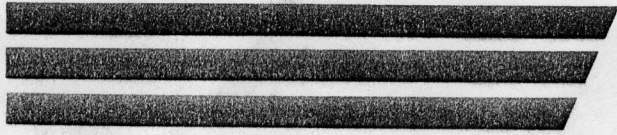


# NEWS



from  
**Paul  
Tsongas**

**U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

March 28, 1984

I am pleased to join today the Coalition for the Peaceful Uses of Space. I commend Rep. George Brown for bringing together Members of Congress and the public interest groups dedicated to preventing the arms race from spilling into space and preserving its beneficial uses.

I would like to briefly review my legislative record in this area and to focus on the future. In February 1983, Senators Hatfield, Hart and I introduced S.J. Res. 28, calling for immediate negotiations for a ban on weapons of any kind in space. This was a companion to Rep. Moakley's H.J. Res. 120, which has gathered broad support in the House. After hearings on controlling space weapons, this resolution was merged with Senator Pressler's S.J. Res. 43, which urged a negotiated verifiable ban on antisatellite weapons, as a first step toward prohibiting all space-based and space-directed weapons. A compromise resolution, S.J. Res. 129, has been unanimously reported out of Committee last summer and has been awaiting floor action. I shall seek early action on this resolution to take the pulse of the Senate and promote open floor debate of these vital issues facing our nation today. For if we embark precipitously, and without deliberation of its likely consequences, on an upward spiraling arms race in space, we and our children face a more uncertain future. And our country, staggering under the burden of a gigantic deficit today, may see the resources needed for its economic recovery swallowed by a growing black hole -- our defense budget.

The antisatellite weapons system (ASAT) now under development is a key link in the chain being forged by this Administration and which is threatening to strangle existing arms control agreements. It may deny us the very national technical means of verification we possess, by endangering our peacekeeper satellites. Last year, I introduced an amendment to the DoD Authorization Act, now called the Tsongas Amendment (Sec. 1235, Title XII, P.L. 98-94).

The amendment restrains advanced space testing of the new U.S. ASAT until and unless the President certifies to Congress that the U.S. is endeavoring in good faith to negotiate with the Soviets a mutual and verifiable ban on such weapons and that proceeding with such tests is vital to our national security. Both the language and the intent of that amendment are clear and unambiguous: a perennial and permanent injunction on ASAT tests against objects in space until and unless the President testifies on both accounts to Congress. My intent was to provide an incentive for national deliberation and renewed commitment to arms control.

Last summer, the Soviets announced a unilateral moratorium on further tests of their ASAT system and forwarded to the U.S., via a Senate delegation led by Sen. Pell, and in the U.N., a serious draft treaty for banning ASAT and other space-based weapons. President Reagan has so far desisted and demurred from responding to these concrete proposals to resume negotiations on controlling space-weapons. There is no evidence so far of any good faith efforts to negotiate a ban on ASAT weapons by the Administration since this amendment became law. We are not just talking about a total ban, but any one of a broad spectrum of options from limitations on tests and development to bans on possession, deployment and use of such dangerously destabilizing weapons.

Thus, we have witnessed a clear role reversal: The Evil Empire (the Soviet Union) has repeatedly extended to the U.S. and the U.N. draft treaties on space arms control, which this Empire of Goodwill has ignored to date.

A new window of opportunity has opened with the change in Soviet leadership. Yet this Administration has not extended, so far, any concrete offering through that window. In fact, it is plainly apparent that the Pentagon is blocking the window with an opaque policy of no-negotiations, unveiled by Richard Perle, the top arms control policy maker at the Pentagon, in recent Senate Armed Services hearings; and by the louder than words facts of launching a consolidated Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) without consent from Congress.

Perle indicated that the Administration has doomed an ASAT treaty a priori, as unverifiable. And further, that even if it were verifiable, such a treaty would be unwise. The inconsistent logic of this argument is evident: we know of most Soviet ASAT tests (about twenty over fourteen years) and of their poor success rate, through intelligence provided by our satellites monitoring a treaty compliance. Admittedly it is easier to verify ASAT test and development, than to verify possession of a dedicated ASAT system. All the more reason to seize today's moment of technological parity, and negotiate restrictions on ASAT's, rather than risk a potentially greater future threat.

A recent OTA workshop on Arms Control in Space made it clear that adequate verification is attainable in a specific treaty context and for likely breakout scenarios. There are several arms control scenarios (such as a mutual ban on further testing, deployment and use of ASAT's) that are verifiable and avoid the ASAT dismantling dilemma and intrusive on-site inspection. However, Mr. Perle's enjoiner that U.S. must proceed with the current ASAT program "to deter Soviet use of an ASAT which we know they possess", is clear evidence that even possession of ASAT is verifiable!

Although I expected and anticipated such a short-sighted arms control posture, based on the Administration record so far, I will be looking with interest for its report to Congress mandated by my House Colleagues' amendment of the FY 84 DoD Appropriation Act. The report, due March 31, 1984, should be a "comprehensive report on U.S. policy on arms control plans and objectives in the field of ASAT systems."

As part of a continuing effort to keep Congress informed, Senator Pressler and I have requested an OTA background paper on Star Wars technologies (feasibility and consequences of their use), which should shortly become available, to help prepare Members and the public for the coming Congressional debate on Star Wars wherewithal. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will be holding a hearing on Star Wars on April 25, at which time both Administration and public views on where we are heading will go on record. Further, I have joined my colleagues in the Foreign Relations Committee in requesting a full scope OTA study of the Star Wars programs and their implications for national security and arms control, which was recently approved.

It is ill-timed and ill-advised to embark on expensive and provocative programs in the Strategic Arms Initiative (SDI) blueprint, discard existing arms control treaties in the process, and face runaway budgetary deficits down the road. In the Senate, both conservative and liberal Members harbor serious reservations about the wisdom of SDI, quite apart from doubts on the technical feasibility of Star Wars weapons.

The promise for commercial developments in space is being denied by new threats of orbiting weapons and pop-up satellite killers, or other countermeasures, such as jamming. Hardening satellites would cost a lot more and insurance rates would soar. Accident scenarios that could conflagrate and international conflict are easy to imagine.

I would commend our commitment to building a space station and to commercializing Landsats and Metsats, if space would continue to be safeguarded for beneficial science, commercial and peaceful military uses.

Senators Pell, Matsunaga, Mathias and I recently cosponsored S.J. Res. 236, hoping to renew our cooperation agreement with the Soviets in the space arena as a prelude to the comprehensive dialogue we must reestablish in order to prevent a new arms race in space. This will also help avoid a technological surprise, in our preparedness one up-manship with the Soviets.