Max M. Kampelman Papers

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Former US Chief Nuclear Negotiator in London calls for Zero Nuclear Weapons

At a meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Security and Non-Proliferation at Westminster earlier today Ambassador Max Kampelman reiterated an earlier call in January this year by US Secretaries Shultz, Kissinger, Perry and Senator Nunn to step back from the brink of nuclear anarchy.

Amb. Kampelman is in London this week at the invitation of BASIC to talk with officials and MPs about the growing movement of former senior US officials and politicians with a shared vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Gordon Brown has also indicated that he intends to make the issue of securing global nuclear disarmament a strong foreign policy priority. Margaret Beckett, the former UK foreign secretary, has already spelt out details of how Britain wants to become a "disarmament laboratory", unveiling concrete steps to champion multilateral nuclear reductions in a recent speech in Washington.

BASIC is working with Max Kampelman to advance the idea of Getting to Zero in both the United States and Britain. In his speech at Westminster today Amb. Kampelman said:

"We must keep in mind that the indispensable initial ingredient for action is leadership in reasserting the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons - the "ought." Only by clearly committing to the "ought" can we change the "is" of our day and achieve our shared vision of a better world for our children and grandchildren."

The full text of his speech is available at:
www.basicint.org/nuclear/kampelman.htm

Kampelman has been credited with shaping US policy in the arena of human rights relations with the Soviet Union in the early 1980s, and as helping to create the diplomatic conditions that preceded the end of the Cold War. Amb. Kampelman was also later responsible as head of the US negotiators for steering through the crucial

achievements that Amb. Kampelman received the Presidential Medal of Freedom (the US' highest civilian award) and a Library of Congress "Living Legend" award. He is acutely aware of the challenges of negotiating arms control agreements in periods of deep distrust.

Amb. Kampelman was intimately involved in the evolution of President Reagan's proposal for moving to zero, a discussion the President had on several occasions with Mikhail Gorbachev in the lead-up to their ground-breaking summit at Reykjavik in 1986. Reagan insisted that nuclear weapons were "totally irrational, totally inhumane, good for nothing but killing, possibly destructive of life on earth and civilization."

Amb. Kampelman and the other former US former senior statesmen and military officers are motivated by the fear that our reliance on nuclear weapons for security is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective. Without new thinking on the part of the nuclear powers further nuclear proliferation is a near-certainty, and the window of opportunity to stop it is closing fast. A key message is that Getting to Zero is not some idealistic goal, but an essential objective if we are to avoid the otherwise inevitable descent into nuclear proliferation and the release by accident or design, sooner or later, of nuclear weapons.

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Notes for Editors:

1. Max Kampelman was US Ambassador to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; from 1985 to 1989 he was Ambassador and Head of the United States Delegation to the Negotiations with the Soviet Union on Nuclear and Space Arms in Geneva; and from 1987 to 1989 Counselor of the Department of State. For a more detailed bio see here: http://www.ffhsj.com/bios/kampema.htm

officially recognised group open only to MPs and Peers from all the political parties represented at Westminster. It operates chiefly (although not exclusively) by holding private speaker meetings in Westminster on defence, disarmament and security issues, for MPs, Peers and their staff. A good number of the meetings focus on transatlantic security issues and US speakers (of all political persuasions) often feature.

3. The 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) was a "grand bargain" involving 189 countries. The treaty committed nuclear weapons states to negotiate in good faith on nuclear disarmament, in return for commitments by other states not to acquire nuclear weapons. But lack of progress in fulfilling this bargain on the part of nuclear powers is fraying this consensus, leading to the possibility of nuclear 'breakout' by as many as 10 or 20 states, many of them fragile. We are at an important juncture in the nuclear debate:

- Putin has just met with Bush - nuclear arsenals and missile defence were on the agenda, but no progress was made (START I treaty is due to lapse in 2009, with severe consequences for nuclear verification and oversight); ·
- North Korea has begun shutting down its Yongbyon nuclear reactor;
- The Iran nuclear stalemate is ongoing; ·
- This week debate is expected to continue in the US Congress on the 2008 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill (which provides funding for nuclear weapons programs). Differences in the Senate and House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittees should be resolved. At stake is the future of a new generation of US nuclear weapons.

