PUBLIC OPINION AND PROPAGANDA

5 November 1954

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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Washington, D. C.

Mr. James Roscoe Drummond, Chief, Washington News Bureau, "New York Herald Tribune," was born in Theresa, New York, 13 January 1902. He commenced his career as a reporter for the "Christian Science Monitor" in 1924 and advanced to the post of chief editorial writer, general news editor, a member of an executive editor. His syndicated column appears in about 100 of the Nation's leading newspapers. His articles have appeared in the "Saturday Evening Post," "Life," and other national publications. He has received the George Arents Award for excellence in journalism from Syracuse University and an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Dartmouth College, and just recently he received an honorary degree in Humane Letters from Principia College. This is his first lecture at the Industrial College.

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5 November 1954

COLONEL BARTLETT: Admiral Hague, gentlemen: We have asked our lecturer this morning, Mr. Roscoe Drummond, to talk on the subject of "Public Opinion and Propaganda" with their military aspects. He tells me that he would prefer to give a very brief talk and then throw the field wide open and will attempt to answer any questions that you may have whether they bear specifically on this scope or not.

You have his biography, and he told me this morning that he had started his newspaper experience and career with the "Christian Science Monitor" and put in 21 years there. Those of you who know well the objective reporting of that newspaper know how sound a recommendation it is for the expertness of our speaker, Mr. Drummond.

MR. DRUMMOND: Admiral Hague, Colonel Bartlett, and gentlemen: Don't think I am not intimidated, but that isn't going to keep me from going through with the performance.

As a matter of fact, when I said that I hoped to speak briefly, don't take that too seriously. I have no great confidence that I am going to live up to it, although I do hold the conviction that in many ways what this country needs and probably what the military needs is less public speaking and more private thinking.

I feel that in many ways I am well disqualified for the discussion this morning. I am certain that during the past two months I have listened to too many political speeches and that exposes one to a state of mind in which it is more likely that he will show himself too free from candor.

I recall one political speech in which a candidate was speaking to his hometown constituents and in that local community there was quite an acute issue over a minor piece of legislation having to do with a rabbit licensing law. It was very important that he should deal with questions on this subject from his constituents who wanted to know where he stood. He said he would tell them very frankly that some of his friends were for this law and some of his friends

were against it, and he stood foursquare with his friends. I hope we do not need to obscure controversial questions in that manner this morning.

I do share the view that one of the most interesting parts of our discussion can be the question period and from my standpoint there is no such thing as an inappropriate or tactless question. I like questions, but I don't think it is necessary for a newspaper correspondent to pretend he knows the answers to all questions. Therefore, I won't hesitate to say I don't know if you ask me, although I must perhaps warn you in advance that anybody who has attended Presidential and Cabinet press conferences for the past 14 years, as I have, and watched these political artisans handle the questions, it is just inevitable that he acquire a certain talent for dealing with questions without answering them.

The subject which I am to deal with today is the general relationship of public opinion to basic military policy, broad policy, mobilization policy, manpower policy, and day-to-day policy at all levels of military operation.

Now I started by asking myself--and it seems to me not a totally inappropriate question--What do we mean by that? What are we really talking about? Is our objective to have what we might call merely a sympathetic climate in which the military can get on with its job relatively undisturbed and unobserved by the public? Do we want merely a disciplined public opinion which will broadly operate on the premise that the military knows best?

Subject to your persuading me otherwise, my present opinion is that we don't want that; that it isn't good enough; that such a state of mind is ephemeral; that such a state of public opinion will ultimately turn on the military unless it is more nourished and more equipped with fact and insight; that such a public opinion will be shifting and unstable. I take it that it is self-evident that this kind of public opinion is untrustworthy, though it may seem rather pleasant to have it for a particular period.

I am impressed by one paragraph in the recently issued Field Press Censorship Manual which deals not only with censorship but with the positive aspects of public opinion and the military. From this statement, I conclude that it is the established policy of the Department of Defense that this kind of a public opinion is inadequate,

and I would like merely to quote a sentence or two from this, although I assume you are already familiar with it. This is an official statement of the Department of Defense policy.

