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Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, at this unique juncture in the history of mankind, we have the potential for the greatest reduction in a former adversary's weaponry since the destruction of German and Japanese weapons that followed World War II.

Unlike then, however, the Soviet armaments whose destruction is within reach today include large inventories of nuclear weapons and other instruments of mass destruction.

I am not talking about the START Treaty. That agreement, while important, requires only modest reductions in the Soviet strategic nuclear arsenal. Indeed, by some estimates the Soviet Union will be able to retain on the order of 8,000 strategic nuclear warheads under START -- and that does not include a lot of warheads that are nonstrategic.

What I am talking about is the declared willingness of Soviet and republic leaders to destroy thousands of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons whose elimination is not required by any arms control agreement.

In his October 6 speech -- responding to President Bush's recent strategic initiative -- President Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union would destroy all of its nuclear artillery shells, nuclear mines, and nuclear warheads for tactical surface-to-surface missiles as well as part of its stockpiles of nuclear antiaircraft missile warheads, tactical nuclear weapons on board ships, and nuclear bombs carried by land-based naval aircraft.

President Gorbachev also declared that the Soviet Union would unilaterally observe a ceiling that is 1,000 weapons below that established in START and called on the United States to negotiate a START II agreement that would cut the START levels by half.

In the Ukraine, officials have called for the destruction in place of strategic nuclear weapons that otherwise could be retained legally under START, and Russian President Yeltsin has urged the central government to eliminate strategic weapons permitted under START rather than move them to Russian soil. According to Soviet officials who recently visited Washington, if you add all those categories up you get a figure on the order of 15,000 -- 15,000 nuclear weapons the Soviet Union is asking us to help them destroy.

The reason Soviet and republic leaders have expressed their willingness to undertake such draconian cuts in nuclear stockpiles is clear: they regard these nuclear weapons as a greater threat to themselves than to anybody else.

Listen to what Soviet leaders have said about the dangers posed by these instruments of mass destruction.

In a speech to the U.S.S.R., Supreme Soviet last year, the late Marshall Akhromeyev, former military chief of staff, said: "We must not forget that we possess nuclear weapons, which in times of instability may become a great source of danger both for the world and for ourselves."

Before resigning as Foreign Minister last year, Edward Shevardnadze warned of the dangers of a civil war in the Soviet Union: "No one can calculate the consequences of a societal explosion capable of igniting not only befogged minds but also the giant stockpiles of nuclear and chemical weapons."

The United States Director of Central Intelligence, William Webster, revealed in an interview before he resigned earlier this year that the United States has learned that the Soviet central government had begun "looking at what they need to do to be sure that the missiles do not fall into unfriendly hands, that they are moved if necessary, that the systems that they have in place to prevent someone from engaging in unauthorized fire are intact and protected." He added that this new Soviet concern "of course lowers the level of our confidence."

In a letter to General Powell, one week before the failed coup in August, Soviet Chief of Staff Moiseyev proposed that the security and safety of nuclear weapons be added to the agenda of United States/Soviet military-to-military talks.

And, in an op-ed in the New York Times last month, Igor Malashenko, a senior aide to President Gorbachev, candidly confirmed that domestic anxieties lay behind the Soviet Union's recent arms cutback proposals:

For decades, the Soviet Union has been preoccupied with a threat of war with the West. Thousands of nuclear weapons were intended to deter such a war or to prevail in war if deterrence failed. These days, war is more likely to start between overly nationalistic republics. Some experts have already voiced concern that a civil war may become nuclear.

That is a direct quotation from a top Soviet aide.