ZERO NUCLEAR WEAPONS
BY
MAX M. KAMPELMAN

HOUSE OF COMMONS
ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON
GLOBAL SECURITY AND NON-PROLIFERATION
LONDON, ENGLAND
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It is a privilege to be in your company today. I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you an issue that has been with us for more than sixty years: what to do about the grave risks and dangers to us, our children and grandchildren posed by nuclear weapons.

In 1985, President Reagan, asked me to head up our American negotiating team with the Soviet Union on nuclear weapons and missile defense. The re-opening of those arms control talks in Geneva was associated with an agreement that President Reagan and Soviet President Gorbachev would meet at a get acquainted summit to take place in Geneva in November.

After this first summit meeting, President Reagan, on his return to Washington, called a meeting of his advisors, which I attended. This was the meeting where he announced to his officials, "Maggie was right. We can do business with this man." In reporting on the substance of his talks, the President informed his staff that he had suggested to Gorbachev that it would be desirable if their negotiations could result in an agreement totally to abolish nuclear weapons. It is my vivid recollection that this report was treated with intense skepticism and expressed opposition by his advisors some of which was related to whether the Soviet Union could be

trusted. The President politely listened. His response to their concerns did not come until the second summit that took place in Reykjavik, Iceland where he repeated his zero offer to Gorbachev and where they came close to an agreement. Indeed in the negotiations under my direction, we agreed on zero with respect to our intermediate range nuclear weapons, the INF Treaty and on reduction under our START negotiations.

In the immediate aftermath of Reykjavik, you may recall there was some "consternation" and concern in both Washington and London about whether the reports were accurate that President Reagan wanted the abolition of "all nuclear weapons" which he said were "totally irrational, totally inhumane, good for nothing but killing, possibly destructive of life on earth and civilization." Many experts were relieved that the meeting had adjourned without an agreement. I know that relief was also felt by some here in London.

Frankly, at that time, I did not feel qualified to have a position on the issue. My instincts were with the President's objective of going to zero, but I also highly respected the fact that the experts whom I knew and worked with said that going to zero could endanger our security and that our possession of nuclear weapons was a strong deterrent against international irresponsibility.

Today, the United Kingdom, the United States, and indeed all humankind are exposed to grave dangers. We Americans experienced September 11, 2001 – and in Britain, you had your own threats to experience following July 7, 2005. We must both realistically face the reality that our good fortune in escaping further tragedy is not likely to last. My personal fear is for the

safety of my children and grandchildren. America's early virtual monopoly in the possession and development of nuclear weapons of mass destruction has long-since disappeared, replaced by a new and dangerous era, where reliance on nuclear weapons for security is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.

It is not surprising that a number of countries are now understandably stating to the United States and to the other countries that possess nuclear weapons that they cannot accept a world in which some states like ours can freely possess those weapons of mass destruction, but that they are somehow ineligible to do so. They insist that they are not of a lesser status in the world – a reasonable position for them to take. Of equal, if not more serious concern, we now know that terrorists are seeking to acquire nuclear bombs and are en route to doing so. We also know that those terrorists look upon us - you and we - as their enemy and plan to destroy our democratic societies as well as our cultural values. There is no doubt that we - you and we - are vulnerable to attack. The United Nations tells us there are today more than 27,000 nuclear weapons in existence and that 40 countries may at some early point be capable of developing nuclear bombs.

What to do? Eight years ago, an American diplomat - an expert in armaments, who was well known on this side of the Atlantic and in this great city, Paul Nitze, published an article in The New York Times. His dramatic suggestion was simple: "I see no compelling reason why we should not … get rid of our nuclear weapons. To maintain them is costly and adds nothing to our security." To use our nuclear arsenal, he continued, "would merely guarantee the annihilation of hundreds of thousands of people none of whom would have been responsible for

the decision." His recommendation to us was clear: "I know that the simplest and most direct answer to the problem of nuclear weapons has always been their complete elimination."