> "The American public has a fundamental right to complete information regarding the sufficiency and efficiency of its military forces. Moreover, the military services depend upon and exist only by virtue of the confidence and support of the American public. This confidence and support can be maintained only if the public is informed of military requirements, problems, and progress. The public receives its information concerning the armed forces principally through press, radio, television and photographic media. The Department of Defense recognizes the right of the public to complete information and the important function of the media in presenting the facts to the public. Its policy is to keep our people fully informed within the limits permitted by security."

It adds: "The sole criterion for the killing or temporary withholding of any information in material submitted for review is that it would be of value to the enemy in his prosecution of the war effort."

My amendment is that while I think we all would accept that as a premise, in executing it, it is sometimes necessary to weigh relative values. That is, we must weigh the need for our keeping the American people informed along with the need of keeping the enemy uninformed; when the two conflict, it is not always self-evident that the greater risk is that of informing the enemy. The greater risk may well be that of underinforming a public opinion necessary to the support of military policy and military objectives, particularly in times of peace.

The problem we have today and will have as far ahead as I can see is that we must maintain a military position and a military establishment almost as great as though we were at war during a long period in which we were going to be in a state of no war and no peace.

I think that it is easy to resolve, at least in the classroom and on paper, the problem of shaping, nourishing, and informing public opinion, whether it has to do with the draft, mobilization, or the total military budget, by the feeling that at some point when the issue really needs to be settled, then top leadership can go to work and in a few months or a few days can toss off a fireside chat, send a message to the Congress, and public opinion will be shaped.

I don't think that is enough. I think that the great need is a continuous state of mind of candor on the part of the military, a continuous exchange of information and views with the American people. The development of public opinion isn't a last-minute crisis operation. It seems to me to be a continuous operation.

I would like to draw on an experience out of my own previous newspaper, the "Christian Science Monitor," to illustrate what I mean. This is a confidential discussion so I can tell secrets of my own trade, and they are not very important secrets either--well, of course, most secrets aren't.

I think it is accurate to say that in its news columns the "Christian Science Monitor" is as objective and fair minded a newspaper as there is in the United States. In its editorial columns, the "Monitor's" mood is that of a fair minded, objective appraisal on the conservative side of national policy. Nevertheless, once for about two months every four years the "Christian Science Monitor" becomes more conservative than it is during the previous 3 years and 10 months because of the pressure and sometimes the hysteria of a national Presidential election. Therefore, the editorial page of the "Monitor" has almost invariably--in fact I don't recall in my lifetime any exception--supported the Republican Presidential candidate.

Well, that is the right of any newspaper, to expound its views on the editorial page, but what I want to report to you is that the editorial page of the "Monitor" once every four years often has difficulty in carrying its own readers with it.

I remember in 1944, for example, when Governor Dewey was running against President Roosevelt, that the "Monitor" came out very vigorously toward the end of the campaign in the advocacy of Governor Dewey's election. It was a very strong editorial; I don't think I ever remember as much adverse reader reaction from an editorial as I do recall in that instance. I also recall that the letters from "Monitor" readers during the entire election period of, say, 1 September to November voting time, the correspondence from our readers ran about two to one against Governor Dewey and for Roosevelt.

The lesson that I draw from this, which I consider pertinent to our discussion this morning, is that it is what we are telling the American people continuously, the manner in which we are equipping American public opinion--cumulatively and day to day, and not what the

President or the Secretary of Defense may say in one fireside chat or in one message to the Congress that really shapes American opinion. I cite the fact that it is what the "Monitor" as a newspaper had been saying in its news columns for the previous four years and in its basic editorial objectivity, recognizing the merits on both sides of the political fence that was more influential in shaping the opinion of our readers than what an editorial says two weeks before a national election.

It seems to me that, in looking at this question of public opinion and military policy, what we are really after is this--and you combat me if you see it differently, please: Our objective is to build a public opinion which understands and accepts the main security objectives, of which military policy is one part but not the sum total. There is foreign policy, there are alliance policies, and so forth, but we must build a body of opinion which understands and accepts the main security objectives of our national Government, including the military, and which will therefore support the measures necessary to achieve those objectives. I take it that that is our primary objective.

Obviously, there are day-to-day public relations problems which the services must handle, but unless this overriding objective is met, then, it seems to me that everything else the military wants and needs is rendered twice as difficult to achieve, if not rendered impossible.

I am going to offer to you a series of four or five general propositions in this area of public opinion and military policy for your examination, for your reflection, and indeed for your cross examination.

