

# How Eisenhower Stopped Truman's March to Nuclear Armageddon

by Dean Andromidas

Aug. 2—It is a safe historical assessment that the election of General Dwight D. Eisenhower to the Presidency of the United States in November 1952 stopped the march to nuclear Armageddon put into motion by President Harry S Truman. In November 1952, two days before the election, in an apparent effort to boost the sagging campaign of Truman's chosen successor, the hapless Adlai Stevenson, the lame duck President Truman ordered the testing of America's first hydrogen bomb.

Perhaps that test, in the midst of the ongoing war without end on the Korean Peninsula, gave Eisenhower the added boost to win one of the most impressive presidential elections victories in the history of the United States.

This report will endeavor to demonstrate how Eisenhower, in the first year of his administration, acted decisively, and with great dispatch, to end the danger of universal war. The best way to begin is with the very end of the story, the last speech of his Presidency, the famous speech warning the American people of the dangers of the military-industrial complex. It is remarkable for an outgoing President to warn his fellow citizens of a danger from within, not from "subversive communism," as one would expect during the height of the so-called Cold War, but from his country's own military-political-security establishment, of which he himself had been a part for his entire professional career. It is probably one of the most important speeches of the Twentieth Century.

Let's look a little more closely at what he said:

...we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial com-

plex. The potential for the *disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted...* (emphasis added).

These heavy words from an outgoing President were unprecedented. Equally important is the second point he made in the speech where he refers to the scientific research establishment:

The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the *power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded.* Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and



President Eisenhower delivered a shock with his farewell address on January 17, 1961.

en.wikipedia.org

*opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific technological elite...* (emphasis added)

Eisenhower is obviously not talking about the Einsteins or Oppenheims, but institutions like the RAND Corporation, the Ford Foundation, and all the others that make public policy through private financial interests. American statesman Lyndon H. LaRouche has been warning about this danger for the last four decades.

As President, Eisenhower was constantly fighting on three fronts. First, there was the Soviet Union, which was problematic in those days; then came the British Empire, whose imperial designs he had to fight while at the same time trying to build an alliance with the nation of Great Britain. And then, behind his own lines, he was always battling this military-industrial complex, which he obviously saw as the most dangerous of all.

Eisenhower conducted this war without having to actually use the massive military power the United States possessed. Rather than using the principle of brute force, he acted upon another principle, a much higher principle, which he found in the history and traditions of his own country, as he understood them. He also states this principle in this same speech:

“It is the task of *statesmanship* to mold, to balance, and to integrate these and other forces, new and old, within the principles of our democratic system — ever aiming toward the supreme goals of our free society...” (emphasis added).

### **Truman’s March to Nuclear Armageddon**

Within weeks of the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in April of 1945, Truman launched his march to a nuclear World War III, when he ordered the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan, an adversary that had lost all hope of prosecuting the war, and was about to surrender to the United States. It was an obvious act of terror aimed against the Soviet Union and the world through the mass murder of a virtually defenseless population.

When briefed on Truman’s intention to drop atomic bombs on Japan in July 1945 by then Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Eisenhower recalled in his memoirs:

During his recitation of the relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the

basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save lives. It was my belief that Japan was at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of ‘face.’ The Secretary was deeply perturbed by my attitude, almost angrily refuting the reasons I gave for my quick conclusions.

Eisenhower was not the only senior military officer to have denounced the use of the bomb. Admiral William D. Leahy, who had been Roosevelt’s chief military advisor, also opposed the use of the bomb. Although he served Truman loyally until 1949, nonetheless Leahy wrote the following in his memoirs, published in 1950:

It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender... My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted the ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children.

MacArthur also opposed use of the bomb. According to Richard Nixon,

MacArthur once spoke to me very eloquently about it... He thought it a tragedy that the bomb was ever exploded. MacArthur believed that the same restrictions ought to apply to atomic weapons as to conventional weapons, the military objective should always be to limit damage to non combatants... MacArthur, you see, was a soldier. He believed in using force only against military targets, and that is why the nuclear thing turned him off, which I think speaks well of him.

Joining them in their opposition would be such war heroes as Five Star Admiral William “Bull” Halsey, Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, who had been deeply involved in the atomic bomb project, and was later named

by Eisenhower to the chairmanship of the Atomic Energy Commission, and many other leading scientists.

Truman did not listen to these warnings, and he was backed by others who would later become part of the “military-industrial complex.”

The bombs were dropped, the slaughter exposed to the entire world, and Generalissimo Joseph Stalin ordered work on the Soviet Union’s first atomic bomb to be accelerated. The wartime alliance that defeated fascism received its first, if not fatal blow.

If the intention of dropping the bombs on Japan was to somehow win support among the American population for this new doctrine of mass murder, it was not very successful. America was war-wary, memories of their “gallant allies,” the Soviet Union, were still fresh in the collective conscience, and there were still many pro-Roosevelt New Dealers in government and the military. Therefore Truman’s first Administration had to confine itself to creating the so-called Cold War, while his second would plot nuclear war.

