

ADDRESS BY  
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ON ARMED FORCES DAY  
TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS  
~~STATLER HOTEL BALLROOM~~, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI  
FRIDAY, MAY 18, 1956 -- Approximately 1:15 P.M. (CDT)

→ *Gold Room, Sheraton - Jefferson Hotel*

THE ARMED FORCES AS A POWER FOR PEACE

I was very happy to be assigned the task of representing the Armed Forces in St. Louis on this, the seventh, celebration of Armed Forces Day. As perhaps you know, I am a native of this state. I was born in Keytesville, Missouri, more years ago than I like to remember. I grew up in Kansas City, where I received my education in the public school system, and left only upon receiving, in 1918, an appointment to West Point from the 5th Congressional District. I also feel that I acquired my martial ambitions in the atmosphere of this state, primarily because of a grandfather who was born in Boonville, and never left the state except to follow the Confederate flag during the Civil War. It was at his feet and through his reminiscences of exploits of General Shelby that I first became interested in military things.

I mentioned Keytesville as my birthplace. Before any audience other than this group of enlightened Missourians, I would doubtless have to identify that town, but I am sure you all recognize it as the county seat of Chariton County. It was in the square of Keytesville that I became acquainted with my first general, General Sterling Price, seated astride his stone horse before the court house. General Price has not received as much attention in history books as some other military leaders, but in my eyes he looked very big indeed, all that a soldier should be. I have always felt indebted to that Missouri soldier for having presented such an inspiring model to a youthful admirer.

As I mentioned, I became interested in soldiering by talking to grandfather about the Civil War. I remember asking him at one point what branch of the Service he was in. "Oh," he said, "I was in the cavalry until my horse died. After that I was in the infantry."

There was a lot of practical sense in the personnel assignment policy of his Army. Then I went away to West Point, and when I returned occasionally on furlough, it was his turn to ask questions about my Army, one quite different from General Shelby's. He always had a way of stumping me by asking this question, "Son, I just don't see what you do in the Army when you've got nobody to fight."

Now, as Chief of Staff, I am still asked that question in various forms and sometimes it takes several paragraphs to produce an adequate answer. Really, the answer is found in the title which has been chosen for Armed Forces Day: The United States Armed Forces represent power for peace.

In spite of the complicated and heterogeneous activities of the Armed Forces as they work at home and abroad, there is a common theme which runs through all of their enterprises and which justifies their activities. Our Armed Forces exist to prevent war from occurring, to represent such power in being that any potential aggressor observing their visible strength will avoid a breach of the peace. We hear a great deal about deterrence and deterrent strength nowadays. I think it is worth a little discussion of what we mean by the deterrent power of the Armed Forces.

As a Nation we have no intention to start a war. Unfortunately, we live in a world in which we cannot be sure that all our associates have that same attitude. The record shows that the Communist Bloc has never hesitated to use military power to support aggression when that course of action appeared profitable. Hence, it is important that we develop ways and means to convince a potential aggressor of at least two things: one, that aggression inimical to the interests of the United States and her Free World allies will be contested; two, that in this contest, the aggressor will lose in the end. If the aggressor believes that we can beat him in war he is not likely to start one. But to be convincing, this deterrent concept must be based on reality; it cannot be mere talk, bluff, or threat. Instead, it must be supported by visible, tangible evidence of our Nation's military, economic, political, and moral strength in being.

To be effective, this deterrent strength must be balanced so that it is applicable to any combination of possible situations. Balance does not mean equal strength in the Army, Navy, and the Air Force, but rather, it means flexible, proportioned strength to deter or fight any variety of armed conflict in any latitude or longitude with any combination

of weapons. President Eisenhower has expressed the need for versatility in these words: ". . . we must stay alert to the fact that undue reliance on one weapon or preparation for only one kind of warfare simply invites an enemy to resort to another. We must, therefore, keep in our armed forces balance and flexibility adequate for our purposes and objectives."

Now, what do the Armed Forces have to contribute to this balanced strength for the purpose of deterring war? Time will not permit a detailed answer to that question, but I shall point to some of the major areas in which our Armed Forces represent deterrent strength.

First, our air forces. The bombers of the Air Force and the Navy, with their capability of delivering atomic weapons on any target any place in the world, represent powerful strength in being. Their visible readiness to retaliate protects our homeland from any ~~real~~ *present* likelihood of atomic attack by hostile aircraft. Our seagoing forces, the largest in the world, are obviously capable of applying sea power to control the water areas of the earth's surface. Their strength in being is a reminder that the sea lanes will be kept open in war so that the military might of America can be deployed abroad in such quantities into such places as any military situation might require.

