



## *Controls, Inspection, And Limited War*

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ONE REMARKABLE ASPECT of the nuclear age has been a penchant for absolute solutions. In strategy it has led to our theory of deterrence, which identifies deterrence with the threat of maximum destruction. In diplomacy its symptom has been the quest for total peace, of which our approach to disarmament negotiations is the most notable example.

During the same month that Great Britain pressed the implications of our own strategic doctrine to their most rigorous conclusion, the major powers were negotiating about disarmament as if the perils of the nuclear age could be avoided at one fell swoop by a diplomatic instrument. From Korea to Indo-China to the Middle East, the real security problem has been the Communists' strategy of ambiguity. This Communist strategy, which is designed to multiply the hesitations and doubts

of opponents, graduates its challenges to a point well below that likely to provoke a final showdown.

By leaving no middle ground between total war and total peace, both our strategic doctrine and our approach to disarmament prevent the attainment of a less dramatic but perhaps more realizable objective: the establishment of a military and diplomatic framework which would cause war, if it does come, to take less absolute forms and which might spare humanity at least the worst horrors of nuclear conflict.

As things now stand, the major powers could conceivably be drawn into a war entirely against their wishes. The conflict over the Suez Canal was hardly foreseen by the western powers and perhaps not even by the Soviet Union. And the Hungarian revolution came as a rude shock to the Kremlin. Both upheavals resulted in military action

that prevailing strategic doctrines might easily have spread to an all-out war. Similar Soviet moves in East Germany or Poland would be fraught with even more danger.

The absence of any generally understood limits to war undermines the psychological framework of resistance to Communist moves. Where war is considered tantamount to national suicide, surrender may appear the lesser of two evils. A gap is thus opened between the quest for total peace and the military doctrine of total war—a gap in which the Soviet leadership can operate with relative impunity. Both strategy and diplomacy should therefore seek to pose less absolute alternatives; the former by developing a doctrine for limited war, the latter by using disarmament negotiations to obtain an understanding of the doctrine by other powers.

### **The Race Is in the Laboratories**

The always difficult task of disarmament negotiations is made nearly impossible by the instability and complexity of weapons technology, which has made it difficult to agree either on reduction of forces or on control over the development of new weapons.

A reduction of forces is difficult to negotiate because it seeks to com-

pare incommensurables. What, for example, is the relation between the Soviet ability to overrun Eurasia and American air and sea power? If the United States weakened its Strategic Air Command, it would be years before it could be reconstituted. If the Soviets should reduce their ground forces, they could be reassembled in a matter of weeks.

Even if a scale for the comparison of different weapons systems could be negotiated, that would still not remove the real security problem: the rapid rate of change of modern technology. Disarmament plans of the past were based on the assumption of a relatively stable weapons technology. Once the proposed reduction of forces was implemented, it was believed that strategic relationship would remain constant. But under present conditions the real armaments race is in the laboratories. No reduction of forces, however scrupulously carried out, could protect against a technological breakthrough. Even if strategic striking forces were kept at fixed levels and rigidly controlled, an advance in air defense sufficient to contain the opposing retaliatory force would destroy the strategic balance.

**T**HE RATE of technological change has outstripped the pace of diplomatic negotiations. Because stockpiles have usually accumulated before negotiators could even agree on the nature of their problem, efforts to control the development of new weapons have proved futile. Since each scientific advance opens the way to innumerable others, it is next to impossible to define a meaningful point at which to "cut off" weapons development. At the beginning of the atomic age, a strict inspection system might have succeeded in stopping the elaboration of nuclear weapons. By 1952, it might still have been possible to control the development of thermonuclear weapons, albeit with great difficulty. The hydrogen bomb developed so naturally out of research and production of nuclear weapons that a foolproof inspection system would have been infinitely complicated. In any case, by 1957 the production of thermonuclear devices has so far outstripped any possible control machinery that the emphasis of disarmament nego-

tiations has turned from eliminating stockpiles of thermonuclear weapons to methods of restraining their use.

