



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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Zero Nuclear Weapons
Remarks By
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At the very outset, I want to thank George Shultz, Sidney Drell and their colleagues at the Hoover Institute for elevating our deep concern about nuclear weapons of mass destruction into a broad national effort to revive President Reagan's serious goal for the world to destroy those threats to our lives and to our civilization. It is encouraging to note that former Senator Sam Nunn, one of our country's most respected and experienced national defense experts and leaders, has enlisted his organization with this joint effort to restore sanity to the international community.

We obviously have serious challenges ahead. The drive for sanity must be an international one if it is to be effective. I recently returned from a week in London where I met and talked with leaders in and out of government – members of Parliament and both major political parties. Sam Nunn and I both met in Washington with a then British Foreign Minister who strongly identified herself and her government with our goal of zero and who later said that she reviewed every word in that commitment with her Prime Minister and that she reflected the policy of her government with the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons from the world. In recent days I was also interviewed at length by a Russian television crew because of interest there in what we were doing.

What is obviously required is world leadership by the U.S. toward that goal of zero. I believe our leadership should be galvanized within the U.N., which ostensibly represents the people of the world, so that the aspirations of the American people and the people of the world should find an expression of that goal in that forum of the world. We should be willing to share that leadership with Russia and others who share our aspirations originally expressed by President Reagan and Gorbachev.

It is appropriate here to note President Reagan's statement that "For the eight years I was President, I never let my dream of a nuclear free world fade from my mind." We should also never forget President Kennedy's reminder that "The world was not meant to be a prison in which man awaits his execution." The goal of zero must be our goal. We must never forget that our children, our grandchildren, and we are in danger of annihilation!

I believe that the President of the United States should speak to the people of the world at the General Assembly of the United Nations and propose that the development and possession of nuclear arms be considered an international crime punishable by total world economic, political and cultural isolation – and we possess most of those weapons that exist in the world.

The Security Council should be designated to provide the means for preventing cheating and for reaching the goal of zero. I commend the organizers of this meeting for elevating this issue of verification to be a major one at these sessions and I commend those of that verification group who are with us today for their serious contributions to this indispensable task.

I spent a great deal of time talking to a number of our friends in the Bush administration on this subject and while I'm not without hope, I think the realities of the political calendar mean that this issue may have to be left for our next President to advance. I am encouraged indeed that there are candidates on both sides of the political aisle who have spoken favorably of our objective. A crucial question for our group is what can we do to help the President, whoever he/she may be, to move forward on this issue with bipartisan support in our country and with appropriate partnership with the civilized world.

Our challenge is at hand. We now know that terrorists are at work to master the no longer mystery of nuclear weapons technology. We also know that the civilized world is vulnerable to attack. We are told that there are more than twenty-seven thousand nuclear weapons in existence and that about forty countries are en route toward that capacity. Our efforts to interrupt this process and restrain have failed. It is like urging people to stop smoking while you have a cigarette hanging from your lips.

It is not difficult to persuade rational men and women that nuclear weapons "ought" to be abolished, but that is quickly accompanied by a kind of "too good to be true." – I respectfully suggest that there is power in the "ought." Our founders adopted the Declaration of Independence and proclaimed that we were all created equal in the midst of a serious war that we were losing. Our society was one in which slavery flourished, women did not have legal rights, and our laws included property qualifications for voting. We should learn that there is power in the "ought." Our country's strength was and is our commitment to move from our "is"

to our "ought". Once we can agree that nuclear weapons "ought" to be eliminated, we would have taken major steps toward their elimination.

Our program tomorrow will include the vital step of how we might work with leaders of other nations to make the pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons a truly "joint enterprise". I look forward to that discussion.

The U.N. has been a disappointment to many of us. It is, however, the only appropriate forum for our country and our President to adopt and thereby use as a vehicle for peace and for stability and for dignity. That was the essence of President Truman's message to the U.N. at its birth.

When President Reagan returned to Washington in December 1985, following his first meeting with Russian Prime Minister Gorbachev and the reopening of nuclear negotiations in Geneva between our two countries, he called his staff and assistants to a White House meeting where he would report on his talks.

In the course of that report he mentioned that he had suggested to Mr. Gorbachev that it would be highly desirable if the talks could result in both of our countries reducing our nuclear weapons to zero. George Shultz may remember that moment as I do. There was immediate room wide consternation and concern about that proposal as one speaker after another respectfully told the President that it was not in our interest to reduce our nuclear weapons to zero even if the Russians agreed to join us in that step.

