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HOWARD H. BAKER, JR.
TENNESSEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

February, 1980

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your postcard regarding SALT II. As you may know, I have received thousands of these cards from concerned citizens who have taken the time to respond to the Conservative Caucus' mailing campaign. While I regret this form of response, I felt that it was the most expeditious means to assure you of my opposition to this treaty.

Although I strongly favor the process of limiting and reversing the race of nuclear arms, I am concerned that SALT II, as negotiated and signed, is contrary to the security interests of the United States. I believe that our SALT negotiators were out-bargained; that they have offered to the Senate for consent to ratification a treaty that is inequitable, that contains potentially dangerous ambiguities, and that is unverifiable.

The SALT II Treaty has, however, had meritorious and beneficial effects. I have long believed that any SALT Treaty, however well negotiated, should be the catalyst for a comprehensive debate on the overall defense posture of the United States. It has had that effect.

In response to the recent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter has now requested that the Senate indefinitely postpone the scheduled debate on SALT II. I believe this well reflects the inherent connection between any SALT agreement and the overall relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. The need to focus on this relationship is clearly illustrated by the most recent of Soviet provocations and our failure to respond effectively to this challenge.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact me. I appreciate your interest and justified concern.

Sincerely,



Howard H. Baker, Jr.

HHBJr:swm

T.C.C. - 2/20/80
Senator Baker admits
response to TCC's mailing
campaign and seems to be
leaning more against
SALT II -
Byron C. Christman

my

Elmer