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**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE:
JOHN F. KENNEDY AND THE MISSILE GAP**

**A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board**

**in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**by
Christopher A. Preble
January, 2002**

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ABSTRACT

The Political Economy of National Security in the Nuclear Age: John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap

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Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair: Richard H. Immerman

In the late 1950s, many journalists, politicians and military leaders warned of a “missile gap” – a perceived strategic deficiency brought on by the Soviet Union’s gains in the fields of rockets, missiles and nuclear weapons. John F. Kennedy skillfully exploited the range of uncertainties about the United States’ national security policies represented by the missile gap to challenge, and ultimately displace, Dwight D. Eisenhower’s New Look with a new military strategy known as Flexible Response.

This dissertation shows that the missile gap succeeded as a critique of the New Look because of a coalition of economic and national security concerns – referred to throughout this dissertation as the political economy of the missile gap – that became acute in 1958. Eisenhower and Kennedy’s national security strategies reflected their own views of the proper balance between nuclear weapons and conventional forces. These strategies also reflected their economic philosophies. Combined with the broader military and strategic critiques of the missile gap voiced by James Gavin, Maxwell Taylor, Henry Kissinger and others, the economic aspects of the missile gap critique – articulated by leading economists, including Walter Heller, John Kenneth Galbraith, James Tobin, and Leon Keyserling –opened the door for Kennedy’s Flexible Response

strategy that promised to spend more on defense, in general, and more on conventional, non-nuclear forces, in particular.

Kennedy spoke of very real concerns. The perception of the United States' declining prestige was spreading, and perception was reality. The missile gap, however, was a fiction. Kennedy received proof that there was no missile gap in early 1961. Yet, in spite of this new evidence, Kennedy refused to declare the missile gap closed. Instead, he pressed on with his promised defense build-up during the spring and summer of 1961. The missile gap served as partial justification for this build-up. The political economy of the missile gap led Senator John F. Kennedy to advocate policies necessary to rectify the potentially dangerous and destabilizing inferiority represented by the presumed gap. These same forces led President Kennedy to implement changes to the nation's military that were unnecessary once the gap was proved to have been a fiction.

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On a personal note, I believe that a person's worldview is reflected in the work that they do. I am no exception. I am grateful to my parents, Charles and Mary-Jane Preble, who shaped that worldview from the very beginning; and to my younger sister Lynn, who shaped it still further. Each in their own way convinced me that all things are possible, regardless of the many obstacles that life places in your path, provided that one has the

courage, and the persistence, to see things through to their completion. This completed dissertation is tangible proof of that objective truth.

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We are rapidly approaching that dangerous period which . . . others have called the 'gap' or the 'missile-lag period.' - Senator John F. Kennedy on the floor of the United States Senate in 1958.¹

Whether the missile gap – that everyone agrees now exists – will become critical in 1961, 1962, or 1963 . . . on all these questions experts may sincerely differ. . . [T]he point is that we are facing a gap on which we are gambling with our survival. - Senator John F. Kennedy on the floor of the United States Senate in 1960.²

Who ever believed in the 'missile gap'? President John F. Kennedy to the National Security Council.³

1. INTRODUCTION

Who ever believed in the 'missile gap'? – President John F. Kennedy to the National Security Council.¹

The Origins of the Missile Gap

In August 1957 the Soviet Union launched the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Then, on October 4, 1957, the Soviets launched *Sputnik*, the world's first man-made satellite. With its Cold War adversary's technological prowess on public display, the United States seemed to be marching in place – or going backward. This perception of weakness and insecurity was reinforced when a secret report detailing the anticipated shortcomings of the U.S. missile program was leaked to the media in December 1957. Journalists, politicians and military leaders began to speak of a “missile gap” – a perceived strategic deficiency brought on by the Soviet Union's gains in the fields of rockets, missiles and nuclear weapons.² The decline of the American nuclear arsenal relative to that of the Soviet Union threatened the very foundation – the nuclear deterrent – of the United States' national security strategy.