Moreover, once a weapon is developed, the next stage is to elaborate its applications until ever-wider realms of strategy become dependent on it. A nation may be willing to forgo the offensive use of nuclear weapons, but it will be most reluctant to give up defensive applications, such as anti-aircraft or anti-missile weapons.

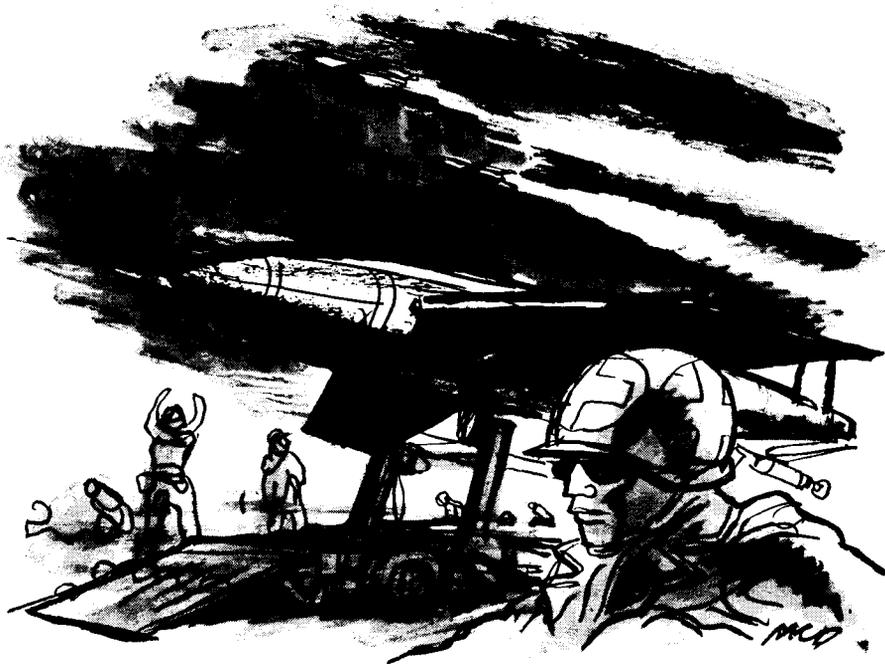
In short, it is possible to keep weapons from being stockpiled only when they are brand-new—when their implications are least understood. By the time their potential is realized, there is no possibility of preventing them from being added to existing arsenals. Thus if missiles are to be controlled, it will have to be within the next two years, before they go into mass production.

#### How Valuable Is Inspection?

The difficulty of developing meaningful control machinery to end the production and development of new

also remove some of the urgency from international relationships. This was the reasoning behind President Eisenhower's proposal at the Geneva "Summit" Conference in the summer of 1955 to exchange military blueprints with the Soviet Union and for the two powers to permit aerial reconnaissance of each other's territories. The principle that inspection may prevent surprise attack has been accepted in the Soviet counterproposal for stationing ground observers at strategic points in the territory of the other nation, and in the recent offer to open part of Soviet territory to aerial inspection.

It cannot be denied that the danger of surprise attack contributes to the tensions of the nuclear age, even if it does not cause them. It is less clear, however, that uncertainty about the opponent's intentions would be significantly reduced by aerial inspection, or that the inspection schemes could add a great deal to existing warning methods and intelligence information.



weapons has caused most disarmament negotiations since 1955 to concern themselves with means to prevent surprise attack. It is argued that since one of the causes for present tensions is the insecurity produced by the fear of imminent catastrophe, an inspection system that reduced the danger of surprise attack would

Because a strategic striking force could be wiped out if it were caught on the ground, it must be prepared to attack from its training bases at a moment's notice. If properly prepared, it should require no noticeable mobilization to launch its blow. An enemy should not be able to tell whether a given flight is a training



mission or a surprise attack until his early-warning line is crossed.

**T**O BE SURE, the Soviet Long Range Air Force has not yet reached this stage of readiness. Because it probably does not possess adequate capability for aerial refueling, it would have to transfer its planes to advance bases on the Kola or Chukchi Peninsulas, respectively east of Finland and west of Alaska, before it could attack. A system of inspection would inform us of this move and it might therefore increase our warning time. Nevertheless, the gain would be only relative, because any substantial movement of the Soviet Long Range Air Force to advance bases could hardly escape high-altitude detection or general intelligence surveillance even without inspection. And future Soviet planes will surely be able to launch an attack on the United States from training bases.

