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April 5, 2011

For: Hillary

From: Sid

Re: Holbrooke Memorial at American Academy/Berlin

I am enclosing below what amounts to a memo from John Kornblum on the Holbrooke event. I've adapted an email he sent me and attached two articles he sent, one on Holbrooke and Europe and another on Holbrooke and the Academy (published in the Academy's journal). You can use this material as the basis for your talk there.

1. Kornblum on American Academy event, Westerwelle and political context.

Hillary is undoubtedly aware that she will be flying into a hornets' nest in Berlin next week. Big losses in the regional elections have caused Westerwelle to be forced out of his position as FDP chairman. No one gives him much chance of staying on long as foreign minister either. But he will still be in office next week for the NATO ministerial and will give the Secretary his party award on Friday afternoon. This is a prize thought up by the FDP to create publicity and to flatter someone they want to get along with. It is a nice gesture to give it to the Secretary, but it loses much of its oomph after Westerwelle's collapse. I would recommend that she be positive and polite in her remarks, but go very light on praise for Guido. He is very unpopular right now and is not long for this world.

We are all very pleased that she will come to the Holbrooke event. It will be much along the lines of the Kennedy Center piece. Ms. Ashton will also be there. There will also be a much too long list of FOD's who will talk about themselves. Gary Smith (Academy director) knows that he cannot time Hillary's arrival perfectly. If she is delayed too long, he will start with other speakers. He would be very grateful for a chance to show her around the Academy, which can take as little as ten minutes.

As for her remarks, she has done this gig a few times already. I have attached a piece I did for the Academy's magazine, which gives some thoughts about the Academy itself and how it reflects RCH's personality and visions. It really is the place which puts his character all together. It shows a much more thoughtful side of him than the many Milosevic war stories do. You may recall that the Academy wasn't mentioned at all at Kennedy Center. This will be the only time a senior person remembers this part of Holbrooke's legacy.

The final three or four paragraphs of my piece give the most important points from my point of view

-- RCH is always known as a crisis manager, but he also cared deeply about building institutions for understanding. During his short tenure in Bonn he rediscovered his Central European roots and became deeply convinced that the United States and Germany must form the core of a permanent Atlantic community.

-- The American Academy is the embodiment of Richard's commitment's It reflects his eclectic interests, his belief that scholarship and dialogue can help build peace and his commitment to Berli and Germany. Living humanity was his slogan and the American Academy is what he was all about.

2. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and the American Academy, by John C. Kornblum

I have always thought there was one fact which described Richard Holbrooke's success more than any other. Persons who have only met or talked with him briefly, or in fact sometimes have never met him, feel that he has touched their lives. The numbers of people who consider themselves to have been his "good friends" runs into the thousands – more than he ever could even have talked seriously to. Those who felt that he had touched their lives or contributed to their well being can be counted in the millions.

All of these groups were somehow moved by his voracious desire to know who they were and what was important to them. This ability to create instant empathy gave him an unmatched talent to build bridges to others. Nations he had never visited were brought back from despair by his commitments to the fight against AIDS or his peace efforts in the Balkans. Others have made similar contributions, but missed the human impact of Richard Holbrooke. The reason? Richard cared so much about the world and its condition that he instinctively absorbed the personal messages from others and transformed them into mutual understanding. His prodigious intellectual and rhetorical skills did the rest. One could never forget a conversation with him or not take seriously a request for assistance.

Exposure to this force of personality did not always win Richard friends or admirers. Those who were bruised, unhappy or just plain jealous of his talents were also numerous. But in almost every case, even those who were less than thrilled with his treatment could not deny the power of his ideas.

Once, at a very important Washington meeting, Richard accused a very senior general of disloyalty for not following the President's goals -- goals which Richard had of course written for him. A year later, this general was one of Richard's most loyal deputies. Most successful was Richard's two year massaging of Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic. Milosevic was a true

sociopath. He cared little for the lives of others. His only goal was to amass as much power and control as possible.

Richard met Milosevic when the ugly Balkan war was in its fifth year. Several teams of negotiators had tried to stop the killing and had failed. Richard had decided that Milosevic and only Milosevic was the key to success. He hit him with every ounce of his matchless powers of analysis, persuasion and coercion. Milosevic, being no slouch, gave much the same in return. It was a contest, which Milosevic could not win, and he probably knew it. Richard understood that he needed Milosevic to help implement the agreement. He made it possible for Milosevic to lose gracefully by ensuring that the interests of the Serbian people were also protected. By the time it was over, the Dayton Agreement had pieced back together a human and historic puzzle, which had burdened Europe for decades.

Richard's other main advantage was his discipline. Much of his cajoling of Milosevic took place after a tragic accident on Mount Igman, on the road to Sarajevo. The American delegation was forced to take this treacherous mountain road, because Milosevic personally had refused them safe passage through Serbia checkpoints. Richard said farewell to the three colleagues who died in the accident and returned to Belgrade within two weeks for the next round of debate. His first meeting was with Milosevic.

The American Academy in Berlin is the most enduring result of Holbrooke's "specialness." It is a unique binational institution crafted from little more than a commitment to the unique relationship which grew between Berlin and the United States after 1945. But its foundations are more than idealistic. The underlying goal of the Academy was very practical in nature. It was to ensure that the United States and Germany never forget the need to build on the deep cooperation forged in divided Berlin. The seemingly random mixture of culture and politics; history and vision which the Academy projects has for more than a decade transmitted the special Holbrooke method to a new generation. Each views it in his or her own terms, and in fact the number of people who claim to understand exactly what Richard had in mind for the Academy rarely agree with each other, but they are still all right. The message is the method rather than the content. It is neither cultural, nor scientific nor political – it is human. Living humanity is what Richard Holbrooke was all about. The American Academy is the living essence of his life's work.