Our Army contributes to deterrence primarily through its strength in being, trained and ready for action anywhere, anytime. Our divisions aligned along the Iron Curtain in Europe and along the Bamboo Curtain in Korea are a reminder that any aggression in these vital parts of the world will be resisted at once by the armed might of the United States. The combat readiness of these forces offers convincing evidence that the enemy must pay for every foot of ground over which he might seek to advance -- pay in terms of losses and time while our retaliatory and reserve forces are brought to defeat him.

In an entirely different way, the Army acts as a deterrent force abroad through the help it gives in developing the military forces of our allies. The Army performs an important role in teaching the indigenous forces of 44 free countries how to use and maintain the equipment made available under the military aid programs. In all, the Army is assisting, directly or indirectly, in the improvement of over 200 combat divisions. In these countries where our forces are found, their presence is a powerful factor for morale. American uniforms on the

streets of the towns and villages constitute a reminder that the American people are prepared to share in the dangers of living under the Communist gun.

Not only does the Army contribute to the deterrence of war by its forces deployed abroad, but also by its Strategic Reserve maintained at home. The latter includes those divisions which we hold in readiness, prepared for immediate deployment overseas in the case of aggression or attack. These units represent to any potential enemy the immediate reinforcements which he would encounter after the outbreak of war or upon the initiation of local aggression. To the extent that these units are strong, well-trained and equipped, and obviously ready for trouble, they are an important part of the over-all deterrent strength of our Nation.

Behind the active Army units at home and abroad, there must be an effective reserve of civilian-soldiers. Since we can never afford to have, in being, all of the military units required for a total military effort, we must have a back-up of reserve units ready for early employment. At this moment, the Army is working very hard to build up the strength of the reserve units, utilizing the provision of the Reserve Forces Act of 1955. This Act offers an attractive choice of method by which a young man, between 17 and 18-1/2 years of age, may discharge his obligation for military service. I hope that St. Louis is well aware of the options presented under this bill, and that you who are parents or have young men of military age in your family will scrutinize carefully the provisions of this Act. To date, over 30,000 young men have volunteered for service under this bill, and I sincerely hope that the interest in it will continue to grow and to attract men who seek to plan their careers with minimum interference from their military obligations.

Another deterrent activity of the Armed Forces at home is in providing for the defense of the continental United States against air attack. Here the principal components of our defense are the interceptor aircraft of the Air Force and the guided missiles and antiaircraft artillery of the Army. The missile system is based upon the Army's NIKE I, the first operational antiaircraft missile ever developed. It represents years of work following World War II when it became apparent that high flying bombers would soon be out of the reach of conventional artillery and interceptor aircraft. Today, we have our NIKE batteries deployed about many of the principal cities and vital targets of the United States. In the aggregate, our weapons for the defense of the continental

United States are a reminder to an enemy air force that their bombers will suffer heavy casualties if they undertake to attack us. To that extent these forces add to the over-all deterrent capability of the Armed Forces.

There is one last area in which the Armed Forces must possess a deterrent effect -- in the field of technological development. We hear a great deal about the race for long-range missiles and its importance to our country. <sup>about</sup> We know <sup>comparatively</sup> so little about these long-range missiles, and it is hard to evaluate them as a practical weapon of future warfare. But, it is certainly most important that we be ahead in this development field, so that we can produce and employ these weapons if, at some point, they appear essential to our national arsenal. Thus, the Armed Forces must be supplemented by the cooperation and the support of all of our scientific and industrial talent. Our leadership in the technological field is a reminder to any hostile nation that the United States will counter an attack with the most modern and effective weapons in the world.

Let me sum up, then, the contribution of our Armed Forces to the deterrence of war. First, there is the capability to retaliate powerfully and swiftly through the long and medium-range bombers carrying atomic weapons. <sup>Then</sup> Next, there is the maintenance of supremacy on the seas and the protection of the sea lanes over which our country would deploy its reserve strength in case of war. Next, we have the deterrent effect of our Army forces deployed in strategic areas about the world and those additional forces held in reserve in the United States for emergency use. Additionally, we have the increasing effectiveness of our continental defense with the resultant reassurance to our people both at home and abroad. In regard to the latter, our friends of Europe are not unaware that the safety of American bases is essential to their protection, that the loss of our air retaliatory capability would expose them to attack. Finally, I have mentioned the importance of the deterrent effect of our technological progress and our readiness to produce and employ the newest of weapons. All together these elements are integrated into the military might of the United States. To be effective, all pieces must fall into place. We cannot compensate for weakness in one area by predominant strength in another. I have often said that one-dimensional deterrence will never do. Deterrence must be tri-dimensional in effect, in the air, on the sea, and on the ground. Hence, the tremendous difficulty and importance of our decisions in applying our resources to the various elements of deterrence. Year by year, as we compile the military budget and develop our operational plans, we must be sure that there is no weak link in the armor of our deterrence.