Unfortunately, nuclear weapons do not just go away when they are no longer wanted. Like an unwelcome house guest, they remain with you until they are decisively removed. Dismantling and destroying nuclear weapons requires two things that are in short supply now in the Soviet Union: No. 1, technology and No. 2, resources. In addition to technical know-how, the Soviets desperately need centralized nuclear storage facilities, transportation networks, dismantlement plants, and radioactive materials handling equipment -- all backed up by a vast pool of scientific and security manpower. Eliminating nuclear weapons is also not cheap. We will find that out in the months and years to come. Last month, the deputy director of atomic energy in the Soviet Union told

the Senate Arms Control Observer Group that if the Soviet Union was to destroy the 15,000 or so excess nuclear weapons [*S16487] it has marked for dismantlement over the next 7 to 9 years, it would require \$2 billion just for new storage facilities.

In a little noted but extremely significant letter to the leaders of the G-7 nations meeting in London last July before the coup, President Gorbachev proposed joint activities involving "technologies and procedures for the dismantling of nuclear explosive devices." Here then was the Soviet President imploring the West to help him eliminate Soviet nuclear arms. Twenty years ago, 10 years ago, or even 5 years ago, such a proposal to the West from a Soviet President would probably have resulted in his being arrested and shot.

Today, though, we face an entirely different situation -- a situation in which offers such as President Gorbachev's letter to the G-7 are taken virtually in stride. Indeed, the Gorbachev G-7 letter was not even mentioned in the press. Nonetheless, in response to Gorbachev's suggestion of joint nuclear warhead dismantlement efforts, President Bush included in his September 27 speech a proposal for discussions to explore cooperation in three areas:

No. 1, the safe and environmentally responsible storage, transportation, dismantling, and destruction of nuclear weapons; No. 2, enhancing existing arrangements for the physical security and safety of nuclear weapons; and No. 3, improving nuclear command and control arrangements to provide more protection against unauthorized or accidental launches.

In my view, President Bush is right on the mark with these proposals. The question for the President is -- what does he intend to do in terms of cooperation and how does he intend to pay for it?

The questions confronting Congress are simple:

Do we recognize the opportunity we have today during this period in history and the great danger we have of proliferation, or do we sit on our hands and cater to what we think people want to hear in this country?

Do we act now -- when the demand is real and pressing -- to establish some modest programs of technical assistance to help the Soviet Union destroy thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons that used to be aimed at our country and our Armed Forces, or do we trust that the Soviets will get their act together and do this job on their own?

Having demonstrated the superiority of our market economy system over their centrally planned system, do we simply watch the Soviet economic situation disintegrate, or do we assist them in converting their huge military sector to civilian production?

Having won the cold war, do we now join with our former adversary in developing

technology to help both our nations clean up the residue of that era and avoid proliferation of weapons throughout the world? Or, do we sit on our hands and do nothing, knowing full well that by so doing we will not do anything to help keep Soviet scientists from selling their services to the highest Third World bidder, thereby greatly magnifying the threats against which future United States defense budgets and defense postures will have to respond for years to come?

Mr. President, the fiscal year 1992 Defense authorization bill provides our country with a clear opportunity to invest wisely in a modest program that could produce dramatic dividends -- a carefully targeted program of cooperation in Soviet defense conversion and demilitarization that could help the Soviet Union and Republics build down their excessive military capabilities -- capabilities which, however benign current Soviet and republic intentions may be, could prospectively constitute a clear and present threat to our Nation and the free world.

The provision authorizing this program specifies that no United States assistance can be provided to any nation, Soviet republic or former Soviet republic that fails to demonstrate a commitment to: First, significant demilitarization; second, full compliance with all relevant arms control agreements; and third, internationally recognized human rights, including the protection of minorities; or that conducts any military modernization program that exceeds legitimate defense requirements, and this would be a matter of judgment for the Secretary of Defense.

Mr. President, this proposal also includes Eastern Europe. Sometimes we go on a wave around here. About a year ago, we were going through all sorts of efforts to get money from the Defense budget to provide to Eastern Europe. There was a popular demand to assist Eastern Europe, and in fact we did so. We are now proposing that we assist the new democracies of Eastern Europe in a way that reduces a military threat. And, of course, I find that the mood has now changed.

Let me explain, for the benefit of our colleagues, what our proposal is and what it is not. Unfortunately, much of the public comment by some critics of this program has distorted rather than clarified its contents.

