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Luncheon:
IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

Address:
“THE NEW WORLD”
HOSTED BY ARCHER DANIELS MIDLAND COMPANY

MR. SCHLESINGER: Ladies and gentlemen, if you will continue with the dessert and coffee, and if all will attempt to be as quiet as possible, we shall continue with our program. I want to emphasize that this is one of our two program highlights: this luncheon in honor of President Richard Nixon. *[Applause.]* And it is my privilege to introduce our honored guest.

We deeply regret, Mr. President, that Mrs. Nixon could not be here with us today. She is a wonderful woman, and she was a perfect First Lady — always supportive, never obtrusive. Next Monday, as many of you know, will be Mrs. Nixon's 80th birthday. *[Applause.]* And, as has regularly been the case for Patricia Ryan Nixon, it will immediately be followed shortly thereafter by Saint Patrick's Day. *[Laughter.]* And, Mr. President, I hope that you will convey to Mrs. Nixon the best wishes of all of us. *[Applause.]*

I mentioned earlier this morning that, when the old order changeth, we are rarely able to anticipate the further changes that will ensue as a consequence. We are rarely able to anticipate the future shape of the world. I do not believe that is so with our luncheon speaker, Mr. Nixon.

He entered office with a clear, strategic design of what he wished to accomplish in the realm of foreign policy. Let me cite three examples.

He had a clear understanding of the difficulties but also the promise of arms control — and a notion of the way to reach agreement with the Soviet Union. While the United States was obliged to continue in the arms competition, nonetheless it was folly for both sides to continue to pile up redundant arms. Mr. Nixon recognized that the United States could no longer maintain strategic dominance, and he drew the necessary conclusions. At that time, he foresaw, as you will recall, an era of negotiation and at the end, as we can see now, a generation of peace. He also foresaw that the world inevitably would become far more multipolar than it had been during the period of military confrontation.

Second, the opening to China, long overdue, culminating in 1972 in the Shanghai Communique. This was a major advance in terms of our relations with several countries. Yet, it was not without its element of realpolitik — in that it created a triangular relationship with the United States at its apex.

Third, Mr. Nixon had the determination that the United States facilitate movement by the parties in the Middle East away from naked antagonism and conflict. First, there was the Rogers Plan. Then, after the Yom Kippur War, came the opportunity to bring about disengagement and the prelude to subsequent moves, some of which continue to bear fruit today.



Those actions that I have cited required not only insight, they required courage. That is perhaps the single strongest element in Mr. Nixon's character — a willingness to accept political risk. Of the three initiatives that I have cited, you will note that two of them went against the predilection of his own party.

Mr. Nixon's place in history will be undergirded by his acknowledged skills in foreign policy. Today, many foreign leaders feel it worthwhile to make a pilgrimage to benefit from his enormous experience.

Our speaker is a man who has weathered a storm that would have been fatal to most other men. And today, as he himself nears 80 years of age, he remains amazingly and vibrantly in touch, as his talk will make abundantly clear.

Mr. President, tell us about the new world.

[Applause.]

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you very much. (Continued applause.) Thank you very much. May I express my appreciation to Secretary Schlesinger for his much-too-generous introduction, and particularly for his reference to Mrs. Nixon. She would like to have been here, but I can assure you she is watching on CNN right now. *[Laughter.]* I also want to say that we don't plan to have a big party for her 80th birthday, so I consider this to be the celebration of that 80th birthday. And I know we all want to send, as you have already by your applause when she was mentioned, our best wishes to her. I also want to express appreciation particularly - not only to Jim Schlesinger and Dimitri Simes, but all of those who have participated in and who have made this conference possible.

We meet at a very challenging time in America's history. We meet at a time when we have been through three years of events that have changed the world. I refer to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, and to our victory over aggression in the Gulf War. As a result of those events, we live in a new world, and the question now is: what should the leadership position of the United States be in that new world?

Other participants in this conference and the various forums, some of which I will attend and I hope all of you can attend, will address what the policy of the United States should be in this new world ideally.

I am going to direct my remarks in this political year not just to what our policy should be, but what is possible politically. If you follow political campaigns, it's rather standard practice for the candidate to get up and say, "This is the most important election in history." I know, I said it a lot of times. Of course every campaign is very important to the candidate. In this case it's very important to the nation.

Over the past 44 years I have had the opportunity to observe 12 presidential elections; I have been a candidate in five of them. In that period of time there has never been a campaign in which foreign policy was less discussed, and there has never been a time in which foreign policy was more important, because whomever is President in the next four years will provide the leadership that will make the difference as to whether peace and freedom survive in the world. Since that is the case, it is vitally important that foreign policy be front and center in our considerations.

