

Monday, November 7, 1994

RELEASE IN FULL

Boss:

I will only very rarely resort to letters of this kind: out-of-channels, direct-approach special pleading on behalf of one side in a debate going on among your advisers. I'll do it only when I think the importance of the subject at hand requires it -- and when I feel I'd be letting you down in some sense to leave the matter to "the system." I'm writing this note with the blessings of Chris and Tony, who support my strong view.

At issue is whether you should attend the CSCE Summit in Budapest on December 5. Chief, believe me, this is an absolute, total, no-question-about-it MUST. You gotta go. If you go, it'll do a lot of good, diplomatically and politically; if you don't it'll cause big problems on both fronts.

First, on the positives, which are overwhelming. Budapest is a chance for you to reassert your leadership on two intimately related, immensely important issues: European integration and NATO expansion. You're committed to both these goals; reconciling them is tough but doable. We have a chance, over the next year, to establish a process for NATO expansion that keeps the Allies on board, contributes to the security and stability of Central Europe, brings the Russians and Ukrainians and other former Soviet states along as part of the larger process of building an overarching European security architecture -- and that largely neutralizes NATO expansion as an issue the Republicans can use against you in '96. But Budapest is essential as the launching pad for this effort. And it only works with you in the U.S. chair. That's why Yeltsin and Kohl have both written to you appealing for you to be there.

Another big plus: if Kuchma is able to get NPT out of the Ukrainian parliament in the next couple of weeks, you'd be able to have a major arms-control signing in Budapest, capping two years of your denuclearization diplomacy.

The negatives of your not going are also daunting. If you give Budapest a miss, you'd appear to be abandoning the field to Yeltsin, Kohl and others; we'd miss the chance to establish a CSCE "second track" that must parallel the NATO expansion track. Yeltsin (who's under huge pressure to come out against NATO expansion) would feel vulnerable at home and, frankly, let down by you, since you agreed when he was here that you'd meet in Budapest "if there's serious work to be done," which there sure is.

The meeting is less than a month off, so we need every possible day and hour to assure that your attendance -- your brief attendance, I might add -- will vindicate this appeal and the trouble we're putting you to.

Cheers,