Because of the greater range of our planes and the nature of our base system, the Soviet Union would gain very little from either ground inspection or aerial surveillance. It knows the location of most of our airbases, and since it will presumably strike the first blow in an all-out war, it is assured of maximum warning in any case. It can be argued, of course, that the Soviet Union may not consider the danger of a United States surprise attack so slight, and that it would thus gain added security from an inspection

system. But unless most of the planes are grounded all the time and both sides are certain that no substantial installations are hidden, there is no guarantee that planes on so-called training flights will not be used for surprise attack. Even filing flight plans in advance would not eliminate this danger. Given the speed of modern planes, by the time inspectors realize that a violation of a flight plan has occurred and can communicate this information to their home government, the planes will probably have reached the opposing early-warning lines. Moreover, if flight plans were cleverly arranged, it would be very difficult to discover whether a given flight was a move to advance bases or the prelude to an all-out attack.

Inspection could, of course, be linked to the grounding of all planes, except perhaps a very small number that would be insufficient to inflict a catastrophic blow. Such a course would be highly dangerous, however. It would be difficult to maintain the readiness or the morale of the retaliatory force without constant training. Since our strategy is more dependent on strategic striking forces than that of the Soviet Union, the grounding of all planes would work to the advantage of the other side. Even if we should develop a capability for limited war equal to that of the Soviet Union, the grounding of our strategic air force would stand to benefit our op-

ponent. It would tell him the precise deployment of our retaliatory force and enable him to concentrate his attack and his defenses against it. To be sure, we would have the same information about the Soviet Long Range Air Force. But that information would be considerably less useful to us.

### Three Hours at Most

The maximum warning that could be achieved by even a perfect inspection system is the interval between the time planes leave their bases and the time they would have been detected by existing warning systems. With present planes, this would amount to an interval of perhaps three hours for the nation under attack. The aggressor would gain no additional warning time from an inspection system because naturally he would alert his defenses before mounting his blow. To be sure, three hours is not negligible. But since neither side could be immediately certain that an apparent violation of inspection meant war, the victim might have trouble making effective use of the additional warning. He would be tempted to delay his counterblow until the aggressor crossed the early-warning line—which is precisely the situation today.

Moreover, as the speed of planes increases, the warning time will be progressively reduced. In the age of the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile—less than ten years away—the maximum warning time possible, assuming perfect communication between the inspector and his home government, would be thirty minutes: the period of time the missile would be in transit. In the age of the missile and the supersonic bomber, even a foolproof inspection system will tell the major powers only what they already know: that their opponent has the capability of launching a devastating attack at a moment's notice and with a minimum of warning.

**S**INCE FLYING TIME from the interior of the U.S.S.R. to our early-warning line is about three hours with present planes, each base of the Soviet Long Range Air Force would have to be photographed at least every three hours. If the reconnaissance occurred at longer intervals,

the early-warning line would provide a better indication of a surprise attack because an attack launched immediately after an aerial inspection would reach the early-warning line before the next reconnaissance sortie discovered that the opposing force had left its base. As the speed of planes increased, the frequency of reconnaissance missions would also have to be increased so that in practice reconnaissance planes would probably have to hover over enemy airfields almost constantly. And in the missile age it is not even certain that aerial reconnaissance could discover launching sites and be able to warn of impending attack.

It is therefore unlikely that our present vigilance could be reduced or that insecurity would be removed by any inspection system now in prospect. The machinery required would be so formidable and the benefits so trivial or uncertain that an inspection system might actually have pernicious consequences. It might give a misleading impression of security and therefore tempt us into relaxing our guard. More likely, however, it would induce both sides to place their striking forces in an even greater state of readiness in order to compensate for the loss of secrecy.

