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DISARMAMENT OR ARMS CONTROL?

An evaluation of the current discussion, divided into
the following parts:

- A. The Advantages of Comprehensive Disarmament**
- B. Arms Control: A Definition**
- C. Stabilized Deterrent: The Concept and
Its Problems**
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DISARMAMENT OR ARMS CONTROL

Since 1946, the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and other powers have been engaged in various types of negotiations aimed at disarmament and the lessening of the threat of war. These talks have been singularly unsuccessful, except those leading to the Antarctica Treaty and perhaps to the still-pending nuclear test ban. The latest series of disarmament negotiations, in the ten-power committee meeting in Geneva from March to June 1960, broke off abruptly and the first session of the 15th U.N. General Assembly was not able to devise new machinery to continue these negotiations.

The reasons for the lack of progress in disarmament are multiple, partly due to the suspicion of Russia that the U.S. wants "control and no disarmament" and to the suspicion of the U.S. that Russia wants "disarmament and no control." In addition, there have been deep divisions on disarmament within U.S. government departments and these have confused and weakened America's posture in these negotiations. Partly this vacillation has been due to the lack of a comprehensive effort in the government even to coordinate political and military studies for disarmament.

A. THE ADVANTAGES OF COMPREHENSIVE DISARMAMENT

1. Comprehensive disarmament would lessen the possibility of catastrophic war. Today there is no national security and no world security. The possibility of general nuclear war breaking out is

high. No government--certainly neither the U.S. nor the U.S.S.R.-- can defend its people from utter devastation in case of war. Present defense strategy cannot, in the final analysis, prevent annihilation; it can only guarantee mutual annihilation. If the goal of controlled and comprehensive disarmament were agreed upon by the great powers and all nations, and if successive stages of a disarmament plan were put into effect progressively, the dangers of nuclear war by accident, miscalculation, or design would lessen as the stockpiles of nuclear and conventional weapons and their carriers were reduced. Limited wars might arise during one stage or another of a disarmament agreement, but the danger that they might escalate into a nuclear war would be progressively diminished.

2. Comprehensive disarmament would make funds available for peaceful projects. The \$320 million dollars spent daily in all countries for armament could gradually be turned to productive uses. These funds could be used for reduction of taxes and public debt, for grave public needs, and to speed industrialization of the underdeveloped countries. While the initial cost of disarmament inspection systems might be large, the savings from comprehensive disarmament would ultimately be tremendous.

3. Comprehensive disarmament would lessen world tensions. Because the arms race itself has become a major source of tensions, agreement upon the goal of comprehensive disarmament by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and significant steps toward this goal would make easier the solution of outstanding political conflicts.

4. Comprehensive disarmament would heighten the opportunity for non-military competition and ideological competition. Such competition between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (or between the U.S.S.R. and China) would be for the allegiance of the non-aligned world. The weapons of the ideological struggle would be non-military, and thus human survival would no longer be in jeopardy. This competition would take the form of which nation can do the most for underdeveloped areas. This is the battle we should welcome and could expect to win.

B. ARMS CONTROL

A new concept has gradually appeared on the American horizon -- arms control. This is not a synonym for inspected disarmament but implies an agreed limitation of arms involving a decrease in some types of arms and a possible increase in others. As presently advocated, arms control with its dependence upon stabilized deterrence is basically a continuation of the arms race with its major hazards of general war.

C. STABILIZED DETERRENT

The central arms control doctrine in the U.S. today is that of deterrence. This is an old military concept. In essence, it is a threat to carry out punitive measures in the event of a specific hostile action. In the nuclear era this has become stabilized nuclear deterrence: a surprise nuclear attack from one nation cannot prevent nuclear retaliation by the other nation. Thus in theory the initial attack is deterred. Each side would refrain from attack for fear of being destroyed.

If the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. each had 200-500 hidden or mobile nuclear missiles, for example, this concept would "guarantee" that if either country were destroyed by a surprise missile attack, there would remain sufficient and automatic missile retaliation to destroy the other nation. This would be accomplished by a second strike force of hidden missile bases, roving Polaris submarines, and missile launchers mounted on moving railway flatcars. Since the enemy nation could not locate and knock out most of these retaliatory weapons, it would be deterred from striking first.

Some advocates of arms control foresee a period of several years during which a "stable" number of missiles on both sides would become the final arbiter in international relations. Such a nuclear deterrence may not, in this modern world, remain stabilized for long, and in any case, it may not deter war.

1. A stabilized deterrent will encourage additional powers to develop their own independent nuclear force. France is openly trying to acquire such a deterrent and it is reported that China is likewise doing so. It was recently estimated that a dozen or more nations could develop their own weapons in about six years. The greater the number of nuclear nations, the greater the possibility of nuclear war. A multiplicity in the possible origin of a nuclear attack and the means of delivery would compound confusion for the nation which is automatically geared to retaliate against only one enemy. The spread of nuclear weapons will cause attrition or dilution of the deterrent, and its eventual nullification. This process is already occurring.

2. A stabilized deterrent will not eliminate war by accident. Although the tendency to panic may be reduced by making the retaliatory system more "secure," the possibility of human or mechanical error remains. This danger will be compounded by the spread of nuclear weapons to more and more nations. An accidental explosion during a period of extreme tension, a malfunction of a warning system, an aggressive act by a single officer or weapons crew, a sneak attack by a smaller nation--all could trigger a chain of events leading to general nuclear war.

