

August 31, 1981

The Honorable Malcom Wallop
Russell Senate Office Building, Rm. 204
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wallop:

President Reagan's recent decision to put the neutron bomb into production and the current heated debate over the emplacement of the MX missile system raise again the issue of what constitutes a sane and reasonable national defense policy in a nuclear age of "mutual assured destruction!"

By every account of our defense posture which I have read our nuclear arsenal contains many times over the destructive power necessary to annihilate the Soviet Union or any other potential enemy now on the international scene. Likewise, we have all been informed that the Russians have even more destructive power in their nuclear arsenal than we do.

As a sober citizen of our fine state I find myself increasingly alarmed by our government's apparent intention of continuing and escalating the nuclear arms build-up. Why have we chosen to play nuclear brinkmanship when mutual annihilation is the only possible outcome of using nuclear weapons? Why must valuable tax dollars be spent on producing more weapons which under the threat of national suicide can and must never be used? We must all remember that it only required a single assassin's bullet to precipitate the horrors of World War I. The use of a single neutron bomb in today's world could very well mean the end of human civilization.

The construction of a land-based MX missile system seems to me an equally foolhardy expenditure of tax dollars. Not only would such a system be technologically obsolete before it was completed, but it would devastate huge portions of western lands and soak up large amounts of valuable western water. I don't know any Wyoming citizens who welcome the prospect of the MX engineers and construction people coming into our state to build this monstrosity. Our state is already a primary target for the Russians because of the missile sites now in place here. The threat to Wyoming citizens would be increased immeasurably were the MX system to be built here. We don't want it here. We ask you to oppose all efforts by the administration to bring the MX system to Wyoming or to any other state for that matter. The MX is a poorly conceived defense system that would do little more than encourage the enemy to target the sites with frighteningly high numbers of nuclear warheads. Any state that consents to host the MX project will most assuredly be the recipient of saturation nuclear bombing in the event of a holocaust.

But the fundamental point to be made with respect to both the neutron bomb and the MX missile system is that our country cannot under any circumstances ever run the risk of using these weapons. It simply makes no sense to me to spend billions of tax dollars to produce weapons that cannot ever be used due to the realities of the "mutual assured destruction" threat that hangs over the world today.

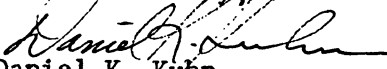
To build neutron warheads and MX missiles in today's world is an unconscionable endorsement of nuclear proliferation. It is suicidal. It encourages the fatal notion that nuclear weapons can and should be used to enforce our foreign policy objectives. It vastly increases the chances that these insanely destructive weapons will fall into the hands of terrorists and military madmen like Khaddafy. The horror of nuclear terrorism will only thrive the more if nations such as ours continue to multiply the weapons which make it possible.

I do not speak with the voice of innocent and ignorant pacifism. I am an ex-Army captain. I am a veteran of the Viet Nam war. I hold among others the Purple Heart and the Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service. I have been a first-hand witness of a military policy which was willing to destroy a city in order to save it and to destroy a country in order to protect it. I can no longer remain silent in the face of a military policy which would seek to protect our people by blindly multiplying weapons of incredible destructiveness. Salvation through destructive power is the particular madness of the twentieth century.

I urge you to oppose the mindlessness of stockpiling more nuclear weaponry. I urge you to oppose policy that would make the west a concentrated target of nuclear missiles and warheads.

I urge you to do all in your power as a United States Senator to promote the resumption of strategic arms limitation talks and the passage of such a treaty as soon as possible. I urge you to promote policy that will reduce and minimize the opportunities for terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons.

Yours sincerely,


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Copies to Simpson and Cheney