

Cable

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 OSRI: RUEHMOA
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 LINE2: ZNY CCCCC ZZH
 LINE3: O 091729Z APR 93
 LINE4: FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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 ORIG: AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 TO: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9866
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 INFO: ****
 SUBJ: CODEL GEPHARDT MEETING WITH YELTSIN
 TEXT:

DECLASSIFIED
PER E.O. 13526

2016-0118-M-2 (1,47)
 vt 6/1/2023

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 04 MOSCOW 010697
 EXDIS
 E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PREL, PGOV, YO, RS
 SUBJECT: CODEL GEPHARDT MEETING WITH YELTSIN
 1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.
 2. SUMMARY: ON APRIL 7 CODEL GEPHARDT MET RUSSIAN
 PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN IN THE KREMLIN. THE U.S.
 DELEGATION EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR YELTSIN
 PERSONALLY, FOR REFORM IN RUSSIA AND FOR BIPARTISAN
 U.S. ASSISTANCE TO REFORM IN RUSSIA. FOLLOWING ARE
 THE MAIN POINTS YELTSIN MADE:
 -- AT THE VANCOUVER SUMMIT HE AND PRESIDENT CLINTON
 HAD AGREED ON A SERIES OF REAL ASSISTANCE MEASURES
 THAT COULD ACTUALLY BE IMPLEMENTED, UNLIKE SOME IN
 THE PAST THAT HAD BEEN MADE FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.
 THESE HAD CREATED SKEPTICISM AMONG THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE
 ABOUT ASSISTANCE.
 -- YELTSIN DISCUSSED "IRRITANTS" IN THE
 RELATIONSHIP, IN THE FORM OF OUTMODED COLD WAR
 RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE.
 -- YELTSIN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE HAD BEEN
 DIFFICULTIES WITH REFORM BUT HE PRAISED PROGRESS IN
 PRIVATIZATION AND SAID CONDITIONS WOULD IMPROVE THIS
 YEAR.
 -- YELTSIN WILL BE TRAVELLING THROUGHOUT RUSSIA TO
 PREPARE FOR THE UPCOMING APRIL 25 REFERENDUM. HE
 EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN A POSITIVE OUTCOME, NOTING
 THAT HIS SUPPORT LEVEL IS CURRENTLY RUNNING AT ABOUT
 60 PERCENT, BUT SAID HE WOULD RESIGN IF THE VOTE WENT
 AGAINST HIM.
 -- YELTSIN SAID HE AND PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD AGREED
 TO "INFLUENCE" UKRAINE TO GIVE UP NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND

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COMPLAINED ABOUT ALLEGED U.S. FOOT-DRAGGING IN TALKS ON THE SALE OF URANIUM.

-- ON YUGOSLAVIA, YELTSIN PRAISED THE VANCE-OWEN PLAN, SAID RUSSIA IS PRESSURING THE SERBS TO ACCEPT, AND ARGUED AGAINST THE USE OF FORCE IN YUGOSLAVIA AND AGAINST LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO. END SUMMARY.

3. YELTSIN OPENED THE MEETING BY NOTING HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE VAWCOUVER SUMMIT. HE SAID HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY A SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP AND PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING. MANY IMPORTANT DECISIONS HAD BEEN ACHIEVED AND MANY OF THESE WOULD ALSO COME BEFORE THE U.S. CONGRESS. YELTSIN COMPLAINED THAT IN THE PAST YEAR A NUMBER OF ASSISTANCE MEASURES HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED MAINLY FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES. THESE HAD NOT WORKED OUT AND HAD EVOKED A CERTAIN SKEPTICISM AMONG THE RUSSIAN POPULATION. THE MEASURES THAT HE HAD AGREED WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON, HOWEVER, ARE INTENDED TO BE THOSE THAT COULD ACTUALLY BE ACHIEVED. THERE IS A FIRST STAGE WHICH CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED NOW AND SUBSEQUENT STAGES THAT WOULD REQUIRE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. YELTSIN SAID THAT HE HAD RAISED A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT THE RUSSIANS CONSIDER IRRITANTS IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. YELTSIN ALSO NOTED THAT HE IS SOMETIMES CRITICIZED FOR DEALING TOO MUCH WITH THE U.S., BUT IT IS NATURAL FOR THE U.S. AND RUSSIA, AS THE TWO MAJOR NUCLEAR POWERS IN THE WORLD, TO TRY TO WORK TOGETHER FOR AGREEMENTS THAT WOULD BENEFIT THEIR COUNTRIES AND THE ENTIRE WORLD.