Indeed, unless designed with extraordinary care, a system of inspection might well make a tense situation more difficult. The value of inspection depends not only on the collection of facts but also on their interpretation. But the information produced by inspection systems is inevitably fragmentary and is likely to be most difficult to obtain when it is most needed—when international tensions are at their height. On

the other hand, the only meaningful reaction to a seeming violation is to launch an immediate retaliatory attack, because protests could not begin to be effective before enemy planes had reached their target. The knowledge that all-out war would follow any apparent violations might well aggravate the tenseness of international relations. Instead of reducing the danger of thermonuclear conflict, an inspection system might make more likely an all-out war based on a misunderstanding of the opponent's intentions.

From the point of view of preventing an all-out war, ignorance may be preferable to partial knowledge. Disarmament negotiations, as heretofore conceived, may therefore cause war—if it does come—to take the most absolute form. In their attempt to find total solutions the negotiations may prevent the achievement of intermediary goals that *are* attainable.

#### Rules for Limited War

One such attainable goal would be to mitigate the horrors of war. One of the most important tasks of disarmament negotiations should therefore be to establish a common understanding of the possibilities and mutual advantages of limiting warfare.

Such a program would help overcome the impasse in which we find ourselves paralyzed by the implications of our own deterrent strategy. It would relate disarmament to strategy and thus help to bridge the gap that now exists between force and diplomacy. It would overcome a situation in which the Soviet leaders can conduct atomic blackmail in the guise of disarmament

negotiations and undermine the will to resist by evoking the most fearful consequences of such a course.

Above all, a program to mitigate the horrors of war could be used to clarify the intentions of the opposing sides and thereby prevent the catastrophe of an all-out war resulting from miscalculation and misunderstanding. Even a unilateral declaration of what we understand by limited war would accomplish a great deal because it would provide a strong incentive to the Soviet Union to adopt a similar interpretation. Finally, given the likelihood that some nuclear weapons will be used in any war involving the two major blocs, even if it is not total, it is imperative to establish in advance the psychological and political framework of such a conflict.

It has been argued that the deliberate ambiguity of our present position, in which we do not define what we understand by limited war or under what circumstances we might fight it, is in itself a deterrent because the enemy can never be certain that any military action on his part will not unleash all-out war. But if we wish to pose the maximum deterrent, an explicit declaration of massive retaliation would seem far more advantageous. The goal of our ambiguity is to combine the advantages of two incompatible courses: to pose the threat of all-out war for purposes of deterrence, but to keep open the possibility of a less catastrophic strategy if deterrence fails.

Ambiguity, however, may give rise to the notion that we do not intend to resist at all—and thus encourage aggression. Or it may cause an aggressor to interpret resistance intended to localize the conflict as a



prelude to all-out war. Instead of strengthening the deterrent and opening the way for a strategy short of all-out war, the deliberate ambiguity of our position may weaken the deterrent and bring on the most catastrophic kind of war.

Moreover, a diplomatic program designed to convey our understanding of the nature of limited war may be important because it is not certain that the Soviet leaders have fully analyzed all the options of the nuclear period. Marshal Zhukov and other Soviet leaders have denied the possibility of limited nuclear war both at the Twentieth Party Congress (Moscow, February, 1956) and afterward. If this represents their real conviction and not simply a form of psychological warfare, an energetic diplomacy addressed to the problem of limiting war might stimulate some second thoughts on the part of the Soviet general staff. In these terms, our diplomacy may have to be a substitute for lack of imagination on the part of Soviet leadership.

**B**EFORE we can convey our notion of limiting war to the other side, however, we must admit the possibility to ourselves. We must also be clear in our minds as to what we actually mean. At present no such clarity exists among either our military or our political leaders. Our services are operating on the basis of partly overlapping, partly inconsistent doctrines. Some of these deny the possibility of limited war, while others define it so variously that even from a strictly military point of view we are hardly able to conduct limited war either physically or conceptually.

If our military staffs could become clear about a doctrine of limited war, we could then use disarmament negotiations to seek some acceptance of that doctrine by the other side. It would not be necessary for such a concept to be embodied in an international treaty or even for the Soviets to adhere to it formally. There should be no illusions, in fact, about the ease with which the Soviets might be induced to forgo the advantages of atomic blackmail. The primary purpose of such a program would be to convey our intentions to the Soviet bloc and to encourage

it likewise to consider a limitation on war in its own interest.

