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## THE DANGERS OF OVERSELLING THE MINI-SUMMIT

### INTRODUCTION

This weekend's meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, between Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has raised high public hopes for improvements in U.S.-Soviet relations. These expectations, however, should be placed in the context of current realities. After a year in power, Gorbachev has yet to significantly alter any of Moscow's policies at home or abroad; rather, he has shown himself adept at packaging Soviet policies in ways that appear more progressive but yield nothing of substance.

Soviet objectives at the talks are clear: to achieve U.S. concessions either on principles or on substance in the arms control area, to encourage the perception that it is the U.S. rather than Moscow which is the stumbling block to peace and arms control, and to deemphasize regional tensions and human rights issues. For a variety of reasons, U.S. objectives are no longer completely clear. Indeed the current unusually reactive and inconsistent U.S. approach to the Soviets could undermine the Administration's gains of the past several years.

### TROUBLESOME DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

The Reagan Administration has a number of solid accomplishments to its credit with respect to U.S. foreign and defense policy: a restoration of national confidence, a necessary defense modernization program, the Strategic Defense Initiative, the use of military force where necessary and a willingness to support insurgencies against Soviet-backed communist regimes. The Administration also deserves credit for its consistent policy of realism toward the Soviet Union.

But there are signs that the Administration's vision of world politics may be starting to unravel.

A number of potentially troublesome developments have occurred recently: 1) a lack of unity on major national security issues within the Administration itself, and between the White House and the Congress; 2) open differences on important arms control issues between the Defense and State Departments; 3) congressional cutbacks in the President's defense budget, attempts by the House of Representatives to dictate arms control policy to the White House, and the Senate's override of the President's veto of sanctions against South Africa; 4) the haste, on the part of the U.S., to swap an innocent American hostage, Nicholas Daniloff, for an accused Soviet spy, sweetened by a release of only one Soviet dissident; 5) the earlier decision by the Administration to subsidize grain sales to the Soviet Union despite the adverse consequences for America's posture with its allies; 6) the decision to hold a summit before the November congressional elections; 7) the toning down of Administration criticisms of the Soviet role in regional conflicts and in supporting terrorism, and the lack of human rights inherent in the Soviet political system.

#### SOVIET OBJECTIVES

Moscow in recent months has exhibited an uncharacteristic subtlety in dealing with the West. Fundamental policies have not changed, but their packaging has been more sophisticated. The visits by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to both Canada and Mexico just prior to the meeting in Iceland demonstrate a growing Soviet tactical aggressiveness. Moscow is also aware of upcoming U.S. elections and the expectations that have been raised, at least in part by the Administration itself, regarding progress on arms control issues.

The Soviets are seeking to use the public relations euphoria surrounding the meeting in Iceland to entice the Administration into signing arms control agreements on terms fundamentally at odds with American national interest, while real threats to peace, such as the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, involvement in Africa and Central America, and sponsorship of forces blocking an Arab-Israeli settlement in the Middle East would remain unresolved.

Realizing the intense American concern over Soviet human rights violations, the Kremlin may make token concessions in individual cases to encourage the Administration's pursuit of "quiet diplomacy" in this area, a policy opposed by many Soviet human rights activists, such as Anatoly Shcharansky, who believe that "quiet diplomacy" actually relieves the pressure on the Soviets to abide by the international agreements on human rights they have signed.

The Soviets will try to exploit American eagerness for a "dialogue" as well as the personal relationship between the leaders of the two nations in order to achieve their strategic goals.

A Soviet priority will be to convince President Reagan to change his instructions to U.S. arms control negotiators in such a way as to make a full-blown summit, complete with the signing of several arms control agreements, possible in the nearest future. This is a favorite Soviet negotiating tactic: force Americans to make concessions when they have no time for thorough study of the long-term consequences.

Specifically, the Soviets are trying to make the United States go along with a comprehensive nuclear test ban, which would effectively prevent the United States from matching the massive modernization of Soviet strategic offensive forces carried out in the last fifteen years, and make impossible development of one of the most promising strategic defensive technologies against Soviet missiles, the X-ray laser.

The Soviets will seek to use the meeting in Iceland to create an impression that the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative is the obstacle to a new strategic arms control agreement, not the Soviet refusal to: 1) end violations of existing arms control agreements; 2) accept effective verification measures; and 3) substantially reduce deployment of their destabilizing SS-18 and SS-19 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.

#### OBSTACLES TO AN INF AGREEMENT

Another Soviet priority is an agreement on the intermediate nuclear forces (INF) in Europe. There the Soviets want a short-term agreement, so that in a few years NATO again will have to go through a divisive debate on redeployment of American INFs in Western Europe in response to possible Soviet redeployment of SS-20 missiles west of the Urals. Such an agreement would also leave largely intact their mobile force of SS-20s east of the Urals, thus creating an image of weakened American commitment to its allies and friends in the Pacific basin.

There are, however, several fundamental issues that must be resolved before an INF agreement could be signed:

Duration of an agreement: Moscow has been seeking an "interim" or short-term agreement. But a pact of short duration could result in future Soviet redeployment of SS-20s or equivalent systems. This would return NATO to where it was in the 1979-1983 period, when the response to the original SS-20 deployments created domestic difficulties in NATO countries and nearly split the alliance.

