Memo on Foreign Policy

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001
MEMO:

In the field of foreign affairs it seems to me that there are four general but crucial factors at work in the world today. They are as follows:

1. The continuance of a strong and hostile Soviet Union.
2. A growing arsenal of weapons of unprecedented destructive power.
3. A drive for political and economic progress in the less developed areas of the world.
4. The relative weakness of the former power centers of Western Europe and Japan.

The first of these - the continuance of a strong and hostile Soviet Union - is apparent in itself. We know that the Soviet system has survived the abuses of its rulers, chaos of invasion, the death of Stalin, the problem of succession, and the sending of millions of its peoples to slave labor camps in Siberia. At the same time its economic and military power has grown tremendously. It is estimated that over the past 5 years its economy has expanded at the rate of about 7 percent per year, while its industrial output has shown a growth at the rate of over 10 percent per year. This factor cannot be ignored, nor should it be underestimated.

The second factor - a growing arsenal of weapons of unprecedented destructive power - is well known to this country now in the development of atomic and hydrogen weapons by the Soviet Union and in its
most recent announcement that it had developed the ICBM - or Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. The destructive power of these weapons is a million times greater than anything available in the last war. This fact alone has altered the basic concepts of war and is forcing the powers to work for peace as the only alternative to annihilation - in other words, "peace by mutual terror" which Winston Churchill referred to some years ago is now in effect. I will have more to say about this later.

The third factor - a drive for political and economic progress in the less developed areas of the world - becomes apparent if we take a look at the map. The post-war changes in Asia and Africa which have seen 20 new nations created and 725 million people achieve independence are a powerful force in today's and tomorrow's world. These peoples are determined to improve their economic lot despite tremendous obstacles such as poverty, illiteracy, lack of know-how, and shortage of capital. Many of these people carry over a feeling of dislike and distrust against the West. Today there is a struggle going on between the Soviet Union and the United States for the minds and hearts of these people. It will be a struggle that may well last for decades, if not longer.

The fourth factor - the relative weakness of the former power centers of Western Europe and Japan - is also apparent for all to see. It is true that economically both areas are better off than before the war, but in relation to the United States and the USSR, they have declined considerably as power centers and could now be considered as second rate.
In relation to all these factors, the United States must shape a policy which will prevent both deliberate and unintended war. It must try, despite the failure at London, to bring armaments, especially nuclear armaments, under some kind of international control. It must assist in the economic development of the under-developed areas of the world, and finally it must help Western Europe and Japan to play as full a role as they can in the world in keeping with their potentialities and changed status.

This will not be an easy task because we find that the world will not stand still, the problems will not disappear, and the answers will not come overnight.

We know, of course, that the Soviet Union announced in the latter part of August that it had developed an ICBM. There is no reason to dispute this claim, nor is there any justification in becoming alarmed about it. A fact is a fact, and we must recognize this on the basis of the Soviet announcement the greatest impact falls on this country and not on Western Europe. We know that as recently as the Suez crisis of last year, Britain and France were both threatened by the Soviet Union with rocket disaster unless they pulled their troops out of Egypt. Russia needs no intercontinental rocket to hit London or any other part of the British Isles. It appears to me that for the first time in our history, the United States is a front line
country and our cities are as vulnerable to devastation as London was at the time of Hitler's blitz. The Soviet ICBM has now equalized the common threat against Western Europe and the United States, and the need now is to interweave our common defense more closely together.

During World Wars I and II the United States could not be reached by enemy weapons. During that time the United States was the industrial arsenal and also the bread basket of the alliance. Neither its factories nor its farms nor its system of transportation could be damaged seriously by enemy action. The invulnerability of the United States was lost when the Soviet Union put jet bombers into production and achieved nuclear weapons which could be carried by such bombers. For several years now the Soviets have possessed some degree of military capacity to invade North America. With our long range jet bombers, our stockpiles of nuclear weapons and our early warning radar lines, we are in a position where we could offer a reasonable assurance of defense - but not an absolutely sure one. With the ICBM the military balance of power is somewhat altered.