3. The Diplomacy of Richard Holbrooke: America as a European Power, By John C. Kornblum

Richard Holbrooke's last mission in Afghanistan added further to his reputation as a negotiator and crisis manager. But remembering him solely in this role would be to overlook some of his most important contributions to American diplomacy. He was equally successful as a strategist in areas not in crisis. Building a constructive relationship with China was one of his early roles. His success in returning US funding for UN commitments in 2000 was another excellent example.

But especially important for today's purposes was his success during the 1990's in laying the foundation for a permanent post-Cold War American role in Europe. At a time when a proliferation of crises seems to be causing the United States and Europe to drift steadily apart, Holbrooke's push for an American initiative to help build a solid post-Cold War trans-Atlantic structure of security and cooperation is looking more important with each passing day.

When Richard Holbrooke took over the State Department's European Bureau in September of 1994, the situation in Europe was deteriorating badly. The giddy days of the "end of history" had sunk into war in the Balkans, stagnation in NATO and a growing sense of alienation between the United States and its closest allies. The final withdrawal of both Russian and Western troops from Berlin had left a major strategic gap in the heart of Europe.

True to form, Holbrooke focused less on celebrating the victory than on dealing with its consequences. His short tenure as Ambassador to Germany left a lasting impression on him. He was moved by arguments of Chancellor Kohl and Defense Minister Volker R  he who favored strong efforts to build democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. Without extension of Western institutions, the new democracies in Central Europe would be pulled mercilessly back and forth in the power vacuum left by the end of the Cold War.

Although he was preoccupied with devising a new Balkan strategy, Holbrooke turned almost instinctively to the task of filling this empty space. A promise of NATO enlargement was designed to focus these countries on pushing forward with democratization and to offer a framework for building a new relationship with Russia. Holbrooke set forth a comprehensive

strategy in an article entitled *America, A European Power*, which was published in the spring 1995 issue of *Foreign Affairs* magazine.

In this article, Holbrooke suggested that rather than pulling back after the fall of Communism, “the United States has become a European power in a sense that goes beyond traditional assertions of American ‘commitment’ to Europe. In the 21st century, Europe will still need the active American involvement that has been a necessary component of the continental balance for half a century.”

Recalling the surge of creativity which defined America's postwar engagement in Europe, Holbrooke argued that a “post-Cold War engagement must focus again on structures, old and new. This time, the United States must lead in the creation of a security architecture that includes and thereby stabilizes all of Europe -- the West, the former Soviet satellites of central Europe, and, most critically, Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union.

America as a European power? To many, Holbrooke seemed out of touch with his times. Post- Cold War America wanted solutions rather than long-term commitments. Europe was rich and stable. It could take care of itself.

Holbrooke was also criticized for focusing on NATO at the cost of missing a chance to bring Russia into a non-military mutual security partnership. But he and Russia Coordinator Strobe Talbott argued that by removing for Russia the temptation to dominate former satellites, NATO enlargement would actually facilitate dialogue. As Holbrooke noted in *Foreign Affairs*: “Stability in central Europe is essential to general European security, and it is still far from assured.”

But he also added forcefully: “All the key participants in the new security equation in Europe -- the United States, the West and central European countries, and the other nations of the former Soviet Union -- desire a peaceful, stable, and democratic Russia, integrated into the institutions of an undivided Europe. No more important political goal has existed in Europe since a newly democratic West Germany was successfully integrated into the European political and security structure after World War II. “

Fifteen years later, this conviction that NATO and the European Union must work in tandem to ensure democracy in Central Europe, looks especially prescient. Despite repeated threats and crises, democracy has taken root and trans-Atlantic institutions have held firm. America has become a charter member of an enlarged Euro-Atlantic community of democracies which now extends from the Finnish border in Europe to the Aleutian Islands in the Bering Strait. This is a

community of nearly a billion persons which dwarfs even China in size and strength. There is excitement in the newness of a rapidly changing Europe united in democracy for the first time in history.

But European political and economic unity is being severely strained by the pressures of a continuing economic crisis. We are again puzzling about the emergence of a more independent-minded Germany and worrying about the financial weakness of the nations of southern Europe. Russia's conflicts with neighbors suggest a backwardness which is as worrisome as was its strength during the Cold War. Clearly, the trans-Atlantic project is not yet complete.

Today US interests are more deeply entwined in the Atlantic world than Holbrooke could ever have imagined in 1995. We are networked in ways which did not even exist 15 years ago. However important Asia or Latin America become, America's own influence and self-confidence will depend to a surprising degree on a continuing sense of common purpose with European partners.

Here is where the United States has too often dropped the ball. Both Bush and Obama seem to have taken the achievements of the 1990's for granted. Each in his own way projected the US more as a separate power which cooperates with Europe rather than as a constituent part of a Euro-Atlantic community. President Obama's speeches – Berlin, Strasbourg, Oslo, and Prague - dominated European debate. But they did little to define how the United States intends to behave as a European power.

Ronald Reagan's famous speech at the Brandenburg Gate was at first ridiculed as being naïve and unrealistic. It became historic only when the results were evident. Here, Richard Holbrooke's judgment would be clear and penetrating. Obama's skillful rhetoric will also be forgotten if engagement and action do not soon follow.