

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

I. THE ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT ACT

1. What did the Arms Control and Disarmament Act do?

Answer: It established the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency to explore, develop, recommend, and, if approved by the President, negotiate possible alternatives to the arms race in order to enhance our national security. **The act also provided that no agreement obligating the United States to disarm or reduce its Armed Forces can become effective without prior congressional approval.**

2. Who supported the establishment of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency?

Answer: Among those supporting the creation of the Agency were President Kennedy and former President Eisenhower; two former Secretaries of Defense, Thomas S. Gates, Jr., and Robert A. Lovett; a former and the current Secretary of State, Christian A. Herter and Dean Rusk; Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell L. Gilpatric; former Director of Defense Research and Engineering Dr. Herbert York; Atomic Energy Commissioner Leland J. Haworth; two former and the current U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, James J. Wadsworth, and Adlai Stevenson; former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther; and the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer.

Congress passed the Arms Control and Disarmament Act creating the Agency by a bipartisan vote of 73 to 14 in the Senate on September 6, 1961, and 290 to 54 in the House of Representatives on September 19, 1961.

3. Which is the greater risk—entering into safeguarded arms control and disarmament agreements or continuing the arms race?

Answer: Believing them to be a lesser risk, every administration since the end of World War II has sought safeguarded alternatives to the arms race. Under present world conditions, a strong military establishment remains essential. But as President Kennedy has said, "In a spiraling arms race a nation's security may well be shrinking even as its arms increase." Congress implicitly recognized this when it gave the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency the job of seeking safeguarded alternatives to the arms race.

4. Why was the Arms Control and Disarmament Act passed?

Answer: The threat of nuclear devastation is as important as any question facing our nation and the world today. For this reason, at the time the act was passed, there had been over 70 conferences and meetings, some of them extending over many months, in which both the United States and the Soviet Union had discussed arms control