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STUDY GROUP REPORTS

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

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First Meeting
November 8, 1954

Digest of Discussion

(This digest has not been edited by the participants)

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
58 EAST 68TH STREET
NEW YORK 21

conditions of terrain. Mr. Dean felt that one must assume that a tactical atomic weapon will be effective in a given situation and then pose the question: can the US forbear using it? Mr. Pace reiterated his previous point that the use of such devices may have greater political disadvantages than military advantages.

Dr. Berkner felt that stalemate, in any definition, is a myth; either the US or the USSR will be willing to use atomic devices to achieve "vital" goals. Mr. Noyes suggested that it is vital, after all, that a nation not commit suicide in order to achieve a goal.

Mr. Halaby's Five Point Program

Mr. Halaby remarked that nearly all the members of the group have either "made" or "used" atomic devices and he called for a more political approach to the problem. He then stated five basic US foreign policy requirements, with the emphasis on political rather than military factors:

- (1) Prevent a nuclear war
- (2) Win a nuclear war if it occurs.
- (3) Stop local aggression at the locality.
- (4) Stop local aggression at its source.
- (5) Preserve the solidarity of the free world.

Mr. Dean agreed with the first of these five points but balked at the second; he felt that the US is not prepared, at this moment, to win a nuclear war.

Mr. Nitze thought that Mr. Halaby's points were well-taken but he would go one step further and make the primary goal the preservation of the United States and the continuance of a "salutary" world environment, thus placing the avoidance of war second. Even if war were to destroy the world as we know it today, still the US must win that war decisively. Furthermore, he would expect most policy planners to agree that, in the final analysis, the preservation of the US is the overriding goal, not the fate of our allies.

The atomic bomb has perhaps acted as a war-deterrent so far, Mr. Lilienthal suggested, but although it has avoided total war it has certainly not prevented Soviet aggression.

Mr. Nitze amplified his previous statement by saying that political success depends upon the military situation. Mr. Pace agreed, adding that to deter war a country must have the capacity to win that war and must make that clear to the potential enemy. Mr. Dean concurred but remarked that this country has not always made its intentions clear to the enemy nor has it always been prepared mentally to face the consequences of its actions. We know what we want to do with regard to war, Mr. Dean went on, but perhaps the people are not yet ready to assess the alternatives publicly.