Thus far, I have taken as my theme the power of the Armed Forces as an instrument for peace. I have told you what our duty is in providing this indispensable deterrence to war. Now, let me answer a question which has probably arisen in your mind. What can I, as a citizen of the United States, do to assist the Armed Forces in discharging their ~~military~~ <sup>of maintaining the peace</sup> mission? I would be glad to give you my answer to that most pertinent question.

First and foremost, I would ask all citizens to take a deep, personal interest in the Armed Forces. We are sometimes concerned by the reluctance with which our young men view the discharge of their military obligations. Those who enter our ranks are often difficult to retain beyond the minimum period of required service. We particularly regret to lose the talented ones who, after receiving extensive training at public expense, leave us at the height of their usefulness to return to civil life. I would not overstate this problem, but when the trend appears it is a matter for deep concern to those of us who are charged with the responsibility for the defense of the Nation. If you will take an interest in the members of your Armed Forces, visit them and talk to their members, your attention will <sup>convince</sup> show them that they are doing a job that really matters. A sense of mission is far more important in maintaining morale and stability among our people than the financial advantages derived from the monthly paycheck. The latter cannot be too small. The Armed Forces cannot be starved and expected to retain their strength, their enthusiasm, and their self-respect. <sup>but above all,</sup> They must be understood; they must be appreciated.

It should not be difficult to develop an enthusiasm for our Armed Forces if you take a good look at the record. Strangely enough, although we Americans are inclined to boast of the highest skyscrapers, the deepest canyons, the broadest rivers, and the most automobiles, we are strangely slow in proclaiming the achievements of American arms. Yet the fact remains that in World War II General Eisenhower and a dozen other American commanders had under their command more troops than ever served under the banners of Napoleon at the peak of his strength. These Americans liberated areas greater than Caesar's conquests. They captured more prisoners than ever fell to the horsemen of Ghengis Khan. They organized and led to victory more foreign nations than Hannibal, the master of coalition warfare. These are some of the bare historical facts that indicate the primacy achieved by the American man at arms. This town is famous for its loyalty and pride in the St. Louis Cardinals. I hope that you will reserve a little pride for another great team -- the Armed Forces of the United States.

These forces do not live on their past record alone. They are doing a job today that merits your interest and attention. Visit our Army camps where we are training recruits to be fighting men. Go to the airfields and see the pride of the Air Force. Call on our naval stations and observe the evidence of American seapower. If you will do some of these things, I am sure you will develop that interest in the Armed Forces which, in the long run, will reverberate through their ranks to the development of strength, confidence, and esprit de corps. If you make them feel that they are doing an important job, I can assure they will ~~continue to~~ <sup>always</sup> do it in an effective way.

Furthermore, as citizens who see and understand the role of the Armed Forces, you will help us in bringing young men of talent to our ranks. The Army, the Navy, the Marines, and the Air Force will never be any better than the quality of the young men who compose them. The final and decisive element in all aspects of warfare is not the weapon, it is not the equipment, it is the men who operate and use ~~the~~ <sup>hardware.</sup> ~~them~~. The strength of the Army in the past has always been in the depth of the talent within its officer and non-commissioned officer corps. Although each year we lose some of the famous names known to all the Nation, behind these men who retire or who leave the ranks there has always been a new generation of young leaders coming forward, officers trained in the Army school system, veterans of one or more wars, with broad practical experience and thorough professional training, capable of filling the gaps. This situation must never be allowed to lapse. This year the young men who are entering West Point and the Reserve Officer Training Corps of our colleges represent the leaders who must be ready for heavy responsibilities two decades hence. Let us be sure that this generation contributes an adequate increment to maintaining that long line of ability in the officer corps of our Armed Forces.

Finally, I believe that if you would do as I suggest, look at the Armed Forces, visit them, develop an interest in them to the point that you are willing to contribute some of your best men to the military profession -- if you do these things, I feel sure that you, too, will gain by playing a part in this vital role of protecting our Nation. It may even be that it will be less painful to pay those heavy taxes which represent the financial support of our costly military program. But, in any event, you will join a most important team -- the security team of the United States. Along with the Armed Forces, you will contribute to that impression of over-all power capable of giving pause to any enemy <sup>strength in being</sup> -- which is the only guarantee of our national security and the peace of the world.

Thank you.