One preliminary proposition is that, as a newspaperman, I would suggest that you do not concentrate your attention primarily so much upon the press as the tendency often is to do. The tendency is to overstress the press. This may seem an odd conclusion for me to reach, but I am trying to put the case to you with total detachment. I think that the military, the Department of Defense, and all officials of the military concerned with public opinion ought to have a fuller awareness of all the media of public communication and that these media include the press, weekly news magazines--which are tremendously influential--"News Week," "Time," "United States News," and so forth. They include the mass circulation magazines, such as the "Post," "Colliers," "Readers' Digest," and so forth; and obviously radio and TV.

Another media of communication which I think is rather easy to ignore is the role of the current events lecturer. That is quite an

organized group, and if the military doesn't already do it, I am inclined to think there would be a great deal of merit in investigating periodically the run-of-the-mill current events lecturer. I don't mean the well-known news commentators, but I am thinking of the lecturers who talk to women's clubs, town-hall forums, and all kinds of groups across the country. There are a host of them and they are very influential people.

So don't think of the press as being the only media or necessarily the principal media. The press may be the most troublesome media, may get in your hair more than anybody else, but I don't think that is necessarily bad. But merely because the press may at times be more exacting in its demands and more troublesome, I suggest that you explore the fuller and the more imaginative use of the other media by which the case, the judgments, and the information bearing on military policy can reach the whole American people.

My next proposition is this: And it seems to me that I am probably merely coming to a conclusion as a layman, a conclusion comparable to that expounded in this statement of official policy, but I emphasize that the military should recognize and act on the fact that the military is no longer merely a technical or specialized agency of Government. Obviously, it is technical and specialized; so is the Department of Agriculture. But the Department of Agriculture affects millions of American citizens and the American people look upon it as an instrument of Government whose policies the public can help shape.

The military today touches and controls the lives of nearly every American citizen. When--bear in mind, that we have something like 3 million young men in the draft services and a continuous military budget of some 50 billion dollars a year, including the production of atomic weapons--we consider how the military affects our lives, pocketbooks, standard of living, economy, and jobs, then we must recognize that, whether we like it or not, we can't proceed on the assumption that the public is going to take military policy as something handed down from the ivory tower that the American people cannot understand and cannot influence.

I think personally--and I may be wrong on this--sometimes military policy and even strategic policy is made much too mysterious, much too precious on the assumption that nobody but a person in uniform can grasp the essential ingredients. I think the thoughtful

people, whether civilians or military, can grasp the essential ingredients of basic military policy.

Therefore, I go to a third proposition which I have touched upon already; that is, in my judgment, public opinion can understand and grasp and therefore is going to influence the security and military policies of the Government. And, if we have any temptation to do so, we are making a mistake, I think, in believing that we can treat the American people on the theory that "Daddy knows best. Don't think about this, the military will decide how to win the next war. We will decide whether there is to be a vast continental defense system or whether it can be all done by air power or not."

I think those decisions are going to be debated in public and if they are not debated in public with enough information to nourish an informed public opinion, then the measures, the resources, the finances needed to implement military objectives are going to be in jeopardy. Such an approach to public opinion, in my judgment, is fatal. I believe therefore that we must provide a flow of fact and opinion so that the American people can weigh the merits of what the military wants to do and, to a degree, share in the formulation of policy.

It is customary to say that the duty of Government officials and particularly the responsibility of the military is to give the public only facts and not propaganda. Obviously, the validity of that conclusion really rests on how you define propaganda. But I am inclined to be more against it than for it. But perhaps after I define what I mean, there wouldn't be much difference between us.

In the main I would say this: Propaganda is opinion. I think that all the basic decisions which the military must make on manpower, mobilization, continental defense, atomic weapons and the use of atomic weapons, and universal military training involve a judgment with respect to facts. American people will accept and value receiving from their military leaders judgment and opinion on these questions as long as that judgment and opinion don't rest upon a partial statement of the facts or an attempt to defend that opinion by concealing part of the facts. I believe in the right and obligation of our military leaders to expound what they believe is sound policy within a framework of fact and on a basis of honestly trying to equip the public with the same factual equation which permits military leaders to reach their own conclusions. I think the public will not

resist the exposition of conclusions as long as it is accompanied by an honest and full-scale persentation of the facts.

