

Speech by
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
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By assigning me the topic of disarmament, you have given me just about the most complex subject in Washington. And you have asked me to discuss it before one of the most sophisticated audiences in America.

It is a stern test to speak before old friends who are alert and discerning. For years you yourselves have given enormously in thought and effort to complicated problems like this one.

But perhaps no problem is both so cumbersome and so elusive as disarmament. Perhaps there is also some point in my discussing it since I have concentrated on this subject in the Senate in recent months. Unquestionably, the issues we encounter when we speak of "disarmament" are issues that increasingly touch at many points on the all-important central question of peace or war.

We are meeting tonight at the end of a terrible week -- a week that has seen violent eruptions of long-smouldering political volcanos. Though we have every reason to be dismayed by the events of this week, and concerned over the weeks to come, there is one thing we do not have. But we have no cause to be surprised. These terrible events have been long building up, in plain view. The tragedy is that those responsible for our foreign policy have been either so blind that they could not see what was coming, or so incompetent that they were unable to avert it.

Of course, what we are seeing are explosive manifestations of a world in revolution -- in revolution against colonialism, against exploitation, and against poverty and degradation. This revolution has been aptly called "the revolution of rising expectations". And it is still the greatest failure of our foreign policy that we have not been willing -- because I believe we were able -- to put ourselves in the vanguard of this great revolution.

What we are seeing are not merely local outbursts of Communist-contrived political unrest. These outbursts are parts of complex, political, economic patterns with their roots deep in the revolutionary situation of the postwar world.

I said this is no time to be surprised. It is a time to grasp what is going on -- in Lebanon, in Algeria, in France, in Latin America, and many other places.

One of the things that is wrong with American policy is that our policy makers react to events, and fail to assess and understand causes -- except in occasional speeches.

We are not organized for the total long-range effort.

It isn't that we do not have the resources. And it isn't that we do not have any real friends in the world. We have vast resources. We do have steadfast friends. But we fail to mobilize the resources and too often take our friends for granted or irritate them. We do not have an over-all comprehensive foreign policy that has moved ahead systematically with deliberate objectives under competent and effective leadership.

Our problem is not lack of knowledge. It is lack of wisdom and the ability to apply it for national and international purposes. We are leaderless -- lacking the will to face up to the realities of the world and discipline ourselves to do what needs to be done.

In this respect, at least, we can learn from our principal adversary. The Soviet Union knows what its purposes are and what policies it needs to pursue. The central purpose of Soviet policy is to isolate the United States -- politically, economically, militarily -- by sewing dissension and division in the free world. The tragic events in Latin America, in the Middle East, in Africa and in Europe this week are eloquent testimony to the way that Soviet policy identifies itself successfully with genuine grievances.

But in our dismay and anxiety we must stop to ask ourselves why is it that the Soviet Union is able to exploit the world situation to our grave disadvantage? Why is it that they seem to be able to fragment and weaken the free world faster than we are able to unite and strengthen it? Why does the world situation itself seem to be on their side rather than ours?

My answer is this: precisely because they do have a total policy and know what they seek to do. There is a policy that takes into account all aspects of international affairs, a policy which is flexible, resourceful, and inventive. A policy that embraces military, economic, social, political, and cultural forces -- all tied together.

I am not suggesting that we should imitate the tactics of deceit and irresponsibility which the Soviet Union employs with such success. But I do think we may well pause to ask whether we cannot match this unity of purpose, this breadth and range of view and this flexibility of tactics.

The truth is that the United States has no total foreign policy. We operate spasmodically. We treat with Europe; we treat with Latin America; we treat with Asia; we have an approach to trade; we have an approach to economic development; we have an approach to disarmament. But an effective foreign policy requires that we should pursue a galaxy of foreign and international programs simultaneously, synchronized, in harmony and concert. Instead a pattern has developed of withholding action in one field on the excuse that not enough has been accomplished in another area.

For example, we have consistently said that a large-scale United Nations economic development program must await an effective agreement on disarmament (as though we could not afford to contribute to such a program while maintaining our own defenses). When we look at the disarmament problem, we are frequently told that the solution of disarmament issues depends on the settlement of political disputes among the major power blocs. But when we look at the political disputes existing in the world, we find that in many areas of the world the key to this conflict lies in economic development.

