

“Defense - Space - Atomic” Speech Delivered by Iowa Senator Thomas E. Martin

Inextricably intertwined with foreign policy is the problem of national defense and scientific developments in the missiles and weapons fields. Our continuing effort to prevent further spread of communism and to prevent that “ism” from sweeping over even our own country, will succeed only so long as we maintain a military establishment of sufficient strength and force to repel attack and to inflict counter devastation on ANY nation so foolhardy as to attack us. George Washington used these words to express the thought: “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving the peace.” With the capabilities now existing for a surprise attacker to inflict havoc on his quarry, the words are even truer today than they were when spoken by Washington.

This is why it was necessary for Congress this year to appropriate roughly \$40 billion for defense, more than ever before provided for our national defense in time of peace. The sum is huge; but so is the need. I do not believe any sincere and patriotic American could say he would prefer the risk of living in a wholly communist world to spending the billions.

More so than ever before, any future world war—if the world ever should be so unfortunate as to undergo another major war—will be decided largely by the ability of trained minds to develop and produce new weapons. Any future world war will be fought primarily with weapons and instruments which only a few short years ago would have been regarded as sheer figments of over-active imaginations—guided missiles, hydrogen explosives, space craft.

Contrary to the scare talk of some, we are holding our own in the race to perfect and develop new weapons. Each of our military services has missiles to operation, and process of perfecting them to even better performance is continuing. Russia has concentrated its energies on long-range missiles, such as our ICBM’s –Inter-continental Ballistic Missiles—because she has no advanced bases near our shores, as we have advance bases relatively near to Russia proper from which we could launch shorter—range missiles if necessary. But in the overall, we are not trailing; we have enough of an arsenal in being to deter the masters of the Kremlin from undertaking an attack which they know would bring retaliatory devastation on their homeland.

The Army has three surface-to-surface missiles, as well as two Nike surface-to-air missiles intended to protect American cities against air attack. The Navy has air-to-air, surface-to-surface, and surface-to-air missiles. The Air Force has its own air-to-air and surface-to-surface operational missiles.

An area in which the United States is maintaining a definite advantage is in nuclear powered submarines, capable of launching missiles from their decks. Development of the Polaris IRBM, Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile, designed to be launched from an atomic submarine and able to travel 1,500 miles, is proceeding at top speed. Neither Russia nor any other nation in the world can match our atomic powered submarine fleet.

The Congress this year took official cognizance of the successful leap into space by man-made earth satellites. It enacted legislation providing the top-level organization, necessary funds and facilities, for a new civilian space agency to take charge of the nation’s aeronautical and space activities. Responsibility for military phases of the space program remains in the Department of Defense, where a new Advanced Research Projects Agency will direct military research in space technology and weapons of the future.

A new independent agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, has been established. Under civilian direction it will plan, direct and conduct aeronautical and space activities; will arrange for the scientific community to aid in measurements and observation of space vehicles, and will disseminate widely their information and findings. Several other lesser steps were taken to provide for the peaceful exploration and use of Outer Space.

In the field of atomic energy, the 85th Congress ratified participation by the United States in the newly-established International Atomic Energy Agency which was a direct outgrowth of President Eisenhower’s “atoms for Peace” program. It also enacted legislation to permit the United States to share atomic information with its allies, subject to certain restrictions dictated by the needs of national security.

Maintenance of an adequate defense capability is an expensive proposition in this day of atomic and hydrogen missiles, spacecraft and other Buck Rogers items which must be included in a full-blown modern arsenal. But in today's world, with international communism ever on the alert for any sign of weakness in anti-communist nations, it is not only expensive, it is vital.