Two years before this editorial, Ambassador Nitze joined General Andrew Goodpaster, former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, in issuing a report by the Henry L. Stimson Center in Washington that called for "the pursuit of a nuclear free world and for the United States to work toward that objective." I believe that most of us here today can agree that this is what ought to be our collective policy as civilized human beings. But how practical is it, particularly in this world of violence and turmoil? Permit me for the moment to address the power of the "ought to which I have referred." And, if you don't mind, I'm going to use an example that dates back to the founding of the United States as a nation – something I hope is not a sensitive spot with this audience today.

During my teaching days at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Gunnar Myrdahl, the highly respected Swedish economist, published his massive study, which he titled, "An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy." His dominant perception was the realization that wherever he went in America, he noted a common theme: that of the principles of the Declaration of Independence that were embedded in our Constitution. I then asked my students to recall that when our nation was founded, we had slavery, no legal equality for women, and property qualifications for voting. I could envision the practical politicians of that era commenting on the proposed document brought to them in Philadelphia saying: "This is no time for these unrealistic dreams. We are fighting for our independence as a nation. Don't mix

us up. We are in danger of losing our independence: Get out of our way. Slavery furthermore has been with us since the beginning of time – even the Bible tells us that."

The practical politicians of that era may have had a reasonable argument, but the "ought" of the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution has endured as the dominant theme of our country's political history and development. The passage of time and great effort toward achievement of the "ought" has clearly and steadily overcome the original "is" of American society. The political movement and struggle from the "is" to the "ought" has made our American democracy the country it is whose principles of human dignity – just as yours – have historically earned respect by peoples all over the world. The power of the "ought" is great, warrants respect, and should not be minimized.

The United Kingdom has its own experience with – and more than one historical example of – the power of the "ought." It was Winston Churchill who during the darkest days of World War II insisted on what "ought" to be done with respect to Nazi fascism. Mr. Churchill said: "You ask, what is our policy? I will say; "it is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us: to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy." You ask, Churchill continued, what is our aim? His answer was one word: Victory—victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival." He understood the power of the "ought" which mobilized the spirit of a great people and nation.

Permit me one other vivid illustration of the power of the "ought" in international politics.

In an effort a number of years ago to separate the United States from its European allies and to expand its influence, the Soviet Union in 1954 proposed a European security conference. In effect they said: "We Europeans have security problems that are unique and special to those or us who live here. Let us meet together to discuss them." This obviously ran contrary to the fabric of European security, which was based on NATO and which was based on the active participation of the United States in the defense of Europe. Europe's response was clear: "No United States, no conference."

By 1973, thirty-three Europeans countries plus the United States and Canada began serious negotiation on an overall formula for stable east-west relations. The agreement reached, known as the Helsinki Final Act, was signed in 1975. The agreement provided standards for national security, political stability, respect for human rights, family, reunification, economic cooperation, security confidence measures, and cultural and educational exchanges are known as that Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and now the OSCE.

The heads of state signed that agreement in 1975. An autobiography by one of the Soviet diplomats of that day reported that the agreement was sold to the Politburo by Soviet foreign minister Gromyko who assured his colleagues that the family reunification and human rights provisions would not be taken seriously.

In 1980, I was asked by President Carter to temporary leave private life and represent the United States at a CSCE follow-up meeting in Madrid. I read the agreement for the first time as I prepared for that session which was anticipated to last for three months. It lasted for three years, during which time I was reappointed to our delegation's chairmanship by President Reagan.

We of the west decided at the meeting that the "ought" of the agreement's humanitarian provisions were to be protected and expanded and not dismissed as window dressing. Our American delegation and your British delegation and the delegations of our friends, including those of our neutral neighbors, made this issue a central one in our three years of discussion and debate. We took our "ought" seriously, which was why we met for 3 years instead of 3 months, but we prevailed. This resulted in massive freedom for hundreds of thousands of Soviet victims. There is furthermore no doubt in mind that it led to the end of the Soviet Union.

Here we see another illustration of the power of the "ought."