In this circle, all our reasoning is closed, and we have to ask ourselves whether we can afford to postpone large-scale economic aid until political issues are settled and the burden of armaments reduced. But, here is the real situation, my friends, no great part of our foreign policy can be tabled while we wait for solutions in other areas. The contest of competitive co-existence goes on all the time and across the board. Either we compete or suffer defeat.

One of the reasons why we lack a comprehensive, integrated foreign policy for the United States today is because a conservative government is incapable of coming to grips with a worldwide revolution and devising bold, creative, flexible policies. How can conservative politicians who oppose TVA, public power, health insurance, and even unemployment compensation, really have their hearts in flood control in Africa and village development projects in Asia? How can politicians who disregard a recession at home appreciate human need abroad.

How can conservative politicians who belittle economic and social planning here at home cooperate effectively with the governments of many new countries where national economic and social planning is required? How can our generals, corporation lawyers and big businessmen really get in tune with a world revolution? How can the Hollisters, the Hoovers, and the George Humphreys possibly symbolize the hopes and aspirations of the millions of people who for the first time are experiencing national independence and personal freedom.

After all, it is the essence of a conservative government that it is dedicated to the status quo and the conservatives who are directing United States foreign policy have dug in behind the policies of their predecessors, retrenched on some of them, and in any event have been unable to either understand or adjust with the movement of events. It is this status quo, too little, too late, containment, Maginot line mentality of the Eisenhower-Dulles Administration that has enabled the Soviet Union with all of its limitations to outflank our positions on the political front, on the economic front, on the technological front, and leave American foreign policy seriously exposed and weakened. Men who jeer at and oppose the philosophy of a welfare state are the wrong people for the responsibilities of leadership in a world where 3 out of 5 persons are the have-nots of the underdeveloped nations. Where more than half of the population live in hunger, disease, poverty and insecurity -- where a majority of mankind seeks immediate answers to old problems.

Yes how can a nation that is governed by timid, cautious, and tired old men give the kind of dynamic, fearless, and imaginative leadership that is required if we are to match and outstrip the wily, cunning, strident and vigorous tactics and challenge of Soviet power. Then too there is the matter of philosophy and attitude. All too often we Americans view our foreign policy in terms of legislation, treaties, compacts, and public pronouncements. We have failed to properly emphasize the attitudes and the philosophies which are necessary to give life, meaning, and spirit to these policies and programs. We tend to

be more interested in the forms of diplomacy than in the understanding, approach, and spirit which is required in these times of tension, doubt, and insecurity. To put it simply, it is not only what we do but how we do it. It is not only what we prescribe, but how it is dispensed. It is not only the dollars that we spend, give, and loan, but even more basically, the spirit in which the gift is given, the loan is made, or the exchange is accomplished.

A foreign policy which is carried out on many fronts simultaneously is the only kind of policy that makes sense in today's world.

Widescale, short and long term foreign economic assistance and investment; expanded and revitalized world trade; a strengthened United Nations and other international institutions; greater acceptance of, support for, and reliance on, international law, a vastly greater exchange of persons; greater respect and concern here at home for the rights and liberties of individuals; the strength and growth of our own economy -- all of these must be pursued vigorously and wholeheartedly, while we are pursuing just as vigorously and wholeheartedly the solution of political conflicts and the control and reduction of armaments.

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

Disarmament cannot be treated in a vacuum apart from other considerations of foreign policy. Neither can it be pursued apart from the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Although there is desperate need to clarify and to sharpen our own disarmament policies, we shall never make any progress on this issue until the Soviet Union and its government also wish progress. No one except the Soviet leaders themselves know whether the U.S.S.R. has a genuine interest in limiting the arms race. Perhaps they really don't know any more than we do. Perhaps they have their own equivalent of a Strauss-Stassen argument inside the Kremlin. The Soviets may not really be as monolithic as they like to appear. Who knows? Nevertheless, we must probe and probe and negotiate and negotiate to find out whether the current proposals of the Soviet Union are based on a Soviet realization that the arms race must be slowed down, or whether its proposals are nothing but empty propaganda.