It is true that we can reach Soviet territory with more weapons and more types of weapons than the Soviets can project against the North American continent. It is true that we still have a ring of bases surrounding the Soviet Union. It is true that we still have our lead in jet bombers and stockpiles of nuclear weapons. It is true also - and this is very important
to us - that the industrial arsenal of the United States is no longer a privileged sanctuary but is vulnerable to weapons against which up to this time there is no present defense.
All this indicates that the world is spending a great deal of its income in the production of arms of both defensive and offensive capabilities. It is estimated that for men and weapons the world as a whole today is spending something on the order of $100 million annually. The men are the 18 million to 20 million in the armed forces of the world's nations. The arms include the tremendously expensive instruments of the new warfare - nuclear weapons and the missiles to carry them.

The bulk of the world's military power is divided between the nations of the communist bloc and those of the free world. There are about 8,700,000 men serving in the armed forces of the communist powers supported by approximately 40,000 to 50,000 planes and thousands of naval vessels, most of them small. The free world grouping mobilizes about 7,700,000 men in its armed forces with more than 53,000 planes and preponderant naval strength except in one category - submarines.

There are in the fullest sense of the term only two military "super states" of global military powers capable of every type of military activity - the United States and the USSR. There are only three nuclear powers: the United States, the USSR, and the United Kingdom. The United States has by far the largest and most varied nuclear armory and has a superior and more flexible and varied delivery system. The numbers of nuclear bombs and devices detonated by each nation represent an approximate yardstick of the progress of the nuclear arms race:

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The United States, Russia and Great Britain are the only powers that have major missile and long range bomber capabilities, and Britain's power is far inferior to the two leaders. The United States has at the present time something on the order of 2,700,000 men under arms which will be reduced, according to Defense Department announcements, to something on the order of 2,450,000 men by 1960. We are spending roughly 38 billion dollars on our armed services, which is an estimated 9.9 percent of the nation's gross national product. The Soviet Union has armed forces in excess of 4 million. Its budgetary figures are unreliable, but it would appear on the basis of the best estimates that she is spending somewhere between 25 and 40 billion dollars annually for arms, which comes to about 14 percent of the gross national product in 1955. The United Kingdom has 690,000 men under arms which will be reduced to 435,000 between by the end of 1962. Its military budget is roughly 4 billion dollars for 1957 and 1958, and it amounts to about 10 percent of its gross national product.

The total armed forces of Communist China number approximately 3 million men on the basis of what information we can get, and this is very incomplete. The budget for defense amounted to about $2,350,000,000 or 6 percent of its gross national product.

In France, 1,200,000 men are under arms with scheduled reductions of 200,000 men during this fiscal year. The defense budget for this fiscal year is 3,700,000,000 dollars or about 7.7 percent of the gross national product.
In West Germany the armed forces now number 100,000 men which will be expanded to 165,000 by April, 1958 and to a projected 345,000 three years from now. The military budget is roughly 9 billion Deutsche marks or $2,143,000,000 and comprises 5 percent of the gross national product.

In addition to these powers, other major military forces of tremendous regional importance include the almost 200,000 men from Japan's Self Defense Force; Turkey's 400,000; a small but efficient Israeli army of 50,000; the Egyptian and Syrian forces, armed with Soviet equipment, number together about 120,000; the 700,000 men of South Korea; the 600,000-man force of the Nationalists on Formosa; the 150,000-man army of South Viet Nam; the Indian and Pakistan armies, deadlocked over Kashmir; and the sizeable armies of North Korea and Eastern European communist satellites.

That there are military political and economic dangers in this arms race is obvious for all to see. These dangers are magnified today when the technological revolution has produced weapons of such power and range that, as Secretary of State John Foster Dulles warned in his disarmament in July, "War could threaten life anywhere on this globe."

We know now that the London negotiations on disarmament have been, in spite of Harold Stassen's brave words, a failure. They have at best and at worst been an exercise in detail and elaborate futility. That
does not mean that we should give up on the possibility of disarmament because the hope for peace must always be held out to the people of the world and worked for by the leaders of the nations of the world. It is ironical though that while disarmament negotiations on a multi-lateral basis were being carried on over a period of months in London, this country and its Western European allies were acting on a uni-lateral basis reducing their armed forces and cutting back appropriations for research and development programs. In my opinion we were throwing our quid pro quo's out the window by acting uni-laterally when we might have bargained off some of our reductions and cut backs in return for similar concessions by the Soviet Union. What we did in London was to discard our bargaining power while at the same time we were showing our good faith. In my opinion that is not the way to live with the Soviet Union in this difficult and dangerous era.