

Student Union Branch

Shelby

BASIC ISSUES IN NATIONAL DEFENSE
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
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Ladies and Gentlemen:

I was indeed delighted when several months ago President Ellis wrote and invited me to return to Columbia to address this gathering at the University of Missouri. . I have not had the pleasure of being on this campus since graduation week of 1951 when I was the recipient of an honorary degree from the University. I had then as I have now the feeling of returning to old friends in my home State of Missouri. As a matter of fact, in my early years there was a reasonable expectation that I might become a genuine son of the University [of Missouri.] Like most of my contemporaries in high school in Kansas City, I was naturally oriented toward Columbia for my college education. However, World War I and other circumstances decreed otherwise so that I went to West Point in 1918 and have returned to Missouri only infrequently in the subsequent years.

One of the "other circumstances" which lead me to the Army was the act of having had an unreconstructed Missouri Confederate as my maternal grandfather. I first heard of soldiers and acquired an interest in soldiers' ways in my visits to his farm in Chariton County ^{during} [throughout] my early years. In the course of time, we both took a great interest in our respective military experiences. Grandfather would never concede that the United States Army ~~to~~ which I ^{eventually joined} [belonged] was quite in the class with Shelby's Brigade and Price's Army in which he had served. Following graduation from West Point and a few years in the Corps of Engineers,

I decided to transfer to the Field Artillery, a change which was accomplished only after several months of negotiations with the War Department. Grandfather was frankly contemptuous of such red tape. He pointed out that when he had wanted to transfer from the Cavalry to the Infantry in his Army it has a matter of no time at all. I asked him how it all came about. "Oh", he said, "My horse died and then I was in the Infantry."

I am afraid that Grandfather would have been even more puzzled and confused about military matters if he were alive to survey them today. Wherever I travel about the country I find that many of our thoughtful citizens are deeply perplexed and concerned over matters of national defense. In spite of their sincere efforts to understand the issues they encounter serious difficulties in getting to the heart of the problem. New military technology has produced new weapons which in turn have required new tactics to serve a new strategy - an aggregate of change which constitutes a revolution in the art of war - or perhaps better expressed, in the art of ^{international} destruction. Even responsible military leaders with full access to all the known facts have difficulty in evaluating the full effect of these changes and the probable consequences of the employment of these new weapons. Without the advantage of the facts, the interested layman must form his opinion largely from the claims and counterclaims of interested manufacturers who make the new weapons and the partisans of the military services who hope to operate them. Is there any wonder that the man in the street is confused over what we can and cannot do to defend ourselves in this age of the long-range

missile and atomic war heads?

We also tend to make the matter harder by our way of considering parts of the defense problem out of context. Concerned over our ^{apparent} reported lag in missiles, we rush to acquire ~~more~~ ^{and more missiles} missiles without any real idea of how many we need and why we need them. We build more aircraft carriers without knowing how they will fit into the overall strategy. We seek more and more atomic weapons without asking if there is not some limit in these weapons even if we ^{were bent} ~~are bent~~ upon ~~to~~ demolishing the ^{whole} earth. It would seem to sensible men that there must be some proper balance of men, forces, and weapons required to execute a rational military strategy. But it is this view of the aggregate necessity which we never seem to obtain.

It is in the hope of assisting in giving some such overall picture that I have undertaken to discuss with you ^{tonight} ~~today~~ a few of the basic issues of national defense. Although I have some fairly strong views on these issues, I have no purpose of converting you to any particular viewpoint but do want to show an approach to these matters and a way of posing questions which may eventually ^{prove helpful} bring forth useful answers. There is no question that we need a greater ^{generalized} understanding of these matters because national defense is the business of us all. Some of you will be called upon to serve the ranks of the armed forces. Many of you ^{must one day} [must one day] as voters take sides in defense matters. All of you - ^{all} of us - will be obliged to pay taxes to support national defense. Thus indeed, defense is everyone's ^{affair} business and we owe it to ourselves and our Country to arrive at an intelligent understanding

of the basic issues. Thus, I would encourage you while still students to take an interest in military affairs, recognizing that we cannot do our duty and be fence-sitters with respect to matters which involve the very existence of the nation, indeed, of the ^{entire} world.

What, then, are some of the principal issues which we need to recognize and assess? The ^{first} overall one is to decide how we are doing to date in providing for the security of the nation. *To deal with it will require* That will lead to a consideration of the present and future military threat and the adequacy of our preparations to cope with that threat, today and tomorrow. If there is doubt as to their adequacy we will then have to decide what we should do to correct the deficiency.

