



Some weeks ago Senator Richard B. Russell, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, appointed a special subcommittee on the Air Force and charged it with this responsibility: It shall be the duty of this subcommittee to examine into the condition and progress of the Department of the Air Force and ascertain if present policies, legislative authority, and appropriations are adequate to maintain a Force capable of carrying out its assigned missions."

Senator Russell appointed me one of the 5 members of this special subcommittee. The other members are: Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri; Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington; Senator Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts; and Senator James H. Duff of Pennsylvania. The subcommittee's chairman is Senator Symington, who served with great distinction several years ago as Secretary of the Air Force.

The importance to the Nation of the task committed to this special subcommittee was emphasized this week in an editorial in the Evening Star, one of the outstanding newspapers of Washington. This editorial points out these things:

"The Senate Armed Services subcommittee headed by Senator Symington has launched an inquiry of great importance to the Nation. It is, in short, whether we are losing out to Soviet Russia in the race for supremacy in military air power. The Symington committee has scheduled an exhaustive examination of qualified opinions and pertinent data bearing on our own effort and on that of Soviet Russia. This study can render a great service."

The subcommittee has assembled a competent staff to aid it in its inquiry and has begun hearings. Thus far, General Walter Bedell Smith, a distinguished soldier and onetime ambassador to Russia, General Omar N. Bradley, another distinguished soldier and onetime chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence and brother of the Secretary

of State, have appeared before us and given us the benefit of their expert knowledge.

The statement made before the committee by General Bradley emphasizes the seriousness of the task committed to us. After pointing out that "airpower has become predominant, both as a deterrent to war, and — in the eventuality of war — as the devastating force to destroy an enemy's potential and fatally undermine this will to wage war," General Bradley stated:

"In the past, oceans constituted a barrier to direct attack against our boundaries, and we were able to expand our giant industrial and armed potential even after our entry into war. Thus, with the assistance of our Allies, we won two conflicts: World War I and World War II. There is no assurance that time will work for us in the future. In fact indications are just the opposite. There are many reasons to believe that if World War III comes, the first attack will be launched against the United States. In the last two World Wars, Germany made the mistake of starting a war in Europe into which we were irresistibly drawn. It is too much to expect that a future enemy would commit the same blunder. Unless we can powerfully and decisively retaliate, we cannot hope to break the enemy's

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might while we develop from a weak position to a strong one. One point should be stressed: to be effective, either as a deterrent, or as a defensive factor, airpower must be "in being."

The statement of General Bradley makes it obvious why I consider the task devolving upon me as a member of this subcommittee the most important public assignment ever given me.

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