### Sanctuaries and 'Clean' Bombs

Against this background, it is possible to visualize a diplomatic program designed to bring about a tacit, if not a formal, understanding of the framework of limited war. Although the details of such a program would require thorough technical study, some tentative ideas can nevertheless be advanced. Even if on closer examination some of these proposals appear not to be feasible, they may indicate a general direction worthy of serious attention.

Without damage to our interest, we could announce that while Soviet aggression will be resisted with nuclear weapons, we will make every effort to limit their effect and to spare civilian populations as much as possible. To this end, we could propose that both sides list the bases of their strategic air force. These bases would be immune from attack if located more than a certain distance from the combat zone (say fifty miles) and if they admitted inspectors. In the same way, all cities fifty miles from the combat zone would be immune. Within that zone, cities could purchase immunity by being declared open and admitting inspectors. An open city would be one that did not contain, within a radius of thirty miles from the center, any installations that could be used against military forces. The term "military installation" should be literally defined and not extended to industrial plants. Although the inspectors might be provided by neutral nations, it would be preferable if they were experts of the opposing side, because their reports would then have a much higher credibility.

The elimination of area targets would place an upper limit on the size of weapons that it would be profitable to use. While it would be impossible to control effectively the explosive power of various weapons, there is one self-policing dividing line: between weapons that produce significant fallout effects and those which do not. The former are devices detonated close to the ground with an explosive power above five hundred kilotons of TNT. The latter are weapons of a smaller size; higher-yield weapons exploded in the air;

and so-called "clean" bombs, a new development that claims to practically eliminate fallout even in high-yield weapons. We might therefore announce that we would not resort to any nuclear weapons that produce dangerous fallout unless the enemy violates this principle.

**S**UCH A PROGRAM would have several advantages over disarmament schemes designed only to prevent surprise attack. In limited war the aggressor would still be anxious to avoid a thermonuclear holocaust. He would therefore be eager to continue to observe limitations—at least as long as the other side possesses a sufficient retaliatory force to make all-out war unattractive. And both protagonists would presumably be eager rather than reluctant to overlook occasional violations.

An additional advantage of the plan is that the inspectors could provide at least some political contact. Thus the mechanics of arms limitations would also improve the opportunity for a rapid settlement if the contenders should desire it. And by relating disarmament negotiations to military strategy, the plan would force opposing staffs to consider options other than the stark alternative of total peace (which may mean total surrender) or total war.

### 'We Would Lose Nothing'

It may be objected that the program outlined here would in effect neutralize cities and seriously interfere with military operations. From the military standpoint, however, it would seem to make little difference whether a city is neutralized by the presence of inspection teams or by atomic annihilation. As for impairing military operations, the handicap would be the same for both sides. The military will have to accept the fact that short of a thermonuclear holocaust purely military decisions are no longer possible, and that they must adapt their tactics to the new technology.

Other criticisms assert that a program for limiting war assumes a degree of human rationality for which history offers no warranty. But neither does history offer any example of the extraordinary destructiveness of modern weapons. A program that seeks to establish some

principles of war limitation in advance of hostilities would seem in any case to make fewer demands on rationality than one that attempted to improvise the rules of war in the confusion of battle.

The idea that deterrence can only be achieved by the threat of maximum destruction deserves close scrutiny. The usual case of aggression has a specific objective. It is not necessary to threaten destruction of the home base of the enemy to inhibit it; it is sufficient to prevent the aggressor from attaining his goal. An aggressor would seem to have no motive for mounting an attack if he cannot calculate a reasonable chance of success.

The United States should therefore shift the emphasis of disarmament negotiations from the almost insoluble problem of preventing surprise attack to an effort to mitigate the horrors of war. We would lose nothing even if we announced a program of war limitation unilaterally. If the Soviet Union begins a war by an all-out surprise attack, we would react by using every weapon in our arsenal. If it begins hostilities on a limited scale, a limited war could be fought according to rules established well in advance. And the inspection system sketched here would serve a threefold purpose: as a warning against surprise attack, as an instrument for keeping the war limited, and as a device to maintain contact with the opponent so that a political settlement would be possible at any point in the military operations.