Admittedly it is difficult to answer such broad questions in a few paragraphs. But if we are to arrive at ^{an} overall concept of the state of our national security, we must have a try at it. First let us have a look at the historical record ^{in the recent past.} up to now.

The military strategy upon which the United States has been relying since 1945 has been called one of Massive Retaliation. Our use of atomic weapons at the end of World War II against Japan convinced many of our leaders that the United States had in these weapons a sure means of imposing permanent American peace upon the rest of the world. Particularly at a time when we had a monopoly of these weapons, they seemed to have an absolute character surpassing all other forms of military force in effectiveness and cheapness. Impressed by their apparent advantages, we proceeded to disband most of the veteran forces which had won World War II and embarked upon this ^{new} strategy which placed primary reliance upon the

use or the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction. We indicated that we were ready to use these weapons any place, any time in order to maintain the peace on American terms.

It is true that subsequent events showed the inability of such a strategy to cope with many situations. Korea afforded the most striking example of its failure. In this conflict we decided for reasons sufficient to our responsible leaders at the time, to wage a so-called conventional war without using atomic weapons even though our monopoly still existed. In spite of the overwhelming superiority of the United States in the air and on the sea, Korea was a bitter war of ground forces where the victory was determined by the location of the infantry front line along the rugged Korean hilltops. The fluctuations of contact on the ground provided the measure of victory.

Other examples arose to show the limited effectiveness of the strategy of Massive Retaliation. Heavy atomic weapons did nothing to solve the challenges posed in Vietnam, Taiwan, the Middle East or Berlin. Nevertheless, these experiences which should at least have stimulated a reexamination of military policy have thus far failed to shake our official confidence in Massive Retaliation as the primary strategic concept. Every defense budget in recent years has testified to this continued reliance. Each year we have spent approximately two thirds of our money on weapons which are applicable only to general atomic war. I refer to such weapons as our long-range bombers, our big naval carriers which provide transport for such bombers, our long-range and medium-range missiles, our submarine warfare forces, our overseas deploy-

ments in Europe and our air defense system in the continental United States. All of these represent weapon systems with primary, if not exclusive use, in general atomic war. They are not the kind of weapons applicable to situations short of a nuclear struggle for survival with the Communist Bloc.

This emphasis on general war forces has necessarily been accompanied by a comparative neglect of those forces which would be called upon to fight non-atomic wars. These forces are represented primarily by the Army, by the Marines and by certain elements of the Navy and of the Air Force. When the money has run short or out, these are the forces which have been skimmed. As a result, the United States Army has not been reequipped to any great extent since World War II. Our soldiers are often armed with weapons which are far from the best obtainable in the equipment market. In contrast, the Soviet Army has been completely reequipped at least once since World War II and in many cases is receiving a second round of postwar weapons. Our ground forces have suffered not only from shortages of modern equipment but also from frequent reductions in numerical strength. During my four years as Chief of Staff, the Army dropped from a little over a million men to 870,000. This reduction of strength has required a thinning of our front line units facing the Communists in Korea and deployed along the Iron Curtain Europe. In Korea we were obliged to fill the gaps in the ranks of United States divisions by incorporating individual Korean soldiers, a practice uncomfortably remindful of the use of barbarian mercenaries in the declining days of the Roman legions.

A summary reply then to the question of how we are doing in National Defense up to now would be about as follows. In the pursuit of a strategy of Massive Retaliation we have accumulated a very substantial retaliatory force based largely upon the long-range bombers of the Air Force and of the Navy. We are beginning to supplement these bombers with long and medium-range missiles but they will not be the preponderant strategic weapon for several years. Both the bombers and the missiles are located on bases known to the enemy and thus highly vulnerable to surprise attack. These weapons are very expensive and we have been obliged to develop them under defense budgets of fixed size. To stay within the budget and still pay the bill for the big weapons, it has been necessary to give comparatively little attention to the requirements of limited wars and of those military forces which would cope with such affairs. The Army at home and abroad has shrunk in numbers without the compensation of the modernization of its equipment. We have not been able to do anything about developing a missile defense of critical targets/ ⁱⁿ the United States and or about providing fall-out protection for the civilian population.

So much then for how we are doing up to now in National Defense. The next obvious question is "Are we doing well enough in relation to the threat?" *Amph*

Before we can answer that question I think we should pause and consider certain changes which have occurred in recent years which have had a significant bearing upon our national security. Only if we recognize these changes and take them into account can

we decide if our military measures are adequate to the present and future threat.