Now again the military today, as I see it, and as far ahead as any of us can see, embraces more of Government, more of our economy, and has a vaster impact upon the lives and comforts of the taxpayer than ever before. Consequently the building of a solid public opinion must rest in the first instance upon the relationship of civilian political leadership to civilian public opinion. The primary communicator--not the exclusive communicator but the primary communicator--of military and security policy must be the political leadership of the executive and legislative branches of Government.

During the last two years, we have seen the National Security Council (NSC) play a larger role in Government than it ever played before and it is being used as an arm of Government, as an arm of coordinated decisions, and I believe should be used as an instrument of public opinion in ways that it has not yet attempted. This means, it seems to me, there is a tremendous role for the President; there is a new role for the NSC and the members of the NSC in expounding security and military policies. There is obviously a very important role for members of the Cabinet whose decisions bear upon budgetary policy, Treasury policy, and so forth. There is above all a tremendous role for the Secretary of Defense; and with civilian leadership goes military leadership, that is to say, the role of the military in expounding policy and communicating fact and judgments to the American people.

If you want to discuss some practical problems that we are faced with, I would raise one that is not often brought into discussion. I could be wrong about it but I assume that our discussion is in the spirit of a classroom in which military rank is unimportant within the classroom and that therefore I could raise a question about the Commander in Chief--the President.

There are tremendous assets to having a man of military background in the Presidency at this point and there are some disadvantages to the military. If my statement of disadvantage is accurate, then it is an aspect of the problem which the military will have to take into account. I am inclined to think as a layman, that--there is an instinctive and widespread attitude on the part of the public that will accept the President's judgment of what the military needs

more than it might accept a civilian President's judgment--the President is at times more reluctant to speak out for what the military might well need than if he were not a military man. I think he has a kind of "anxiety" or a "fear," if that is the word, that he will appear to the public to be overemphasizing his military qualifications in a nonmilitary function of the Government. Therefore, in some ways, I feel that the military can depend on General Eisenhower in the White House a little less to help their case than the military might depend upon a civilian President.

It might be useful to take a moment at least to mention some of the ways in which American public opinion has either been developed or risen to rather great decisions in my judgment during the past 10 years; they might offer something of a pattern that we could look at to see what we could expect in the future.

I reached a conclusion before we entered World War II, and I count this to be a source of strength to the military, I felt that the American public opinion was ahead of American political leadership opinion from 1931 to 7 December 1941. In many ways public opinion was pressing political leadership, including President Roosevelt, to do the things needed to safeguard the security of the United States in the kind of war that was then in progress. I cite two or three examples.

The project which the President ultimately approved of, an exchange of American cruisers for Western Hemisphere defense bases, I think clearly had public support many months before the President brought himself to actually carry it out. I believe that private leadership developed the case and the cause of American aid to the Allies or primarily American aid to Britain before we were in the war more vigorously than political leadership did.

I remember the press conferences during 1940 and 1941 when the President was sort of taking a very timid attitude toward the problems of mobilization and how he was suggesting that we could have both worlds and at the same time carry a maximum military production for our anti-Nazi allies, and how, to use the exact quotes, I remember the President's once remarking, "You needn't discombobble anybody."

The only reason I mention that is that I think there was not a sense of frankness with the country. I think the country felt that we

couldn't have both and we ought to get on with one or the other. I always felt that the country was ready to get on with mobilization. I always felt that more candor, more decisive, more outspoken civilian leadership would have found an extremely responsive public opinion--I think we will have it in the future. I think that there is no other safe premise to make than that the American people will do what is essential to our own safety, to our own security, to our own survival if leadership opinion will take the risks, the responsibilities, and the initiative which leadership must take if it is to be leadership.

I would like to cite the origin of the Marshall Plan. It seems to me to be a nearly perfect example of how political leadership functioned effectively in developing public opinion to support a most daring and ambitious program of American aid to Western Europe. Until the Marshall Plan really came into being, I think classroom students of public opinion would say you could never get the American people to invest 15 to 17 billion dollars of the taxpayers' money to prevent Western Europe from economic disintegration, and yet the Marshall Plan was carefully expounded and many imaginative things were done to develop opinion that would ultimately support it.

