

U.S. Military Policy and the Captive Nations

It has been a matter of interest to me to examine U.S. Military policy from the point of view of its effect upon the Captive Nations. We have often considered its impact upon the USSR, upon our Allies and the uncommitted nations of the World. It has been rare to look at our military posture as it must appear in captive eyes directed toward us from Eastern Europe.

Our military policy is not an independent entity created for itself for any intrinsic merit of its own. It is rather only one of several components entering into the national policy which, in turn, exists only as a means to attain our objectives as a nation. For the moment let us assume that the national objective toward the captive Nations is essentially the same as that which I understand is supported by the AFCN - namely, the ultimate liberation of the Captive Nations from Communism, while maintaining their determination to resist - now by peaceful methods, at an appropriate time later if need be, by forceful methods. If this is accepted as a fair statement of the national objective, what can our military policy do in its furtherance? First, let us take a look at what our military policy is presently.

The use of atomic weapons at the close of World War II introduced a new military policy in 1945 which was used thereafter to justify the disastrously hurried demobilization of our victorious armed forces. Implicit at the outset, it was formalized and codified later in 1953 as the Strategy of Massive Retaliation which as the essential part of the New Look was to keep us safe and solvent through dependence on the use or the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction.

The new strategy was accepted without much challenge in spite of the evidence of the Korean War that non-atomic wars were still possible even when one side - the United States - possessed a monopoly of atomic weapons. It remained in vogue in spite of the failure of our atomic strength to influence the course of events in such places as Viet Nam, in the Taiwan Straits, in the Middle East, in Berlin or in Hungary. In spite of this manifest inadequacy, it remains our basic strategy today as any examination of our expenditures for national defense will indicate. We have spent and are spending most of our dollars in anticipation of the needs of general atomic war. I estimate that about two-thirds of our annual budget goes for general war forces - the long range missiles and bombers, continental air defense, anti-submarine warfare forces, early warning systems, civil defense and the like. Some of this expenditure is indispensable, but much of it is misapplied. As a result of this concentration of effort there have not been enough funds to modernize our Army and the supporting services which are necessary in both general and limited war. Fascinated by the horrible implications of ~~the~~ general war, we have overlooked the fact that its reciprocal destructiveness makes it inconceivable as a deliberate choice of governments whereas lesser military challenges remain as likely as they have been frequent in past history.

The Strategy of Massive Retaliation has a particular significance in the NATO area where it has led to the concept of the Sword and Shield. In case of war the ground forces there, notably United States Seventh Army, are viewed as a shield to bar the passage of the Communist Armies while the atomic sword of Massive Retaliation effects the destruction of the Communist forces and their

homeland. This concept has been accompanied by the corollary proposition that Europe is such a tinder-box that any war there will inevitably be a general atomic war, that limited war is inconceivable in the NATO area.

These U.S. supported concepts appeared to satisfy our European Allies for a time but lately they have given rise to growing anxiety. The growth of Soviet strength in weapons of mass destruction took much of the shine from our Strategy of Massive Retaliation. Our friends began to wonder under what conditions we would release SAC against Soviet targets if the price were the probable destruction of the U.S. homeland. The next thought was to ask whether they themselves would want SAC invoked if it meant making Europe an Atomic no-man's land lying under a pall of atomic fall-out. The Sword obviously was double-edged - a danger to friend and foe alike.

Meanwhile, the Shield - our Army forces in Europe - became weaker each year. The U.S. forces dwindled through the effect of the inadequate budget at home. The French forces marched off to Algeria, while the Germans moved too slowly to compensate for their loss. Serious minded NATO citizens could rightly wonder about their safety behind this shield as they might fear for their safety under such a sword.

How must our Strategy of Massive Retaliation look to the Captive Nations? If it creates concern in our NATO allies it must excite horror in the satellites. In these lands are found many of the targets for our atomic weapons. These weapons cannot distinguish between Armed Communist forces and their subjugated captives. All would suffer alike. It is an inevitable fact of this kind of

war - if it may be called war in the historic sense.

The other aspect of the Strategy of Massive Retaliation - its neglect of ground forces with conventional weapons and the refusal to contemplate limited military operations in Europe - must be equally depressing to the Captive Nations. Hungary was a tragic reminder of the unreadiness of our means to help behind the Iron Curtain. It is true that by geography, Hungary presented a particularly difficult problem. But what about Berlin, Czechoslovakia or Bulgaria - areas which are accessible to our aid - are we to say that we have only an atomic bomb to answer their hopes? It would seem that at a minimum the ground forces which act as a Shield for NATO should offer the Captive Nations a haven of refuge for defection and a base of support for resistance. These forces do not have that strength today.

Thus far I have talked about the defects of our orthodox military strategy - primary reliance on Massive Retaliation. It is inadequate to provide for the security of the U.S. It alienates our Allies. It terrifies the Captive Nations and leaves them without hope. Can we not do better? Must we not do better?

I can hardly be expected to overhaul our U.S. strategy in the few minutes remaining to me. Such an overhaul is a critical necessity and it should be undertaken by the responsible officials now. Its purpose should be to substitute a strategy of Flexible Response for the Strategy of Massive Retaliation which has reached a dead end. This new approach would strengthen our ground forces and prepare them to fight without preponderant dependence on atomic weapons. It would maintain our ability to retaliate with weapons of mass destruction but they would consist of a

limited number of reliable, concealed and mobile missiles. In a reversal of roles, this missile force would be a shield under which we could maneuver a sword represented by our mobile forces specialized in the requirements of limited war. Some of these forces would be permanently in the NATO area-- ultra modern in their equipment and clearly ready for instant employment at any point along the Iron Curtain.

What could we hope from the presence of these forces? First they would stimulate our Allies to match these forces in kind. Next, they would be a symbol of hope and encouragement to the Captive Nations. Finally, they would create new and difficult problems for the Soviets. As the captives gained confidence, the captors would be obliged to observe greater vigilance and caution. Soviet truculence would be blunted as loss of freedom of action brought loss of freedom of provocation. The aggregate effect would enhance the strength of the Free World to deter war, great and small.

In closing, let me assure you that these changes in military policy can be effected - if the right decision is taken now. Unfortunately there is a considerable lead-time required for strategic readjustment so that we cannot await upon endless debate. The captives of Communism will not wait forever. The moment of explosion might come tomorrow - in which case we would be woefully unprepared. Whether we like it or not the trend of military strength is running against us. Unless we are willing to try to live with the USSR as an inferior - and I for one am not - we must take heroic measures beginning now to achieve the strength in kind and dimension necessary for our own security and for the ultimate liberation of the Captives of Communism.