There is some evidence today that Khrushchev and company would like to see arms control agreements. I say this even though the U.S.S.R. recently vetoed in the Security Council the United States proposal for mutual aerial inspection over the Arctic circle.

The Soviets know what a nuclear war would do to their country. Moreover, there is evidence that, riding high on their recent propaganda victories and the successes in political, scientific, economic and cultural penetrations, the Soviet Union may believe that its hope to win the world to Communism can be best realized in intensive peaceful competition and not warfare -- at least not large-scale nuclear warfare.

There is reason to believe that the men of the Kremlin have embarked upon a new strategy of world conquest. One in which they seek not to blow the world to pieces, but to pick it up piece by piece. This we can properly term "operation nibble". By such an operation they can be even more effective and successful in conquest purposes than any military aggression or attack by modern weapons. We must ask ourselves again and again are we prepared not merely to resist "operation nibble" but in fact to launch our own economic, social, and political program that will bring the blessings of modern science and technology, of freedom and independence to the vast areas of our world. This is our challenge and it is an even more demanding one than the challenge of military preparedness and strategy.

If the Communists want peaceful competition we should welcome it, encourage it, and win it! We ought to be prepared to meet them on their own terms and take calculated and measured steps to slow down the arms race.

I want to warn, however, that the Soviet Union does not seem so weak economically that it cannot compete or that its economy will collapse if it does not obtain relief from the arms race. Some people have indulged in some wishful thinking in this respect and have concluded that for this reason the United States should intensify the arms race.

To be sure, there is evidence of domestic economic difficulties in the Soviet Union. Premier Khrushchev calls every other day for more food production, for less bureaucracy in the economy, and for greater decentralization of industry. But the fact that these problems are discussed in public does not mean that the Soviet economy is about to collapse any more than public discussions of our own recession indicate our economy is about to collapse.

In fact, we have the testimony of Allen Dulles, head of CIA, that the Soviet economy is growing and is day by day better equipped to compete and challenge the economy of the West. Soviet production which was 33% of United States production in 1950 is now about 40% and in a few years will be 50%. The rate of growth of the Soviet economy is roughly twice the rate of growth of the American economy.

There is no spot in Allen Dulles' statistics to support Foster Dulles' thesis that internal weaknesses in the Soviet Union will force its leaders eventually to accept our terms.

We cannot wish away the Soviet state or the Soviet economy or the facts of Soviet power. Until we accept the relative permanence of our chief adversary we shall continue to pursue policies based on optimistically unrealistic assumptions.

I do not minimize the difficulties of negotiating or even living on the same planet with the Soviet Union. But there is no other planet to live on -- yet. The opposite of co-existence may be no existence.

Yet for some curious reason the whole concept of co-existence has always been in disrepute. Many people seem to assume that co-existence means "trusting the Russians". But the answer to that was given by Admiral Radford in his testimony before our Disarmament Subcommittee. You can't trust the Russians, he said, but you could trust a system. It is this system of inspection and detection that remains the central point of a disarmament agreement. It is this system which we have to devise and develop.

And right here we must face up to the new importance of disarmament as a subject of negotiations. This is no longer the 1920's or 1930's. The importance of disarmament is directly related to the discoveries of weapons, technology of war and the dispersal of armament.

World War II gave the world a glimpse of what is meant by total war. World War III can amount to total destruction. Just what that means is appreciated on a personal basis far more widely among those civilian populations of the world who experienced the bombings of World War II than it is here in our hitherto safe and protected America.

Many people in this country still are bemused by discussions of disarmament. They are still back in the Twenties and Thirties and regard the whole problem as slightly academic.

When are we going to face up to the dreadful threat of nuclear catastrophe? We are not discussing a theoretical problem. It may be more truthful to say that we have actually been permitted a little extra time to contemplate means of survival.

This is all the more important because time and wealth are no longer on our side. We have always assumed that time and wealth were on our side in meeting aggression. The premium is now on sudden devastation, leaving less and less time to mount a defense or to put wealth to work.

