

Statement of

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In the late 1940's, when General George C. Marshall was no longer Secretary of State but had not yet become Secretary of Defense, I had the honor of spending a day with him in his home at Southern Pines, North Carolina. I recall commenting to him that as a high school student in 1938 I had gained the impression from public statements of government officials that in the event of a war with Japan, the US would prevent the invasion of the Philippines. General Marshall stated that that was our declaratory policy. I asked him why we had not done so. He said, "Lieutenant, you need to understand the difference between your country's declaratory policy and reality. The reality was that we knew we lacked the military capability to carry out our declaratory policy. We always assumed, privately, that we would have to surrender the Philippines and fight our way back after mobilization."

General Marshall went on to say that in peacetime in democracies the dynamics of media criticism, public interest in and preference for social welfare programs, and party politics, all tend to overwhelm national security requirements. He pointed out that prior to both World War I and World War II the conventional wisdom in the US, England, and France was that the military are never satisfied, want too much, and have too much. It was his judgment that the millions who died in these wars need not have died had the democracies been prepared for war. Presciently, before the Korean War, he predicted that the then ongoing unilateral disarmament by the West would soon lead to still another war.

In the second half of my active duty career I came to understand fully that General Marshall's description of the national security malaise of democracies during the first half of the 20th century was quite relevant to the third quarter of the century.

Specifically, during my tenure as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1970-74, while the public position of the US Government was that our military forces were adequate:

- The RISOP/SIOP calculations of the JCS showed quite irrefutably that the Soviet Union was gaining the strategic nuclear superiority over the US which President Reagan later publicly conceded.

- I reported to Congress that the US had only a 35% probability of victory in a naval war with the USSR.

- I heard the Chief of Staff, US Air Force, give the President his judgment that the US had less than a 50% probability of victory in an air war in Europe.

- On several occasions I heard the Chief of Staff, US Army, give his judgment that the NATO armies could not prevail in conventional war against a Warsaw Pact offensive into Western Europe.

- During the Yom Kippur War munitions were in such short supply that I had to deny full ship loads to some ships in the Pacific Fleet, despite the war in Vietnam, in order fully to load out ships in the Atlantic Fleet.

Since leaving the JCS, as a co-founder of the Committee on the Present Danger and as a member of its Studies and Analysis Committee, I have had the opportunity to continue to analyze US national security. As a result, it is clear to me that the military weaknesses with which I grappled as Chief of Naval Operations were further exacerbated by the Carter defense budgets.

The military decline of the US in the '70s was the direct result of grossly inadequate defense budgets.

For our conventional forces the specific results of these inadequate defense budgets throughout the '70s were:

- Inadequate force levels to deal with the global Soviet threat.
- Those forces in being were not ready for combat due to:
 - 1) Inadequate spare parts to keep ships, aircraft, tanks and other equipment operational.
 - 2) Huge backlogs of ships, aircraft, etc. awaiting overhaul.
 - 3) Inadequate munitions to fight even a short war.
 - 4) Inadequate O&M funds to provide vital training.
 - 5) Inadequate reserve forces with outmoded equipment, inadequate training facilities, insufficient personnel.
- Personnel readiness of the active forces was inadequate in quality or quantity due to inadequate pay scales and generally poor morale.
- Airlift and sealift including reserve fleet merchant ships fell far short of requirements.

I believed then and continue to believe now that the Congresses of the 1970's failed by a wide margin to provide adequately for the national security and that this failure was in part the result of the failure by the Executive Branch to inform the public of US military inferiority to the Soviet Union.

The defense budgets of the Reagan Administration, as submitted to the Congress, would in my judgment have resulted in conventional military superiority over and strategic parity with the USSR by 1988.

The defense budgets passed by the Congress during the Reagan Administration have resulted in improved capability relative to the threat but at a slower pace. We have, however, made important strides toward closing the window of vulnerability in the strategic nuclear field. Our conventional forces levels

are larger though still not adequate. Our readiness and sustainability in spare parts, maintenance, munitions and logistics have greatly improved. Airlift, sealift, reserve merchant fleet, and reserve forces are greatly improved. Personnel readiness is at an all time high as the result of adequate pay and the morale boost that comes from increased training and the knowledge that readiness and sustainability are improving.

In my judgment the state of the world is greatly improved as a result of the perception by the Warsaw Pact nations and the Third World that the US has regained the will to lead and is regaining sufficient military capability to deter. We see it in more circumspect behavior by the Soviet Union and Cuba and by renewed interest in Moscow in arms negotiations. We see it in the renewed respect with which the Third World nations treat the US in the UN and other fora.

I believe that significant cuts in the defense budget currently being considered by Congress would slow down the rate of our return to a fully deterrent posture. The impact of such cuts would be to: increase the motivation of the USSR to harm free world interests, toughen the Soviet stance on arms control, discourage our allies, and weaken our influence in the Third World.

In the light of historical experience, I believe the issue with which the Congress must grapple is whether to have the courage to deal with the deficit problem without slowing the President's vital programs to regain a reasonable national security posture. If it does not, if it cuts deficits by cutting defense, if it does not permit defense expenditures to match the threat, then I believe that General Marshall's description of the malaise of democracies, with all that that portends for world peace and stability, will have become relevant to the final quarter of the 20th century.

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