These challenges played out against the backdrop of an entirely new type of weapon. Just as the fission-based atomic bomb had signaled the beginning of a new era in the history of warfare, the development of more reliable fusion-based thermonuclear weapons represented a similarly revolutionary advance in the destructive capacity of the weapons of war, and of war itself. By 1957, long-range bombers were capable of delivering these so-called H-bombs over long distances. The capacity for waging nuclear war on a global scale

became a reality when thermonuclear warheads were subsequently married to the new technology of the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

Public anxiety remained high through the remainder of the 1950s and into the early 1960s. The sense of security that Americans had known for much of the nation's history was shattered as millions contemplated life under the shadow of nuclear Armageddon. During this same time, millions of Americans came to doubt their own nation's capacity for world leadership. These doubts and insecurities, brought into focus by the alleged missile gap, contributed to John F. Kennedy's victory over Vice President Richard Nixon in the presidential election of 1960.³

The Missile Gap and the New Look

The origins of the missile gap must be traced to the earliest days of the Eisenhower administration. When Dwight D. Eisenhower came to power in 1953, the former Army general and his staff immediately turned their attention to two related problems – ending the war in Korea and closing the looming budget gap.⁴ Eisenhower wished to avoid becoming bogged down in another Korea-style conventional war, and he justified significant cuts in conventional forces – the Army and Navy especially – by his adherence to a policy articulated in National Security Council Paper NSC 162/2, and later dubbed the “New Look” by outside observers.⁵

The New Look planned to limit military spending, but it proved difficult to reduce real defense expenditures to pre-World War II levels in the midst of the Cold War. Defense spending as a percentage of GNP fell from a high of 13.8 percent in 1953 to a low of 9.1 percent in 1961, and the percent of government expenditures devoted to defense fell in these same years from 65.6 percent to 48.5 percent. National security expenditures, nevertheless, remained well above pre-Korean War levels.⁶ During the 1950s, conventional forces were significantly reduced, but defense spending remained relatively high because most New Look spending shifted resources from the Army and Navy to the Air Force, a process that had begun under Eisenhower's predecessor Harry S. Truman.

The debate over the wisdom or folly of Eisenhower's fiscal restraint, which contributed to his alleged over-reliance on nuclear weapons, had begun immediately after the New Look strategy was first articulated.⁷ Then three senior Army officers – Matthew B. Ridgway, James M. Gavin, and Maxwell D. Taylor – publicly criticized Eisenhower's New Look. In their semi-autobiographical books, all three men called for a more diversified military force capable of conducting conventional, non-nuclear warfare. Taylor, writing in 1959, dubbed this the strategy of "flexible response."⁸

While these three former Army generals were criticizing massive retaliation for its emphasis on nuclear weapons at the expense of conventional forces, a panel of scientists and military experts – the so-called Gaither Committee – bemoaned the alleged inadequacies of the country's nuclear weapons programs.⁹ Eisenhower, who had

commissioned the Gaither Committee to conduct a review of national security policy, specifically directed that the report be kept secret. By December 1957, the contents had been widely leaked and journalists were speaking openly of the “secret” NSC report.¹⁰

Eisenhower bristled at the public criticism he received from his former Army colleagues. He objected to the Gaither Report’s extreme language, and to the proposed cost of the new national security program called for in the report. A similar belief in the need for a crash program, he frequently pointed out, had created the illusory bomber gap in 1955.¹¹ Eisenhower did not dismiss the Gaither recommendations out of hand,¹² but his efforts during his second term to refine the New Look to meet the new threats posed by Soviet technological gains were not immediately apparent to those who criticized the “delicate balance of terror” upon which U.S. security policy was based.¹³

Meanwhile, those individuals who had strained against the budgetary ceilings imposed by Eisenhower’s New Look for years became increasingly vocal during Eisenhower’s second term. In late 1959 and into 1960, with the missile gap as their battle cry, many other military leaders stepped forward to publicly question the adequacy of the nation’s defenses. Their public criticisms became more persistent during the late stages of Eisenhower’s term, when personnel changes within his administration forced the president to become a more active defender of his own national security program. Eisenhower had learned some important lessons from a notorious case of bureaucratic wrangling that had occurred during Harry Truman’s presidency – an ugly public row known as the “Revolt of

the Admirals” – and he was determined to keep a “revolt of the generals” out of the headlines by resolving internal disputes over national security policy, in private.¹⁴ The president ultimately could not, however, keep a lid on the service chief’s competing priorities.¹⁵ Congressional hearings highlighted these and other significant differences between the military services and the administration, and the general-president became embroiled in a controversy that would buffet his administration for the remainder of the term.