4. YELTSIN SAID THAT MOST OF THE IRRITANTS HE HAD RAISED CONSTITUTED LIMITATIONS ON RUSSIA'S ABILITY TO TRADE NORMALLY WITH THE U.S. THESE STEMMED FROM THE PAST COLD WAR ERA, SUCH AS THE 1959 CAPTIVE NATIONS ACT. YELTSIN EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS THAT MANY SUCH LIMITATIONS STILL REFERRED TO THE SOVIET UNION, AND SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE NEW DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA. YELTSIN SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AND THE U.S. PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS WANTED TO SEE A STRONG AND FREE RUSSIA BECOME AN EQUAL PARTNER WITH THE U.S. BUT MANY PEOPLE IN RUSSIA, INCLUDING EVEN INTELLECTUALS, SAY THAT THE U.S. IS NOT INTERESTED IN DEALING WITH RUSSIA AS AN EQUAL. YELTSIN POINTED OUT THAT RUSSIA SUPPORTS THE TRADE SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAQ AND LIBYA. RUSSIA HAD COMPLETELY CUT OFF TRADE AND TECHNOLOGICAL TIES WITH THESE COUNTRIES AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE TO ITSELF.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE U.S. STILL HAS LEGISLATION WHERE RUSSIA IS CONSIDERED A COMMUNIST COUNTRY. THIS IS DOUBLY STRANGE IF ONE
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TAGS: PREL, PGOV, YO, RS

SUBJECT: CODEL GEPHARDT MEETING WITH YELTSIN
CONSIDERS THAT IF YELTSIN LEAVES OFFICE IT REALLY
WILL BE THE COMMUNISTS WHO COME TO POWER.

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5. YELTSIN COMPLAINED THAT HE HAD THOUGHT HE HAD AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION TO REPEAL THE JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT BUT THAT LAW IS STILL IN EFFECT. NOTING THAT HE WAS DESCRIBING THE SITUATION FRANKLY, AS HE SAW IT, YELTSIN HOPED THAT THE CONGRESSMEN WOULD NOT TAKE OFFENSE. HE SAID THAT HE HAD GIVEN "BILL" A 5-PAGE LIST OF LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE WITH RUSSIA. "HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO TREAT A PARTNER LIKE THAT?" YELTSIN ASKED.

6. YELTSIN NOTED THAT RUSSIA HAD SPACE LAUNCH FACILITIES AT PLESETSK AND BAIKONAR AND IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO USE THESE FOR PROFITABLE LAUNCHES OF SATELLITES OF OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY USING THE RUSSIAN ADVANTAGE IN HEAVY LIFT CAPABILITY. RUSSIA COULD EARN OVER USD ONE BILLION ANNUALLY FROM SPACE LAUNCH SERVICES, BUT THE U.S. FORBIDS THIS.

7. YELTSIN CONTINUED THAT THERE ARE OVER 300 U.S. LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE WITH RUSSIA. OF COURSE, THESE COULD NOT ALL BE ELIMINATED OVERNIGHT, BUT CONGRESS COULD GRADUALLY AMEND AND REMOVE THESE LIMITS. THIS ACTION WOULD ALLOW RUSSIA THE ACCESS IT NEEDS TO THE U.S MARKET. YELTSIN ALSO SAID THAT A NUMBER OF UNRESOLVED "MILITARY-TECHNICAL" QUESTIONS REMAIN ON THE AGENDA, TO BE ADDRESSED WHEN RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTER GRACHEV VISITS THE U.S. IN JUNE.

8. TURNING TO DOMESTIC ISSUES, YELTSIN NOTED THAT REFORM IN RUSSIA IS PROCEEDING WITH DIFFICULTY, BUT IT HAS ONLY BEEN ONE YEAR SINCE REFORM BEGAN WITH THE LIBERALIZATION OF PRICES ON JANUARY 2, 1992. SINCE THAT TIME OVER 6000 PRIVATE ENTERPRISES HAD BEEN CREATED AND 5000 LARGER ENTERPRISES HAD BEEN CONVERTED INTO JOINT-STOCK ORGANIZATIONS. ON HIS WAY BACK FROM VANCOUVER, YELTSIN NOTED HE HAD VISITED ONE SUCH JOINT-STOCK ENTERPRISE, THE MAJOR ALUMINUM PLANT AT BRATSK. PEOPLE ARE BECOMING USED TO WORKING FOR THEMSELVES; THEY ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY ADJUSTING TO THE MARKET. OF COURSE PRICES HAVE GONE UP, BUT SO HAVE WAGES. MOST OF THE DECLINE IN PRODUCTION HAS BEEN IN MILITARY-RELATED ENTERPRISES. PEOPLE EXPECT THAT CONDITIONS WILL IMPROVE IN THE COMING YEAR.

