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DEFENSE AND MUTUAL SECURITY LUNCHEON

**"Our Posture as
a World Power"**

REMARKS



**The Honorable
Gerald R. Ford, Jr.**
United States Congressman
from Michigan

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON 6, D.C.**

forty eighth ANNUAL MEETING

MAY 1-2-3-4 • 1960

DEVELOPING AMERICA'S
STRENGTH THROUGH
VOLUNTARY ACTION



REMARKS

By: The Honorable Gerald R. Ford, Jr.
United States Congressman from
Michigan

It is a distinct privilege and honor to appear on this program with Senator Jackson and to discuss one of the most vital problems of the day -- our program for National Security and its funding.

As everyone knows in 1953 after the cessation of hostilities in Korea the U. S. embarked on a new national defense policy. On occasions since the inauguration of that policy some individuals, both military and civilian, have challenged the adequacy or soundness of the policy. Despite such criticism, in my opinion, the new concept is sound, the funding in general has been adequate, and its execution or management has been effective. It cannot be denied that in the last 7 years the policy prevented or deterred an all-out or general war. It has successfully met the limited war threats in Lebanon and Formosa, or the Taiwan Straits.

How does this policy of defense programming compare with past programs? History shows that previous U. S. peacetime military policies were underfunded and without adequate manpower. This was true prior to World War II. We repeated the mistake before Korea. When war broke out in each of these instances military appropriations zoomed upward and active-duty manpower requirements increased substantially.

This "feast and famine" policy did not deter war, limited or general. This pre-World War II and pre-Korea "peak and valley" military policy proved to be costly in dollars and manpower. The new Eisenhower concept if adequately funded by the Congress and properly executed by the Pentagon, should give the U. S. an invulnerable defense posture.

Despite some Congressional critics the House and Senate in the last seven years have basically endorsed President Eisenhower's military policies except that in the last five fiscal years the Congress has reduced the budget requests of the President by approximately \$3.5 billion. Even in 1959 the military Appropriation bill for fiscal year 1960 was cut below the budget by \$19 million. If there has been any underfunding of the Army, Navy, and Air Force in recent years the fault rests with Congress, not the White House.

It may be argued that Congress has taken the lead in redirecting certain vital defense programs. This is true to some extent but such changes by the House and Senate are based on subsequent testimony given to the Congress after the President's budget has been submitted in January each year. That is the case in 1960 for the fiscal year 1961. In December 1959 at the time the Executive Department finalized its decisions on the military budget and programs certain scientific tests had been concluded. Based on those tests at that time specific programs and dollars were recommended. In the intervening five or six months new technological and scientific breakthroughs have taken place. With this new evidence Congress can and should act accordingly. The President and the Secretary of Defense have made significant program readjustments themselves. In this era flexibility is important. Both the President and the Congress by their recent action have recognized this point by decisions relating to military programs for the current fiscal year and for 1961.

(more)

In conclusion the best evidence of Congressional support for the President's military policy is the action on April 29th by the House Committee on Appropriations. This Committee on the recommendation of its Defense Subcommittee, composed of 9 Democrats and 7 Republicans, increased the Eisenhower Administration's military budget in dollars by only 7/1000 of one percent. After four months of intensive hearings on all aspects of Army, Navy, and Air Force programs the \$39.3 billion budget was increased by only \$2.8 million. Some specific programs were revised upward and downward but the basic soundness of the overall program has been approved in 1960 as it has been in prior years.

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Remarks of Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Jr.
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES
DEFENSE - MUTUAL SECURITY LUNCHEON
Washington, D. C.
May 2, 1960

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