

**Statement
by the Honorable Fred C. Iklé
before the Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
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Nuclear Proliferation - The Larger Context

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before your distinguished committee. Our concerns about the spread of nuclear as weapons are always accentuated by most recent setback. The nuclear testing by India and Pakistan is one such set-back that caught the attention of everyone concerned with world peace and US foreign policy. This issue must be addressed; but we also need to place our non-proliferation efforts into a larger context.

The United States has sought to prevent or limit nuclear proliferation for 55 years -- since the beginning of the nuclear age. Few objectives of our foreign policy have received such continuous and bipartisan support. And measured against the anxieties expressed half a century ago, the success of our policies against nuclear proliferation has been remarkable. Since our use of atomic bombs to end World War II, only six other states have tested nuclear weapons and maintain an avowed program for a national nuclear stockpile. Apart for the special case of Israel, another three or four

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states have started clandestine nuclear weapons programs, and one of these states may possess a few atomic bombs. Biological and chemical weapons, by contrast, have been acquired by a larger number of countries.

The United States has tried seven different policies against nuclear proliferation, sometimes with the support of other nations, sometimes alone. Six of these policies are still useful arrows in our quiver, only one of the seven policies has been irrevocably expended. The one that is irretrievably lost is the universal abolition of nuclear weapons, which was the goal of the Acheson-Lilienthal plan and the Baruch plan that the Truman administration had advanced with the support of Congress. These plans envisaged effective international control of any and all nuclear reactors, a concept -- let us note -- that was scientifically sound at that time. Given the absence of significant amounts of fissionable materials and nuclear bombs at that time, this was the only point in history when the abolition of nuclear weapons would have been a technically feasible option -- although it was obviously not politically feasible because of Stalin's Soviet Union.

Our second policy to prevent, or retard, nuclear proliferation has been to impose secrecy and strict export controls. However, to maintain such a closed fortress is not our cup of tea. Here in America we prefer openness to secrecy and want free trade rather than export restrictions. Even if we had guarded our nuclear secrets more effectively, the Soviet Union would eventually have become the second nuclear power because of its own scientific and industrial capabilities. But it achieved its first nuclear test only four years after ours thanks to its successful espionage and hasty US declassifications about the Manhattan Project. The next two nuclear powers, England

and France, could rely on scientists who had been involved in the Manhattan Project and these allies later on received US assistance for their nuclear weapons program. Similarly China, the fifth nuclear power, had received substantial aid from the Soviet Union.

By now we should have discovered that a nation with some scientific and industrial capability that is determined to build nuclear weapons can be delayed with export controls and secrecy, but it cannot be prevented from eventually acquiring nuclear bombs. The reason for this, in part, is our aversion to secrecy. In particular, export controls and secrecy, in the long run, are ineffectual barriers to proliferation because of the intertwining of peaceful technologies and weapons technologies. This is a fundamental fact that we must keep in mind as we shape our policies today. The difficulty of separating weapons uses from peaceful uses is the bane of all non-proliferation policies -- in the nuclear, chemical, and especially the biological area.

When our ebullient promoters of open science, technological aid, and technology exports skirmish with our close-mouthed and perhaps somewhat surly guardians of weapons secrets, it is inevitably the latter who lose. Note that is now US policy to make all new findings of the US funded genome project instantly available on the Internet. Imagine the uproar in the scientific community should our government try to keep some of these discoveries secret for security reasons! This problem cannot be fixed by setting up an international organization that is supposed to promote peaceful uses while guarding the weapons technologies. Such a contradictory mission was the tragic flaw of the Atoms for Peace Project, which, by spreading supposedly peaceful reactor technologies to every corner of the globe also spread the wherewithal and much know-

how for making nuclear bombs. Atoms for Peace -- let us be honest about it -- is what helped to start India, Iraq, and North Korea on their weapons programs. We should have learned this lesson by now.

Alas, we have not. The mistake is being repeated with the current reactor project for North Korea (which our allies are financing because we pressure them to do so). Why does the Administration assume that North Korea, which has violated nearly every previous non-proliferation agreement, will abide by the inspection provisions for these two new reactors that we are donating? And the same mistake will be repeated with the proposed verification Protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention. Experts are agreed that the development of biological weapons agents cannot be verified; yet this Protocol would set up an international organization with the conflicted mandate, on the one hand, to spread the latest biotechnology to every rogue nation that has signed on, and on the other hand, to pretend to verify what cannot be verified.