3. A stabilized deterrent will not stop the arms race. International tensions and fears would continue to remain high without the prospect of inspected disarmament. Governments would feel compelled to develop new military technology and stockpile new weapons, causing instability in the deterrent system. One side or the other may become convinced that it is necessary to launch a preventive or pre-emptive war.

4. A stabilized deterrent will not lessen, and may increase, the possibility of limited war. Nuclear stockpiles would not be eliminated and "tactical" weapons would be available for use. Since, under a stable deterrent, "massive retaliation" cannot be successfully threatened, "brush-fire" military adventures may be encouraged. There is ominous further danger that a limited war can always grow into a general war.

5. A stabilized deterrent could be self-defeating. The probabilities of nuclear war resulting from "bluff calling" or nuclear blackmail are high. A country can be trapped by its

own threats: if its bluff were called and it did not act, it would never again be listened to--it could never again deter. If a nation carried out its threat, war would ensue. There are grave dangers of wrongly estimating the opposing nation's moves or intentions. Each side, equipped with an arsenal of strategies for outwitting the other, can readily impute to the enemy the very modes of thought that it itself has developed. The "self-fulfilling prophecy" can produce war.

6. A stabilized deterrent will not stabilize ideological initiatives. Schemes for balancing military forces can be outflanked by political and economic strategies. The strains thus produced can provoke military response and upset the deterrence. Thus a stabilized deterrent could become a new Maginot Line. Reliance on a stabilized deterrent in preference to joining issue in the ideological battle on the political and economic plane represents a tacit repudiation of confidence in the ability of a free society to compete successfully with communism.

7. A stabilized deterrent will be politically unacceptable to the world. The sincerity and the peaceful intention of the U.S. would be seriously questioned if it should propose stabilized deterrent measures. The U.N. unanimously voted for "general and complete disarmament" in the autumn of 1959. The continued advocacy of a stabilized deterrent by the U.S. would be regarded as a step backward and as an effort to stall forward motion on what most nations believe to be essential and inevitable. Such a policy would be seen for what it is: a holding operation based upon irrational

suspicion, essentially a strategy of moral bankruptcy and defeatism. The totally cynical interpretation of the intentions and needs of other nations which are implied in this policy are not justified by a close study of the current political context.

D. COMPREHENSIVE DISARMAMENT

Disarmament, to be effective, must proceed by sequential monitored stages down to the level of arms required to maintain order within nations. Systems for arms limitation are difficult to inspect, and easily reversible. They would do little to allay fear and tension. The chances of an arms limitation system enduring for any length of time are slight. Also, the capability to construct weapons of mass construction cannot be unlearned, and other new weapons could not be "uninvented." Further, a U.N. Peace Force could not maintain a preponderance of power except in a disarmed world.

U.S. proposals through June 1960 do not specifically make comprehensive disarmament their goal. However, on October 27, 1960, Ambassador James Wadsworth stated before the U.N.: "We wish and intend, under honest, balanced, and inspected agreements, to travel the road of genuine disarmament all the way to the end." The U.S. has made some generous offers regarding first step measure it regards as negotiable immediately. These include cessation of production of fissionable materials, control and reduction of stockpiles, and monitoring of missile firings.

The Russians have resisted any first steps outside the framework of a comprehensive treaty on disarmament to which the major

powers are committed. They interpret such measures as providing "inspection without disarmament." There are indications that the U.S.S.R. is prepared to accept phased control provided there is mutual agreement on the goal. Chairman Khrushchev so indicated on several occasions in the autumn of 1960. (For example, Professor Louis Sohn attending the Pugwash meetings of scientists in Moscow early in December 1960, observed that the Russians "seem willing to accept substantial controls in a first stage if that stage includes a substantial amount of disarmament.") The U.S. should carefully explore the sincerity of these statements. There is no way of knowing how much control the Russians will accept short of entering negotiations on a detailed, step-by-step disarmament treaty.

In preparation for such negotiations, the U.S. needs to define clearly what it envisages as the end goal for disarmament, how balanced and equitable reductions can be implemented, and what technical measures will be necessary in order to make control of each stage feasible: control being defined as adequate inspection measures to deter evasion.

Because there will be national antagonisms and problems of justice in a disarming world, attention and study must be given to developing strengthened or new international institutions to keep the peace and continue international efforts for justice. The organs of the U.N. -- legislative, judicial and punitive -- must be strengthened before disarmament can be carried to completion. The U.N. Disarmament Commission and the U.N. Secretariat itself could initiate new studies.

Heretofore U.S. studies in disarmament have been few, understaffed, underfinanced, and uncoordinated. A new Peace Agency should be established to conduct research into the technical and economic steps toward disarmament, prepare proposals for negotiation, and coordinate the views of various government agencies involved in planning for disarmament. It should be supplied with funds commensurate with the importance of its tasks. One of the key roles of a Peace Agency should be to plan the kind of machinery needed to settle disputes and keep the peace in a disarmed world.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Kennedy Administration should establish new machinery to coordinate all official efforts to plan disarmament agreements.

2. The U.S. should adopt as its unambiguous goal comprehensive disarmament (universal, complete, total) down to small arms needed to maintain domestic order, provided there is phased inspection and creation of new international institutions to maintain peace and justice.

3. The U. S. should present a reasonable plan for the continuation of disarmament negotiations when the U.N. General Assembly reconvenes on March 7, 1960.

4. The West should launch a world-wide public education campaign on disarmament so that the chances for success of international negotiations on disarmament will be increased.

5. Concerned American organizations and individuals should coordinate efforts to launch a public education campaign on disarmament within the U.S. so that any government negotiations will be supported by widespread public opinion.

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