The missile gap, therefore, became a popular foil for Democrats. Eisenhower’s repeated attempts to defuse the crisis were unsuccessful. The president had always asserted that existing nuclear weapons programs were sufficient to deter the Soviets from directly attacking the United States. He also doubted pessimistic intelligence reports, which showed that the Soviets were engaged in a crash program to build liquid-fueled rockets when new technologies – including solid propellants, more accurate guidance systems, and advanced delivery platforms – would soon render such first-generation weapons obsolete.

Eisenhower’s confidence was bolstered by classified data from the U-2 program. However, when new intelligence estimates reflecting this data revised projections of Soviet ICBM strength substantially downward in January 1960, it only added to public confusion and prompted yet another round of missile gap charges and counter-charges. In the end, the range of uncertainties about the United States’ national security policy represented by the missile gap were most skillfully exploited by a rising star within the Democratic Party who

would challenge, and ultimately displace, Eisenhower and the New Look with a new military strategy known as Flexible Response.

John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap

Many politicians struggled to emerge from the long shadow cast by Eisenhower's personality. Senator John F. Kennedy was one of the first to do so successfully.

Eisenhower and more-senior political leaders, including Lyndon Baines Johnson, initially dismissed the young senator from Massachusetts as a political and intellectual lightweight.

But Kennedy first gained national notoriety with his surprise bid for the Democratic Vice Presidential nomination in 1956. He later combined a political and economic critique of the New Look with the missile gap in 1958 to gain still further national attention. His fellow Democrats quickly adopted Kennedy's strategy. At a time when unemployment was on the rise, Democratic leaders believed that the two themes of defense inadequacy and economic stagnation combined to form a winning political strategy.¹⁶ They guessed right. In the mid-term elections conducted in November 1958, the president's party suffered one of the worst political defeats in history.¹⁷

Kennedy's references to a missile gap always addressed the presumed vulnerability of the entire defense establishment, not simply missile and rocket forces. His rhetoric borrowed liberally from that of some of the Eisenhower administration's most vocal critics, including Gavin and Taylor, as well as Henry A. Kissinger, and nationally syndicated

newspaper columnist Joseph Alsop. By January 1960, Kennedy had made a name for himself through his harsh attacks on the president's defense and employment policies.¹⁸

The confusion over the state of the nation's defenses relative to that of the Soviets, represented by the so-called missile gap, was then thrown into the cauldron of presidential politics. John F. Kennedy was there to stir the pot. When he declared his candidacy for the presidency in January 1960, Kennedy specifically jabbed at the Eisenhower administration's national security strategy. He called the administration's most recent military budget to be too low by "a substantial margin," and he alleged that Russia would have an important and significant "missile lead."¹⁹ Less than two months later, Kennedy called for increased funding for a number of missile programs in order to, in his words, "cover the current gap as best we can." He also advocated greater diversification of the nation's defenses in accordance with Taylor's "flexible response" model.²⁰

Kennedy's views on foreign policy and defense were relatively well known, then, by the time that he had secured his party's nomination for the presidency at the Democratic National Convention in July 1960.²¹ There was a missile gap. The gap threatened the nation's survival. Only concerted action by the president, and much more spending on defense, could close the gap. Kennedy promised to do just that if elected in November. Upon accepting his party's nomination, Kennedy challenged his fellow Democrats, and his fellow Americans, to join him as "pioneers on the New Frontier" at a "turning point in

history” and prove that the nation could “compete with the single-minded advance of the Communist system.”²²

The Kennedy campaign recognized that foreign policy issues could work to the senator’s disadvantage as skeptical voters might question Kennedy’s relative youth and inexperience. Kennedy responded to this challenge by regularly tying foreign policy to domestic issues while on the stump. The central rhetorical vehicle for this message was his reference to the country’s declining “prestige.” The country, Kennedy said, could not be strong abroad if it was not strong at home. Unused industrial capacity, regional unemployment, poorly distributed surpluses, and the missile gap were all, in Kennedy’s stump-speeches, signs of a nation in decline.²³

Kennedy intended that his strategy of tying foreign policy and national security to domestic issues would resonate particularly well with one group of voters. When JFK explained to defense workers that they had a crucial role in his plan to close the missile gap, these men and women understood precisely what he meant. More defense spending meant more jobs, more economic growth, and a potentially brighter future for themselves and their families. In several areas, including Eastern Pennsylvania, Greater Detroit, Michigan and upstate New York, Kennedy went one step further by explicitly promising to spend defense dollars in economically distressed regions.