To kick off his “Cold War,” Truman, in March 1946, within seven months of the end of the war, invited Winston Churchill, then out of government, to Fulton, Missouri, Truman’s home state, to deliver his infamous Iron Curtain speech. Churchill called for Russia to take down the “Iron Curtain” it had allegedly created across Europe and join a “World Government” he was proposing, that would guarantee peace through a nuclear arsenal controlled by the “Special Relationship” between the British Empire and the United States.

The evil Bertrand “Dirty Bertie” Russell completed the doctrine in his infamous article that appeared in the same year in the United States Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, where he called on the Soviets to join the World Government or face preemptive atomic war.

“...If Russia acquiesced willingly, all would be well, If not, it would be necessary to bring pressure to



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Principal author of the “Cold War Plan,” NSC-68, former investment banker turned State Department official, Paul Nitze. Here he appears at the National Press Club in 1987.*

bear, even to the extent of risking war... If Russia does not agree to join, there will be war sooner or later...,” warned Russell.

Not only did Stalin refuse, but American public opinion was decidedly turned off by Churchill’s ravings. Nonetheless, the Cold War set in, with Truman making no effort whatsoever to even talk to Stalin. In fact, Truman said he would meet the Soviet leader only if Stalin came to the United States, which, of course, everyone knew Stalin would not do, for security reasons.

By Truman’s second term, the Cold War was at its height, and in August 1949 Russia tested its first atomic bomb and was soon on the road to developing a thermonuclear, hydrogen bomb.

With many of the New Dealers and moderates having left government in disgust, a new

breed of policy-maker marched into the Administration, opening the way to launch a preventive war doctrine. The representatives of the military-industrial complex marched into the new administration. Among the most noteworthy was the evil Paul Nitze, a former investment banker and commodity speculator with the private bank, Dillon Reed.

From his perch on the Policy Planning Staff in the State Department, Nitze was among those calling for an “appropriate response” to the Soviets’ testing of a nuclear bomb. That response would be to declare the United States at war with the Soviet Union, which now required a massive military build-up, which in fact increased the defense budget by more than 400 percent.

This undeclared, declaration of war was embodied in the National Security Council Directive NSC-68: “United States Objectives and Programs for National Security,” completed on April 14, 1950. Nitze was the principal author of this document. It was the “Cold War Plan.” Like an H.G. Wells science fiction novel, one section read: Motivated by a “fanatical faith... the fun-

damental Design of the Kremlin” is to destroy the United States “as the center of power in the non-Soviet world... whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed by one means or another if the Kremlin is to achieve its fundamental design.”

NSC-68 asserted that a massive military build-up had to be completed by 1954, because that was the date, it was claimed, of “maximum danger,” since by that time the Soviet Union would have enough atomic bombs to launch a first strike against the United States.

The execution of such a build-up, however, requires that the United State have an affirmative program beyond the solely defensive one of countering the threat posed by the Soviet Union... it must envisage the political and economic measures with which, and the military shield behind which, the free world can work to frustrate the Kremlin Design by the strategy of the cold war... The whole success of the proposed program hangs ultimately on recognition by this Government, the American people, and all free peoples, that the *cold war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake* (emphasis added).

This new doctrine demanded that the United States must always maintain absolute military superiority over Russia, including having more strategic bombers, more missiles and above all, more nuclear weapons. Such a doctrine was militarily incompetent, since deterrence does not depend on absolute military superiority: such doctrines actually are the cause of wars. What followed was an orgy of immensely wasteful spending that created mountains of actually obsolete military systems such as the B-36 bomber, which was already obsolete on the drawing board, but which lined the pockets of those whom Eisenhower warned against.

When one declares war, one should not be surprised if a war begins. The adoption of this new doctrine in April of 1950, had an almost immediate effect. On June 25, 1950 North Korean troops began storming across the 38th parallel, thus beginning the Korean war.

Despite the fact that General Douglas MacArthur had virtually won the war with his attack on Inchon, and subsequent routing of the North Korean army back across the 38th parallel, Truman did nothing to seek a diplomatic end to the war. When China intervened, MacArthur was ordered not to bomb the bridges over the

Yalu river, on the claim that the action would create a bigger war, and it was “the wrong war in the wrong place,” begging the question of what was the “right war and right place.”<sup>1</sup>

MacArthur was dismissed, and the war became a killing field like the Vietnam War. The Defense budget went from 10 billion to over 40 billion dollars as the military buildup accelerated the massive production of nuclear bombs and bombers and missiles, and aircraft carriers to deliver them. The build-up would continue to prepare for the year of “maximum danger,” 1954 when the “right war in the right place” might present itself.