For example, it has been claimed that this provision forces the United States to send \$1 billion to the Soviet Union. What are the facts?

In fact, the provision authorizes no direct financial assistance to the U.S.S.R. It mandates no funding for the Soviet Union.

It does provide, however, President Bush with the option of using this funding for the transport of emergency food and medicine. It does provide President Bush the option of using this funding for cooperation in weapons destruction and in demilitarizing the Soviet economy. It does so because in a country possessing some 30,000 nuclear weapons, these dismantling programs are in our national security interests.

It does provide the administration with flexibility in proposed funding levels for these programs, because no one can foresee how events will unfold in the U.S.S.R. in the next few months. There may be things we cannot anticipate now that will happen long before we get back in session next year; we should make allowance for this possibility now.

At the same time, this legislation requires continuous, detailed reports to Congress on all funding and all program execution.

Another claim that we have heard in recent days by people opposing this provision is that it would assist the Soviet defense industry and Soviet military personnel at a time when American defense industries and American military personnel need assistance.

What are the facts? In fact, this legislation provides no direct financial aid to the Soviet military establishment.

It does foresee limited economic incentives for United States firms to invest in Soviet and Eastern European military conversion, but only if a blue-ribbon panel recommends such a program to the Secretary of Defense, and only if the Congress then agrees to a subsequent act to create such a fund and to create such a program by specific additional legislation.

In other words, the media reports that this provides an incentive plan for American businesses to invest in the Soviet defense industry are not accurate because they do not put the conditions precedent there, and that is, first, a report by a blue-ribbon commission, and, second, a subsequent act of Congress.

The legislation provides no benefits of any sort to individuals involuntarily separated from the Soviet military, another error that continues to pop up in story after story and in critic after critic's speeches here on the floor.

It does foresee limited technical assistance to the Soviets in setting up a program comparable to our GI bill, while specifically prohibiting U.S. funding for actual retraining or reemployment.

That has been in the legislation from the time we voted on it in our committee about a week and half ago.

Some media coverage of the provision has been totally inaccurate and misleading. This morning, for instance, a New York Times article implies that this legislation would pay to retrain Soviet officers, when in fact, it involves only United States technical advice to Soviet authorities on setting up a retraining program at Soviet expense.

The article also indicates the legislation would pay to clean up environmental damage to the Soviet Union when, in fact it involves only technical cooperation on military-related environmental cleanup that would assist [*S16488] all countries plagued with this problem, including the United States and also including the new democracies of Eastern Europe.

In other words, what we are talking about is technical assistance; we are talking about technological cooperation. We are not talking about the United States going over and cleaning up an environmental mess in the Soviet Union. That would be preposterous. There has never been anything in this proposal to indicate that, and anyone saying so is simply not reading the legislation.

Finally, the New York Times article notes that the proponents of this provision did not demonstrate that it would lead to direct financial savings for the United States. This is a charge that defies all common sense. Surely it is clear that programs to assist in the destruction of thousands of Soviet nuclear weapons, programs to demilitarize the Soviet economy, and to help reduce the danger of weapons proliferation around the world will make possible substantially lower United States defense spending in years ahead.

If helping them destroy 15,000 weapons is not a reduction in the Soviet military threat, why have we been worrying about these 15,000 weapons for the last 30 years? I do not see any logic here at all. It defies my own ability to understand.

I ask that this morning's article be printed in the Record.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. NUNN. The United States has spent over \$4 trillion -- not billion; \$4 trillion -- since World War II to defend Europe and protect other U.S. national security interests. I am confident that the American people are perceptive enough and smart enough to realize that taking \$1 billion -- up to \$1 billion, at the administration's discretion -- out of the Defense budget would not be too high a price to pay to help destroy thousands and thousands of Soviet nuclear weapons.

I am confident the American people are perceptive enough and smart enough to realize that using a small share of the defense budget to distribute humanitarian relief in order to prevent civil unrest or a military coup that could install a hostile military regime is a very small price to pay when we are at this critical juncture in our history.

