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MEANINGFUL ARMS CONTROL

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Ever since the first nuclear weapons were exploded at the end of World War II, the nations of the world have been seeking ways by which these catastrophic weapons could be brought under control. Nuclear weapons have never been used again in war, but otherwise success has been virtually nonexistent. The United States and, shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union built their nuclear arsenals up to awesome levels. The explosive power of the original Hiroshima bomb, which was already enough to kill 100,000 people and destroy a city, has been multiplied more than a thousand-fold with the development of thermonuclear weapons. More than 1,000 nuclear tests have been conducted. Piston bombers have been replaced by jets, and land-based and submarine-launched long-range missiles have added a totally new dimension to the means of delivering such weapons. Perhaps of even greater danger has been the spread of nuclear weapons capabilities to five and maybe even seven nations, since India and Israel probably also have small capabilities. The record does not provide any basis for complacency with our efforts toward arms control.

Until 1963 no arms control agreements of any sort were negotiated. For about two years between 1959 and 1961, there was a moratorium on nuclear testing, but in September 1961 the Soviet Union recommenced on a very large scale, and the United States followed suit shortly thereafter. In the summer of 1963, the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and the U.K. succeeded in negotiating a treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, under water, and in outer space, and more than 100 nations have subscribed to this treaty. France and mainland China, however, were notable bystanders; they have continued to test on many occasions in the atmosphere since that date. But the hopes that the limited

Test Ban Treaty of 1963 would be a useful step toward the control of nuclear weapons were rapidly dashed by the actions of the two prime participants. Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., instead of cutting back on their nuclear test programs, only moved them underground and continued testing at a rate even higher than before the agreement. Thus, the best that can be said for the Limited Test Ban Treaty is that it was an environmental rather than an arms control agreement. The politics of getting wide support for the Treaty forced President Kennedy to permit extensive underground testing, which had not been banned, and similar considerations probably forced the Soviet Union to do the same.

The next major attempt was aimed at stopping the further spread of nuclear weapons to additional nations. These efforts in the mid-sixties culminated in the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. The U.S. and the Soviet Union cooperated very closely in the negotiation of this Treaty, but it required major diplomatic efforts to insure that the interests of our allies and those of many non-nuclear weapons nations around the world were adequately taken into consideration. Despite these efforts, the NPT was still widely criticized in many quarters as discriminatory. A number of key countries have not subscribed, and others took many years to go through the ratification process. In order to soften the political criticism that the Treaty was a one-sided restriction on non-nuclear countries, articles were inserted by which the nuclear nations committed themselves to on the one hand exercise restraint and on the other provide peaceful nuclear benefits to the non-nuclear states. Such peaceful programs, however, run the risk of providing opportunities for nuclear explosives becoming more widely available around the world.

It is too early to evaluate the success of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. More than 100 nations have now become parties and thereby agreed to place all their nuclear materials under international safeguards. On the other hand, many key countries have stayed out, and India and perhaps Israel as well have acquired a nuclear explosive capability since the Treaty was signed. The U.S. and the Soviet Union have not fulfilled their obligations to limit their nuclear programs and therefore have made it politically difficult for them to urge restraint on the others.

The only Treaty negotiated to date by which the U.S. and Soviet Union have limited their nuclear arsenals is the ABM Treaty signed in Moscow in 1972. This limited ballistic missile defenses on both sides to sufficiently low levels that a mutual deterrent posture was guaranteed. The ABM deployments of both countries were halted and, in fact, a protocol signed two years later still further reduced the number of allowed ABM sites from two to one. Although some types of research were allowed to continue, restrictions on new developments were agreed to, which should have set a useful precedent for controls on other weapons as well. Thus, the ABM Treaty should have reduced incentives for the procurement of additional offensive systems because these were no longer needed in order to be sure of overwhelming an ABM. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Since offensive systems were not satisfactorily limited at that time, the funds saved on ABMs were frequently diverted toward offensive programs. Again, the politics of arms control required approval of new programs in exchange for support for an arms control agreement.

Just to complete the history, reference should be made to two other nuclear arms control agreements, the Outer Space Treaty and the Sea-Bed Arms Control Treaty. The former, signed in 1967, and the latter in 1971 respectively banned the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction in outer space and on the

sea bed. No nation had any plans for such deployments since they do not appear militarily or economically practical, but the Treaties did at least serve as a stabilizing influence by bringing to an end many design studies to develop such systems. This was particularly true of the Outer Space Treaty, which in the mid-sixties halted many fanciful schemes being proposed by almost every aerospace group. The politics of arms control in this case made it easier to get an agreement because neither the U.S. nor the Soviet governments had any real desires for the weapons they were foregoing.

This gloomy history does not provide much hope that the nuclear arms race will ever be brought under control before civilization is destroyed by the weapons man has created. Arms control agreements have rarely limited nuclear arms, and, in fact, have often fueled the continued arms race. In many cases, as for example the Limited Test Ban Treaty, an arms control agreement has been the basis for expanded programs. Perhaps even more importantly however, the very process of achieving agreements has become a justification for initiating or continuing advanced weapons programs. Since the negotiations are generally very time-consuming, the technological development has outpaced the controls.

