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The Hon. Pete V. Domenici
U. S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Domenici:

The wealth and human resources that the United States and the Soviet Union are diverting to armaments and nuclear weapons as security against an attack which each nation believes to be the intention of the other is economically wasteful and is a course leading to mutual impoverishment.

To reverse this trend and reduce suspicion, confidence and trust must be established. This could be accomplished if the United States and the Soviet Union were to cooperate in a major project that would benefit them both. An undertaking of this magnitude already exists which is engaging both countries to a limited extent and could continue to do so far into the future provided they joined forces in the effort.

The project is the exploration of the solar system which should begin with the construction of an orbiting space station; an undertaking that the United States and the Soviets are independently considering. From such a platform joint expeditions to Mars and the Asteroids could be mounted. Support for this proposal could be diverted from military appropriations which would become superfluous as collaboration reduced suspicion and increased trust between the two countries.

Efforts to reach a peaceful and enduring relationship with the Russians have long been beset with misunderstanding and suspicion due to a lack of common goals. This proposal will be rejected by many as utopian, but is the time not ripe to bypass the repetative pursuit of failed diplomacy and to try a more imaginative approach to a permanent resolution of the distrust that underlies the relationship between us?

Yours respectfully,

Eliot Porter