9. YELTSIN CONCLUDED HIS OPENING REMARKS BY NOTING THAT HE AND PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD DISCUSSED 52 SEPARATE ISSUES AT VANCOUVER, INCLUDING THE JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF THE RUSSIAN IL-96M AIRCRAFT.

10. MAJORITY LEADER GEPHARDT RESPONDED BY EXPRESSING PLEASURE ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATION FOR THE VISIT AND PASSING ON CONDOLENCES TO YELTSIN FOR THE RECENT DEATH OF HIS MOTHER. GEPHARDT EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR THE COURAGE AND LEADERSHIP YELTSIN HAD DISPLAYED IN LEADING ECONOMIC AND DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN RUSSIA. GEPHARDT ALSO EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR THE COURAGE YELTSIN HAD DISPLAYED IN OPPOSING THE AUGUST COUP. THE PEOPLE OF THE U.S. WOULD NEVER FORGET THIS. THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL STAND BY YELTSIN IN HIS FURTHER EFFORTS TOWARD DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC REFORM. AT THE SUMMIT, PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD SAID THAT DEMOCRATIC REFORM CONSTITUTES THE BASIS FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE AND FOR

BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES. THE FINAL OUTCOME WOULD BE DECIDED BY THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE BUT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DO NOT INTEND TO BE BYSTANDERS. NOTING THAT HE BELIEVED ALL MEMBERS OF THE CODEL HAD VOTED FOR THE FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT, GEPHARDT SAID THE CONGRESS SUPPORTS THE MEASURES THAT PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD PROPOSED AT THE VANCOUVER SUMMIT. PARTNERSHIP WITH RUSSIA IS AN INVESTMENT IN THE RUSSIAN AND THE AMERICAN FUTURE. GEPHARDT CONCLUDED BY ASKING YELTSIN WHAT HE EXPECTED FROM THE APRIL 25 REFERENDUM AND WHAT HE WOULD BE DOING IN THE COMING DAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE REFERENDUM.

11. YELTSIN REPLIED THAT HE HAD PROPOSED THAT THE REFERENDUM CONSIST ONLY OF A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF. THE CONGRESS OF PEOPLES DEPUTIES, HOWEVER, HAD DECIDED TO HAVE FOUR QUESTIONS AND HAD ADAPTED THE LAW TO REQUIRE THAT 50 PERCENT OF ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS AND NOT JUST 50 PERCENT OF THOSE VOTING WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE QUESTIONS TO BE APPROVED. THE SUPREME SOVIET WOULD HAVE TO FIND SOME WAY TO RESOLVE
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THIS, BUT YELTSIN ADDED THAT HE IS INTENSIVELY PREPARING FOR THE REFERENDUM. IN THE COMING MONTH ALL HIS ACTIONS, INCLUDING THIS MEETING WITH THE CODEL, WOULD BE AIMED AT THE REFERENDUM. HE WOULD TRY TO COVER AS MUCH OF RUSSIA AS POSSIBLE TO LOOK PEOPLE IN THE EYE. ON FRIDAY (APRIL 9) HE WILL GO TO KEMEROVO AND ON SATURDAY (APRIL 10) TO THE "YAKUT REPUBLIC."

12. HE WOULD ALSO BE MEETING EACH DAY WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS GROUPS -- WITH STUDENTS, WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS, SCIENTISTS AND TEACHERS. IF THE VOTE WERE HELD TODAY, YELTSIN SAID HE WOULD GET OVER 60 PERCENT POSITIVE VOTES. YELTSIN SAID HIS PROBLEM IS TO KEEP HIS POLLS UP AT THIS LEVEL. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT THE OPPOSITION IS GAINING STRENGTH. THERE IS PRESSURE FROM THE OLD PARTY NOMENKLATURA, BUT ITS SOCIAL BASIS IS WEAK.