Mr. President, notwithstanding President Bush's September 27 proposal for joint programs of cooperation along these lines, the White House has been frozen into inaction by demands from some of its more partisan supporters to exploit this issue for political purposes. The tepid and ineffectual support from the White House has provided those who worked with the Defense authorization conference to fashion appropriate legislative authority that would permit President Bush to move forward in these directions is, to say the least, discouraging. We have an opportunity to get out in front of a problem, which left unattended could become a crisis.

Mr. President, if this provision is dropped from the conference report, which may very

well be the case -- we have to make that decision this afternoon -- what is the alternative? What are the consequences of doing nothing?

The simple truth is at this unique juncture in history there is a great opportunity, but there is also great danger. We have the opportunity for an unprecedented destruction of the weapons of war. We also have the potential for the greatest proliferation in history of weapons from the world's largest military arsenal to Third World countries, including those ruled by the Saddam Husseins of the future. This unsettling and extremely destabilizing danger could well include the transfer or sale or even theft of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles and ballistic missile technology, and highly sophisticated conventional weapons.

Mr. President, we are spending, as part of the U.N. force, a large amount of money and time and effort, worthwhile effort, to search in Iraq right now, to make sure we get rid of all their nuclear materials. We are spending our part of it as a member of the United Nations. We need to continue that.

But at the same time, we are going to sleep -- to sleep -- about a country that is coming apart at the seams economically, that wants to destroy nuclear weapons at this juncture, but may not in the months and years ahead. And that is a potential source for the greatest proliferation of weapons that we have seen in the history of mankind. I cannot really believe that we are going to continue to sleep through both this opportunity and this danger.

But so far, the snores are being heard. In addition, we may witness an equally threatening proliferation of scientific know-how in each of these areas, a bidding war, if you will, by Third World regimes for Soviet weapons experts that would dwarf United States-Soviet cooperation to recruit Germany's V-2 scientists after World War II, in one of the first real contests of the cold war.

This was a contest to see which side, the East or West, was going to have access to the knowledge of the German scientists. Fortunately, we, I think, did better than the Soviets in that respect, and we recruited some of those scientists to help us develop programs that helped preserve the peace and deter war all of these years.

Right now, what people are not stopping to think about is the tens of thousands of scientists and technicians in the Soviet Union that have spent a lifetime building nuclear weapons, building missiles, building chemical weapons, even in some cases biological weapons, and weapons of mass destruction. And here we are, debating whether this is just another foreign aid provision in the context of domestic politics.

Mr. President, I have a lot more confidence in the intelligence of the American people than some of my colleagues do.

Mr. President, one need not look very far to see evidence of the reality we face. Indeed, one need look no farther than last Thursday's New York Times or last Sunday's Los

Angeles Times. The New York Times headline reads as follows: "A Soviet Company Offers Nuclear Blasts for Sale to Anyone With the Cash." The story describes the marketing efforts of a Soviet company, called CHETEK, whose shareholders include the Soviet ministry responsible for nuclear weapons production, offering to use so-called peaceful nuclear explosions to destroy toxic wastes, including chemical weapons.

How is that? We are going to get rid of our waste disposal problem by blowing it up with nuclear weapons?

One U.S. nonproliferation expert, quoting from that story said:

Soviet weapons scientists are faced with tremendous economic hardships and are going to be tempted to sell their services to anyone who is prepared to provide hard currency.

A Canadian expert says -- quoted in the same article -- "Everybody in Moscow wants to make a deal; these people are not really concerned about the consequences of the sale -- they only want the dollars."

Mr. President, Sunday's Los Angeles Times features the following headline. "U.S. Fears Sale of Soviet A-Arms and Technology." The article goes on to quote at length from comments Secretary Cheney made in a CNN interview on Saturday morning expressing concern about the proliferation of Soviet nuclear expertise and know-how to the Third World.