### **Eisenhower Decides He Must Save the Nation, Seeks the Presidency**

Eisenhower was never one of Truman’s “team players,” Quite the contrary. He grew to detest the Kansas city haberdasher-turned-president for his pettiness, incompetence, and dangerous foreign policy, where Truman allowed the British to lead him by the nose to help them save their crumbling empire. By 1948, after a term as Chief of Staff of the Army, Eisenhower went into unofficial retirement from the military, and took the position of president of Columbia University in New York City.

[Note: As one of the handful of Five Star Generals named in World War II, Eisenhower would always be on the active list. Nonetheless, when he became president, he resigned his commission.]

Despite popular demand for him to run for the 1948 presidential campaign by millions of Americans, especially war veterans, including the sons of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the young Lyndon H LaRouche, Eisenhower remained at Columbia.

If he had become President in 1948, the world would have been a very, very different place than we have today, because Eisenhower had a very clear conception of America’s place in the post-war world. In many respects it was very similar to that of FDR. While at Columbia, he worked through these conceptions. Like FDR, he saw that the United States, as the world’s leading Republic and most powerful economy, must play its historic leading role. The task was clear: maintain world peace through the institution of the United Nations, as conceived by FDR, restore the trust between the United States and Russia that promised a new world order of

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1. See “[MacArthur’s Victory at Inchon: Defeating the British Empire](#),” by Don Phau and Dean Andromidas, *EIR*, April 12, 2013.

peace and cooperation at the end of the war, and begin the process of dismantling the European Empires of France, the Netherlands, and above all, the British.

His view of the Soviet Union at the end of World War II, and in 1948, was expressed in his Wartime memoir, *Crusade in Europe*, published in 1948. There he described his visit to Moscow in August 1945, when he talked with Stalin, while attending a sports parade.

He [Stalin] evinced great interest in the industrial, scientific, educational and social achievements of America. He repeated several times that it was necessary for Russia to remain friends with the United States. Speaking through an interpreter, he said in effect: 'There are many ways in which we need American help. It is our great task to raise the standards of living of the Russian people, which have been seriously damaged by the war. We must learn all about your scientific achievements in agriculture. Likewise, we must get your technicians to help us in our engineering and construction problems, and we want to know more about mass production methods in factories. We know that we are behind in these things and we know that you can help us.' This general trend of thought he pursued in many directions, whereas I had supposed that he would content himself merely with some expression of desire to cooperate.

Putting the desire to cooperate in a broader context, Eisenhower wrote:

In the past relations of America and Russia there was no cause to regard the future with pessimism. Historically, the two peoples had maintained an unbroken friendship that dated back to the birth of the United States as an independent republic. Except for a short period, their diplomatic relations had been continuous. Both were free from the stigma of colonial empire-building by force. The transfer between them of the rich Alaskan territory was an unmatched international episode, devoid of threat at the time and of any rumination after the exchange. Twice they had been allies in war. Since 1941 they had been



Evgeni Khaldei

*General Eisenhower and Marshall Zhukov at ceremonies in Moscow, August 1945. During the visit, Eisenhower expressed optimism about restoring the "unbroken friendship which dated back to the birth of the United States as an independent republic."*

dependent each on the other for ultimate victory over the European Axis.

After reviewing the obvious differences and potential for conflict between the two powers, Eisenhower continued: "Should the gulf, however, be bridged practically by effective methods of cooperation, the peace and unity of the world would be assured. No other division among nations could be considered a menace to world unity and peace, provided mutual confidence and trust could be developed between America and the Soviets."

At the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950, Truman requested that Eisenhower return to active duty to establish the military command of NATO, the Supreme Allied Headquarters in France. Establishing the headquarters and building an allied command was a task Eisenhower put his heart into, and used it to help create a new military doctrine he would implement as President.

Eisenhower was in France when he heard that Truman had fired General Douglas MacArthur from command in Korea, for the crime of wanting to terminate the war as soon as possible. It was from Europe that he saw Korea become a quagmire because the Truman Administration refused to end it, and it was in 1952 when he read that Truman intended to increase the defense budget from \$40-65 billion. That same year,



while still in Europe, Eisenhower decided to run for the Republican Presidential nomination.

Eisenhower knew what his mission as president was: reverse the march to Armageddon, launched by Truman, beginning with ending the Korean war; reversing the preventive war doctrine initiated by NSC-68, bringing the United States strategic doctrine to that of true deterrence which would enable the reduction and stabilization of the defense budget, and endeavoring to reestablish the wartime trust between the U.S and Russia.

Popular history attacks Eisenhower for his so-called doctrine of “massive retaliation” with nuclear weapons. While nuclear weapons in fact played a central role in the doctrine, the emphasis was on “retaliation,” not preemption. Nor did it include what became, after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the dangerous doctrine of so-called “flexible response,” which was to carry out proxy wars, even in the middle of Europe and maintain them below the nuclear threshold, a very dangerous and impossible-to-control doctrine.