We have been on a rollercoaster ride as far as foreign policy is concerned. After the communist victory in Vietnam the attitude of most Americans was that there was nothing we could do in foreign policy. After

our victory in the Gulf War, the conventional wisdom was that we could do anything. After the collapse of communism, particularly in the Soviet Union, the conventional wisdom was that there was nothing left to do.

As a result of these events, we see developing a new isolationism in both political parties. The general theme which runs through the new isolationists is that the United States no longer should play or can play a leadership role in the world. There are some who say we can't afford to, there are others who say it is not necessary for us to play that role, and there are still others who say that others should play that role.

When we consider what they are saying, it reminds me of a pickup ragtime band. Some are marching to different drummers, some are singing off-key, but all of them have the same tune, the same theme — come home America.

Even some of those who have been the strongest supporters of a strong foreign policy role for the United States now say it is time to turn our efforts inward. We can't afford it, as far as foreign policy is concerned. Our domestic problems are so great that we should concentrate on them.

What they fail to realize is that foreign and domestic policy are like Siamese twins: neither can survive without the other. The American people will not support a strong foreign policy unless we have a strong policy dealing with problems at home. And what they fail to realize is that foreign policy has an impact on what we do at home. We can't be at peace in a world of wars, and we can't have a healthy American economy in a sick world economy. For example, we all can recall — I can, at least, you've read about it, I lived through it — the Great Depression. It began as a recession in 1931, became a depression in 1932 in great part because the United States adopted a protectionist policy under the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act.

We come now to the fundamental question: Is it necessary for the United States to play a role in this new world since all of these events have occurred? Those who answer 'no' begin with what I think is a false premise. It goes something like this: The Cold War is over, and we have won it. It is time to come home. That's only half true. It is true that the communists have lost the Cold War. It is not true, however, that the free world has won it.

What we have to realize is that the Cold War was not the traditional war over territory by great powers. It was a war of ideas, the ideas of communism versus the ideas of freedom. We can see that war most clearly in Russia where the seeds of the idea of communism were first planted. The Russian people reaped the bitter harvest from those seeds. As a result, the Russian people rejected communism. They rejected it because it didn't work.

But now, freedom is on trial, and if freedom does not work, the Russian people are not going to return to communism because it failed. But they will turn to a new despotism in which they trade their freedom for security and put their future in the hands of those who promise to make sure that they can have the necessities of life. This new despotism, shorn of the baggage of the dying faith of communism, but still committed to the imperialist Russian nationalism which has been traditional in Russian history, could be a far more dangerous threat to peace and freedom in the world, and particularly to peace, than was the old Soviet totalitarianism. And it is that, therefore, that we have to address today.

Even more important, he has political courage. He risked his immense popularity by adopting policies which let the ruble float. This led to astronomical inflation. This has caused enormous hardship, and has brought his popularity down. But it was a necessary first step in moving from a command to a free market economy.

Yeltsin is the most pro-Western leader in Russian history. He deserves our help.

To summarize, it is important for us to recognize that Yeltsin is going to need very substantial economic aid from the West. Not just the United States, I emphasize, but from the West. The New York Times in its editorial today estimated that the cost of the aid to cover some of these items that I have mentioned and others would be approximately \$20 billion a year over a period of five years. That's a great deal of money. However, the London Financial Times, in its report yesterday pointed out that \$20 billion a year has to be compared with 20 times that much that the West spent last year, before the collapse of communism, to defend against Soviet communism. This puts it all in perspective.

The major burden for meeting the needs of Russia and the other countries that need help must be carried by the nations in Europe and in Japan that we helped after World War II. But the United States is the richest and strongest nation in the world and we must provide the leadership. We cannot provide the leadership unless we have a seat at the table. To paraphrase Ben Stein in another context, you can't have a seat at the table unless you have chips to put in the pot. And we have to have enough chips to be a serious

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contender for that leadership role.

Now we come to a fundamentally basic question in a campaign year. What's in it for us? What's in it for us to help Russia, Ukraine, the other independent nations in the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe? The answer is that a great deal is in it for us.

Charity, it is said, begins at home. I agree. But aid to Russia is not charity. We have to realize that if Yeltsin fails the alternative is not going to be somebody better, it is going to be somebody infinitely worse. If Yeltsin fails, if freedom fails, the new despotism which will take its place will mean that the peace dividend is finished, we will have to rearm, and that's going to cost infinitely more than would the aid that we provide at the present time. It would also mean, if Yeltsin fails, if freedom fails in Russia, that the great tide of freedom that has been sweeping over the world in these last three years will begin to ebb and that dictatorship, rather than democracy, will be the wave of the future.

On the other hand, if freedom succeeds in Russia, Russia will be an example for others, particularly in China, in the other remaining communist countries and in the non-communist dictatorships around the world — an example for others to follow, a powerful magnet drawing them to freedom.

