

WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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RELEASE IN FULL

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Ø Rennie

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

December 12

Note for Strode, Talbot,
Leon Firth
Jim Collins

I have attached a copy of
the President's letter to Yeltsin
delivered this morning in
Moscow.

Please note changes to the
letter proposed by Ambassador
Pickens and agreed to by
~~the~~ Tony Lake on December 11.

Nick Burns

R8A

RELEASE IN FULL

PRIVACY CHANNEL MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT YELTSIN FROM PRESIDENT CLINTON

AMBASSADOR PICKERING: PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING LETTER AND THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION IMMEDIATELY UPON DELIVERY

DEAR BORIS:

I AM WRITING TO YOU AFTER MY RETURN FROM BUDAPEST BECAUSE I AM CONCERNED ABOUT BOTH THE TONE AND THE SUBSTANCE OF YOUR PUBLIC COMMENTS ON EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES AND EVEN ON THE NATURE OF MY OWN PARTICIPATION THERE. I WANT YOU TO KNOW MY PERSONAL VIEWS ON THESE ISSUES WITH THE AIM OF PROMOTING A MORE PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE THAN THE ONE WE HAVE HAD DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS. I THINK YOU WILL CONCUR THAT WE NEED A FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR RESPECTIVE VIEWS AND THAT WE SHOULD DEDICATE OURSELVES TO A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLIC DISCUSSION IN THE FUTURE.

SPECIFICALLY, I WAS PUZZLED AND DISAPPOINTED THAT YOU CHOSE, WITHOUT ADVANCE WORD AND CONSULTATION, TO CRITICIZE PUBLICLY NATO'S DECISIONS ON ITS FUTURE AND THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN EUROPE. ALONG WITH RUSSIA'S SUDDEN REFUSAL ON DECEMBER 1 TO SIGN THE PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE DOCUMENTS, THESE ACTIONS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP OUR GOVERNMENTS AND YOU AND I PERSONALLY HAVE DEVELOPED DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS. WHEN WE MET IN SEPTEMBER YOU MADE CLEAR RUSSIA'S SENSITIVITIES OVER THE ISSUE OF NATO'S EXPANSION, AND I PLEDGED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO ENSURE NO SURPRISES FOR YOU AS WE BEGAN THE FIRST PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO THE DECEMBER 1 NATO MEETING IN BRUSSELS. AS I WROTE YOU LAST WEEK, I FEEL WE ADHERED SCRUPULOUSLY TO THAT PLEDGE.

WHILE I UNDERSTOOD FROM OUR EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BEFORE BUDAPEST THAT YOU HARBORED CONCERNS ABOUT THE PROCESS OF NATO EXPANSION, THERE WAS NOTHING IN YOUR LETTERS THAT INDICATED THE APPROACH YOU CHOSE TO TAKE IN YOUR BUDAPEST REMARKS. I WOULD HOPE THAT WE COULD AVOID SUCH INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE AND TO AGREE THAT OUR DIFFERENCES, WHICH OF COURSE ARE NATURAL IN RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT POWERS, ARE BETTER DISCUSSED FULLY IN PRIVATE BEFORE EITHER OF US FEELS COMPELLED TO CRITICIZE THE OTHER PUBLICLY. THIS IS A FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST AND COOPERATION THAT YOU AND I HAVE BUILT TOGETHER.

FOR MY PART, I WILL CONTINUE TO ACCENTUATE IN MY OWN PUBLIC COMMENTS MY STRONG SUPPORT FOR U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS AND THE NEED FOR US TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE FOR EUROPE'S FUTURE AS AN UNDIVIDED CONTINENT. THERE IS TOO MUCH AT STAKE HERE, AND TOO MUCH COMMON GROUND BETWEEN US ON SO MANY ISSUES, FOR ANYONE TO BE

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ABLE TO EXPLOIT THE PERCEPTION OF A U.S. - RUSSIA "RIFT" AS A SYMPTOM OF DEEPER PROBLEMS IN OUR RELATIONS.

FOR THIS REASON, I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE CONTINUE TO PURSUE A FULL DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY DEBATE. LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT I DO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE AND COMPLEXITY OF THIS ISSUE FOR YOU PERSONALLY AND FOR ALL RUSSIANS. I BELIEVE IT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT ISSUE THAT YOU AND I WILL CONFRONT TOGETHER. I AM WELL AWARE THAT YOU HAVE SOME DOUBTS AND CONCERNS ABOUT NATO EXPANSION IN PARTICULAR AND, AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, I AM TAKING THOSE INTO FULL ACCOUNT AS WE PROCEED.

YOU ALSO KNOW FROM OUR CONVERSATIONS IN SEPTEMBER THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIC AIM OF THE U.S. IS TO HELP CONSTRUCT A UNIFIED, STABLE AND PEACEFUL EUROPE IN THE NEXT CENTURY IN WHICH RUSSIA, THE UNITED STATES AND ALL THE COUNTRIES OF EUROPE CAN FULLY PARTICIPATE. THIS PROCESS, WHICH WILL TAKE YEARS TO COMPLETE, MUST INCLUDE A STRENGTHENED CSCE. IT MUST ALSO INCLUDE A RENEWED NATO. BORN IN THE COLD WAR, NATO WAS, AND REMAINS, A PURELY DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE. WITH THE COLD WAR OVER, NATO MUST NOW EVOLVE THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF PEACEKEEPING AS AN ADDITIONAL MISSION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE AS A LONG-TERM PROGRAM OF COOPERATION WITH ALL OF EUROPE'S DEMOCRACIES; AND THROUGH GRADUAL EXPANSION OVER TIME. THIS PROCESS MUST RESULT IN RUSSIA'S FULL INTEGRATION WITH THE WEST THROUGH YOUR FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN GATT AND THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION, THE PARIS CLUB AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS, YOUR POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE G-7 AS WELL AS THROUGH THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE COLLABORATION BETWEEN RUSSIA AND NATO. THAT COLLABORATION COULD POSSIBLY EVOLVE TOWARD MORE CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS, SUCH AS THOSE RAISED IN YOUR DECEMBER 3 LETTER CONCERNING NATO'S FUTURE RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA. OUR COMMON AIM SHOULD BE TO ACHIEVE A FULL INTEGRATION BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST -- INCLUDING STRENGTHENED LINKS WITH NATO -- WITH NO NEW DIVISIONS IN EUROPE.

could have had a full
I BELIEVE THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ^{had hoped that} MUST DEEPEN OUR BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF EUROPEAN SECURITY. I ~~HAVE ASKED~~ VICE PRESIDENT GORE ~~TO HAVE AN OPEN AND CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE WITH YOU WHEN HE IS IN MOSCOW NEXT WEEK. HE AND I WILL DISCUSS THIS MATTER INTENSIVELY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE.~~ I WOULD PROPOSE FURTHER THAT MINISTER KOZYREV AND SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER MEET IN JANUARY AND REGULARLY THEREAFTER TO UNDERTAKE AN INTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF OUR EUROPEAN SECURITY AGENDA. YOU AND I CAN BE IN TOUCH BY PHONE AND LETTER ON THIS AND OTHER ISSUES THROUGHOUT THIS PERIOD TO PREPARE FOR OUR NEXT SUMMIT IN MOSCOW.

BORIS, WE MUST NOT ALLOW THESE DIFFERENCES TO PERSIST. I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING YOUR COMMENTS ON THESE PROPOSALS AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.