The first change of importance has been the loss by the United States of technological superiority over the USSR in many important military and scientific fields. For the moment, I refer primarily to the Soviet progress in atomic weapons and the long-range missiles for the delivery of atomic war heads. Though I am always skeptical of information tending to inflate the strength of an enemy, I have reluctantly been obliged to accept the reality and the significance of the Soviet missile progress.

The fact that the Soviets probably have or will soon have more and better long-range missiles than we is all the more significant because the United States does not have or is not presently planning an effective anti-missile defense. This defensive weakness in our military program is an important part of the so-called missile gap which is attracting so much public attention today.

Since the United States is committed not to strike the first atomic blow, the need for a missile defense either to deter or ward off attack is perfectly clear. In anticipation of this need the Nike-Zeus anti-missile has been under development for a number of years and its tests have been most encouraging. However, the decision has been withheld to spend the funds necessary for its production in quantity. Some morning I expect to read that the Russians have beaten us to this vital weapon, in which case the adverse consequences will be far greater than

*System
Nike-Zeus*

missile

those resulting from the victory scored by the Russian Sputnik. ^{only?}

These two new factors, the Soviet offensive missile strength and the non-existent United States missile defense, combine to put our country in a very exposed position during the next few years. They represent factors changing the balance of military power which must be taken into account in our military and political planning. They create a condition of exposure to possible defeat in general war, and of increasing vulnerability to atomic blackmail. ^{SP} This latter vulnerability is enhanced by our continued inferiority to the Communist Bloc in conventional ground forces, the third important factor which must be taken into account in appraising our military position. To be doing well enough in National Defense we must at least have some future hope of offsetting the ^{adverse} effects of the missile gap and of our weakness on the ground. ^{will}

The inquiring citizen will find it difficult to decide whether or not adequate offsetting actions are being taken. A point which will baffle him is the absence of goals in our military programs. No place can you find an answer to the question of how much is enough in military forces. How much do we really need in terms of bombers, missiles, ships, divisions and the like? We have never agreed on such matters ^{within the Pentagon} and hence have never constructed our defense budgets in meaningful terms. Thus, we have no yardstick to measure our progress toward sufficiency.

A related defect in the conduct of our defense business is the absence of any set of books to show whether our military capabilities are in balance with our political commitments. As a personal reminder when I was Chief of Staff, I kept a chart on my

wall showing the political commitments which we had undertaken around the world which had military implications. This chart reminded me that we have obligations to some 48 nations, and that any or all of these obligations might require military force to make them good. They include our obligations under such agreements as the North Atlantic Treaty, the Rio Treaty, the Anzac Treaty, the Southeast-Asia Treaty, as well as a number of bilateral agreements with individual countries. To answer whether we are doing well enough in national defense will require a careful study of the possible military actions which might grow out of these commitments. Thereafter we should look at the military forces available to us and ask ourselves, are they likely to be enough? Until some such systematic balancing of the books takes place I am afraid that the inquiring citizen, or for that matter a responsible government official, can never reach a qualified conclusion as to the adequacy of our military forces.

In the light of this uncertainty about our military strength, what should be our reaction? Should we stand pat on what we have been doing or should we make some changes? At a minimum should we not take another hard look at our military policy and programs and see if they still make sense?

I am sure that by now it is quite clear where I stand on this question. I feel that it is indispensable to make a thorough overhaul of our procedures for military planning, programming and execution. But, unfortunately, we do not have unlimited time for preliminaries. If the balance of military power is inclining to our disadvantage - as I believe - we must not

become involved in procedural niceties to the detriment of the hard, constructive thought which needs to be brought to bear on the heart of our security problem. After all, the object of our efforts is simple enough - we need a military program that will prevent war, large or small, or will win in war if deterrence fails. Now what would be the content of such a program in specific terms?

First, we must recognize two principal forms of possible military conflict. The first is general nuclear war between ourselves and the Soviet Bloc. The second is military conflict short of general war, usually referred to as Limited War.

In order to deter the great general atomic war, which would mean disaster to all participants and most bystanders, the basic requirement is for the United States to maintain a secure second-strike nuclear capability. That is the Pentagon way of saying that we must have an invulnerable long-range missile force which could survive a surprise missile attack by the Soviet and still guarantee the destruction of all essential enemy targets. It does not mean an astronomical number of missiles, rather it stresses the need for these missiles to be safe against attack and reliable in operation. At present, we are making great efforts in increasing the numbers of our missiles. Thus far, we have not done much in providing for their protection. As I mentioned above, we have been strangely timid in not going all out to get an anti-missile missile to provide an important part of this required protection.