It would mean too that with freedom succeeding in Russia, we would live in a totally new world with all that could mean to all the people of the world and particularly to us in the United States. Just think. For seventy years, communist Russia has been trying to export communism around the world. If Yeltsin and his reforms succeed, democratic free Russia will be exporting the goods and the ideas of freedom around the world. And that means that, in the years ahead, this will have an impact going far beyond Russia, far beyond Europe, all over the world. Economically speaking, it means that the new Russia, with all of the production it will be able to have with a free economy, will provide great new markets for the products of the United States. That means billions of dollars in trade and potentially millions of jobs.

It also means — if Yeltsin succeeds, if democracy survives — that our children and grandchildren will be freed from the fear of a possible world nuclear war that now haunts them, because democracies do not begin wars.

We come now, however, to another political question, and I understand that people are interested in politics these days. The political question is this: All of the pollsters are telling their candidates, don't tackle foreign policy, and particularly not foreign aid, because foreign aid is poison as a political issue. They're wrong and history proves it.

I recall vividly what Harry Truman did in 1947. Let me lay the foundation of what he did and why. Harry Truman's popularity in January of that year was 35 percent. The congress was overwhelmingly Republican. He had suffered an enormous defeat in the election of the 80th Congress in the previous November. And yet, I remember as if it were yesterday, Harry Truman — jaunty, some said a little cocky — coming down before a joint session of the Congress and asking for millions of dollars in aid to Greece and Turkey to prevent communist subversion and possible communist aggression. It was a very tough vote for two very young and both, as history later indicated, rather ambitious young congressmen.

The liberal Democrats in Jack Kennedy's Massachusetts district were against military foreign aid. The conservative Republicans in my California district were against all foreign aid. However, after considering

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GOV. BELYAKOV (through interpreter): Dear Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honor for me to take part in this conference, which I am convinced will play a crucial role in the history of international politics. I listened with great attention to what President Nixon had to say, and I endorse 100 percent every word of his speech. Many years ago, President Nixon proposed to put an end to the Cold War. And if our politicians listened to him at that time, this conference would not be needed today. But it was a different time.

Now Russia has different leaders which want to give Russian people a kind of life which is enjoyed in so many other places in the world, and first and foremost, this is the President of Russia, Boris Yeltsin. Six months ago, I was appointed by President Yeltsin the Governor of the St. Petersburg region. We have a very difficult time proceeding with our reform, but we remain optimistic. We remain optimistic because we are supported by such people as Mr. Nixon. And I want to tell all of you and American people in general, please listen to what the wisest of your statesmen had to say. This is a guarantee for your future, for your children and grandchildren because relations between Russia and America will determine everything that is happening in the world.

And in recognition of everything President Nixon has done for the people of Russia, I want to give him a certificate and pronounce him in the name of my government an honorary citizen of the St. Petersburg region. *[Laughter and Applause.]*

And also, a small present, a painting which was prepared by artists from Volkkov in our province.

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you very much. *[Applause.]*

GOV. BELYAKOV: I wish you excellent health and many years of productive life. Thank you so much. Thank you very much. *[Applause.]*

PRESIDENT NIXON: Bol'shoe spasibo. Thank you. *[Applause.]*

Well, Mr. Governor, I am very touched by your presentation. I want to tell all of our guests here today that I've been to his city. I was there when it was Leningrad. I remember it very well. It's a magnificent city. And all of you, when you have the chance to travel, must go not only to Moscow, you must go there. And while I'm talking, don't miss Kiev and a few other places. *[Laughter.]* For Dr. Brzezinski's sake I have to make that point. *[Laughter.]*

But in any event, I want to say, too, that I wish he hadn't done this on television because Mrs. Nixon has seen that he gave it to me. Otherwise I'd take it home as a gift. *[Laughter.]*

And I want to also point out that St. Petersburg is very significant because that, as you recall, is where the Bolshevik Revolution began, and it's very significant that is where the revolution of freedom is moving so strongly today.

I remember when I was there with Mrs. Nixon back in 1959, when I was Vice President. We saw the Leningrad Opera perform. It would now be the St. Petersburg Opera, or perhaps we'd call it a ballet. And they had a performance of "Spartacus." It was a magnificent performance. There was one difference, however. At the end in their performance, the slaves won. *[Laughter.]* I can only say now that we can be sure the slaves, whether previously under the czars or under communism, have won, because free Russia

is going to survive.

[Applause.]

Mr. Simes: This completes our luncheon section. We will have dinner tickets after the last session. Unfortunately, because the space is very limited, the tickets will be available only to those who already registered for dinner. But everyone who is registered will be accommodated.

And we will see you in fifteen minutes. They will prepare the room, and we will proceed on to our next session on Europe, chaired by Professor Brzezinski. Thank you.