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## President's Notes: Challenge!

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## CHALLENGE !

An expanded U.S. military assistance program will be an indispensable factor in the success of the Nixon Doctrine, the strategy for the 1970's.

We are at the beginning of a new chapter in American history, one in which our Government has asserted that we will no longer carry a disproportionate share of the defense burden of the free world. Therefore, we are moving toward an era in which others must do more in the collective defense effort. This is the essence of that crucial pillar of the Nixon Doctrine: partnership.

But if our friends and allies are to assume a greater share of the defense burden, we will, in many cases have to help them obtain the necessary tools and expertise essential for the development of viable defense establishments. For sister navies this means needed ships, aircraft, and weapons systems along with education and training where desired for their officers and men—all to be provided through a reinvigorated, reoriented military assistance program.

The Task Force on International Development known as the Peterson Committee—created in September 1969 of private citizens to examine U.S. economic and military assistance programs—reported to the President last March. In that report the task force cited the primary goal of our military assistance program: to improve the military capabilities of our allies so that they may move toward a greater degree of military self-reliance.

If this goal is to be realized, with fully capable indigenous forces replacing U.S. forces in various world areas, the military structures of many nations long dependent upon the United States will have to be significantly strengthened.



This means too, I believe, that our stronger allies, notably those of Western Europe and Japan, whom we assisted for so many years, will have to help prepare and equip the smaller allied nations in this worldwide program. But if we are to expect our politically healthy, economically viable, and militarily strong allies to increase their own military assistance to the weaker developing nations, we will have to provide the leadership and initiative as well as improve *and* increase our own national efforts in this field.

If the past is any indication of the future, we have a long way to go. The historical example of the last few years is not encouraging. As Secretary of Defense Laird recently reported, the appropriation for the Fiscal Year 1970 Military Assistance Program was the lowest in the history of the program, a scant \$350 million. Prior to 1967 the appropriation averaged some \$2 billion annually!

In the face of severe military assistance cutbacks, we are continuing our own force reductions. As of last fall, there were well over 100 foreign base reduction actions taken. There have been over 65 foreign base closures since January 1969. These decisions have accounted for a cutback of more than 60,000 civilian and military personnel overseas, and it is estimated that by this spring the total number of U.S. military

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forces overseas will be at least 300,000 below the level in force 2 years ago.

Despite these drastic reductions in our own strength, we cannot expect others to assume immediately the massive defense burden which has been ours almost exclusively over these past two and a half decades. But we can expect them, with adequate help and support, to progressively accept an equitable share of the burden, particularly in connection with regional security arrangements. While many nations are clearly willing and able to supply the manpower to provide for their own and regional defense, they lack the means necessary to convert that available resource into well-trained and well-equipped armed forces. It is here that our planned military assistance and foreign military sales programs, to be titled the International Security Assistance Program (ISAP), are crucial if the defense of the free world is not to be seriously degraded with the lowering of the overseas U.S. military profile of the United States.

As the Peterson Committee argues, the "amount of military assistance allocated among countries should be related to a realistic assessment of needs, not to historic assistance levels." We are opening a new chapter, we are at a new crossroads, where old ideas and old policies are no longer applicable. The needs of each of our allies must be given a close, hard look. New programs will have to be initiated programs to develop military forces adequately to replace our own; programs which will provide for meaningful security arrangements on a national as well as a multi-national area basis. If free world security is not to be jeopardized, these programs must begin now.

Three-quarters of our current grant assistance (outside of that to Southeast Asia) is used to finance operations and maintenance of equipment and weapons already provided. "In these circumstances," the task force report observes,

"it does not seem possible that the receiving nation can both become self-reliant and modernize its forces. Unless these problems [of our outdated military assistance program] receive careful attention, the United States faces the prospect of continuing the program indefinitely, without any assurance of improvement in local force capabilities."

But this is *not* what we want. This is *not* what the new strategy envisages. The crucial question therefore is: Are we going to continue an outdated program of assistance which does nothing to substantially augment indigenous capabilities, all because we are penny-wise and pound-foolish? The initial costs of new and revitalized assistance programs may well be great. But the long-term results for free world security will certainly be greater.

Past and current legislative restrictions have kept the United States from providing "sophisticated" military equipment to the developing nations. There have been two essential reasons: first, to avoid unnecessary arms escalation; and second, to save resources which might be better directed to social and economic reform. But the end result has been that many of the nations denied arms by us have acquired them by turning elsewhere. And they have been bitter toward the United States. Continuing to treat our friends and allies as immature, not recognizing their pride and dignity as sovereign nations, is hardly the way to begin this new era of partnership. This Nation must recognize that the vacuum left by our own worldwide reductions can be filled only by realistic regional programs, ones wherein hard weapons systems, training, and equipment are provided in sufficient quantity to those we expect to be truly equal partners in our collective defense.

The guiding philosophy and behavior of the United States and military aid recipients alike must be self-reliance. For the United States and for the

recipients, it is better to supply American equipment than American troops. It is better for the United States because it reduces the requirement for maintaining forces overseas. And it certainly is more economical. For the recipients, it is better because no nation likes to be beholden to another. The development of viable defense forces as envisaged on an area basis will certainly help satisfy the pride and independence of the developing nations in providing for their own basic security.

Secretary Laird has repeatedly cited the challenge, calling for a vigorous and revitalized military assistance and foreign military sales program. It is an

absolutely essential ingredient of our new Foreign Policy for the

1970's. Without such a program, we will be severely restricted in our determination to honor our obligations, to support our allies, and, at the same time, to reduce present U.S. forces in Asia and elsewhere while diminishing the likelihood of having to commit American ground combat units in the future.



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**Cover: Portrait, "Before the War, the North Atlantic Squadron at Hampton Roads," by Carlton T. Chapman (1860-1925)—a famous artist of naval ships and maritime scenes. This work was presented to the Naval Historical Division of the Office, Chief of Naval Operations in July 1958 by Captain Richard G. Colbert, who is now serving as President of the Naval War College.**