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A VOTE AGAINST MX IS NOT A VOTE AGAINST GENEVA

Dear Colleague:

As we approach the key votes on the MX, we urge you not to be beguiled by the Administration's "Geneva argument"--i.e., that voting against unfencing the funds for 21 more MX missiles will undercut our position at Geneva. Let's face it: If we buy that argument we will abdicate Congressional control of the defense budget indefinitely. The Geneva negotiations will almost certainly continue for many years, and will involve virtually all nuclear, space and even conventional programs. If we allow it, all these programs could then be cut off from Congressional scrutiny on the grounds that they are "bargaining chips."

The SALT I negotiations took 3 years to negotiate; the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks in Central Europe, on the level of conventional forces currently deployed from which reductions should be measured, have been going on since 1973. In view of the wide disparity of positions between the Soviet Union and us on such issues as Star Wars, anti-satellite weapons, Euromissiles, and MBFR, can anyone expect that the current round of negotiations will not be protracted?

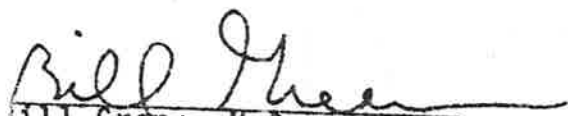
As to the scope of the weapons and forces involved, they include all strategic forces; anti-satellite weapons; all strategic defenses, including Star Wars development and deployment; and, in the MBFR negotiations, potentially all American forces and weapons deployed in Europe or available to deploy further forces there. In short, there is virtually nothing that the defense budget pays for that cannot be described by the Administration as a bargaining chip.


If Congress accepts the argument that we cannot restrain spending on Geneva bargaining chips, we shall totally abandon control of military spending to an Administration that thus far has simply rubber stamped everything the Pentagon has wanted to buy--and that at a time when we must deal with a \$200 billion plus deficit!

There is no group of Americans more interested in negotiating a settlement in Geneva than the Members of Congress. But that does not mean that we are willing to give up our Congressional control of military programs and fund such wastefully expensive, indefensible weapons as the MX. If we give in to the Administration on 21 MXs now, how will the argument be any different later this year when the vote is on 48 more MXs, or ASATs, or binary chemical weapons, or Star Wars?

We regret that the Administration has chosen to time the MX vote so close to the opening of the Geneva talks. Plainly, this has been done in an attempt to maneuver us into funding the MX in violation of our best judgment.

We should not let ourselves be so easily manipulated. The Administration can best avoid the prospect of embarrassment by withdrawing or delaying its request for MX funds. If it refuses to do so, this does not give us an excuse for surrendering our Constitutionally mandated control of the defense budget.


Bill Green, M.C.

Sincerely,

Les AuCoin, M.C.