**T**HE LIMITATION of war described here is impossible, however, without a strategic doctrine adapted to nuclear weapons. It presupposes an ability to use force with discrimination and to establish political goals in which the question of national survival is not involved in every issue. It also requires a public opinion that has been educated in the realities of the nuclear age. In short, a program of war limitation cannot be used as a cheaper means for imposing unconditional surrender. The concept of limited war and the diplomacy appropriate to it reflect the fact that in the nuclear age the possibility of total solutions no longer exists.

## A CHANGE IN THE AIR

ERIC SEVAREID

**T**he impression is deepening that on the world's most urgent problem, armament control, an initial agreement with the Soviet Union is really possible. There are two reasons for this: the fact that Dulles and Stassen went over the negotiations with the Senate Disarmament subcommittee before Stassen returned to the London talks; and the tone of the President's brief remarks at his news conference on May 22.

There is a walking-on-eggs feeling on this problem in high circles; this would not be so if the negotiations were still only in the stage of debating points for propaganda reasons. The President clearly doesn't wish to take a chance on a single egg being broken. He said on May 22 that our first concern should be to make certain we are not being recalcitrant or picayunish ourselves; that we are open-minded, ready to meet the Russians halfway. It was immediately assumed by his listeners that he was trying to remove any adverse impression made on the Russians by the jolting remarks of Admiral Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Radford, who had been away and out of touch with the negotiations for several weeks, bluntly stated that the Russians can't be trusted on a disarmament agreement or anything else. Radford does represent a continuing school of thought with this attitude, but this group is being challenged by another group, led by Mr. Stassen, who believe that this attitude would not only condemn the world to an eventually fatal arms race but is beside the point. They are equally opposed to buying a pig in a poke; the whole point of current negotiations is to get a beginning agreement that will be mutually enforceable and that does not depend on trust or "sincerity."

The President himself used to raise that objection—the question of Russian sincerity—almost automatically whenever this broad problem came up. It would seem highly significant that he is not doing so now. Pretty clearly, he is impressed with the fact that the Russians are making counter-proposals on the aerial-inspection idea. When he first proposed this at the Geneva Conference two years ago, the Russian leaders immediately scoffed at the whole idea. But now they have accepted it in principle. They are believed to be serious, not

merely making propaganda, though the differences on the particular real estate to be inspected might bog the whole thing down. Nevertheless, this represents a vital Russian switch, and when the President says that our very first concern should be our own open-mindedness, then the whole negotiating atmosphere has obviously changed.

**W**hy this change? Basically because the realization has sunk deep here, and apparently in Moscow, that neither country could reap anything but destruction in a big war and that the risks of sliding into such a war will grow as more and more nations are able to produce the ultimate weapons. Thus the urgent sense that unless these monstrous things are brought under international control soon, not even a binding Russian-American agreement could guarantee the peace. The day is foreseeable when even the smallest and most irresponsible nation could plunge the world into the pit.

In the background of this new atmosphere is the spreading feeling that we are dealing with a different Kremlin. Stalin is dead. There is an attempt by some experts within our government to break the hard mold of American thinking about Russia, the mold formed by so many years of cold war with Stalin. Automatic assumptions that Russia seriously intends to conquer the world, that she will take great risks with world peace as she did in Korea, that she dictates to Red China, that western Communist Parties will remain under Kremlin control—these basic assumptions are being challenged by some men in official quarters here. These men are convinced that Russia's stake in peace is quite as important as ours, and that the old Stalin type of harsh, tight rule, in Russia, in the satellites, and in western Communist Parties, is loosening and will continue to loosen. No more than the Radfords do these men argue for unilateral American disarmament; indeed, they think that would check present Russian trends and tempt the Kremlin back toward Stalinist expansionism. They do argue that certain conditions have changed and that, as the President has indicated, our own thinking must change along with them.

(From a broadcast over CBS Radio)