A deterrent doctrine did not require absolute military superiority, especially with nuclear weapons. You can only destroy the world once. Eisenhower had a conception of mobile military forces that would allow rapid deployment for concentration at chosen points in case of emergency. It was a doctrine that would enable the reduction of military forces. This became the so-called “New Look” doctrine. Since Eisenhower opposed any type of colonial or proxy wars, a super-large standing military force was not required. Indeed, under Eisenhower, the United States did not engage in any colonial war.

## End the Korean War by Ending the Cold War

The major plank of Eisenhower’s presidential campaign was to end the bloodbath in Korea, and recalibrate United States defense doctrine to one of true deterrence. He promised the electorate that he would visit Korea on an inspection trip as soon as he was elected, even before his inauguration, a promise he kept.

Eisenhower had a secret, or not-so-secret, weapon not only to end Korean War, but to reestablish trust between the United States and the Soviet Union. That secret weapon was his old commander and war time collaborator, General Douglas MacArthur, for whom Eisenhower served as chief deputy for almost ten years



*President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower (left) during his visit to Korea in December 1952.*

in the 1930s, when MacArthur was Chief of Staff of the Army, and later chief military advisor to the Philippines. It is a story fully elaborated in the *EIR* article, “Eisenhower’s Fight Against the British Empire’s Cold War” by this author.<sup>2</sup> We can only summarize it here.

As promised, Eisenhower conducted an inspection of the Korean war front within days of his election victory. Upon his return he held a meeting with MacArthur on December 17, 1952 where he was presented with a memorandum calling for ending the Korean War through coming to a series of understandings with Stalin that would resolve all major points of conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States and its European Allies. This would require a series of summit meetings between Eisenhower and Stalin, without any third country involvement; especially without the involvement of the British and their prime minister, Winston Churchill.

The United States would propose not only the

2. Dean Andromidas, “[Eisenhower’s Fight Against the British Empire’s ‘Cold War.’](#)” *EIR*, September 24, 2010.

ending of the Korean War, but putting an end to the division of Germany. Both countries would be allowed to unite under forms of popularly determined governments, and, along with Austria and Japan, all four countries would become neutral under guarantee of the United States and the USSR.

With Stalin and Eisenhower once again sitting at the same table, as during the summits of World War II, the Cold War would be virtually over.

As documented in the above-mentioned article, Eisenhower fully embraced this plan, and diplomatic moves were made for an Eisenhower-Stalin Summit. Of course, Churchill was horrified as being the third man out, watching the potential for an American-Russian Alliance, which for 200 years the British Empire had endeavored to prevent. Nonetheless, the idea of these two iconic wartime leaders holding a summit electrified popular opinion in the United States.

Following the inauguration, Eisenhower named State department Russian expert, Chip Bohlen, who had served as FDR's interpreter during all of the latter's meetings with Stalin, as the new ambassador to Moscow. Alas, on March 5, 1953, in the midst of preliminaries for the summit, Stalin died, and this unique opportunity to end the East-West divide died in still-birth. A new, untested, and unsure leadership came forward in Moscow, that precluded any new and bold initiatives on both sides.

In April, Eisenhower presented his "Chance of Peace" speech as an effort to sound out the new leaders. In that speech he specifically called for completing the negotiations to end the Korean war, and the negotiations for an Austrian peace treaty that would see the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the neutralization of the country guaranteed by all the major powers. Not unexpectedly, there was no positive response from the Soviet side.

Nonetheless the Korean Armistice was signed on July 27, 1953. The Austrian peace treaty and subsequent removal of all foreign troops and its neutralization did not occur until May 15, 1955.



The New York Times' Christmas Day 1952 interview with Josef Stalin, in which Stalin welcomes the idea of a meeting with Eisenhower. The British were apoplectic.

## Solarium Project: Deconstructing the Preventive War Doctrine

Denied the political and positive strategic momentum that a Stalin-Eisenhower summit would generate, Eisenhower was faced with dismantling the "Cold War plan" and provocative doctrine that permeated the American security-military institutions and establishment in Washington, even in his own Administration. Very specifically, he had to reverse the provocative NSC-68 policy. This was done in typical Eisenhower fashion. He would force his entire security staff through an exercise that would make perfectly clear the failures and dangers of NSC-68, in contrast to what his policy would be.

During a meeting with some of his top advisors in the White House solarium, he came up with the idea of the Solarium Project. The project would serve to thrash out the three major strategic doctrines that were being bandied about at that time, especially in NSC-68; in reality, refute them; and in doing this in the presence of Eisenhower's entire security establishment, expound his own, contrary policy.

Many years later, General Andrew J. Goodpaster, who served as one of Eisenhower's closest and trusted White House advisors, commented on the President's purpose for the project.

