



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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REMARKS OF
AMBASSADOR MAX M. KAMPELMAN
BREAKFAST SEMINAR OF
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND DEFENSE STAFF

Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis
Capitol Hill Club
Washington, D.C.

May 10, 1990

SUMMARY OF REMARKS AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Soviets are very serious arms negotiators; they are patient and they understand the need for deployment deeds to back-up bargaining words. The Soviets' initial response to various U.S. negotiating proposals are just that -- an initial response that in no way is necessarily indicative of the final outcome. In my previous 4 years as START negotiator, I was convinced that SDI was not an obstacle to the eventual agreement on START issues, although a very large number in Congress thought otherwise. My views appear to have been confirmed, in that even the testing of SDI and its development do not now appear to be obstacles to the signing of a START agreement.

While the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have been unusual and unanticipated, they are not permanent yet and U.S. defense and negotiating strategy aimed toward both the completion of a START agreement and maintenance of deterrence should be guided by our past principles of assuring a sound and robust deterrent and a strong negotiating position.

We have a chance to make great strides in arms control. It is not in our interest to delay. We must, however, resist the temptation to take unilateral action which undermines our deterrent or harms our negotiating strategy. We must be very careful how we act. Our defense posture -- to the extent that it remains strong -- was and has been indispensable to the securing of both the INF and START treaties, respectively. Many assume that the changes we have seen are permanent -- they are not. We are simply not there yet, although en route. That's why NATO remains indispensable for our strength.

There is interest in trading away the MXRG for the Soviet SS-24. The Soviets now have a strong lead over the U.S. in the deployment of mobile ICBM forces. The question is whether they can be persuaded to reduce this advantage, especially with respect to powerful, first strike type weapons such as the SS-24, but also the SS-18s that will remain under START. A trade which has been envisioned by a number of people will not come about in START I. In START II, yes, that is a possibility. We should go ahead and build the MXRG. We would be significantly weakening our negotiating position should we fail to move forward on this system. While it is desirable to trade these systems, the Soviets will take a significant amount of time to think through the idea.

We need as much bargaining leverage as possible. We should not unilaterally give this leverage away. It is not in our interest to do so. As for the SICBM, I support the President's budget request and believe that if such a trade as envisioned takes place, the Midgetman may well serve as a satisfactory post START I deterrent ICBM. As an arms negotiator, I would want both the MXRG and the SICBM, but I appreciate the budgetary problems that militate against such Congressional action.