New production lines: Earlier arms agreements have limited only deployed missile launchers and have not included undeployed missiles and the production of new systems which perform the same mission as systems limited by the agreement. (For example, SALT I failed to prevent replacement of old heavy SS-9s with new heavy SS-18 ICBMs.) If an INF agreement reduced current deployments but did not cover systems held in reserve (Moscow is believed to have at least two SS-20s in reserve for every system deployed) or failed to prohibit the production of new systems, then the U.S. and NATO could actually end up worse off militarily and politically.

GLCM/P2 Mix: The U.S.-deployed INF systems include both slow-flying ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) and faster-flying single-warhead Pershing II intermediate-range missiles. These deployments were made in reaction to the Soviet deployment of the fast-flying three warhead SS-20 intermediate-range missile. The Soviets would like to have all 108 Pershing II missiles removed from Europe, leaving only some of the slower-flying cruise missiles in place. These are easier to defend against than the Pershings. But it would be both symbolically and militarily inequitable for Moscow to have the more capable SS-20 deployed while the NATO deployment consisted only of the less capable GLCMs.

Shorter-Range INF Systems: In addition to the SS-20, Moscow has also deployed missiles with a somewhat shorter range--the SS-21, SS-22 and SS-23. These missiles are mobile and can cover many of the same targets now under threat from the SS-20. Thus, an agreement that reduces Soviet SS-20s while leaving the Kremlin free to deploy the shorter-range missiles at will, or to increase their numbers, could nullify any political or military benefits of an INF agreement.

Geographical Distribution of INF Systems: Moscow currently has about 250 SS-20s deployed in the European Soviet Union, but also has about 180 deployed in Soviet Asia. If the U.S. were to allow the Asian SS-20s to remain in place while the Soviets reduce their SS-20s in Europe, it would create serious political problems with U.S. Asian allies, who would conclude that the U.S. places a lower priority on their security, and leave open the possibility that Moscow could move its mobile Asian-based SS-20s to Europe.

Verification Issues: Even assuming other problems could be resolved, the verification of destruction of current SS-20s and restrictions on production or deployment of new systems would still be necessary. Moscow has until now steadfastly rejected the kinds of intrusive on-demand inspection measures, including on-site inspection of factories, necessary to assure fulfillment of arms control treaty obligations.

Aside from these specific obstacles, the prospect of an INF agreement raises more fundamental issues. First, to the extent that the original NATO INF deployment had a military as well as political

rationale, would a reduction inhibit NATO's ability to deter Soviet attack, or to prevail if it ever occurred? Would it not place even more dependence upon a NATO conventional capability that is already suspect? Second, to the extent that the INF deployment was intended to serve the political function of "coupling" the U.S. to Europe in the event of a Soviet attack, would an agreement undermine that coupling and raise further questions about the extent of the U.S. commitment to NATO? Third, should the U.S. be willing to sign any new arms control agreement while Soviet violations of existing agreements (for example, the Krasnoyarsk radar violation of the ABM Treaty) remain unresolved?

#### POLICY FOR THE REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETING

At his meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev, President Reagan should insist repeatedly, privately and publicly, on the following points.

1) Stable peace can be achieved only on the basis of a broad political settlement of conflicts. Therefore, arms control agreements will not bring peace unless major regional conflicts, fueled by Soviet direct and proxy interventions, are settled.

2) Settlement of regional conflicts will not be achieved by Soviet attempts to attain complete victory. It should be made clear to Gorbachev that only speedy and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan would result in a genuine political settlement in that area.

3) The Strategic Defense Initiative is not a bargaining chip in arms control negotiations. It offers a hope of a world no longer threatened by nuclear annihilation. Negotiation should, therefore, be over how, not whether, to deploy strategic defense.

4) There can be no further arms control agreements until past Soviet violations of existing agreements are rectified. New arms control agreements must incorporate iron-clad provisions for on-demand verification. A total ban on nuclear testing, moreover, is impossible at this time because of U.S. defense requirements.

5) Soviet violations of human rights make the American public distrust the Soviet Union. Americans will never trust a government which does not allow its own citizens to voice their opinion and exercise their religious beliefs freely.

6) Soviet massive espionage effort conducted in the United States, particularly from the United Nations, is a serious obstacle to improved U.S.-Soviet relations.

At the same time, Reagan must be concerned about U.S. and allied public opinion and perceptions. The President should continue efforts to lower expectations, which to some extent have been inflated by Administration officials, about the results of the meeting. He must point out repeatedly that there are still serious obstacles to even a INF agreement, let alone one covering strategic offensive forces. Finally, Reagan should emphasize that it is Soviet unwillingness to substantially reduce SS-18 and SS-19 deployments, not the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, that is the real barrier to an arms agreement.

It would be unwise for President Reagan to make any concessions in the hope that the Soviets would reciprocate later. Such a hope would be based not only on a false assumption about Soviet international conduct, but also on a misreading of the domestic political situation in the Soviet Union. While Gorbachev's personal power seems to be relatively strong, his ability to design and implement policies different from the mainline of the tradition of Soviet Communism is at best in doubt. Consequently, the President must follow the only proven method for dealing with the Kremlin--he must stick to his principles and not give an inch without a simultaneous and equivalent Soviet concession.

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