13. YELTSIN SAID HE WAS TELLING LOCAL SUPPORTERS TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF ALL FOUR QUESTIONS, INCLUDING FOR THE EARLY ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT. IF THE VOTE SHOWED A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENT, HE WOULD RESIGN EVEN THOUGH THIS IS NOT DIRECTLY REQUIRED. "I HAVE A CONSCIENCE," YELTSIN NOTED. THE PEOPLE, HOWEVER, UNDERSTAND THAT IF HE IS DEFEATED, A PRO-COMMUNIST REGIME WILL TAKE HIS PLACE, AND THEY DO NOT WANT TO REPEAT THE EXPERIENCE OF 74 YEARS UNDER A COMMUNIST REGIME. A NEGATIVE OUTCOME FOR THE REFERENDUM, YELTSIN CONCLUDED, WOULD BE SERIOUS NOT ONLY FOR RUSSIA, BUT FOR THE FSU, THE U.S. AND THE ENTIRE WORLD.

14. MAJORITY LEADER GEPHARDT SAID THE CONGRESS WOULD REVIEW THE RESTRICTIVE LAWS YELTSIN HAD MENTIONED AND WOULD TRY TO MAKE POSSIBLE CHANGES, CONSISTENT WITH

THE FACTS. MINORITY LEADER MICHEL, NOTING THAT THIS IS HIS FIFTH VISIT TO MOSCOW SINCE 1957, ENDORSED GEPHARDT'S REMARKS ON U.S. ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIA. DURING PREVIOUS VISITS, WHERE MICHEL SAID HE HAD MET BREZHNEV AND GORBACHEV, THE U.S. AND THE USSR HAD ALWAYS BEEN IN AN ADVERSARIAL RELATIONSHIP. TODAY THE SITUATION IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT AND MICHEL STRESSED THAT THE U.S. HAS A WARM REGARD FOR YELTSIN AND FOR ALL HE SYMBOLIZES. POINTING OUT THAT THE CODEL HAD JUST VISITED KIEV, WHERE IT HAD DISCUSSED THE ISSUE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN UKRAINE, WHICH IS PROBLEM FOR RUSSIA AND THE U.S., MICHEL ASKED YELTSIN HOW HE INTENDED TO RESOLVE THAT CONFRONTATION.

15. YELTSIN REPLIED THAT RUSSIA HAS REACHED FULL AGREEMENT WITH BELARUS AND KAZAKHSTAN THAT ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS BE UNDER RUSSIAN JURISDICTION AND BE SUBJECT TO START I AND START II LIMITS. UKRAINE IS NOT FOLLOWING THIS PATH. THIS ISSUE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT VANCOUVER AND A DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED TO "INFLUENCE" UKRAINE ON THE NUCLEAR QUESTION. YELTSIN SAID IT IS IMPORTANT TO PREVENT UKRAINE FROM BECOMING A NUCLEAR STATE. ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD BE MOVED TO RUSSIAN JURISDICTION FOR DESTRUCTION.

16. YELTSIN COMPLAINED THAT THE U.S. HAD REFUSED THREE TIMES TO SETTLE THE ISSUE OF THE SALE OF "URANIUM" IN THE U.S. (YELTSIN WAS APPARENTLY REFERRING TO LOW ENRICHED URANIUM (LEU)). THE U.S. IS CAUSING PROBLEMS BECAUSE DOE IS SEEKING TO MAINTAIN ITS MONOPOLY. THE ISSUE, ACCORDING TO YELTSIN, IS PRICE. THE U.S. HAD PROPOSED FIXING A PRICE FOR THE URANIUM WHICH IS WELL BELOW WHAT DOE WILL RESELL IT FOR. YELTSIN CITED FIGURES OF USD 1200/PER TON AND USD 800/PER TON IN THIS REGARD. NOTING FRUSTRATION BECAUSE RUSSIA HAD 500 TONS READY TO SELL (AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM), YELTSIN SAID THAT HE AND PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD "GIVEN AN ORDER" THAT THE ISSUE SHOULD BE DECIDED WITHIN A WEEK. YELTSIN DESCRIBED THIS AS A MATTER OF HIGH POLITICAL IMPORTANCE, THAT IS ALSO LINKED WITH THE

UPCOMING REFERENDUM.

