

# Envisioning Worldwide Disarmament

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The topic I have been given of worldwide disarmament of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons is one that can be handled very briefly. I don't see worldwide disarmament happening in the foreseeable future. The world just isn't ready for the kind of intrusive inspection regimens that would be needed to ensure against cheating.

We have had a catastrophe with inspections in Iraq, where the U.N. Security Council mandates allowed outside inspection to keep that country from having or developing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). We've let it go; that is a great shame because here was an opportunity for a precedent, a model to lead us toward worldwide disarmament. Now, if we can't have disarmament in the foreseeable future, the next best thing we can do is to ensure that nobody actually uses these weapons.

The focus of this conference has been largely on what to do if WMDs are used. I suggest three steps that we as a country should consider to reduce the probability that anyone, a rogue nation or terrorist group, will use weapons of this sort. One of these recommendations specifically points toward the medical and health care professions.

First, the United States needs to establish a regime of punishments for the use of WMDs. We don't want anyone thinking about using these and not understanding that there's going to be a price to be paid at some point. We didn't exact any price from Iraq when, during its war with Iran from 1979 to 1988, they used chemical weapons several times. We exacted a very small price from Pakistan and India in 1998 when they tested nuclear weapons. We put on an embargo but lifted it very quickly when the grain lobby in the United States said, "We'd rather sell grain to these people than punish them for moving forward with WMDs." This indicates that we have a way to go still in heightening consciousness in the United States about this problem, because it's always going to be difficult to get grain lobbies and others to forsake profits to discourage the use of WMDs. However, we must elevate the latter in importance in order to position ourselves better for when the next time something like this happens.

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It's got to be done delicately because we can overexcite people, overalarm them. I don't think it was helpful when the secretary of defense of several years ago, to make a point, during a TV broadcast put a bag of sugar on the table and said, "If this were anthrax, it could kill all of Washington, DC." That was more alarming than informative.

I suggest that we, as a nation, develop, discuss, and agree on a range of possible punishments for the use of WMDs ranging from mild to severe. The point, though, is to have already discussed these and to have already agreed on the general scope before a crisis erupts, so that there is a consensus within the country. Because we'd have a range of these options, that would also let us fit the punishment to the crime. It would make it easier to ensure that the punishment selected would have broad public support here and possibly in foreign countries.

Now, my list of what these candidate punishments could be is not comprehensive, but let me suggest that we could start with taking the country to the World Court. You could move on to cutting off World Bank and International Monetary Fund financial sources. You could sever their airline connections with the outside world, by preventing their airlines from landing on our fields, and not letting our aircraft fly into theirs. We could embargo some portions of trade. Finally, we could implement a total embargo of trade. In any particular case, whenever we were ready to execute, we would try to persuade other responsible nations in the world to join with us and exercise the same punishments. What would they have to lose? Well, they wouldn't be able to maintain good relations with the country involved. However, most of the countries that would think of using WMDs are pariahs anyway: the Iraqs, the North Koreas, and so forth.

Of course, they would also lose commercial opportunities, and this will be difficult to overcome. Again, it depends on how well we've prepared the case, how well we've tried to condition international and national opinion, on the importance of deterring the use of these weapons. I doubt we could do this by sitting down tomorrow and trying to negotiate some broad treaty because there would be too many compromises, too many uncertainties. We need to wait and do it on a case-by-case basis and bring together for each case an ad hoc group of nations that will exercise this power.

Second, we must ensure that we have the best intelligence possible about the development and possible use of WMDs. There are a number of ways to obtain intelligence on any subject; satellite photographs and electronic intercepts of signals and messages going

around the world are two. These can be useful, even in cases such as the development or production of chemical and biological weapons, which is easy to hide.

However, we generally look more in this area toward human intelligence. It, of course, is intended to get right inside the other country's network and find out what it is planning to do. There are some difficulties in these kinds of situations, however. Let me give you an example. I was having lunch with a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative just a few days after Iraq attacked Kuwait in 1990. We were reading criticism in the newspapers in those days that the CIA and the intelligence community had not predicted this attack. People were saying we should have had an agent inside Saddam Hussein's inner circle to tell us what he was planning to do. I asked my friend, "What's the chance we could ever penetrate, that is, get somebody on the inside of a Saddam Hussein's inner circle?" He instantly put up his hand and said "zero." That's a tough nut to crack. However, it doesn't mean you don't try. You never know when you'll just happen to make out.

There's another approach to human intelligence that we should not overlook in this kind of a situation: the open contacts that go on all the time between US citizens and citizens of other countries, even countries as hostile as Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. These are tourists, businessmen, academics, people attending conferences of professional organizations, and so forth. Let me tell you a little sea story here. In 1977, when I took over as director of Central Intelligence, there had just been a year's worth of examination of the CIA by two committees of Congress, appointed by the president. These investigations had come up with some CIA activities in the 1950s and 1960s that they did not think were appropriate. One of those was the use of American citizens in the course of collecting intelligence. Particularly, there was outrage that the CIA had used some US media people as well as academics, businessmen, tourists, and others. I spent a good deal of time in my first few months in office trying to sort this out and establish what our policies would be in response to this considerable criticism. I ended up with the wrath of the media on me for a long time because I refused to exclude the media totally. I said we would be cautious about ever asking media people to help us but that we would not renounce it. They were American citizens, and they were patriotic. If they might help us, I would be willing to call on them. I authorized doing that once when we had hostages incarcerated in Tehran.

