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File Folder STRATEGY PAPERS [1984]

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ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
11590	PAPER	DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS <i>R 4/14/2011 F2006-114/11</i>	5	7/26/1984	B1
11591	PAPER	NEGOTIATION AND STRATEGY <i>R 4/14/2011 F2006-114/11</i>	2	ND	B1

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July 26, 1984

Dealing with the Soviets

I. Where We Stand

-- In the past four years, we have managed to halt what had become a worrisome pro-Soviet shift in the global "correlation of forces." On our watch, "containment" has become an operational reality instead of a pious slogan.

-- Likewise, the strictly damage-limiting objective of detente -- to "manage" the emergence of the Soviet Union as a global superpower -- has been supplemented by a new determination to resist Moscow's demands for unilateral advantage.

-- These changes have been accompanied by what our critics call a "deterioration" in U.S.-Soviet relations. In fact, our ability to meet the Soviet challenge is greater than at any time in recent memory. There is clear evidence that Moscow knows this and has become more sensitive to the costs and risks of continuing a cutthroat competition.

-- More concretely, we can -- and should -- take credit for the following successes:

- o We have made real (though still insufficient) headway in redressing the military balance, restoring our economic vigor and our national self-confidence.
- o We have demonstrated a renewed willingness to use covert and overt force in the "grey area" competition (Grenada, Lebanon, Central America, Afghanistan, etc.).
- o We have reconfirmed the cohesion of the anti-Soviet coalition of the democratic nations and China.
- o We have stimulated and been able to capitalize on rising doubts about Moscow's reliability as a friend and ally (Grenada, Iraq, Angola, Mozambique).

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- o We have put and kept Moscow on the diplomatic defensive (INF, START, CW, Vienna).
- o We have cast doubt on Moscow's claim that "there is no international question that can be settled without Soviet participation" (Southern Africa).
- o We have reinforced Moscow's "isolation" within the Communist world (improving U.S. relations with China, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, etc.).

II. Opportunities

-- Our primary objective in a second term will be to consolidate and build on these achievements, thereby further narrowing Moscow's opportunities for self-aggrandizement.

-- At the same time, we will want to be alert and to probe for signs that Moscow is willing to deescalate the competition and take meaningful steps to stabilize East-West relations.

-- Contrary to conventional wisdom, the continuing leadership transition in the Kremlin may be conducive to a modification of established Soviet policies and priorities and create further incentives for international self-restraint:

- o This is what happened in the post-Stalin succession struggle, and it could happen again.
- o While there is no way we can determine (or even accurately monitor) the jockeyings for power within the Kremlin, we can help to ensure that would-be militants face an uphill struggle and more moderate elements can make a plausible case.

-- What is required, above all, is continued firmness and resolve. It is illusory to think that the Soviets will moderate their behavior in the absence of countervailing power. We must further increase our military capabilities and convince Moscow that it will lose a continuing arms race.

-- Our demonstrations of military prowess must be coupled with political overtures and negotiating initiatives that convey a sincere willingness to take account of legitimate Soviet security concerns and to reach equitable agreements. Otherwise, the competition will escalate to increasingly dangerous and, for us, unsustainable levels.

III. Negotiations

-- One of the strengths of Soviet foreign policy has always been its steady, patient determination. The Soviets have a long-term strategy. We must have as well.

-- Moscow's outrageous behavior makes it tempting to treat the Soviet Union as an international pariah and limit diplomatic contacts and communications to an irreducible minimum. This is the more tempting because more intensive dialogue can create dangerous illusions among susceptible Western publics. Nonetheless, this is a temptation we must resist. Negotiations -- and negotiating flexibility -- are crucial ingredients of our overall strategy:

- o Some agreements with the Soviet Union would be in our interest. (Similarly, with other adversaries Vietnam on MIA, Cuba on Marielitos, Nicaraguans on ways of halting subversion, etc.)
- o In such cases, we must put forward negotiable proposals and be prepared to make reasonable compromises and trade-offs.
- o Serious diplomatic exchanges and credible offers to negotiate are essential for putting relations with Moscow on a more stable basis and reducing the risk of unnecessary confrontation.
- o They are also essential in order to retain domestic and allied support for our overall strategy. Over the long run, Western publics will not tolerate the absence of good-faith efforts to reach agreements.

-- Even in the near term, standing pat helps the Soviets put us on the defensive:

- o Pressures build up and force us to move. The move we make loses some of its political impact because people believe we were forced into it.
- o To some extent we lose control of the process and leave the initiative in the hands of our opponents.

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-- We must not permit the prospect of reaching agreement in some areas (if it in fact materializes) to inhibit our reaction to Soviet encroachments on our interests in other areas. We must compete while negotiating and be ready to confront not only periodic episodes of Soviet misconduct but an uninterrupted Soviet effort to prevail in a long-term global contest.

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Negotiation and Strategy

- A strategy toward the Soviet Union, or toward any Communist adversary (Nicaragua, Cuba, Vietnam), must be sustainable on a fixed course over the long term.
- An offensive strategy blends together sticks and carrots, penalties and incentives:
 - o The sticks are military and economic strength.
 - o The carrot is: a positive political program that shows willingness to resolve concrete problems where possible. This means negotiation. *presumes Soviet interest in solving problem*
- Negotiation should be seen as an instrument of strategy:
 - o We have objectives of our own, which constitute our negotiating position.
 - o Some agreements may be in our interest: (e.g., a satisfactory START agreement with the Soviets; talks with Vietnam on MIA; Nicaraguan agreement to our terms; Cuban agreement to solve Marielito problem).
- In a democracy, the public expects its government to be doing whatever it can for peace. The Soviets can exploit this. A sustainable strategy therefore requires that we play the negotiating game:
 - o If we stand pat, the Soviets can put us on the defensive. If we then make moves under pressure, to some extent we lose control over the process and the initiative is left in the hands of our opponents.
 - o It is better to have a more active negotiating posture which gives us the initiative and allows us to keep our opponents off balance.
 - o E.g., in Central America, the positive side of our program (support for Duarte, Contadora, Managua talks, Marielito talks) is keeping our opponents off balance and our public support more solid. Similarly in Southern Africa.
 - o Putting forward a positive arms control program was good strategy.

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- We have to sustain this kind of a strategy. But there are incessant pressures to vacillate. People on our side who should know better are constantly undermining the negotiations side of our strategy.
 - o The soft liners say that all our problems can be solved by talking to our adversaries; that negotiations need not be backed up by strength and pressure. This is nonsense.
 - o The hard liners say that we shouldn't negotiate at all. But in a democracy, the people won't stand for this. To pursue a policy of strength without negotiations is not sustainable; the Congress will deny us the programs we need.
- And when negotiations are working for us, the critics on our own side keep trying to turn them off when the other side behaves abominably. Clearly we must react to the behavior of our adversaries, but this should not result in wild swings up and down in our own behavior in response to our opponent's actions. There may be a point where the Soviet's treatment of Sakarov should affect our willingness to talk about arms control; and a point where Nicaragua's treatment of the Church should cause us to pull pack from talks with them. But we cannot go up and down with every change in our adversaries' behavior.
- Our strategy presupposes that our adversaries are nasty and will do outrageous things. It cannot and should not change every time they do something outrageous:
 - o Jimmy Carter was shocked by Afghanistan; he withdrew SALT II.
 - o Ronald Reagan was not surprised by KAL; he kept Geneva talks going.
- We can always use our adversaries' outrageous conduct to build support behind our firm negotiating positions. But to have relations so vulnerable to shocks means further loss of control over events.