

REMARKS BY MR. JAMES H. DUFFY
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
AT WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CIVIL DEFENSE
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 1958

Mr. President, Governors, and Members of the Congress

I appreciate the opportunity to present to you and to the Congress these remarks as related to military policy. The subject of this meeting is a subject which is in accord with the importance of the defense Department's policy on civil defense.

Several years ago the production of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union created a capability to attack and destroy our country. So civil defense and its planning has been considered as a means of protecting our people against a nuclear attack. It is true that such an attack could have been carried out only by a small number of weapons, but at least a few hours warning of an attack is necessary. The fact that the Soviets have a very few intercontinental ballistic missiles in the next two years they may have a considerable number. These missiles can deliver large payloads of warheads to targets which are distant in about half an hour. At this time the missile warning system is under construction, but no effective defense against ballistic missiles is available for some years except our deterrent. It is true that the years immediately following an attack against us, if it came, would be a very hard time for our people and our missiles -- and even with an effective warning system the time available would be very short.

Ballistic missiles have an extraordinary impact on our civil defense, both military and civil, and are most important to our protection against the Soviet Union. Today a very small number of Atlas missiles are in operational. These missiles are being produced in large numbers and sites are under construction -- and they are being built by the Soviets -- surpassed our expectations. As a result of our missile program, our test firings have on the average been about 100 miles above the ground. The Soviets have since asserted greater capabilities in their missile program. In the Titan program, since the first test was essentially successful, we have encountered a series of difficulties. We are looking for a resumption of testing. As a result of this period of difficulty with Atlas, Thor and Jupiter programs, and of these difficulties, the present reliability. Four Polaris submarines have been built and missile testing is proceeding satisfactorily. The Polaris submarine program should be operational before the end of the present year.

The Soviets may have a made a great deal of progress in their missile program. They have launched missiles during the next few years. Whether they have a large number comprises a real threat to our security in a number of ways. We should study these missiles closely and we should be prepared to meet them.

with a surprise attack to destroy enough of our retaliatory capabilities to support a rational decision to attack. We believe the Russians must recognize that a nuclear attack against us would bring, in retaliation, unacceptable damage to their country and people. This deterrence is based on the fact that our over-all retaliatory power depends not only on our strategic weapons in addition to missiles, upon our strategic reserves, improved warning, and vigilance of the Soviet potential for aggression.

We are determined to maintain peace and strengthen the Free World. We seek to reduce the risks of war and to strengthen our alliance with the Free World. And we seek better relations and understanding with the Communist world.

Today, however, and until armaments can be reduced with adequate safeguards, military power is our best assurance of peace. Our strategy and that of our allies is one of deterrence. Our purpose is to make clear that aggression against us or any ally cannot profit the aggressor. To deter an attack against us we must have long-range striking power that can survive even a surprise attack and perform its mission in any event. To deter aggression against our allies we must have strength and credibility that convince an enemy that we could retaliate and respond to aggression with force. To permit doubt as to the extent of our power would be to invite new dangers to the Free World.

Today the combat readiness of our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and the forces of our allies, provides strong deterrent power. We must continue strong in the future. And we are sure that a strong defense program will be an increasingly important element of our deterrent posture. Better protection for our civil population will strengthen the resolution and credibility of our firm policy to meet aggression with force. We must remember that if our policy of deterrence should ever fail, our military power and civil defense are our only means of survival.

We know that in the event of a nuclear attack our military forces would play an important part in meeting the wide spread destruction that would result.

The primary mission of our military forces is active defense, and this gives us some uncertainty as to exactly which military personnel may be available. But we may be sure that if the country suffered a nuclear attack, military personnel and other resources would be available.

This is so not only with respect to our active forces, it is true of all Reserve forces. For example, I am satisfied that members of the Air Force Reserve air lift would immediately play an important part in the care of casualties, moving of emergency supplies, and in meeting extraordinary demands for air transportation.

We have asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff to review its size and composition of Reserve forces, including the possibility in support of civil defense.

The military services have a remarkable record of cooperation with civil authority in peacetime disaster relief services and have rendered similar assistance in wartime. The military continue to support civil defense planning. Technical developments and test results important to civil defense planning are continuously reviewed by the Department and are made available to OCDM. Information on the effects of nuclear weapons and defensive procedures is provided. OCDM representatives have access to data such as weapons effects studies not readily available to military personnel.

The Department of Defense is represented on the National Civil Defense Advisory Board which was established to advise and assist the President, OCDM, on emergency medical care planning. Also the Department of Defense provides technical advice and assistance to OCDM in the development and testing certain items of survival equipment.

We have conducted, in cooperation with OCDM, studies on the development of a single nationwide nuclear detection reporting system to include monitoring and reporting of radioactive fallout, nuclear fallout, and bomb damage assessment.

Defense, OCDM and the Federal Communications Commission are constantly working to improve the WEFBAC system which was developed to deny navigational information to the enemy, but which has been modified providing better dissemination of intelligence information to the general public.

Much has been accomplished under the fine leadership of Governor Hoegh and the leadership in many states. We have learned a great deal of the effect of radiation on people and animals and food. We are studying to provide fall-out protection, and what a small amount to provide for our own protection supply, which, if accomplished, will be a basic step toward the assurance of national survival against nuclear attack.

We know that even in the event of a nuclear attack, the casualties suffered would depend not only on the character of the attack, but to a large extent upon the protective measures planned and carried out by the general population. The self-help shelter plan, with the encouragement of \$15 million loans, is well conceived. Both the plan and its national implementation must be understood by our people if it is to constitute an effective defense measure. The Defense Department supports the self-help shelter program as a part of the civil defense effort. We are giving attention to practical aspects of a military fall-out shelter program for military personnel and dependents, particularly with respect to what activities will be consistent with the fall-out protection program. Some shelter experimentation is being planned for the services. One difficulty is that military personnel on operations and on short tours of duty cannot be expected generally to finance appropriate shelters. Also, the problem of fall-out shelterage must be raised for general consideration.

Today we have the ingredients for a significant civil defense effort. Our problem is one of education and conviction. The primary task is one of communicating a understanding of the nature and of the practical protective measures that can be taken, without instilling the idea of hopelessness in the face of a clear attack, or an almost remoteness of possibility that creates complacency. We do not expect nuclear war, but we know it would be a hardy not to take the precautions of maintaining an adequate defense, both military and civil. To carry out a civil program will take real understanding and persistence. I believe we are on the right track in providing information, and encouragement at the Federal level, and placing primary responsibility on the States to secure effective action by Americans in their own communities in implementing the Federal disaster policy. This is something that people can do for themselves, so that assistance in credit, and planning and guidance, we should move now to make civil defense in this manner, and we are by example and by persuasion as yours. And we may be sure that unless there are new and better assurances of progress toward such goals, the people's civil defense will become a matter of increasing concern.