This secure second-strike nuclear force is vital to our safety but it is only half of the major requirement. Such a force

designed to see that general war does not occur, or if it does, that it will be accompanied by the sure destruction of the aggressor. Under such circumstances, fortunately, it is extremely unlikely that general atomic war will occur as a deliberate choice of the Communist leaders. On the other hand, there is a great likelihood that they will take advantage of this nuclear balance to resort to limited war, secure in the knowledge that we will not dare to use our own heavy nuclear weapons to repel a limited attack.

This atomic state of affairs forces us then to give serious attention to our ability to deter or wage successful limited war. To have this ability will require increased conventional military forces visibly capable of going to the help of our friends without destroying them in the process. Thus, modernized armies and related sea and air forces vested with greatly improved tactical and strategic mobility are just as essential to balanced security as are the forces which constitute our retaliatory nuclear strike force. The lack of limited war forces constitutes a zone of critical weakness which we cannot neglect in our fascination with the terrors of general atomic war. As a matter of fact, the danger which we run of the attrition of our world-wide position and of the piecemeal loss of our friends through limited aggressions is far more real than the danger of direct atomic attack on our homeland. No military program is adequate for the security of our nation which does not face these facts squarely and make adequate provision for limited war.

So much then for the two essential military components of

an adequate Security Program. But military adequacy ~~was~~ not the full measure of the sufficiency of a Security Program. It should also be consistent with our overall national objectives, such as the safeguarding of our constitutional liberties, the promoting of the economic welfare of our people and of our friends, and the maintenance of peace through removal of the causes for war. Is it possible to meet the military requirements of security without sacrificing at least in part, these other objectives to which we are pledged?

I believe that the harmonization of the requirements for security with the attainment of ^{other} national objectives is indeed possible, provided we are wise and utilize our assets to the fullest advantage. If we analyze our military requirements and set clear goals and standards of sufficiency for them we can stay within limits of manpower and dollars which will not bankrupt the nation and bring impotence to other fields of national endeavor. To support a military program of the sort we have been discussing will initially cost in the range of 50 to 55 billion dollars a year in comparison with the 41 billion defense budget of recent years. However, this sum would not exceed 10% of our Gross National Product and thus would not represent an impossible drain upon our economy. The Manpower required for the Armed Services would increase, but would remain well below the levels maintained during the Korean conflict.

In compensation, the removal of primary dependence upon atomic weapons of mass destruction would tend to reassure our friends and to strengthen our wavering alliances. The fear of an

irresponsible blind Samson lashing out with nuclear weapons to destroy his friends in the destruction of his enemies would be removed from the fevered imagination of many nations about the globe. ~~By~~ discarding a strategy of Massive Retaliation we would give to our leaders in the Cold War a flexible weapon for maneuver and a freedom of choice of action which they presently do not have.

Once we have reliable long-range missiles and truly mobile limited war forces it will be possible to give up progressively many overseas military bases. We must recognize that these bases are a frequent cause for friction between ourselves and our allies. Particularly, bomber and missile bases for use in general atomic war have become increasingly unwelcome since Khrushchev has begun to rattle his missiles and threaten to direct them upon these targets. Our ground forces are somewhat more popular abroad as they promise help without the use of atomic weapons and symbolize our willingness to share with our friends the hazards of living under the Communist guns. Nevertheless, they too provide their share of incidents to perturb normal relations abroad. The fact is that our overseas deployments are very expensive and should be withdrawn as they lose military justification. The justification will disappear when we have the invulnerable long-range missiles we have discussed and Army forces visibly able to move rapidly to the aid of our friends overseas. ^{then} Thus, the Department of State can reap the many political advantages of a voluntary offer to reduce our forces abroad.

These have been some of the thoughts which I wish to bring to you, ^{to assist} to assist in appraising the basic issues of national defence. Every citizen has the right, indeed has the duty, to ask

the Government what kind of military strength it is maintaining and what kind of security these forces will ^{represent} provide. Before he is satisfied he should establish the fact that ~~our~~ military program is such as to create respect for the military strength of the United States without creating fear of its misuse. That respect should be so great as to deter military attack on the United States and to discourage aggression in any area of ~~our~~ national interest. Should deterrence fail ~~that~~ strength should be sufficient to impose appropriate punishment upon the aggressor. Such, I believe, is a fair statement of the proper objective of our defense efforts. In their form today or as planned for the future, are these efforts ^{or} ~~good enough~~ ^{to attain security} good enough to achieve this objective? That is the question which we should repeatedly ask and honestly ^{try to} answer. If we are to survive long as a nation, each ~~time~~ ^{always} the answer should be an ^{unqualified} unhesitating yes. *We can not live long with Communism as a military inferior.*

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