I am referring to the fact in this instance that the usual legislative process was greatly augmented and that, instead of the Administration offering a bill to the Congress, as you know, General Marshall gave his famous speech at Harvard inviting Europeans to take the initiative. The Europeans did take the initiative. They drew up a program of what was needed. Then the President appointed a commission of governmental and nongovernmental leaders of the country which examined and took an inventory of American resources. The leadership of private groups and the Government itself ultimately produced a report and a recommendation to Congress that was expressed in the final Marshall Plan legislation.

I also think that American public opinion has shown itself quick to grasp and to persevere in its support of whatever you want to call it, internationalist, an interventionist, a world-minded foreign policy that would have seemed improbable and almost beyond our reach 10 years ago. This public opinion has in a sustained manner, despite the fluctuations of support, given its endorsement and given political support to the Members of Congress who approved such a tremendous and unprecedented evolution of American policy as expressed--going back to 1946 and 1947--in the Truman Doctrine and

involving American military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. Then came the evolution of the North Atlantic Treaty in which the United States for the first time committed itself in advance to the principle of collective security in the event that any member of the North Atlantic Alliance was attacked. In other words we said in advance the conditions under which we would fight. In many ways it was because Britain and the United States had not reached that conclusion before World War I that may well have rendered it impossible to avert either World War I or World War II. Two wars might have been averted.

Then there was the evolution of the NATO command under General Eisenhower and his successors; and also the tremendously bold and courageous decision of President Truman in going to the defense of Korea.

There is one change of policy here that is very interesting, that is, President Truman utilized the lattitude of authority which the President possesses in making an Executive decision to use American troops to defend Korea. I wasn't in the country at the time; I was in Paris, and I wouldn't want to assert that what I am saying now isn't wisdom after the event; it may well be. But I do believe the President made a mistake, at least in retrospect, in not taking whatever steps were needed to have the Congress share in that decision.

I think that would have been the part of wisdom, and that there would have been no difficulty in getting Congress to approve. Senator Taft, whom you might think would have been an opponent of it, said not long after Korea that he was quite sure the Senate would have supported the President. But it would have altered the mood and character of the ultimate political debate which arose with respect to the Korean War if the Congress had shared in the decision, and therefore had had to accept responsibility and wouldn't have had as much free and easy political freedom to call it the President's war, Truman's war, or something else.

President Eisenhower has stated that he intends that Congress shall share in the decision to use American troops abroad in a way which would be likely to involve the United States in a major conflict. That somewhat curtails possibly the independence and the quickness of decision which the Executive could make, but on balance, I am inclined to think that it is a wise course of action. But it means that the public and the politicians will need to be kept continuously informed and alerted and abreast of potential decisions

that might be taken in order that the inclusion of the legislative branch of the Government in this kind of Commander in Chief decision may not bring about dangerous delays or dangerous division.

I want to conclude quickly in order that we may take on questions. Therefore, I will put what remains in my mind to you very succinctly.

If I were to leave any one single thought with respect to the state of mind that will, in my judgment, enable the military to have the most effective and intelligent public relations and will aid the military in helping to develop a competent, informed, stable public opinion, I would leave "candor."

As a writer of a Washington column, I find that the state of mind on my part that brings the fullest, the most cordial, and the most trusted relationship between a writer and his readers is candor--the feeling that you are saying what you honestly believe, what you honestly consider to be the facts. When the military does that, and when it relies first, second, and last upon candor, it is by way of developing a trusted relationship between the military and the American people. In fact I would suggest--and subject to questioning--that in many ways what we need from the military is more candid discussion and less indiscretion.

Maybe that doesn't mean anything. What I have in mind is--and I will put it to you because if I have a wrong slant on this I would like to hear from you, but I have a feeling that to some extent there is too much discussion by military people of an aspect of policy which in our Government the military must not decide, namely, the issue of a preventive war. That is a question to be decided by the civilian element of our Government. And broadly, the use of atomic weapons will be decided by the civilian element of the Government. I recognize that there is an area of refinement on that subject. But we know that under the law the President alone decides the use of atomic weapons; regardless of his background, the President is the civilian leader of the Government.

In many ways we are going to face more difficult public opinion problems in the next few years than we have faced in the past. Fortunately--and I certainly could be caught up for the use of it, but I believe it--the Soviet Union has helped to develop an alert public opinion. In fact I have a feeling that if I could have run the Kremlin's public relations with the Western World, I could have promoted their

cause and damaged the strength of the West with great ease. At a given point the Russians have nearly always done something that has so aggravated the American people that we would have been willing to support some new action which we needed for our combined strength.