Indeed, time and technology are also combining against us. If we had been able to achieve an inspection agreement on bomb tests two years ago, our position today would be immeasurably stronger. Soviet science is closing gaps. The technology of armaments on both sides of the cold war is proceeding at such a rapid rate that it is itself increasing the rate of obsolescence. Last year's guns and planes are tumbling out into military aid programs and the world market is being flooded with recently out-of-date military equipment. Multiplication and dispersal of weapons around the world represents an expanding and growing threat to peace and stability everywhere.

This is just one further reason why Soviet leaders have been reaping large gains in world public opinion with a constant stream of statements on disarmament. Mr. Khrushchev has done his peace campaigning so effectively that in many areas of the world the Soviet Union is regarded as more peace loving than the United States. If Soviet pronouncements on disarmament are nothing more than bluffs, then surely the bluff should be called and soon.

HUMPHREY'S ARMS CONTROL PROPOSAL

This is one of the reasons why I have advocated negotiations for an international agreement to suspend nuclear weapons tests with inspection. Although most authorities on the Soviet Union state that inspection is one of the most difficult things for the U.S.S.R. to accept, nevertheless the U.S.S.R. has professed to agree to inspection for a nuclear test suspension.

As recently as last Friday, May 9, Mr. Khrushchev wrote to President Eisenhower about technical studies on inspection: "The Soviet Government is agreed to have either side appoint experts who should immediately start work on studying the means of detecting possible violations of an agreement to end nuclear tests, with the proviso that work should be completed in the shortest term agreed upon beforehand."

I urged the President to accept this offer. It represented a significant shift in Soviet policy. And it was a shift, since the Soviets had insisted previously that first the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. must agree to suspend tests apart from other disarmament measures.

I have repeatedly urged the President to negotiate separately on a test suspension agreement apart from the cut off of production of fissionable material for weapons purposes and apart from other points in our disarmament package.

As you know, a terrific battle has been raging within the Administration on this policy question. Admiral Strauss, Dr. Libby, and Dr. Teller as well as key officials in the Pentagon have argued that tests must not be stopped.

On the other side of the test issue is Dr. Bethe, the prominent nuclear physicist from Cornell University and a member of Dr. Killian's science advisory committee. I am also told that Dr. Killian and the Secretary of State are inclined to agree with Dr. Bethe.

Although the President has delayed making up his mind on this issue, thus allowing the Soviet Union to reap more propaganda gains, newspaper reports indicate that the United States is now about to make a positive statement. The reports indicate that the President is going to announce a suspension of nuclear weapons tests after our current series has been completed. The reports also indicate that the President will accept the offer of the Soviet Union to appoint a group to study the details of inspection, one of his own recent proposals, and one which I publicly advocated last February.

These reports are encouraging. We should applaud them. It is also heartening to know that the Secretary-General is taking personal charge of the disarmament question in the United Nations. Each of these moves may take us a little closer to a limited but, nevertheless, first step agreement.

But I am sure that the debate within the Administration has not ended.

There are two main factors in the test suspension debate: 1) can we set up an effective inspection system, and 2) are we ahead of the U.S.S.R. in atomic weaponry?

On the second question, every witness who has appeared before the Disarmament Subcommittee has stated we are ahead of the Soviet Union.

On the first question there are two problems. One is whether the Soviet Union would cheat and the other is whether the Soviet Union could cheat and get away with it.

Most people assume the Soviet Union would try to cheat, although there are some interesting but classified discussions of this question.

Whether they could cheat and get away with it is subject to considerable dispute with Dr. Teller saying they could and with Dr. Bethe saying the probably could not. There is no flat answer to this question.

The main problem concerns the detection of underground tests, and whether an inspection system set up both inside and outside the U.S.S.R. could detect and identify underground explosions which the Soviets might try to conduct secretly.

On this point it is quite appalling that although Mr. Stassen was in London, on instructions from the President and the National Security Council, to agree to suspend tests with inspection if other measures were also agreed to, no detailed study of the detection of underground tests had been made by anyone in the Administration. It is, therefore, no wonder that Mr. Stassen swore all the members of his inspection task force to utter secrecy. They had not, most of them, made the studies that they were supposed to have made.

When the Disarmament Subcommittee discovered how ill prepared the Administration was on this matter we undertook to make some studies of our own. We have written to 37 seismologists asking questions on the detection of underground tests.