Bargaining chips for the negotiating table have become the most effective justification for a weapon, particularly when its military value has become questionable. In some cases, these bargaining chips have been needed to get widespread national support for an arms limitation, and in others they are needed for the international negotiating table. As an example of the first, President Nixon reportedly endorsed the acceleration of the Trident submarine program in order to get approval by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the SALT I ABM Treaty. An example of the second was the U.S. MIRV program. When the Soviet Union halted ABM deployment and the ABM Treaty guaranteed that this would remain at a low level, the security need for placing MIRVs on U.S. SLBMs and ICBMs

vanished; the Defense Department then justified MIRVs as bargaining chips to persuade the Soviet Union to ban them in SALT. Of course, just the opposite occurred. Once the U.S. had begun large-scale deployment of MIRVs, then it became absolutely impossible to persuade the Soviets to forego such programs. This bargaining chip charade culminated in the Vladivostok Accords, which allowed the Soviet Union to acquire 1,320 MIRVed delivery vehicles even though they had none at that time. Thus, our bargaining chip forced us to endorse a Soviet build-up that could only end in providing a counterforce threat to our ICEMs.

Another classic bargaining-chip fiasco was the strategic cruise missile. The U.S. had not had any program for strategic cruise missiles since the mid-1950s, since these were considered inferior to ballistic missiles, but immediately after Moscow, Secretary Laird started development of submarine-launched cruise missiles since these were not specifically banned by the Interim Agreement on offensive weapons. The failure to include everything in a given agreement becomes a common excuse for proceeding with programs which could not otherwise be justified. However, Secretary Kissinger has said that he supported this program to provide a bargaining chip for SALT II and expressed surprise that the Pentagon would "fall in love" with this weapon. Such naivete is a bit hard to understand even though admittedly submarine-launched cruise missiles are vastly inferior to ballistic ones. They are not only easier to shoot down with Soviet anti-aircraft defenses, which are unconstrained by any Treaty, but they require the launching submarine to operate close to Soviet shores because of their limited range. Now, however, instead of being a bargaining chip for SALT II, cruise missiles have become the major barrier toward the achievement of any agreement. The military do not wish to include these in the already astronomically high Vladivostok ceilings on strategic delivery vehicles, and yet without their inclusion the ceilings are meaningless.

SALT provides a graphic illustration of how the political negotiating process has failed to bring the arms race under control. It has not only contributed toward the procurement of new weapons--such as the cruise missile already referred to--but it has also failed to slow any of the programs already in the pipeline. When positions were first being prepared for SALT in 1968, the U.S. had halted its deployment of additional missiles and bombers. MIRVs were still in the design stage, but since then they have been tested and deployed on both ICBMs and submarine-launched missiles. At the present, the U.S. has approximately 1,000 MIRVed delivery vehicles, and the only arms control agreement which limits these is the Vladivostok Accords which permits expanding this number to 1,320. This Accord has not even yet come into effect since SALT II has now been stalled for more than two years. Eight years of negotiation have thus failed to produce any limitations on offensive weapons which have not already been in effect when the talks first began. In fact, several replacement missile systems--such as the MX or the Mark 12A Minuteman--are either being developed or about to be deployed. No program, no matter how marginal its military value, can apparently be stopped while negotiations are in progress.

The record is no better with respect to the Soviet Union. During SALT I they expanded their ICBM force to about 1,600 missiles which was apparently the limit of their desires. About a year after they had reached this limit, they signed in 1972 the Interim Agreement which froze them at that level and then turned their attention to replacing the already deployed weapons with more advanced models, several of which contained MIRVs. The Vladivostok ceiling, which was set at 1,320 in November 1974 when the Soviets had as yet no deployed MIRVs, only served as an authorization for them to continue their program, and they are now starting to build up to this level. Similarly, since the SALT Agreements of 1972, they are expanding their submarine missile force from about 400 to 950 missiles.

The process of continued expansion of armaments often does not even stop when an agreement has been reached, since in some cases months or even years pass between the signing of a treaty and its coming into effect. A particularly bad example of this was the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, a relatively limited arms control agreement at best. Although it was signed by President Nixon and Secretary Brezhnev in July of 1974, it contained an article which postponed the ban on tests above 150 KT until the 31st of March, 1976. This delay was then used as an excuse by both the U.S. and Soviet developers to accelerate their testing of high-yield weapons. In the previous three years, the United States had only conducted three tests above 150 KT, but in the 20-month interim period, it carried out 15 such tests. The Treaty was even used successfully as an excuse to seek supplementary testing funds from the Congress.

This sorry history of arms control negotiations provides us with a number of lessons which must be learned if we are ever to bring the nuclear arms race under control. First the entire process of negotiating agreements must be speeded up. Eight years on SALT negotiations with most of the key weapons still unconstrained and six years on mutual balanced force reduction negotiations with almost no visible progress are luxuries which this world cannot afford. Months on end without any serious attempts to resolve issues because one or the other nation is caught up in an internal political crisis must not be allowed to happen. The national political decision-making process has got to be streamlined with stronger leadership at the top. The problems which will inevitably arise in any such negotiation do not necessarily become easier with prevarication. In fact, they usually become more difficult because as technology advances, the specifics of an agreement become less and less simple. The tendency to fall back on artificial deadlines, such as a summit meeting, to force a decision do not work for the optimum solutions nor do they necessarily save time. Furthermore, this tactic usually results in providing ammunition to

those opposed to an agreement and thus make it more difficult to implement.