It was quite characteristic of his way of doing business. He wanted to get... all the responsible

people in the room, [have them] take up the issues and hear their views. He had what amounted to a tacit rule that there could be no nonconcurrence through silence. If somebody didn't agree, he was obliged to speak his mind and get it all out on the table or [directly to him] in the Oval office. And then in light of all that, the president would come to a line of action. He wanted everybody to participate in it. And then he wanted everybody to be guided by it.<sup>3</sup>

The project established three groups of experts who would study the three doctrines embodied in NSC-68. This included the so-called containment policy first enunciated by State Department Russia expert George Kennan, who also participated. The latter, despite being a died-in-the-wool anti-Soviet policy maker, who thought it would be impossible to come to serious agreements with the Soviet regime, had in fact left the State Department in 1950 because under NSC-68 and Nitze, containment had been militarized and could lead to war.

The second doctrine was the "line in the sand" policy, where literally a line would be drawn on the map such that, if the Soviets crossed it, war would become inevitable.

The third was the so-called "roll back," using methods short of war to roll back Soviet influence until it presumably collapsed.

Eisenhower had designed this exercise to have, for the first time, teams of very high level experts work intensely for six weeks to elaborate fully these doctrines. Eisenhower included certain of his own more trusted experts, such as General Goodpaster, who participated in the roll-back team, to assure thoroughness that would demonstrate the dangers and positive concepts, if any, implied in all three, especially the "line in the sand" and "roll back" and "date of maximum danger" as stated in NSC-68.

At the end of their deliberations, the teams presented their findings before a forum held in the White House basement attended by the administration's entire security establishment, including the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, the National Security Council Staff, etc., in all some 70 people.

At the end of these presentations, Eisenhower presented his own summary and conclusions. He prefaced those remarks with the statement, "The only thing worse than losing a nuclear war, is winning a nuclear war." He then proceeded to expound upon what he saw as valid and as dangers in each of the doctrines. While a transcript of his comments is not available, Goodpaster commented, Eisenhower "wanted to reduce the militarization of the United States-Soviet Cold War confrontation."<sup>4</sup>

### **Revoking the Preventive War Doctrine**

The end result of the project, in June 1953, was the drafting of NSC 162/2 which virtually reversed the most dangerous parts of NSC-68. Many observers see it as a banning of preventive war. By no means is the document a peace manifesto, and it pulled no punches on what it saw as clear Soviet threats. Nonetheless, it reads much differently than the NSC-68. Gone is the idea of the "date of maximum danger." In fact, it states, "The USSR does not seem likely deliberately to launch a general war against the United States during the period covered by current estimates. . . ." In fact, it states that it is "improbable." The document warns against western actions that the Soviets "may view as a serious threat to their security" because the Soviets would not be "deterred by fear of general war from taking the measures necessary to counter" these actions.

The document further states that while the United States must improve its strength in the face of a Soviet threat, it, "must also keep open the possibility of negotiating with the USSR and Communist China acceptable and enforceable agreements. . . ." While the policy of the United States is to prevent Soviet aggression, [it is also] to establish an effective control of armaments under proper safeguards, but is not to dictate the internal political and economic organization of the USSR."

Much of the document refers to building and strengthening the western alliance, recognizing that, since the countries of Europe hope for the creation of a durable peace, therefore the U.S. must dispel their fears that the U.S. policy holds risks "ranging from preventive war and liberation, to withdrawal into isolation." Therefore the US must "seek to convince them of its

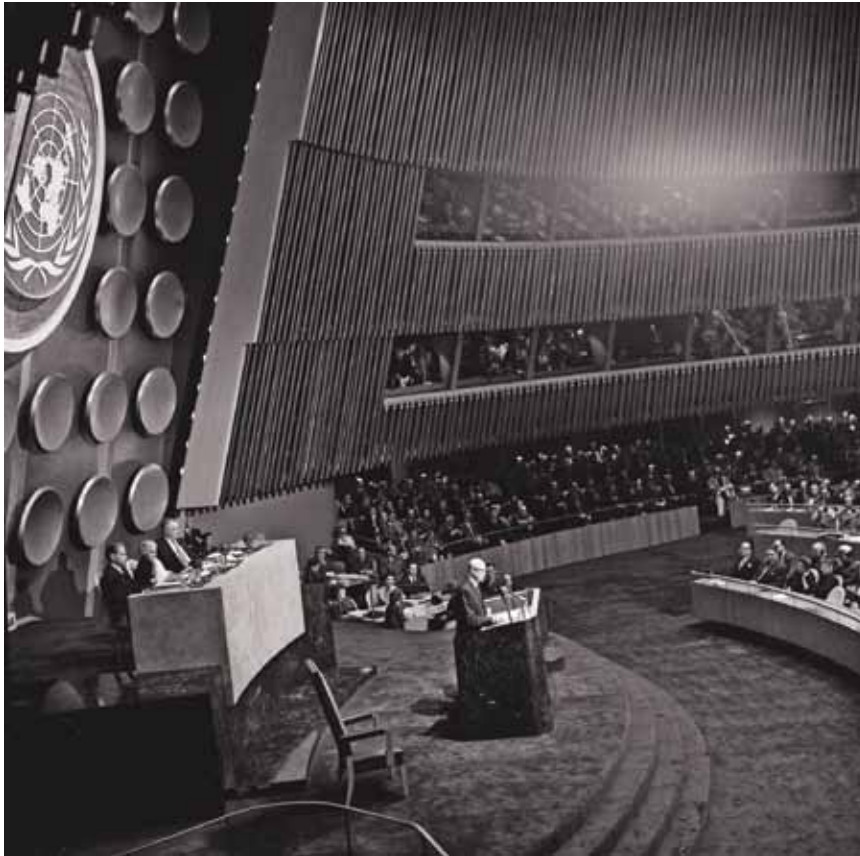
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3. *George F. Kennan and the Origins of Eisenhower's New Look: An Oral History of Project Solarium*, William B. Pickett, editor, Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, Monograph Series Number 1, Princeton University, 2004.

