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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: OVIP (BAKER, JAMES A III)  
SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:  
MOSCOW, MAY 17

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: JAMES A. BAKER, III  
SUBJECT: MY MEETINGS WITH SHEVARDNADZE  
1. I WANTED TO GIVE YOU A SHORT REPORT OF WHERE WE  
ARE AND SOME OF MY IMPRESSIONS OF WHAT'S GOING ON  
HERE. TO BEGIN WITH, WE'RE REALLY SLUGGING IT OUT ON  
THE ARMS CONTROL ISSUES. WE'VE MADE SOME HEADWAY ON  
ALCMS, BUT THE GAP IN SLCMS REMAINS. THE GOING IS  
SLOW ON CFE, BUT I MAY HAVE MADE A LITTLE HEADWAY  
WITH SHEVARDNADZE THIS EVENING. I'LL KNOW MORE  
TOMORROW AFTER SEEING GORBACHEV. ON CW I THINK  
WE'RE CLOSE TO A DEAL THAT REALLY WOULD ALLOW US TO  
IMPLEMENT YOUR INITIATIVE, AND THAT'S NO SMALL FEAT.  
I THINK WE ARE PROBABLY ALSO ON TRACK TO GET A  
STATE IENT ON NUCLEAR AND MISSILE PROLIFERATION, AND

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THE NUCLEAR TESTING PROTOCOLS ARE COMPLETED.

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2. IN OTHER AREAS, WE ARE MOVING AHEAD ON A LIST OF POSSIBLE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS (LONG-TERM GRAIN AGREEMENT, MARITIME TRANSPORTATION, CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND INFORMATION, STUDENT EXCHANGES, ETC.) INDIVIDUALLY, THEY MAY NOT BE DRAMATIC, BUT CUMULATIVELY, THEY REVEAL SOMETHING ABOUT THE BROADENING AND OPENING OF THE RELATIONSHIP. OUR ABILITY TO SIGN THE COMMERCIAL TRADE AGREEMENT -- ONE THAT HAS NOW BEEN FULLY NEGOTIATED -- WILL OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LITHUANIA AND THE BALTICS. THE FIRST SIGN OF POSITIVE MOVEMENT OCCURRED TONIGHT IN THE GORBACHEV-PRUNSKIENE MEETING. THE FACT OF THE MEETING REPRESENTS A GOOD THING, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO SEE WHAT IT ACTUALLY PRODUCED. I'M SEEING GORBACHEV AND PRUNSKIENE TOMORROW AND I SHOULD HAVE A BETTER FIX ON WHETHER OR NOT WE MAY BE CLOSE TO A REAL DIALOGUE AND A REAL PROCESS -- ONE THAT HAS RELEVANCE FOR THE OTHER REPUBLICS AS WELL.

3. THE ONLY REGIONAL ISSUES I'VE DISCUSSED AT THIS POINT ARE AFGHANISTAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA. ON AFGHANISTAN, WE'RE ALSO GETTING CLOSE TO A COMMON POSITION. I THINK IF YOU AND GORBACHEV WERE TO ISSUE A JOINT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, IT MIGHT SEND A USEFUL SIGNAL TO EVERYONE, INCLUDING ALL THE AFGHAN PARTIES. HERE AGAIN, WE'RE NOT THERE YET, AND WE STILL HAVE DIFFERENCES ON NAJIB'S POSITION DURING THE TRANSITION AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO AN INTERIM AUTHORITY, BUT WE MAY BE ABLE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT. I'LL WORK ON GORBACHEV ON THIS ONE BECAUSE I SENSE HE'S MORE WILLING TO CUT THIS ONE LOOSE.

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4. ON CENTRAL AMERICA, I TOLD SHEVARDNADZE WE'D LOOK FAVORABLY ON THE SOVIET UNION BECOMING A PART OF THE G-24 AID EFFORT IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, PROVIDED (1) THEY MAINTAIN THEIR ASSISTANCE TO MRS. CHAMORRO AND (2) THE CUBANS STOP THEIR MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENCY IN EL SALVADOR AND PROMOTE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT THERE. SHEVARDNADZE REACTED ENTHUSIASTICALLY -- THE IDEA OF BEING INCLUDED IN A G-24 EFFORT APPEALS, IMPLYING GROWING SOVIET INVOLVEMENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY. HE SAID

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THEY'D MAINTAIN THEIR OIL SUPPLIES AND ASSISTANCE LEVELS TO NICARAGUA, AND THEY'D WORK HARD TO GET THE CUBANS TO STOP. WE'LL SEE. NOTHING HAPPENS FROM OUR STANDPOINT UNLESS THE CUBAN ARMS SUPPLIES AND SUBVERSION STOP.

5. SOME CONCLUDING IMPRESSIONS: FIRST, I DO THINK THE MILITARY IS PLAYING A BIGGER BUREAUCRATIC ROLE. SHEVARDNADZE FELT COMPELLED TO START OFF READING HIS WHOLE ARMS CONTROL BRIEF IN FRONT OF HIS WHOLE DELEGATION -- AS IF TO SHOW HE COULD BE TRUSTED TO MAKE THE POINTS. HE DOESN'T SEEM WILLING TO MAKE MANY DECISIONS OR SHOW MUCH INITIATIVE. I STILL BELIEVE THEY'LL COME AROUND IN THE END BECAUSE GORBACHEV WANTS A SUCCESSFUL SUMMIT, BUT THEY ARE CLEARLY GOING TO GRANT THE MILITARY EVERY CHANCE TO FEEL INCLUDED AND TO SHOW THEM WHAT COULD WORK AND WHAT WOULDN'T WORK WITH US. SECOND, I FEEL SHEVARDNADZE IS DISTRACTED AND A LITTLE OVERWHELMED BY EVERYTHING. THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, THE PUBLIC MISTRUST, THE SENSE OF LOSING CONTROL, THE FEAR OF THE NATIONALITY ISSUE, AND CONCERNS ABOUT GERMANY ALL ARE WEIGHING VERY HEAVILY. AGAIN, YOU HAVE TO ASK WITH THESE KINDS OF MONUMENTAL PROBLEMS, HOW EASY IS IT TO THINK ABOUT ALCMS? AND DO THEY REALLY BELIEVE THEY CAN MANAGE? THIRD, TO FILL THE IDEOLOGICAL VACUUM, I WONDER WHETHER THEY MIGHT NOT BE TURNING

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TO TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN VALUES, INCLUDING RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY. SHEVARDNADZE TOOK ME TO THE ZAGORST MONASTERY TODAY, THE HISTORICAL SEAT OF RUSSIAN OTHODOXY. HE LISTENED AS THE ARCHBISHOP TALKED OF THE NEED TO HAVE PEOPLE BELIEVE IN SOMETHING, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHILDREN TURNING TO RELIGION, AND THE EXISTENCE OF, AS HE PUT IT, AT LEAST 70 MILLION BELIEVERS IN THE SOVIET UNION. SHEVARDNADZE DID LITTLE TO QUESTION THE ARCHBISHOP AND SEEMED TO ACCEPT MUCH OF WHAT HE HEARD. HE ALSO KNEW THIS VISIT WOULD RECEIVE A LOT OF COVERAGE WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION. I DON'T WANT TO MAKE TOO MUCH OF THIS, BUT YOU HAVE A LEADERSHIP THAT NEEDS TO BECOME MORE CREDIBLE AND LEGITIMATE -- AND WE MAY BE SEEING A MOVE TO IDENTIFY WITH TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN VALUES.

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