17. MAJORITY WHIP BONIOR ASSOCIATED HIMSELF WITH THE REMARKS OF THE MAJORITY AND THE MINORITY LEADERS ON TRADE AND ASSISTANCE. BONIOR ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR RUSSIAN ASSISTANCE WITH MEASURES AGAINST LIBYA AND IRAQ. HE NOTED THAT IT IS BECOMING CLEAR TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT THE CATASTROPHE IN BOSNIA MUST END. BONIOR URGED YELTSIN TO USE HIS ~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 04 OF 04 MOSCOW 010697 EXDIS

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SUBJECT: CODEL GEPHARDT MEETING WITH YELTSIN
INFLUENCE WITH THE SERBS TO PRESSURE THE SERBS TO END THE CARNAGE.

18. YELTSIN REPLIED THAT RUSSIA HAD SUPPORTED THE U.S. AND UN EFFORTS IN YUGOSLAVIA. A RUSSIAN

BATTALION IS IN YUGOSLAVIA WITH UN FORCES. YELTSIN ADDED THAT THE SERBS, ESPECIALLY THE BOSNIAN SERBS, ARE VERY STUBBORN. RUSSIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHURKIN HAS JUST RETURNED TO BELGRADE TO PRESSURE THE SERBS TO ACCEPT THE VANCE/OWEN PLAN. RUSSIA CONSIDERS THIS A GOOD PLAN. NOTING THAT THE BOSNIAN SERBS ARE STILL SEEKING TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE V/O PLAN, YELTSIN SAID HE HAD ASKED CLINTON FOR A DELAY IN SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION TO GAIN MORE TIME TO SECURE ACCEPTANCE OF THE PLAN.

19. LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO, YELTSIN SAID, WOULD AGAIN UNLEASH WAR. IT WOULD BE BETTER TO CONTINUE JOINT EFFORTS TO TRY TO PRESSURE THE PARTIES TO ACCEPT THE PLAN. THE USE OF FORCE, HOWEVER, WOULD BE A MISTAKE. RUSSIA IS DEEPLY OPPOSED TO THE USE OF FORCE, SEEING HOW SUCH CONFLICTS HAVE ALREADY UNFOLDED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER USSR. ONLY PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS, WHICH WOULD TRY TO CREATE CORRIDORS SEPARATING THE SIDES, SHOULD BE EMPLOYED. RUSSIA HAD SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED SUCH METHODS IN SOUTH OSSETIA AND THE TRANS-DNIESTR REGION OF MOLDOVA. SENDING ADDITIONAL ARMS TO BOSNIA WOULD BE A MISTAKE BECAUSE THEY WOULD FALL INTO THE HANDS OF OTHER PARTIES, NOT JUST THE MUSLIMS.

20. REP GINGRICH SAID HE SUPPORTED BIPARTISAN AID FOR RUSSIA AND ASKED YELTSI ABOUT WHAT COULD BE DONE TO HELP DURING THE CODEL'S VISIT AND AFTER IT RETURNED TO WASHINGTON. YELTSIN REPLIED THAT THE RUSSIAN AND U.S. GROUPS AT VANCOUVER HAD WORKED ON THIS QUESTION AND HE HAD PERSONALLY GIVEN TO PRESIDENT CLINTON A DOCUMENT ON THIS MATTER.

21. COMMENT: YELTSIN SPOKE STRONGLY AND WITH CONVICTION, WITHOUT REFERRING TO BRIEFING PAPERS. THE DELEGATION THOUGHT YELTSIN WAS IN VERY GOOD FORM EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES THOUGHT HE SEEMED SOMEWHAT TIRED, HOWEVER, AND ON A FEW OCCASIONS APPEARED TO BE GROPING FOR THE RIGHT WORD. HIS WORDS AND MANNER EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN THE OUTCOME OF THE UPCOMING REFERENDUM AND IN HIS OWN ABILITY AND DETERMINATION TO CARRY OUT HIS REFORM POLICIES. END COMMENT.

22. CODEL CLEARED THIS CABLE BEFORE ITS DEPARTURE.
COLLINS

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CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

DIST:

PRT: KYLE SIT

SIT: BURNS GATI GOTTEMOELLER PONEMAN SANNER SUM SUM2 VAX

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PRT: BERGER FUERTH ITOH KENNEY KYIM LAKE SIT SODERBERG

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