

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Chairman Richard G. Lugar
Opening Statement for
Nomination Hearing of Robert Joseph and Daniel Fried
April 13, 2005

Today the Foreign Relations Committee meets to consider the nominations of Ambassador Robert Joseph to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security and Ambassador Dan Fried to be Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. We welcome these distinguished nominees and look forward to our discussions with them.

As Under Secretary, Ambassador Joseph would have responsibility for arms control, nonproliferation, security assistance, treaty verification and compliance, and export controls. He would be the point man for U.S. efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, missiles, and conventional weapons. In my view, this position is one of the most important in the Administration.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the number one national security threat facing our country. This threat comes from a variety of sources. Iran and North Korea continue to challenge the global non-proliferation regime by developing nuclear weapons. Terrorist groups continue to seek weapons and materials of mass destruction. Such weapons remain vulnerable to theft, misuse, and proliferation in Russia and elsewhere.

Under President George H.W. Bush, Ambassador Joseph served as the American Commissioner to the U.S.-USSR Standing Consultative Commission. During the current Bush Administration, Ambassador Joseph has served with distinction on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Proliferation Strategy, Counter-proliferation, and Homeland Defense.

If confirmed, he will continue to be at the forefront of U.S. efforts to safeguard and destroy vulnerable stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. To this end, I have introduced legislation designed to eliminate impediments to the Nunn-Lugar program. My bill would end conditions on weapons dismantlement work that in the past have slowed the urgent task of safeguarding and destroying nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Secretary Rice has endorsed this legislation, and I look forward to engaging Ambassador Joseph's assistance in its passage and implementation.

Ambassador Joseph has hands-on experience with the non-proliferation tools at our disposal, including: expanded Nunn-Lugar authorities for the President; the Proliferation Security Initiative; and the Global Partnership Against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. We look forward to discussing these programs and how they can be applied to meet the critical non-proliferation challenges before us.

The second nomination to be considered by the Committee today is that of Ambassador Daniel Fried to be Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. Ambassador Fried is an accomplished Foreign Service Officer who has spent much of his career working in Europe and Russia. He is currently Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council. Ambassador Fried also has served as Ambassador to Poland and has worked extensively in the former Yugoslavia.

I have enjoyed frequent opportunities to work with Ambassador Fried over the years. I had the pleasure of visiting Warsaw when he was Ambassador there. In Washington, we came in frequent contact as we promoted NATO enlargement and advocated U.S. support of the Rose and Orange Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine. The nominee has demonstrated that he is a skilled decision-maker with a clear vision of U.S. policy towards Europe.

If confirmed, Ambassador Fried would assume his post at a critical time in the U.S. – European relationship. Over the last several years our relations with Europe have been strained. President Bush's recent trip to Europe marked a turning point in the relationship, as both sides sought to establish common ground.

At the heart of the Transatlantic relationship is NATO. American leadership remains critical to the future of the alliance. I am confident that as Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, Ambassador Fried would work with our allies to further adapt NATO to the challenges of the 21st century.

Even as relations with Europe are improving, tensions continue in the U.S. – Russian relationship. Russia's retreat from democracy at home and its attempts to influence elections abroad, have raised considerable concern. Ambassador Fried has a difficult road ahead as he seeks to reinvigorate democratic principles in Russia, while maintaining strong bilateral cooperation in the war on terrorism.

In the Caucasus and Central Asia, democracy continues to develop and the United States must be ready to provide assistance. The political transformations in Georgia and Ukraine underscored the importance of achieving the goal of a Europe whole and free. The recent events in the Kyrgyz Republic are another positive sign that the countries of the former Soviet Union are choosing democracy.

Ambassador Fried, we look forward to hearing your ideas on how the United States can strengthen Transatlantic relationships.

I congratulate our nominees on being selected by the President for these important posts. I ask that you deliver your statements in the order that you were introduced. If you are summarizing a statement, the text of your entire presentation will be included in the hearing record. Also, please introduce family and friends that may have accompanied you on this important occasion.

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