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From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
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To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: FW: (Washington Post) Obama's worst foreign-policy mistake

FYI

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Subject: (Washington Post) Obama's worst foreign-policy mistake

By Mitt Romney

Tuesday, July 6, 2010

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/05/AR2010070502657.html>

Given President Obama's glaring domestic policy missteps, it is understandable that the public has largely been blinded to his foreign policy failings. In fact, these may have been even more damaging to America's future. He fought to reinstate Honduras's pro-Chávez president while stalling Colombia's favored-trade status. He castigated Israel at the United Nations but was silent about Hamas having launched 7,000 rockets from the Gaza Strip. His policy of "engagement" with rogue nations has been met with North Korean nuclear tests, missile launches and the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel, while Iran has accelerated its nuclear program, funded terrorists and armed Hezbollah with long-range missiles. He acceded to Russia's No. 1 foreign policy objective, the abandonment of our Europe-based missile defense program, and obtained nothing whatsoever in return.

Despite all of this, the president's New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New-START) with Russia could be his worst foreign policy mistake yet. The treaty as submitted to the Senate should not be ratified.

New-START impedes missile defense, our protection from nuclear-proliferating rogue states such as Iran and North Korea. Its preamble links strategic defense with strategic arsenal. It explicitly forbids the United States from converting intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) silos into missile defense sites. And Russia has expressly reserved the right to walk away from the treaty if it believes that the United States has significantly increased its missile defense capability.

Hence, to preserve the treaty's restrictions on Russia, America must effectively get Russia's permission for any missile defense expansion. Moscow's vehemence over our modest plans in Eastern Europe demonstrate that such permission would be extremely unlikely.

The treaty empowers a Bilateral Consultative Commission with broad latitude to amend the treaty with specific reference to missile defense. New START does something the American public would never countenance and the Senate should never permit: It jeopardizes our missile defense system.

The treaty also gives far more to the Russians than to the United States. As drafted, it lets Russia escape the limit on its number of strategic nuclear warheads. Loopholes and lapses -- presumably carefully crafted by Moscow -- provide a path to entirely avoid the advertised warhead-reduction targets. For example, rail-based ICBMs and launchers are not mentioned. Similarly, multiple nuclear warheads that are mounted on bombers are effectively not counted. Unlike past treaty restrictions, ICBMs are not prohibited from bombers. This means that Russia is free to mount a nearly unlimited number of ICBMs on bombers -- including MIRVs (multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles) or multiple

warheads -- without tripping the treaty's limits. These omissions would be consistent with Russia's plans for a new heavy bomber and reports of growing interest in rail-mobile ICBMs.

Under New START, the United States must drastically reduce our number of launchers but Russia will not -- it already has fewer launchers than the treaty limits. Put another way: We give, Russia gets. And more troubling, the treaty fails to apply the MIRV limits that were part of the prior START treaty. Again, it may not be coincidental that Russia is developing a new heavy-load -- meaning MIRV-capable -- ICBM.

New-START gives Russia a massive nuclear weapon advantage over the United States. The treaty ignores tactical nuclear weapons, where Russia outnumbers us by as much as 10 to 1. Obama heralds a reduction in strategic weapons from approximately 2,200 to 1,550 but fails to mention that Russia will retain more than 10,000 nuclear warheads that are categorized as tactical because they are mounted on missiles that cannot reach the United States. But surely they can reach our allies, nations that depend on us for a nuclear umbrella. And who can know how those tactical nuclear warheads might be reconfigured? Astonishingly, while excusing tactical nukes from the treaty, the Obama administration bows to Russia's insistence that conventional weapons mounted on ICBMs are counted under the treaty's warhead and launcher limits.

By all indications, the Obama administration has been badly out-negotiated. Perhaps the president's eagerness for global disarmament led his team to accede to Russia's demands, or perhaps it led to a document that was less than carefully drafted.

Whatever the reason for the treaty's failings, it must not be ratified: The security of the United States is at stake. The only responsible course is for the Senate to demand and scrutinize the full diplomatic record underlying the treaty. Then it must insist that any linkage between the treaty and our missile defense system be eliminated. In a world where nuclear weapons are proliferating, America's missile defense shield must not be compromised. As currently drafted, New START is a non-starter.