However, even under the best of circumstances treaties cannot be negotiated overnight. Even in bilateral situations, such as SALT, time is required to develop national positions and allies must be consulted: when multinational negotiations are involved, then the coordination process will be inevitably stretched out even longer. Therefore, it is essential that if real progress is to be made toward meaningful arms control, negotiated treaties must be supplemented by some other mechanism. Arms build-ups cannot be allowed to proceed while every "i" in an international agreement controlling them is being dotted and nations are going through the ratification process. National restraint during the negotiations is an essential if the trend toward more and more sophisticated and dangerous armaments is to be turned around. The order of the processes must be reversed. We must stop a program or cut back on development and then try to negotiate an agreement to perpetuate the action already taken.

Such restraint can be exercised by individual governments as a normal part of their security planning, and reciprocal actions, which need not necessarily be identical, can be attained as a second step. This provides much greater flexibility so that national security can be maintained and enhanced in a situation where the forces and requirements of the two sides are not necessarily symmetrical. For example, the U.S. might now forego programs to acquire counterforce capabilities through more accurate MIRVs while the Soviet Union could reciprocate by foregoing the deployment of additional very large missiles which could provide them with a counterforce capability. This type of action would be almost impossible to formalize in an agreement but might still be the best way of insuring the security of both sides.

Unilateral actions can be much easier to reverse than would be the abrogation of formal treaty; thus the period until such actions have been put

into treaty form can be used as a trial one. The final agreement might profit tremendously from the experience gained during this period. Furthermore, a government might be less constrained to take some action if it knew that this could be more easily reversed in the event of some unforeseen difficulty.

The second lesson which must be learned from history is that bargaining chips are a pitfall, not a step along the path to arms control. They only raise the stakes at the negotiating table and inevitably produce less satisfactory agreements. The MIRV bargaining chip has only resulted in a MIRV ceiling so high that it threatens the survivability of our Minuteman force. The cruise missile bargaining chip has only resulted in placing almost insurmountable roadblocks in the achievement of any SALT II agreement. History has shown that unilateral restraint has, on the contrary, resulted in successful moves toward arms control. President Kennedy unilaterally halted U.S. atmospheric testing and two months later succeeded in negotiating a Limited Test Ban Treaty banning all such tests. President Nixon unilaterally halted U.S. biological warfare programs in 1969, and in 1972 an International Convention was signed by which all nations agreed to give up such weapons.

The third lesson to be learned is that agreements must be more all inclusive to avoid leaving loopholes which provide opportunities for diverting efforts from banned to unbanned programs. If all aspects of a given military field cannot be covered in a single initial agreement, specific prohibitions should be included to force restraint in those areas which may have to be negotiated later. We cannot allow a repetition of the Limited Test Ban Treaty where failure to ban underground tests was used as an excuse for accelerated programs. If all the details on such tests could not have been worked out, then at the very least, underground testing should have been frozen at existing or low levels. The cruise missile loophole should never have been left on the SALT I Interim Agreement on offensive weapons since such programs were not then

in existence. There is no public evidence that such weapons were discussed seriously, and we are now paying for this oversight. It should have been a relatively easy matter to have stopped them before the programs developed a momentum of their own and to have avoided the Navy from starting a new militarily unsound cruise missile program because they had nothing else to work on. In some cases, it may be difficult to close all these loopholes in formal agreement, but if reciprocal unilateral restraint is the order of the day, then this tactic would simplify dealing with the problem.

Finally, one should avoid making political concessions which might undercut an agreement in order to get support for it. The Joint Chiefs of Staff insistence on a program to maintain technical superiority should not have been acquiesced just to get their concurrence with the ABM Treaty. Very often such so-called "safeguards" can completely negate the value of the agreement since the concession can become more damaging than the gains from the agreed-upon limitation. Reciprocal restraint is a much more satisfactory way of insuring security in the aftermath of an agreement than unilateral or bilateral initiation of new, uncontrolled programs.

Thus altering the political process aimed at achieving arms limitation from one which places primary reliance on negotiation to one involving reciprocal unilateral restraint backed up by treaty negotiations could overcome the major difficulties of the past. Actions could be taken rapidly so that arms control for the first time can outrace technology. Scarce funds no longer need be wasted on bargaining chips which can never be dispensed with once they have been bought. Treaty loopholes will no longer become a mechanism for end-running limitations which have already been achieved. Since the mutual deterrent balance is not delicate but instead very stable, both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. can afford to adopt this approach without risk to their security. The overwhelming

deterrent force which both nations have procured in recent years at least has the advantage of permitting them to safely begin exercising restraint. The opportunity should not be lost because unless real arms limitations are achieved in the near future, the new weapons programs could seriously erode the current stable posture.