

# "The MX Missile,"

## Washington, D.C., May 23, 1983.

### Floor statement

There have been great differences in this great debate. However, there are some things that I think we can all agree on. It is obvious that the Soviets have engaged in a massive and dangerous build-up of their conventional and nuclear forces. This concerns us all. We all want the U.S. to be secure. We all recognize the need to modernize our armed forces and weaponry. But does this basic knowledge of our needs allow us to accept a flawed concept? I think not.

President Lyndon Johnson once said that, "To do what is right is easy--everyone wants to do what is right. But to **know** what is right is the tough thing." All of us want to do what is right on this terribly important issue. The real question that faces us though, is to **know** what is right, and to make the right decision. I've always believed that public policy must be grounded in common sense or it soon will fail. We have heard from many experts in many fields during these last few months. Now it is up to us to apply common sense, and to make the right decision on this vital matter.

After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, President Kennedy commented on his decisions during that turbulent time. He said that many experts, in their braid and decorations, told him that the Bay of Pigs invasion could and would succeed. In his post mortem, President Kennedy criticized himself. In retrospect he said:

- "All my life I've known better than to depend on the experts. How could I have been so stupid, to let them go ahead?"

I think that a lot of the experts in this great debate are wrong.

I have always believed in modernizing our armed services and our weaponry when the need develops. In the past, I voted to build the MX, to research it, to test it, but to hold on a final decision until we had a basing mode agreed upon.

We've gone through many basing modes now, and still haven't come up with an answer. In fact, we've gone around in a circle and have ended up where we started 20 years ago. In the late 1950's we had a big debate in Tucson, my hometown. At that time, we were appointed hosts, for 18 Titan missiles, an early generation of powerful, liquid- fueled missiles that have served us well and been a key part of our deterrent. But we were told at the time, that time would come in the 1970's or 80's, the Soviet's

would improve their ICBM accuracy and that our land-based missiles, in silos or otherwise, could be destroyed by a pinpoint Soviet attack.

We knew that sometime in the 70's or 80's, we would have to have a new missile, land-based, if we were to keep that leg of the triad. And so we began, even then, on the MX. This missile was designed to be land-based and invulnerable. Not like the silo based missiles of the past, but by some kind of mobile or deceptive deployment.

So the search began, we talked about putting the missile in trucks that would cruise the interstate--in barges along our waterways--in railroad cars--we had the racetrack system in Nevada and Utah--there was dense pack republic--and time after time, after we studied each system, it became clear that they would not provide us with the kind of invulnerable, land based missile system that was needed to protect us from modern, highly accurate Soviet ICBM's.

After analyzing all of these systems, the Scowcroft commission finally came up with the solution, guess what, believe it or not, of putting the MX missile in fixed silos! And so, we've come a full circle. And now, I'm not so sure we can find a workable, land-based deployment mode for the MX.

If we can't, we ought to face up to it and make adjustments. Spend the \$20 billion on something that will add to our security. There's nothing magic in the figure three. The triad fixation says we have to have three different, separate ways to hit the Soviet Union with our nuclear power. There has even been some loose talk lately about adding a fourth basing mode, and putting missiles in outer space. And make no mistake about it, this is not a bargaining chip we are talking about anymore. It is a 20 billion dollar weapons system that will take money away from other military needs as well as those of our civilian society. Given the history of arms control, and our relations with the Soviet's, does anyone seriously believe at this late time that we'll build another ICBM system and then trade it off at the bargaining table? It's clear that this is not something that will appeal to the Soviet's and that they will simply build more systems of the kind that they have now.

More than a hundred years ago, my grandfather traveled from Utah to Arizona to build the small town in which I was born. In those simple times, the U.S. government and indeed, foreign governments, had little impact on your lives, or threatened your existence. In the Rocky Mountains, protected by two oceans, and wide deserts, the people of Arizona didn't really have to worry about any kind of attack or death from outside forces. The biggest guns built in those days were mounted on battleships and had a range of twelve miles. Now times have changed. Drastically changed. Someone you have never seen, and do not know, can make a decision in the next thirty minutes, and within one hour, all that we have built into this country and that mankind has built

into this world could be destroyed. We have threats that were literally unthinkable even 40 years ago when we entered the nuclear age. We must face facts. And the plain, blunt fact is that the accuracy and the throwweight of the Soviet missiles has now rendered our ICBM's obsolete. We are foolish to consider spending this kind of money, on 100 MX missiles in fixed-silos.

