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# At Arms Talks: Tight Secrecy and Tighter Space

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GENEVA — At the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency offices on the Avenue de la Paix here, Ambassador Max M. Kampelman has made a concession on the issue of space. The chief American arms negotiator will have the carpenters move his office wall, ceding a bit of territory to make more room for the secretaries.

In the months ahead, Mr. Kampelman will make greater decisions, to be sure. But the process of controlling nuclear weapons begins with the process of shoehorning 90 people into offices built for half that many.

The negotiations that began here in early March on nuclear and space arms have been described as the most complex bit of superpower bargaining undertaken in the nuclear age.

The Russians and Americans are discussing long-range nuclear weapons, the medium-range nuclear balance in Europe, and the contentious new third category of space weapons.

## Secrecy Above All

To accommodate this intricate assignment, the Americans have assembled a miniature foreign policy establishment, complete with seven ambassadors, dozens of advisers, treaty lawyers, interpreters, archivists and cablegram writers, with all the attendant complications of office space and telephone hookups, hotels and cars, diplomatic protocol and bureaucratic imperatives.

And secrecy: under the negotiating ground rules, which establish Geneva as a demilitarized zone in the war of words, American officials refused to discuss even the most humdrum aspects of the delegation without a promise of anonymity.

Each of the three American chief negotiators will go to work flanked by representatives of five Government agencies, each with its own perspective and its own, sometimes conflicting, bureaucratic imperatives.

There is the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, which is nominally in charge of arms control. There is the State Department, watching over the broader picture of East-West relations. The civilian leadership of the Defense Department and the military leadership of the Joint Chiefs of Staff each have representation to advise the delegation from the cautionary perspective of military strategy. And the Central Intelligence Agency, though nowhere publicly acknowledged, is everywhere represented. One of its main jobs is to assure that a treaty can be verified with existing intelligence-gathering abilities.

## 7 Rank as Ambassadors

The three American chief negotiators and their four deputies have all been awarded the rank of ambassador, entitling them to comfortable houses and chauffeur-driven cars, maids, an entertainment allowance and the use of diplomatic dinner china.

The lower-ranking members of the entourage are ensconced primarily in hotels, where they will live on a \$75 daily allowance that, the officials say, leaves little for luxuries in a city as expensive as Geneva, even with the dollar in robust condition.

Some in the delegation, like the strategic arms negotiator, John G. Tower, and the intermediate-range negotiator, Maynard W. Glitman, have brought their wives. Most will be separated from their families half of the time, on a rhythm of two months in Geneva followed by two months in Washington, possibly for years.

A nurse at the American mission, who has attended to the fatigue and insomnia of previous arms delegations, said this back and forth makes for a punishing life.

"It's hard," said the nurse. "It's stressful. It's long hours and it's lonely. There are strains on those who bring their wives, because the wives sit in the hotel with the kids without anything to do. And there are worse strains on those who do not bring their families. Of course, it must affect their work."

## Offices Seem Vulnerable

They spend most of their working week on five rented floors of a nondescript office over the Zonca lamp store and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of San Marino, behind a Marine guard and a sign detailing the proper handling of document burn bags.

In contrast to the Russians, who operate behind the tall iron fence of their United Nations mission, the American offices, readily accessible by an underground garage and a cramped elevator, seem vulnerable, and this is known to worry top officials.

A typical negotiating meeting will begin with the two teams facing off across a large conference table, deputies and aides arrayed behind them. If it is Thursday, these "plenary" sessions will be held in the Americans' eighth-floor conference room, decorated with tennis and ice hockey prints. On Tuesdays they move to the Soviet mission.

The senior diplomat on either side reads a statement, slowly and formally, allowing time for an interpreter to translate.

After this formal exchange, the delegations usually break up into subgroups of two to six people. The chief negotiators go off together, and representatives of each agency pair off with their counterparts.

These "post-plenary bilaterals," as they are called, are less formal, but still carefully orchestrated.

"What your chief negotiator said about mobile ICBM's today seems to contradict what he said on the subject two weeks ago," a participant might begin. "Can you explain this?"

Aside from the full sessions, much of the haggling is done in English.

Of the top seven Americans here, only Warren Zimmermann, a former deputy chief of the American Embassy in Moscow who serves as Mr. Kampelman's deputy, speaks Russian. But all three top Soviet negotiators are fluent

in English, and the chief negotiator, Viktor P. Karpov, is known for his wordplay.

During a 1976 negotiation, an American was suggesting a definition of missile launch weight, the weight of the missile free of its launch-pad appendages.

"Excuse me," Mr. Karpov interrupted. "I thought in America there was no free launch."