The President listened politely and respectfully. He did not respond. His response came at the next meeting with Gorbachev twenty-one years ago, when he

repeated his offer of zero. A few of us here were with George Shultz on that scene and know how close we came to that zero objective. What we did later achieve was zero on both of our parts with respect to the intermediate range nuclear missiles and a fifty percent reduction of our strategic nuclear missiles.

My own assumption is that countries like North Korea and Iran cannot be expected to deprive themselves of what India, Pakistan, and Israel, for example, have in the form of nuclear weapons. They are obviously pleased to accept bribes, but the delays will only be temporary.

President Putin's recent proposal that Russia and the U.S. cooperate in responding to the growth of Iran's ballistic missile program would seem to carry a suggested message of support and cooperation. He should be consulted. All of Europe understands that having advanced military capabilities at the hands of a hostile and unpredictable country like Iran threatens all of us. We should explore the opportunity for NATO and Russia to work together in a coordinated and sensitive fashion. The U.N. would provide that opportunity.

Diplomacy is now called for. American Leadership is essential. Our first step is to advance a civilized "ought". The rest can and will and certainly ought to follow.

I would like to close these comments by referring to one of our country's illustrious public servants whose spirit has influenced many here today. Eight years ago Paul Nitze published an article in The New York Times with a simple dramatic suggestion: "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". He ended: "I know that the simplest and most direct answer to the problem of nuclear weapons has always been there complete elimination."

Turning the Goal of the World Without Nuclear Weapons Into A Joint Enterprise

By Max M. Kampelman

October 25, 2007

Let me at the outset state that my friend and associate Dr. Steve Andreasen should be standing here and not me. He has done most of the work and contributed a great deal of the thought and analysis

Steve has temporarily lost some of his speech and it is not because he teaches at the Hubert Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota. Nor is it because he is also associated with Sam Nunn in Washington.

In any event, I thought it judicious not to proceed further with this inquiry – Steve, thank you!

Yesterday I spoke at the opening of our conference on the importance of the “ought” to achieving a world without nuclear weapons. How to turn that “ought” into a realized “joint enterprise” is our subject today. We know that the drive for international sanity must be an international one and that goal requires the talents and leadership of all of our group and all of our friends and allies. In that connection, I respectfully suggest that the path towards zero also requires a coordinated effort by the scientific community, which gave birth to the technology, to understand fully how best to assure us that the technology can be harnessed to become a salvation for the human race rather than an instrument towards destruction. In effect, I suggest that the strength of science and scientists be conscious of realistic political requirements.

Yesterday, at the opening of our conference I spoke of the importance of the "ought" in achieving a world without nuclear weapons. We should not think of it as a far off position nor should we think of it as simply a symbolic gesture. It is, furthermore, important that what Dr. Martin Luther King called "the paralysis of analysis" not handicap us. The pending threat of world catastrophe provides us with a historic opportunity to achieve our goal by creating and utilizing a joint enterprise.

It is important, I believe that our goal of zero should be established by the United Nations General Assembly, the only agency which today can claim the status of representing the peoples of the world as their constituency. This is why I believe that the President of the United States should, without further delay introduce that goal of "ought". We, who have more of these weapons of mass destruction than any country in the world, should announce our willingness to destroy those weapons once we are assured that every country in the world is joining us in that effort. It also obviously brings to mind President Reagan's "trust but verify" requirement as a basis for an agreement. The challenge of verification must be the talk of our scientific community. It is a fundamental condition.

Would it be stronger if the President submitted to the U.N. General Assembly for consideration a proposed resolution. Jointly introduced by Russia and the United Kingdom for example. Yes - and we should propose that other countries join with us and add their name as sponsors as well. All of this would strengthen the "ought" of our objective. The indispensable next step must also be provided for in the resolution and that would be assigning to the Security Council

the serious and difficult task of verification and appropriate serious penalties of political, economic and cultural isolation of those who violate the agreed "ought".

The issues surrounding nuclear weapons go to the heart of national and international security. It would be helpful for all of the nuclear states to agree on how to proceed, but in its absence, the U.S. must lead and fill the gap. The absence of full involvement would be a serious handicap. An international agreement with constructive steps would have far reaching benefits. In any event the issues that we are talking about at this conference are the issues that affect the people of world. It is vital to raise these questions at the U.N. to reach the world. I hope that this or a future President of the U.S. will understand and appreciate the indispensable need for American leadership, the details of which are being thoroughly explored during these two days.