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4. *Ibid.*





UN photo/MB

*President Eisenhower delivers his Atoms for Peace proposal to the United Nations on December 8, 1953.*

desire to reach such settlements” with the Soviet Union.

Rather than positing a call for a huge military build-up, it calls on the U.S. to maintain the required military strength required to counter the Soviet threat, but “at the least feasible cost.”

### **Atoms for Peace**

While NSC 162/2 put an end to the preventive war doctrine of the Truman administration, it was not a positive policy that would put the world on the road towards putting an end to the causes that underlay the danger of nuclear Armageddon.

Working with his closest advisors, Eisenhower put forward various initiatives, including a grand settlement of the division of Europe calling for the reunification of Germany and the withdrawal U.S. and Russian troops from Western and Eastern Europe. While this was deemed impractical because of not only the unsettled leadership transition in the Soviet Union but also opposition within Western Europe itself, Eisenhower

developed his own plan which would be enunciated in an address before the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 8, 1953.

This was the Atoms for Peace plan, which presaged Lyndon LaRouche’s 1970’s conception of the Strategic Defense Initiative,—that is, called for establishing a mission, where both the United States and Soviet Union could cooperate on a program that could deploy their immense scientific capacities away from developing weapons for mutual mass destruction, toward benefitting all of humanity.

As Eisenhower said:

For me to say that the defense capabilities of the United States are such that they could inflict terrible losses upon an aggressor—for me to say that the retaliation capabilities of the United States are so great that such an aggressor’s land would be laid waste—all this, while fact, is not the true expression of the purpose and the hope of the United States.

To pause there would be to confirm the hopeless finality of a belief that two atomic colossi are doomed malevolently to eye each other indefinitely across a trembling world. To stop there would be to accept helplessly the probability of civilization destroyed—the annihilation of the irreplaceable heritage of mankind handed down to us generation from generation—and the condemnation of mankind to begin all over again the age-old struggle upward from savagery toward decency, and right, and justice.

Surely no sane member of the human race could discover victory in such desolation. Could anyone wish his name to be coupled by history with such human degradation and destruction. . . .

So my country’s purpose is to help us move out of the dark chamber of horrors into the light, to find a way by which the minds of men, the hopes of men, the souls of men everywhere, can

move forward toward peace and happiness and wellbeing.

The proposal was simple and straightforward. To establish an Atomic Energy Agency where those “principally involved” nations, which must include the Soviet Union, would contribute to the establishment of a bank of fissionable material that would be made available to all the nations of the United Nations “to serve the peaceful pursuits of mankind. Experts would be mobilized to apply atomic energy to the needs of agriculture, medicine, and other peaceful activities. A special purpose would be to provide abundant electrical energy in the power-starved areas of the world. Thus the contributing powers would be dedicating some of their strength to serve the needs rather than the fears of mankind.”

This would “allow all peoples of all nations to see that, in this enlightened age, the great powers of the earth, both of the East and of the West, are interested in human aspirations first, rather than in building up the armaments of war...”

Furthermore, it would “open up a new channel for peaceful discussion,” both private and public, to make progress in advances toward peace “to find the way by which the miraculous inventiveness of man shall not be dedicated to his death, but consecrated to his life.”

Not only did the Soviet Union accept the challenge, but with the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Commission, the science of nuclear power was no longer confined to weapons laboratories operating under top secrecy, but became available for the whole world, thus opening the potential for establishing an entirely new scientific and technological platform for the world economy.

These were the accomplishments of Eisenhower in the first year of his Administration. As anyone can see,



creative commons/Fleet Air Army

*This photograph from the British Imperial War Museum collection, shows smoke rising from the oil tanks beside the Suez Canal, which had been hit during the initial Anglo-French assault on Port Said, November 5, 1956.*

it was a dramatic shift from the Truman Administration’s “chamber of horrors,” to the potential for change and cooperation.

