime, America will sometimes be called upon to decide what to do when brutal and dangerous conflicts break out. And while we cannot and should not respond to every outbreak of violence and injustice around the world, neither can the United States afford never to respond.

That is true because, as we have seen so many times in this century, big wars that harm our interests almost always start as small wars that the world does not care enough to do something about. It is also true because in a globalized world, we see -- almost instantly -- the killing and uprooting of innocent men, women and children thousands of miles away. In such a world, we cannot choose not to know; we can only choose not to act.

Over the years, our administration has chosen to act where America's interests and values were at stake. For all the recent discussion of humanitarian intervention, we should remember that America hasn't used force for purely humanitarian ends since the commitment to end famine in Somalia in 1992. From Haiti to Iraq to Bosnia and Kosovo, we have acted both to help others and to protect ourselves from the consequences of unchecked conflict and violence.

I expect you will continue to ask hard, appropriate questions of the Administration about when and how America should use force. But those who are examining this issue critically need to ask themselves some hard questions, too. What precisely would they have done differently about Kosovo, Bosnia, Iraq, Haiti, East Timor, and why do they think that would have been more effective? How would they have dealt with the consequences of not acting?

✓ A third question we will face in the next century is whether terrorists and potentially hostile nations will acquire the means to undermine our defenses, and cause us to live in fear once again.

Thankfully, the New Year's Eve celebrations around the world passed without a terrorist attack. But just because we dodged a bullet doesn't mean there was no bullet to dodge.

The last weeks of 1999 saw the largest US counter-terrorism operation in history. Terrorist cells were disrupted in eight countries and attacks were almost certainly prevented thanks to the good work of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies. But the threat remains real. We'll need to keep meeting this challenge just as we met it last week: with both vigilance and a refusal to be intimidated.

Part of the challenge will be to make it more difficult for weapons of mass destruction and the missiles that can carry them to fall into the wrong hands. That requires the United States to do many things well at the same time: helping the nations of the former Soviet Union secure weapons and their key components. Continuing to prevent Iraq from threatening its neighbors. Restraining North Korea's missile and nuclear program and Iran's. Aggressively pursuing terrorists and maintaining pressure against those who shelter them, including the Taliban. Strengthening global standards against proliferation. And yes, that means eventually finding the common ground on the Test Ban Treaty that last year's truncated debate in the Senate prevented.

We also are working to convince Russia that the missile defense system we are planning is not designed to undermine their deterrence, nor would it be capable of doing so. We must also convince some of our critics at home who say we should preemptively abandon the ABM Treaty and arms control and move forward unilaterally. The difference between us is that we see defense against missile attack as part of a broader national security strategy. Some seem to think missile defenses should be the sum total of our strategy. We believe it is a far wiser course to move forward in a way that takes into account the technical feasibility of a missile defense system, its cost, the nature of the threat, and its impact on our overall security, including arms control.

✓ A fourth question is the one that came into stark relief in Seattle: How can we shape globalization so that it spurs growth and lifts the poor as well as the rich, improves the dignity of labor and strengthens protection of the environment?

In various ways, the protestors in Seattle were raising that question. But they offered a confusing answer. Many complained that the WTO is too powerful, yet argued, in effect, that the WTO should acquire new powers to impose and enforce labor and environmental standards around the world. All expressed solidarity with poor people in the developing world. Yet it is hard to see how the 1.3 billion people around the world living on a dollar a day will ever be able to live in dignity if we deny them the chance to sell the fruits of their labor and creativity beyond their borders. There are practices such as forced labor and child labor that the world should not tolerate. But we must also understand that, for the poorest countries, trade means growth and growth means improved working conditions. We don't want a race to the bottom in the international economy, but neither do we want to keep the bottom down. It is not right and it is not in our interest. What we want is a steady march to the top that leaves no one behind.

In the years ahead, we will face many other fundamental questions, and challenges we can hardly foresee, whether tragedies or hopeful breakthroughs.

But, as a result of the last several years, we look to that distant horizon from higher and more hopeful ground. We have done much already to help shape the character of the 21st century world, and the terms of debate about America's involvement in it. Think of it: the world's great powers still disagree on many things, but for the first time they do not see one another as military adversaries. A decade after the Cold War ended, our alliances are not weaker, but stronger, with new, more enduring purpose. Half the world enjoys democratic government, and the democracies that emerged with the end of the Cold War have survived and in many cases thrived. Bitter regional conflicts that once defied resolution are bending to international mediation. There is a growing recognition that

war crimes and massive violations of human rights are the world's concern, even if they happen within sovereign borders. The central phenomenon of our time, globalization, plays to America's greatest strengths -- to our creative and entrepreneurial spirit -- and spreads our most cherished ideals of openness and freedom. Trade is more open today than ever before, raising standards of living for many, though not all, and the world's economic architecture is being adapted to a new economy. People are thinking freshly about the relationship between promoting global growth and protecting the global environment. Perhaps most important, eight years after Time Magazine, echoed by countless other commentators, asked "Is the U.S. in an irreversible decline as the world's premier power?" America has arrived at a moment when our strength and prosperity are unparalleled.

That is a very good place to begin a new era.



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George Read

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