

ASSESSING THE SUMMIT: THE WILSON PRINCIPLES

Assessing the outcome of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit is something which next month will preoccupy U.S. policy makers, experts, and opinion makers. What is needed is a set of broad principles by which the U.S. can judge the success or failure of the summit. A set of five such principles was offered last week on the Senate floor by Senator Pete Wilson of California. They provide an extremely useful checklist by which Americans will be able to measure whether the most important U.S. concerns had been protected at the summit. The five principles also provide valuable guidance to Ronald Reagan when he sits down in Geneva with Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Wilson Principles are:

- 1) Do not allow the Soviets to set the agenda. Said Wilson, "The Soviets are entitled to address their concerns; we are entitled to address ours. They will not be the same."
- 2) Do not limit the talks to arms control. Wilson wisely insisted that "we must insist upon a linkage between the subject of arms control and the subject of human rights, the subject of violations of the Helsinki Accord, the sponsorship of terrorism, the sponsorship of regional aggression and subversion, and the conduct of espionage under diplomatic cover."
- 3) All agreements must be strictly verifiable. Wilson told the Senate: "The fact that we dare not trust the Soviets in no way exempts us from having to deal with the Soviet Union, but does impose the requirement that Soviet performance be verifiable." This is particularly critical given recent confirmations of Soviet deployment of the Krasnoyarsk radar and the new SS-25 missile which violate the ABM and SALT II treaties, respectively.
- 4) New negotiations and agreements must consider and redress Soviet non-compliance with existing treaties. Referring to the violations of the ABM treaty by the Soviet battle-management radar at Krasnoyarsk, Wilson warned that "we must make clear to the Soviets

that there will be a cost to them for violation of any agreement. Just as it does no good to enter into agreements--however high-flown the language, however optimistic the thoughts expressed therein--... so it does no good to monitor and verify performance if, when there is in fact Soviet violation, we impose no cost."

- 5) Negotiations and agreements must not hinder or prevent the U.S. ability to pursue research, development, testing or future deployment of systems that could defend the American people and their allies from nuclear weapons. Wilson stressed that "where undiscovered defensive technologies hold out the promise of replacing the 'balance of nuclear terror' with mutually assured survival, to forsake achieving such technology for some concession of incomparably lesser value would be an act of inexcusable dereliction." Moscow years ago endorsed this principle. When the ABM treaty was signed on May 26, 1972, the Soviets refused to preclude the development of some future defense "based on other principles" which at that time may be unknown. This means, despite the tangled syntax of the U.S.-USSR Accords, that those Soviets who signed the ABM treaty should be in enthusiastic agreement with the U.S. that the testing and development of many new advanced strategic defense technologies are not precluded by the ABM treaty.

Wilson's five principles are a litmus for testing whether the summit succeeds. The five principles should be stamped on index cards to be carried by Ronald Reagan and all his advisors in Geneva for quick reference as they negotiate with the Soviets. These cards also should be given to the thousands of journalists covering the summit, to enable them to fairly assess its outcome.

The Reagan Administration, Congress, and U.S. observers should define success according to the U.S. agenda. As in all negotiations, it makes very little sense to judge the outcome by criteria other than those which serve one's own interests. Similarly, success should not be defined according to Soviet criteria.

The Wilson Principles, if followed carefully, would insure that the summit promotes world peace and improves U.S.-Soviet relations and trust. If these principles are violated, there may be little point in Ronald Reagan's going up the summit. As Pete Wilson told the Senate, "The answer is that we should not go to Geneva now or ever unless we are prepared to insist upon and obtain our agenda, as well as theirs; and verifiable Soviet performance; and after agreement, Soviet compliance or Soviet cost."

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For further information:

Senator Pete Wilson, "The Geneva Meeting," Congressional Record-Senate, October 22, 1985, p. S13708.