## The Empire Strikes Back

Of course, the fight did not end there. In fact, it only was the beginning. The British Empire and the military-industrial complex fought back against Eisenhower’s determination to bring American policy back to the traditions of seeking peace and economic progress. This article will not elucidate that fight but will make a brief comment on it.

From the very moment he was elected President, Eisenhower came into conflict with the British Empire and its major advocate, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who desperately worked to save the crumbling British Empire. The conflict expressed itself over Churchill’s determination that the British hegemony over the Middle East should be fully protected, especially maintaining control of the Suez Canal and the huge military base, the largest in the world, that encompassed the entire Canal Zone and where no less than 80,000 British troops were stationed in 1953.

Churchill's "Eighteenth Century" world outlook was a total antithesis of Eisenhower's. Like Roosevelt, Eisenhower believed colonial empires should be dismantled, and new nations created and supported in their struggle for economic development. These two world views came into conflict over Egypt, generating serious tension between the United States and Britain from the very beginning of the Eisenhower Administrations. That conflict is well documented.

Eisenhower saw no need for Great Britain, which was always teetering on the edge of bankruptcy since the end of World War II, to maintain the extravagance of having 80,000 troops in Egypt, an independent nation. It was clear to Eisenhower that those troops were there not to protect the canal zone from Soviet aggression, since everyone knew Russia had neither the capability nor the intention of attacking the Canal. They were there to reinforce the Empire's domination of the entire region.

Eisenhower actually admired President Gamal Abdel Nasser as a dynamic nationalist leader seeking to assert his country's independence and leadership role in the Middle East and Africa. Eisenhower held a similar admiration for India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

Under United States persuasion and pressure, Britain withdrew its troops in 1954. In the same year Eisenhower wrote Churchill calling on him to take an initiative that would immortalize him as a world historic figure by announcing the dismantling of the British Empire! In the July 22 letter Eisenhower said, "Colonialism is on its way out as a relationship among peoples..." The letter suggested that Churchill give a speech calling for the establishment of a program, funded by the leading western powers, to express sympathy, and support educational and economic programs, and political development among the nations, and colonies of Africa, Asia, South America, etc. He goes on:

Possibly it might be said that our nations plan to undertake every kind of applicable program to insure that within a space of twenty-five years, all peoples will have achieved the necessary political, cultural and economic standards to permit the attainment of their goals.

If you could say that twenty-five years from now, every last one of the colonies (excepting military bases) should have been offered a right

to self-government and determination, you would electrify the world....

Churchill was not amused. In response, he admitted he was a "laggard" when it came to offering independence to Britain's colonies, but added, "I am a bit skeptical about universal suffrage for the Hottentots..." He reasserted his belief in "the unity of the English speaking peoples" and the "special relationship" between the United States and the British Empire.

This basic conflict exploded on the world stage in October 1956, when Churchill's successor, Anthony Eden, in cahoots with the French and Israelis, and without informing Eisenhower, invaded Egypt to seize the Suez Canal, which had been nationalized, within Egypt's legal rights under the Canal treaty and international law. Occurring on October 29, only a few days before the presidential elections, the action was also calculated to undermine Eisenhower's bid for re-election.

Eisenhower was enraged by the British double cross, but was not surprised. He acted with dispatch, taking the issue to the United Nations, imposing unprecedented pressure on Britain, including by supporting a run on the pound and blocking a desperately needed International Monetary Fund loan to Britain. He forced the withdrawal of British, French, and Israeli forces from Egypt. Under the cover of a nervous breakdown, Eden resigned as prime minister to appease the enraged Eisenhower.

Parallel to the Suez Crisis was the Hungarian revolution of 1956, which culminated with the Soviet invasion of that country on November 2. Many have observed that the Soviets' decision to invade was prompted by the attack on Egypt. The two crises could have rapidly escalated into a superpower confrontation, and even nuclear war. The revolt itself came at a time when discussions over the situation in Eastern Europe between the Soviets and the Eisenhower administration were underway.

Seeing the dangers, Eisenhower sought to de-escalate the situation, and confined his action to appropriate UN resolutions and extension of humanitarian aid and denunciation of the invasion. Reflecting on his decision not to intervene militarily, Eisenhower wrote in his memoirs: "Sending United States troops alone into Hungary through hostile or neutral territory would have involved us in general war.... [I]t was obvious that no mandate for military action could or would be forth-



National Archives

*"I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its stupidity," said General Dwight Eisenhower in 1946. Here, he talks with the troops just prior to the D-Day invasion, June 6, 1944.*

coming. I realized that there was no use going further into this possibility."

As for the elections, Eisenhower declared the break with the "special relationship" over Suez was the United States' "second Declaration of Independence" in foreign policy. Eisenhower won an even more impressive electoral victory than in 1952. Nonetheless, the Republicans lost their majority in both houses of Congress.