For example, I would add to that, with all the careful and imaginative preparation that went into the development of the Marshall Plan and its exposition in political discussions, one act which absolutely assured congressional approval of the Marshall Plan was the Soviet grab of Czechoslovakia, which came about two weeks before the vote on the Marshall Plan.

I doubt that the Western World would be anywhere near the position of strength or would be as near as it is today to having the initiative almost on our side in the conduct of the cold war were it not for the Korean aggression. Relatively speaking, I hold, as I know you do, that the loss of one life is the loss of too many, but in many ways Korea was a relatively inexpensive Pearl Harbor because we saw that international communism was ready to use force across borders and that action alerted the West as nothing had done before.

The reason that I say we may be in a period of greater difficulty during the next few years is that we are going to be, I think, in a period of no war and no peace--basically, I think the present intention of the Kremlin is not to risk or to precipitate a world conflict.

I think there are probably very persuasive reasons. I think the Kremlin has really reached the conclusion that the risk of a World War would be profoundly unprofitable; that this is due to the gathering strength of the free world; this is due to the consequences on both sides of atomic weapons. It is due to the possibility that the Kremlin itself could not survive in control of its own people in such a war. Since the Russian leaders are also Communists, they are persuaded by their own propaganda that the competitive enterprise system of most of the free world carries with it the seeds of its own weakness and the germs of its own destruction, and for that reason conclude that time is on the Soviet side.

I am not at all convinced that they are right about it, and in many ways I am glad that they think that is true, but this means we are not likely to have an impact of Soviet aggression. We will have to rely upon an extremely mature and sophisticated public opinion that will recognize that we are in the position we are today because

of increasing strength; and that the only way to reduce the dangers of the cold war--to bring the cold war to a kind of stalemate that is more advantageous to us than to the enemy--is to continue more of the same and to tolerate no letting down of our guard, either mentally, governmentally, or militarily.

I will take questions when your are ready.

QUESTION: You mentioned that too much dependence had been placed on the press and that some of the other media should be used to a greater degree. There are 3 million people in the armed services now; 2 million of those will be back in civilian life in the next few years. How about using them? How about taking the best advantage of our own people?

MR. DRUMMOND: I would think that there would be a way to utilize the draftee. I think that has to be handled with a great deal of care. I had never thought of it until this morning but I think it has possibilities. I think it will have to be very carefully thought through. It is possible that during the period the draftee is in the Army, he is not always the greatest booster of the Army. He may, you know he could, feel that he has sort of lost something in his civilian career, and he is not in a state of mind to respond as he might well respond after he has left the Army.

I am almost inclined to think that the best way to turn the draftee into a useful and valuable component of American public opinion would be to make him the best possible soldier. I do not mean being soft on the draftee, but I think the best use of the draftee as a draftee will put him in a state of mind where he will be most useful to you subsequently.

QUESTION: Would you please state what you had in mind about the NSC being used as an instrument of opinion making?

MR. DRUMMOND: Yes; but I would like to return just for a second to the other question and then come back to this, because I wouldn't think it would be adequate to turn this aside.

I think it is a very interesting proposal and it is quite possible that the draftee will be a better soldier and a better member of the Armed Services if he understands more minutely why he is there, what the military is seeking to accomplish, then why it is seeking to accomplish it, and so forth.

COLONEL BARTLETT: The Navy calls it "Commander Hour."

MR. DRUMMOND: Troop education really. I think that can very probably be used more objectively and more shrewdly than is being done.

Now the other question was, What did I mean when I suggested that the NSC could be used more effectively as a means of shaping public opinion? Well, let us begin by admitting right off that I haven't thought this through substantially. I am just aware and convinced that there are very considerable possibilities there.

What I broadly meant was that the NSC recognizes that its very existence is premised upon the idea that there is a tremendous meshing of military policy, fiscal policy, budget policy, trade policy, and so on, in order to achieve a national policy that serves the economy, that serves our security, and so forth. We can't separate the state of our security from the state of our economy. We can't pursue a tax policy unrelated to a foreign trade policy.

