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 forms, 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 Stats 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.

So let us turn to Russia. In turning to Russia, as I was saying to Dr. Brzezinski during lunch, that does not mean that I believe we should ignore what is happening in Ukraine and other former Soviet republics and the newly independent nations of Eastern Europe. I use Russia only as the prime example of the problem. What I say about Russia would apply to the others as well.

As we look at Russia today, the question somebody asked me at the table was, Is it going to work? Is freedom going to survive? The answer is it is going to be a very close-run thing.

It is going to be close-run because there are many minus factors at this time. Among them, as Dimitri Simes has pointed out in recent article, corruption is rampant. We have the problem of ethnic quarrels. We have the problem of enormous suffering because of the changes that have been made in the attempt to build a free market society in Russia.

One of the major reasons that there is a serious question as to whether freedom can succeed in Russia is the lack of a management class. When I say the lack of a management class, that indicates why the Marshall Plan analogy will not work, because when we look at Russia and when we compare the situation in Europe, and for that matter, in Japan at the end of World War II, five years of war did not destroy the management class in Western Europe or in Japan. Seventy years of totalitarian communism did destroy the management class in Russia. And therefore we have to have a different approach than the Marshall Plan. Those are the negatives.

There are some positive factors which we sometimes overlook. One is that Russia is a very rich country, rich in resources and rich in its people. It is a highly industrialized society. The Russian people are a great people, they are a strong people. Ninety-five percent of the Russian people are literate. Ninety percent have the equivalent of a high school education. Russia produces some of the great scientists, the great engineers, particularly in military activities. Some people forget that the first man in space was not an American, it was a Russian.

There's another factor on the plus side, which is often overlooked. Pushkin in the 19th century wrote that rebellions in Russia tend to be senseless and violent. What is particularly significant about this revolution is that it was neither violent nor senseless. This is to the great credit of both Gorbachev and Yeltsin

The major factor on the plus side, however, is that Russia, has a strong leader. There is a tendency to underestimate Boris Yeltsin. Some say that politically, he isn't democratic enough; and others say that intellectually he is not smart enough; and that socially he is not smooth enough.

I have seen many great leaders over the past 44 years. I would rate both Gorbachev and Yeltsin as political heavyweights. Both were born as peasants. Gorbachev became a man of the world; Yeltsin remained a man of the people. And Yeltsin right now must never forget that.

As he moves onto the world scene, he must always remember that if he is going to change the world, he first has to change Russia. He has to change it from dictatorship to democracy. He has to change it from a command economy to a free market economy. And if he is going to be able to do that, he is going to need help. The question is: should we provide that help?

Let's look at the positive factors as far as Yeltsin is concerned. Yeltsin has demonstrated his physical

courage by standing on top of a tank and facing down a gang of card-carrying killers who were trying to run a Stalinist coup.

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.

He is one who, unlike Gorbachev, if you read Gorbachev's first column in the New York Times a few days ago, has repudiated not just communism but socialism as well. He has vetoed all of the foreign aid programs that he inherited from Gorbachev, which in the year 1990 took \$15 billion from the Russian budget to provide aid to a number of countries including Cuba which were antagonistic to the West and to the United States. And we all know that in the field of arms control, he not only has matched President Bush's courageous initiatives; he exceeded them.

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

What does he need? He needs a number of things. Just to tick off a few of them, he needs help from the IMF and other sources, and that will take billions of dollars, to stabilize the ruble. He needs more open markets for exports which Russia would want to make, the new Russia, to the West and to other parts of the world. He needs humanitarian aid. And there needs to be a single Western-led organization which would assess all of the needs and then would develop a program for working with private enterprise and with governments to meet those needs.

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.

Now we come to the hard political questions. What does the United States do? How do we meet this problem, particularly when we are in the midst of a presidential campaign and in the middle of a recession? The first argument that is made, and it's one that is well taken, is that the United States has carried this burden long enough. It is time for others to carry it. After World War II we provided aid to our allies and also to our defeated enemies and enabled them to recover from World War II. Now it is time for those that we helped then to assume the burden of helping Russia, the other independent countries in the former Soviet Union and those in Eastern Europe recover from the Cold War. They are right.

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

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

it, we both voted for it, and a majority in the Republican House and Senate, voted for that program and that was the program which later was developed into the Marshall Plan and later into NATO, which not only contained communism but bought the time that was essential for communism to fail as it inevitably did fail last year in the Soviet Union as well as in Eastern Europe two years before.

The following year, Harry Truman who had been at 35 percent in January of 1947, won the election for President. What is more important is that a Democratic President supported by a Republican Congress provided aid to Greece and Turkey, which was the indispensable step toward containing communism and that eventually let to the victory of freedom in Russia and the rest of the Soviet Union. Today a Republican President with a Democratic Congress has the opportunity to provide aid to Russia which would assure the victory of freedom.

We responded magnificently to the threat of war then. Can we not respond to the promise of peace now?

War brings out the worst and the best in men; real peace will bring out only the best.

In the Cold War, we united to prevent what was evil. Now we must unite to advance what is good.

That is the question, then, that Americans must face today, political Americans, all Americans, and I think we know what the answer should be.

As we look to the future it is important for us to recognize that we have this great responsibility but it is also a great opportunity. Consider this. The 20th century will be remembered as a century of war. By our leadership at this time, we can help make the 21st century a century of peace and freedom. That is our challenge.

In his Iron Curtain speech, Winston Churchill said, "America at this time stands at the pinnacle of world power. This is a solemn moment for the American democracy, because with primacy in power is joined an awe-inspiring accountability for the future."

Despite what the pessimists say, despite what the negativists say, those works are as true today as they were when he spoke them 45 years ago.

America today has that responsibility but some may ask, why not someone else? If America does not lead, who? The Japanese? The Chinese? The Russians? The Germans? They are the only nations in the world that have the potential economic and military power to lead in the next century. This is our moment of greatness. It is our moment of truth. We must seize this moment because we hold the future in our hands.

[Applause.]

MR. SCHLESINGER: Thank you for those insightful remarks, Mr. President. I think that you can see that you held your audience captivated. We now have a small presentation which will be symbolic of this emerging generation of peace.

MR. SIMES: Mr. President, I would like to introduce to you the Governor of St. Petersburg region, Alexander Beliakov, who came from St. Petersburg to take part in the conference. And the Governor has something to say to you and to the audience.

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.