One should not forget Eisenhower's policy toward France. He absolutely refused any U.S. military intervention whatsoever, to bailout the French after their spectacular defeat in Dien Bien Phu in Indochina.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Military-industrial Complex Strikes back**

Eisenhower's crushing of the British imperialist intervention, did not stop the military-industrial complex from fighting back. The most dramatic example of their attack on Eisenhower was the so-called Gaither report, which was nothing less than a reincarnation of NSC-68. It was leaked to the *New York Times* in the wake of the

5. In fact, warhawks in Eisenhower's own Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the backing of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, went so far as to advocate U.S. pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons in defense of the French effort to hold on to Indo-China. Eisenhower adamantly refused, saying: "You boys must be crazy. We can't use those awful weapons against Asians for the second time in ten years. My God."

Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957.

On October 4, 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik, putting the first satellite into orbit. Although the feat surprised the world, it was not at all out of the blue. The Soviet satellite program was well known, and in fact, on Oct. 2, two day before the launching, the *New York Times* had a front-page article on the Russian satellite program entitled "Light May Flash in Soviets' Moon."

The military-industrial complex used Sputnik to create a hysteria that would later morph into the slogan of a "missile gap" between the United States and Russia. It was used once again to push for massive military spending.

The United States already had a satellite launch program, but it was fully separate operation from the top-secret ballistic missile programs, since its activities were not secret and were shared with the public and other na-

tions. Advances that were made in the military program that would have been useful for the satellite program, were never shared. Eisenhower was quick to take action to increase the satellite program which soon expanded into the manned space program.

On the day of the news of Sputnik, Senators Stuart Symington and Henry Jackson, two of the biggest promoters of the military-industrial complex, charged that the administration was not spending enough, causing the United States to "fall behind" the Soviets.

Ironically, it was the Truman Administration which was to be blamed. While spending hundreds of millions on obsolete bombers like the pre-World-War-II-designed piston-engine, propeller-driven B-36 bomber, Truman had starved the missile program. In fact, rocket scientist Dr. Wernher Von Braun, who would later spearhead the Saturn Rocket program, said that the problem was that the United States had "no ballistic missile program worth mentioning between 1945 and 1951...our present dilemma is not due to the fact that we are not working hard enough now, but that we did not work hard enough during the first six or to ten years after the war."

The Gaither Report was authored by a group of private citizens under the title of "The Security Resources Panel of the Office of Defense Mobilization Science Advisory Committee." The committee had been origi-

nally authorized to study measures for the active and passive defense of the U.S. population in case of a nuclear attack. It morphed into a hysterical demand for massive expansion of military capability to face the Soviet threat.

The report, which was leaked to the *New York Times* two days before it was delivered to the President, in November 1957, was nothing less than an echo of the dangerous ideas of NSC-68.

This was not surprising because one of its authors was none other than Paul Nitze, the author of NSC-68. As for its chairman, Horace Rowan Gaither, he was cut from the same cloth.

A lawyer and investment banker, Gaither had variously been the administrator of the Ford Foundation, and founder of the Rand Corporation. He also was a founding member of the venture capital firm, Draper, Gaither & Anderson. Draper was William Henry Draper who also had a long career with Dillon Reed, the same investment bank where Nitze had worked. In and out of government and the military, Draper became a rabid advocate of genocidal zero population growth as co-founder of the Population Crisis Committee.

Another member of the committee was the young

Andrew W. Marshall, who was at the time with the Rand Corporation, but soon moved to the Pentagon to become mentor to the advocates of the insane “Revolution in Military Affairs.”

Eisenhower was enraged both at the report’s findings, as well as the fact it had been leaked to the press. He refused to officially release it. While calling for more bombers, more missiles, and more nuclear bombs, it also called for investing \$22 billion for bomb shelters, an enormous sum of money at the time. While it had little influence on his policy choices, it was symptomatic of the constant struggle that Eisenhower had to wage against the warhawks.

Eisenhower’s final speech on the military-industrial complex serves as his own testimony that he felt he was not successful in wresting control of the nation’s destiny from this danger, and that he would have to turn the baton over to President Kennedy. It is a bitter irony that among the first policy statements laid upon Kennedy’s desk was the rejected Gaither report, and that one of his new National Security Staff members would be none other than Paul Nitze.

As history has shown, Kennedy learned that he too had an enemy within.

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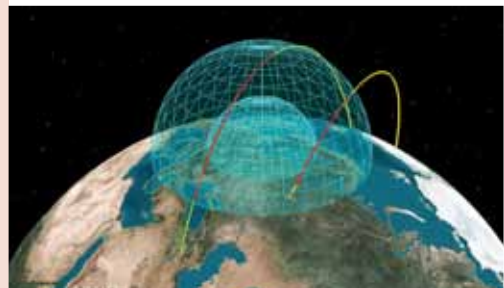
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