I think the Secretary is exactly right. The question is, What is this administration and what is this Congress going to do about it? Are we going to continue to sit on our hands?

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the two articles, as well as the transcript of the Secretary's interview, be printed in the Record at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 2.)

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I have heard this from several of my colleagues in explaining their opposition to this proposal that Congressman Aspin and I have put forth. "Your proposal makes sense, but I cannot explain it to my constituents in 1 minute. Therefore, it does not meet the 1-minute political test." I have heard that from several different sources and, I must say, on both sides [*S16489] of the aisle. I have also heard this: "Yes, we need to take this step now, but all my constituents are telling me -- take care of our own needs; help the people of America for a change." I have heard that. I have heard it back home.

Mr. President, I do not know of any better way to help the people of America than by reducing the potential military threat that not only faces our Nation in the months and years to come but faces our Nation for, really, generations to come. I do not know of any

better way -- which so many people want to do, and I would like to do it myself -- I do not know of any better way to shift large amounts of money from the military side of the ledger in the years to come to the domestic side than by reducing the military threat that we will inevitably have to face in years ahead unless we get off our hands and do something about it.

To those who say, "Oh, we think you have a good idea, but we are worried about public reaction," I pose the following questions:

How will we explain to our constituents when they read that Soviet weapons experts, including those engaged in missile technology and weapons of mass destruction, are showing up in North Korea or Libya or Iran or Iraq? How are we going to explain that, in 1 minute?

How will we explain it to our constituents if they read that we suspect certain chemical and biological and nuclear materials or weapons are being sold to terrorist groups? What will we say when they ask, "Why didn't you get out in front of this problem? And I think the American people would have every right to ask that.

I also pose this question: How will our constituents feel if 15,000 Soviet nuclear weapons that the Soviets at this juncture are pleading with us to help them destroy, how will we and our constituents feel if these weapons remain in the Soviet inventory because a modest program of cooperation that would have led to their elimination on an expedited time frame was blocked -- was blocked -- by the Congress and by the inactivity on the part of the executive branch?

How will we explain to our constituents that thousands of Soviet chemical weapons that could have been destroyed were not destroyed because United States technical assistance to the Soviets in this area was blocked, and the Soviet side lacked the technology to destroy these weapons that we have been worrying about for the last 45 years? How are we going to explain that?

How do we explain it to our constituents if a civil war breaks out in the Soviet Union similar to the conflict in Yugoslavia -- and I pray it will not -- but how will we explain it if they are sitting over there with huge nuclear and chemical weapons stockpiles spread throughout the region, when we could have cooperated in helping bring about the destruction of these stockpiles?

Try explaining those questions, which the constituents that we represent will have every right to ask if these events transpire, try explaining that in 1 minute.

Mr. President, I will leave it to my colleagues who have denounced this provision as a "billion dollar giveaway" or as "foreign aid" to explain their position to their constituents as events unfolding the months and years ahead. Deleting this provision may cater to the immediate mood of the public -- although I doubt it -- but sitting on our hands at this critical juncture does not cater to the long-term interests of the American people.

Mr. President, the people of this country are frustrated. They are frustrated with Congress. They are frustrated with the economy. But I do not believe it is difficult to explain to the people of this country that what they have sacrificed for for 45 years in terms of tax dollars, and what our young American military people have sacrificed over the years, those who served in Europe, those even who died in Korea and Vietnam, what they sacrificed for we have now achieved in terms of a moment in history, and yet we are sitting on our hands waiting for great public demand to take steps that anyone with common sense would understand should be taken now.

Mr. President, I have the fear that we are watching a script play out in the last few days -- in terms of this proposal and the way it has been described, criticized by some, distorted by others -- I have a feeling we are watching a script play out that could haunt us for years to come.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the legislative provision I have described, as prepared for inclusion in the conference report, be printed in the Record immediately following my remarks. Let me make clear, Mr. President, that while the provision contains all of the programs I have outlined, it does not provide \$1 billion for the purchase of humanitarian aid as initially proposed in the House version of this provision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.