Today, a central theme of American foreign policy – and I respectfully submit it also that of our allies in the United Kingdom and around the world – must be to move the "is" of our present global nuclear peril to a more hopeful "ought" of stability and peace. We must not minimize the pursuit of the "ought." I suggest to you that our joint role in the world – yours and ours - must be to establish a civilized "ought" for the human race. The abolition of weapons of mass destruction now must be central to that objective. To paraphrase Mr. Churchill - without victory over the nuclear peril, there is no survival.

The danger is well known. Many of the world's leaders and experts have been confronted by it over many decades. Last October, a distinguished group of American citizens hosted by two Americans – our Former Secretary of State George Shultz and the distinguished scientist Dr. Sidney Drell – met at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University on the twentieth anniversary of the Reagan – Gorbachev Reykjavik summit meeting. Our challenge was to consider again the nuclear danger threat. I had the honor of opening that meeting. In a statement published in The Wall Street Journal this past January, former Secretaries of State Shultz and Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense Perry, former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Nunn and seventeen other prominent signatories (including me) concluded that none of the steps we are now taking are adequate to the danger. An increasing number of our scientists and experienced diplomats are now joining that effort.

Just last week, I had the privilege of attending a stirring and courageous speech in Washington by the then Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, Margaret Beckett, to the Carnegie International Nonproliferation Conference. In her speech – which I believe marks an historic turning point in the nuclear debate – Foreign Secretary Beckett stated: "The judgment we made forty years ago, that the eventual abolition of nuclear weapons was in all of our interests – is just as true today as it was then." That is a judgment that we fervently share.

Consistent with this development, I have respectfully suggested that the President of the United States, after appropriate consultation, should personally appear, join with your distinguished leaders and propose to the United Nations that the General Assembly call for the

elimination of all weapons of mass destruction by making their development and possession contrary to the principles of the United Nations charter. This must be our – and the world's indispensable rational objective, - the "ought" for the human race. It was our President Truman who at the creation of the United Nations saw there is nothing more urgent confronting the people of all nations than the banning of all nuclear weapons under a foolproof system of international control. It may not be appropriate today for me to say, but this leadership is particularly appropriate for your great and historic democracy to join and champion.

Once the urgent desirability of our "ought" is accepted by the United Nations General Assembly as the urgent wish of the civilized world, the General Assembly should then simultaneously call for the U.N. Security Council – working with other key states including, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and other nuclear capable states such as Israel, India and Pakistan – to develop effective political and technical procedures to achieve this goal of zero, including stringent verification and severe penalties to prevent cheating by irresponsible nations and groups. Total international isolation – political, economic, and cultural – must be developed to punish those criminal states that attempt to violate the "ought" adopted by the United Nations. Until that objective is reached, we will obviously be forced reluctantly to continue to maintain and strengthen each of our defenses against attack, share our defense technology with those countries that join us in our efforts to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and reluctantly maintain and modernize our inventory.

We Americans and Britons are blessed with an ideology, a commitment to human dignity, to democracy. Some apparently and mistakenly attribute this to a characteristic of

Western civilization alone. I close by reminding ourselves of a question asked by a journalist of Mahatma Gandhi: "What do you think of Western civilization?" was the question. Mr. Gandhi's response was "I think it would be a good idea." Let us remember that the urgent drive for peace and dignity and freedom is an "ought" that transcends language and geography. Let us also symbolize the civilized change we seen by establishing a United Nations Bank which would purchase the weapons grade minerals now in the possession of an increasing number of states and transform them into energy for an energy starved world.

I close in this appropriate forum by proposing that we commit ourselves to provide for our children a world of peace and human dignity. Our case for the elimination of all nuclear arms as championed by our President Ronald Reagan, with the support of the former Russian leader, Mr. Gorbachev, has been gathering strength, among scientists, educators, and global leaders. Today, I believe that the political and diplomatic process for peace and dignity can and must be utilized to help achieve the goal of zero nuclear weapons. In doing so, we must keep in mind that the indispensable initial ingredient for action is leadership in reasserting the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons – the "ought." Only by clearly committing to the "ought" can we change the "is" of our day and achieve our shared vision of a better world for our children and grandchildren.

The danger is serious and imminent! It transcends national boundaries and internal political partisanship. We need your help and your leadership in this momentous and indispensable effort to preserve and strengthen the dignity of the human race.

Thank you.