Our third policy against weapons proliferation also deals with export controls, but is far more effective. Indeed it is one of the most essential non-proliferation policies today. This policy enlists US diplomacy and economic assistance to coax, urge, and help governments better to control the dangerous weapons materials and bombs that they have accumulated. This US effort has been -- and still is -- particularly important in the vast area of the former Soviet Union and is known here in Washington as the "Nunn-Lugar program." I can think of no greater accomplishment in the recent era in behalf of non-proliferation than this program.

The fourth policy against proliferation is the promotion of treaties -- a favorite sport of our arms control officials these days. Among law-abiding countries, treaties

can help to keep in place the decision of governments not to acquire nuclear weapons. In addition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, there are the Biological and Chemical Weapons conventions and some regional agreements on nuclear-free zones. Since India and Pakistan were honest enough not to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, their recent tests were not in violation of a treaty. Iraq and North Korea, by contrast, dishonestly and deviously signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty to obtain the technological assistance that the Treaty offers to all the parties, and thus, the better to make bombs. Mr Chairman, please let us keep this experience in mind as we evaluate the proposed Protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention.

What do we do when an arms control treaty has been violated? Usually we turn the other cheek and politely invite the violator to sign another treaty. In the 1980s, Saddam Hussein used poison gas against Iraq's own people and against Iran, thus violating the venerable 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of poison gas. Did we condemn Iraq or apply punitive sanctions? No, the arms control diplomats instead gathered in Paris and resolutely resolved to negotiate another treaty prohibiting chemical weapons, this time a treaty that would allegedly verify compliance. Even though these diplomats had all seen the photographs of gassed Iranian soldiers and Kurds, not a single one had the courage to stand up and shout: "we have verified Iraq's use of poison gas; we don't need more verification, we need punishment!" The same blithe disregard for enforcement occurred when North Korea violated the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, to which it had adhered in 1985. What was the penalty North Korea had to suffer? For promising, once more, not to build nuclear bombs, the North Korean dictatorship received the US promise of donated fuel supplies, food, plus two

brand-new large reactors. What is this telling India and Pakistan about our earnestness on non-proliferation?

The fifth policy against proliferation is persuasion, which can be effective with allies and friends. Several important countries have abandoned their nuclear ambition because the United States or other Western democracies persuaded them to do so. Among the notable successes are Sweden, Brazil and Argentina, South Africa, Taiwan, and the Republic of Korea. For Taiwan and South Korean, the American defense guarantee was crucial in persuading these nations not to pursue their own nuclear arms program.

Our sixth policy against proliferation has been the imposition of economic sanctions. We employed sanctions against India and Pakistan, as well as against Iran and Iraq. By and large, economic sanctions have not been effective in dissuading nations from going nuclear. Although, if all the leading democracies were willing to maintain a credible threat of universal economic sanctions, such a deterrent might be persuasive in some cases. (Libya comes to mind.)

Our seventh policy against proliferation has been the non-use of nuclear weapons, that is to say our reluctance to use nuclear weapons after 1945. Even when we still enjoyed a nuclear monopoly in 1950 as we nearly lost the war in Korea, we did not use nuclear weapons. And we accepted defeat in Vietnam without even considering the use of nuclear arms. Likewise, the Soviet Union lost the Afghanistan war and did not even threaten to use nuclear weapons. We have become so used to this restraint that we tend to overlook its enormous significance. More than half a century of non-use helps to keep nuclear weapons in a very separate sphere, turning it

into a military instrument that appears to be of extremely restricted utility.

None of the six policies I mentioned, whether employed singly or in combination, can keep each and every country that wants to produce nuclear weapons from doing so. Iraq, North Korea, Pakistan, and India are probably not the last countries that have crossed our line. Hence, we must have a way to respond that will not aggravate the problem. We need to impose penalties that will help to deter the next proliferator in the queue. If possible, we should also give assurances to those threatened by the new proliferation to dissuade them from doing what Pakistan did in response to India's weapons tests. But whatever measures we take, we should not send gifts each time a regime violates non-proliferation agreements. Unfortunately, this is precisely what we have been doing for North Korea.