It is important to remember that we still have two legs of the triad, an invulnerable, powerful system in our nuclear deterrent force. And that is our submarine system. We also have pretty good air defenses. We have cruise missiles and new bombers coming on line. And we are exploring new, innovative weapons systems that could eventually make nuclear missiles obsolete.

I think the time has come to say the common sense way, that we're as safe as we can be--that we have all the deterrence that we need. We will modernize our airborne and submarine systems when the time comes, but we should no longer insist on a full-blown triad, when it won't work, it won't solve our problems and it will only increase likelihood of a nuclear conflict.

This latest MX silo plan does not meet the test of common sense. All it does is create a bullseye in middle America for Soviet defense planners. We've had a nuclear triad not because of the number three, but for one reason only. We have better odds in deterring a nuclear war.

Nuclear weapons are odd, contrary things. They are the only weapons in the history of man that have been constructed with the sole purpose of not being used.

The threat of a deliberately triggered nuclear war, is a danger hanging over all of mankind, but sadder than that, and more ominous, and more alarming, is the fact that if we keep heading down this course of more and more large missiles, with more and more warheads, we raise the odds of starting World War III. We raise the odds on the destruction of all mankind. What's worse, as more nations join the nuclear club, something even more unthinkable could happen. We may blunder into a nuclear war by miscalculation, by accident. Not even by design. We almost had World War III by accident in the late 1950's, when a full moon coming up over the arctic sea was mistaken by our advance radar as a Soviet flight of missiles coming into the Midwest. We lucked out on that one, but it will be harder to the next time luck out of a nuclear war, when 20 nations instead of the present 6 have these terrible weapons of destruction.

President Kennedy, after the 1962 missile crisis, said of that experience, that what frightened him most was that great powers could miscalculate so severely. He told of meeting with Krushchev in Geneva a few months before the crisis, and holding a sharp

conversation on the dangers of nuclear war. Then, during the crisis, Krushchev apparently believed that Kennedy, or any other American president, would sit idly by and let the Soviet's install nuclear weapons in Cuba. And he said, "On my own part, I could not believe that this man that I had met and talked to, really believed that I would simply accept the missiles in Cuba. On both sides, in this terribly important matter, there was basic miscalculation that could have led to war." Who will miscalculate as we pile weapons on weapons, and the Soviets match us, and we them? Albert Einstein once said "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything, except our mode of thinking. Thus, he said, we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe. A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive."

The administration would do well to heed Einstein's words. We do need a new type of thinking on these basic, serious matters. We need to say, in a common sense way, that there is nothing sacred in a nuclear triad. There are alternatives. By placing the new-generation of single-warhead missiles in small submarines off the shore of the United States, we could gain both deterrence and avoid another expensive round in the escalating arms race. Maybe that isn't the answer, but it is better than anything else that has been proposed.

So I say the time to close out this well intended new weapon is now. Not tomorrow, or next week, Or next year, but now. In the first hour of a nuclear war we could kill more people than all of the wars in history. So we must think anew, and face anew these complicated decisions we're making this year in this matter. Loose talk about nuclear war being winnable, or that nuclear war can be limited no longer makes sense. Who really believes that we could fire at the Soviet's at nine in the morning, they would take out a few of our cities a couple of hours later, then we'd all go off to lunch and talk about what would happen next? Once this nuclear war begins, there will be no limits. And we don't find the answers to these terrible dilemmas by waiting another year, with another weapon or another bargaining chip. The MX missile has seen more than 35 unacceptable basing modes. And putting new missiles into old silos won't work anymore than the old racetrack proposal would have worked.

I had an old law professor who used to say "Son, your whereases do not match your now therefores." I think that applies to the Scowcroft commission. They say in effect:

- "Where land-based missiles cannot be based in the U.S. in any mode that will not be vulnerable to a Soviet attack and whereas, we have tried the racetrack, the railroad cars, and trucks, and barges, and none of them will give them this invulnerable basing we seek to save the idea of the triad. Now therefore, lets build the 20 million dollar missile anyway."

I say that we do not need any more money for procurement of the MX missile, we have spent enough time debating the merits and the pitfalls of this decision. The time has come for the U.S. government to move forward and find a reasonable alternative. Whether it be a submarine based missile, a single-warhead missile, or some new form of basing. But let's stop living in the past and move into the future. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote against this proposal. We can then go to work to correct the system, whether it has three legs, two legs or five legs, we have options. We still have our common sense. We can go on and negotiate as we must on arms control agreements, but we can't do it until the plan meets both the test of the experts and the common sense of the American people.