The NSC endeavors to make sure that the collective decision on these issues is a better decision than if it were a bilateral decision between the President and each separate arm of Government.

As a newspaper man I feel that the NSC has gained a very substantial public prestige as an instrument of the Government. I am inclined to think that it would be useful if NSC decisions, when they are in the nonclassified field, when they represent decisions affecting public policy, could be more often expounded as NSC decisions and expounded by the NSC as a whole.

This may seem a rather unconventional idea but it may seem rather unconventional because it is relatively new. The NSC is relatively new.

We had the other day a quasi Cabinet meeting on TV. Anybody knows that was not a real meeting of the Cabinet. The Cabinet was providing a backdrop for a TV show; I think it was perfectly valid. I don't object to doing it, but I don't think it was a real meeting of the Cabinet.

I am inclined to think that we haven't yet effectively put to the public the weight and persuasiveness of the NSC as a body behind its

policies, and that they ultimately become expounded either by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Treasury, or the President; and that here is a means of carrying a great deal of weight with the American people that has not yet been very much explored and certainly not yet exploited.

COLONEL BARTLETT: The NSC makes recommendations to the President. He may or may not accept those recommendations. On a crash basis or obvious emergency, it is probable that NSC's recommendations and the President's decision might coincide; but on long-range policies, do you think partisan politics--I am not speaking of any specific President--would cause him to discount the real advice of the NSC and pursue a policy that might not be that of the NSC?

MR. DRUMMOND: I would recommend that we begin to look at this question by recognizing that, except for the military, the NSC is made up of partisan politicians so that they are part of an administration which is partisan in one particular sense.

In answer to your question, I think it would be rare that the President would turn aside a unanimous recommendation of the NSC. I don't know of any instance in which it has been done during the past year or two, although I must admit that some of the minutes of the NSC have yet to come over my desk.

COLONEL BARTLETT: The point was that only if the President and the NSC were in full agreement, would it be wise for the NSC to be the mouthpiece for any express policy.

MR. DRUMMOND: While the NSC is in an advisory capacity, the President himself is chairman of the NSC, in which case the President has made NSC decisions official policy.

QUESTION: If the military assumes a posture of complete candor, particularly with the press, what means would you propose for controlling the irresponsible elements of the press who will add up these several items of candor and come up with something that is clearly of national security importance?

MR. DRUMMOND: If we are talking about violation of security information, then I think that the only way to deal with violation of security information is that it is a violation of the law. When I was talking about candor, I did not have in mind the kind of candor that

is at all related to classified security information. I was referring to the kind of candor that pursues an honest, intelligent, straightforward presentation of military objectives, of military policy.

For example, I do not think as yet that the American people have had a candid presentation of the kind of choices which the country has had to make in the field of continental defense, and therefore I think there are large gaps or large areas of uncertainty, of ignorance, and of distrust in many ways in American public opinion on the question of continental defense.

I don't think there is any easy answer to the potential risks of candor which one will run with what you might call either irresponsible sections of the press or areas of the press that would be hostile. I think you will have to weigh the relative risk that sometimes your candor is going to be abused.

QUESTION: Mr. Drummond, in your last discussion you ended up with the special treatment of continental defense. This would become somewhat of an essay. The problem of continental defense, it seems to me, wouldn't devolve upon the military, that is to undertake this essay. The question would come up, Why wouldn't you, say, being acquainted with the pros and cons--any layman is reasonably familiar with the pros and cons--take that responsibility? Why cast it in terms that this is a job which the military is not doing and so it implies that the military is not being candid?

MR. DRUMMOND: I think it is a job for both of us. I recognize it is a job for the press and it is a job for Washington writers who accept their jobs with any sense of responsibility. I think that, when we are coming to develop public opinion with respect to major aspects of defense and military policy, actually you have to address the country with credentials, and in many ways the layman does not have the credentials and the acceptance value that qualified military spokesmen would have. Somehow I don't feel that I want to deny responsibility to myself or to others like me, but at the same time it does seem to be a responsibility that has to be borne by the military.

COLONEL BARTLETT: Mr. Drummond, that is a bouquet for the military and as we get so few of them I think it is a fine time to stop.

On behalf of the Commandant and the student body, I thank you for a lecture which I am sure will be most helpful to the students in their course and which will stay with them in their future. Thank you.

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