The answers to our questionnaire are not all in, but we have offered to make available to the President and to Dr. Killian the information received thus far so that they may have the benefit of as much information as possible. You may detect here some evidence of turning the other cheek. We have not always received information we asked for from the Executive Branch, but we wish to try to set a good example by cooperating as best we can with the offices at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

OTHER DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS

I have dwelt on the suspension of nuclear weapons tests because this is one, if not the one, proposal which has some chance of being accepted, of being workable, and of constituting the first brake in the arms race. But this is not the only proposal which I think could be pursued.

I have advanced several such limited proposals.

Briefly they include:

- a. The separation from our disarmament package, for the purpose of negotiation, of the proposal for a cut-off of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes, with inspection.
- b. A study of new proposals for the unification of Germany based on possible troop withdrawals from certain parts of central Europe and new security arrangements for all nations with primary interests in Europe.
- c. Reduced armaments in both North and South Korea based upon renewed and improved systems of aerial and ground inspection.
- d. The need to have China become part of any substantial arms control agreement and to what extent this should be coupled with a concerted reevaluation of our policy toward Communist China.
- e. Greater attention to and strengthening of the peace machinery of the Latin American system, including modification of our military aid programs in that area.
- f. An "open skies" aerial and ground inspection system in the Middle East along with continued use of demilitarized zones and U.N. emergency forces to guard against border incidents and surprise attack.
- g. International agreement for the prevention of the use of outer space for strictly military purposes.
- h. International agreement to develop a reconnaissance satellite to help guard against surprise attack and to detect high altitude nuclear explosions.
- i. Increased authority given to the U.N. to explore the extent to which trade and traffic in armaments should be observed, controlled, or reduced to the end of relaxing tension in specific areas.
- j. Increased use of the Secretary-General of the U.N., the Security Council, neutral Chairman of negotiations, private diplomacy and orderly procedures in pursuing disarmament negotiations.

These are some of the proposals I have developed as a result of my work on both the Disarmament Subcommittee and the Foreign Relations Committee. No one of these proposals would bring us world peace. No one of them could act as a substitute for the settlement of political disputes and differences. But each of them might, if pursued and adopted, help to reduce regional, or in some cases, world, tension and thus allow the arms race to abate somewhat.

Many of the proposals I have offered require serious and concentrated study before they could become the basis of any negotiations. But the Executive branch of our government has been so unresponsive, not only to these ideas but to the ideas and suggestions advanced by others, that the status quo continues to persist.

I would like to be less pessimistic than I am about the possibilities of our government giving the necessary leadership to turn the world away from the brink of nuclear catastrophe. I become almost depressed when I think we shall not awake soon enough to the present demands on us as a nation to tackle the many issues which confront us simultaneously on the world scene.

RISKS

Of course we are constantly reminded of the great risks we run in entering into any sort of agreement. There are, indeed, risks. Any agreement would involve new and untested devices, both political and technological; and we would always run the risk that some of them might not work as they had been planned and that we might surrender some of our freedom of action without appreciably reducing the danger. There is always the risk that an agreement which broke down or was breached would create new dangers of its own.

But let us assess also the risks in failing to reach any agreement on the control of nuclear armaments; in continuing the arms race while nuclear weapons are developed in four, five, six, and who knows how many countries, multiplying the danger that nuclear war may be triggered by miscalculation, mistake, or madness. Let us assess the risks of the ultimate destruction that would follow in the wake of such a war. My conclusion is that faced with risks like these, as the consequences of doing nothing, we must explore every avenue that might lead to arms control. We may have to endure the lesser risks if by so doing we can reduce the greater ones.

The risks of doing nothing are now so intolerable that we can no longer look upon arms control as a consequence or byproduct of our efforts to reduce political and economic tensions. Arms control must now be looked upon as one of the principal objectives of United States foreign policy, and the preservation of peace must be accorded equal importance with the preservation of freedom.

We need not only the inspiration that what we are striving and working for is a peaceful world composed of free societies, systems of government based on democratic principles, and improved economic conditions. We need also the intellectual stamina to explore painfully what policies and programs must be discarded, which must be strengthened, and in what manner we should devise and pursue new and modified courses of action. This is my task and your task. I only hope we are equal to it.



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