Another view on this came to my attention just a few months after taking office when I went to London

to call on my counterpart, the head of MI-6. Much of the CIA's procedures and programs had been modeled on the British intelligence system, and so I was looking forward to my first conversation with this senior spymaster of spymasters. After having dinner at his home, we sat down beside a fire, and I waited anxiously for his advice to me, a novice in this field of intelligence.

He asked, "Stan, are you tapping all the information that's available in the American business community?" I was shocked. Here was this spymaster asking me if I was using open intelligence rather than spies. He went on to say, "Well, look, there's no point in taking the risks and paying the costs of putting a spy into a situation if the information is already available inside your society. You've got to find a way to get it out, to pull it together." This was logical enough. It obviously had to be tempered with the culture of our society as opposed to that of British society; however, I took his point.

I suggest that intelligence on chemical warfare and biological warfare is a field where you in the medical, health care, and public health fields can make a real contribution. You may have contacts with your counterparts abroad that could be very helpful.

For instance, yesterday, Amy Smithson discussed her interviews with Russians about biological warfare in which she learned that numbers of them were "teaching" in foreign countries. Knowledge of where those people were going and what kinds of individual skills they took with them could provide important clues to help keep track of what's going on in biological warfare. That, however, is not enough to make a case. It is not enough to draw firm conclusions. However, then you add this information to another clue. A businessman comes back and finds out that Germany is selling centrifuges to Iraq. These two pieces of information put together is sufficient evidence to let you draw a useful conclusion, one that could lead to some national action on the subject.

Somebody, of course, must be the collecting point, pulling all of these together facts together, and collating them. It must be the CIA. They have to, if they haven't already, set up a body to do this to be the collecting point.

The Center for Civilian Biodefense and other professional groups can be important contributors to this, providing the CIA these fragmentary clues together from which they can assemble the puzzle.

Successful intelligence itself is actually the art of completing a jigsaw puzzle when you've only got about 40% of the pieces with which to work, and you have to

draw the whole picture. It will always be controversial to bring innocent people into the spying business. However, I suggest that in this case intelligence can indeed be our best defense against the actual use of WMDs. However, this tough nut can't be cracked just with the ordinary intelligence processes.

My last suggestion concerns nuclear weapons. There is one big difference between the way we deal with biological and chemical weapons on the one hand and nuclear weapons on the other. We, as a country, have renounced the use or possession of biological and chemical weapons. We have not done so with nuclear weapons. In fact, we have insisted that we reserve the right to use nuclear weapons first if it seems to be in our interest to do so. It will *never* be in our interest to do so. If we think about using a nuclear weapon against another country with nuclear weapons, there is no way you can hope not to receive at least one nuclear detonation in retaliation. I don't believe the American public would want to sacrifice any one city of the United States to achieve something overseas by our initiating the use of nuclear weapons.

What about using a nuclear weapon against a non-nuclear state where there is no risk of retaliation? The use of any nuclear weapon, regardless of size, would be disproportionate to the provocation, even to the provocation of an attack with biological weapons. I think we, the public, should urge the president to have a recount on this policy of preserving the right of the first use of nuclear weapons. There's a real benefit in renouncing that policy. It opens up the possibility of going to really low numbers of nuclear weapons.

The US arsenal contains about 12,000 nuclear warheads. That's a lot more than anybody in a right mind could possibly think of needing or using. The increments by which we are reducing our nuclear arms are so small that they don't make much of a dent in our arsenal. The United States has no plan, despite all you read in the newspapers about arms control agreements, to reduce its arsenal to less than 10,000 nuclear warheads and not until 7 years from now. That's absurd. However, as long as we have this fiction that we will order our military to use these weapons first, our military will understandably be reluctant to go to truly low numbers. They will want to be prepared to fulfill what we tell them to do. They'll say there's this contingency and that contingency, that more contingencies might arise, that weapons might deteriorate, and so on. We will never get down to truly low numbers, like a couple hundred warheads, which is in my opinion all we need for our national security.

Why do I raise this issue of reducing nuclear weapons in a conference on bioterrorism? I do so because we need to keep our eye on three balls at once: chemical, biological, and nuclear. No one can predict which is going to be used, if any, so we need to be consistent in emphasizing our opposition to the use of any one of them. It's important that we not drive some rogue state or some terrorist group into thinking they

shouldn't use this kind or that kind of WMD because we're going to punish them for it, but we're not that anxious about this other one. We could drive them to using it. We must be consistent across the board.

I urge you, as we go forward, to keep these three topics in balance because we must defeat the use of any of them.