The belief in a missile gap persisted through the presidential election of 1960. Walter Lippmann, one of the most respected journalists in America, concluded that there

were only three themes in Kennedy's presidential campaign. One of these themes was the missile gap, and Kennedy's promise to close it. Kennedy also argued that the American economy was stagnating, and that the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union and the leading industrial states in Western Europe. Finally, Kennedy claimed that the United States was failing to modernize. All three of these themes were related. All three of these themes were significant factors in Kennedy's rise to national prominence. And all three themes figured prominently in Kennedy's ultimate political success – his narrow victory over Vice President Richard Nixon.²⁴

Kennedy spoke of very tangible concerns. The nation's economic woes had worsened during the final months of Eisenhower's presidency. The perception of the United States' declining prestige – made manifest by Soviet technological successes, and apparent American failures – was spreading, and perception was reality. The missile gap, however, was a fiction. Kennedy received conclusive proof that there was no missile gap as early as January 1961. His Secretary of Defense confirmed these findings in early February 1961. Yet, in spite of this new evidence, Kennedy refused to declare the missile gap closed. Instead, the Kennedy administration pressed on with its promised defense build-up during the spring and summer of 1961. The missile gap served as partial justification for this build-up.

Kennedy remained troubled by the issue well into the summer of 1963, long after his own administration had publicly declared the gap closed in October 1961. At one point

he asked national security adviser McGeorge Bundy for a formal study to explain, “What happened to the missile gap?”²⁵ In reply, one report attempted to shift attention away from the gap, *per se*, by arguing that the more important issue was Eisenhower’s fundamental faith in the adequacy of the United States defense posture in contrast to the Kennedy administration’s public commitment to improve U.S. defenses.²⁶ Another report determined that the missile gap was “a serious phenomena calling for significant shifts in our defense posture to decrease U.S. vulnerability,” and concluded, accordingly, that “the phenomenon of the missile gap and its disappearance were understandable and legitimate in the light of the facts as seen at the relevant time.”²⁷ Within months, Kennedy was dead. The interpretation of the missile gap that emerged in these reports, however, was incorporated into the historical record.

John F. Kennedy and the Economics of the Missile Gap

Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy – the first two presidents of the thermonuclear era – shared an aversion to the use of thermonuclear weapons, but neither explicitly disavowed their use. While neither Eisenhower nor Kennedy opted to use the ultimate weapon during his tenure in office, each man predicated his national security strategy on the threat to use such weapons in the form of nuclear deterrence.

At a deeper level, Eisenhower’s and Kennedy’s national security strategies reflected their own views of the proper balance between nuclear weapons and conventional forces.

These strategies also reflected their economic philosophies. Missiles were only one element, therefore, of the missile gap critique. The larger issue had always been economic. The respective size and structure of Eisenhower's and Kennedy's military budgets relative to the domestic economy reflected each man's perception of the appropriate balance between public spending (both military and non-military) and private consumption. It is here that historians have identified major differences between the two men.²⁸

The New Look attempted to constrain, and ultimately shifted, defense spending among competing weapons systems, and between competing companies. First, conventional forces gave way to nuclear deterrent forces. Then missiles displaced manned aircraft. Later, solid-fueled rockets replaced less stable, first-generation, liquid-fueled ICBMs. Throughout this process, some companies lost out. Others succeeded. Communities that were home to companies that had been tapped to build weapon systems deemed unnecessary by the New Look, therefore, felt the economic pinch during the Eisenhower years. But the weight of these economic factors was generally not felt until after the emergence of the missile gap. Combined with the broader strategic critique of the missile gap, these economic factors opened the door for Maxwell Taylor's, and ultimately John F. Kennedy's, Flexible Response national security strategy that promised to spend more on defense, in general, and more on conventional forces, in particular.

Eisenhower's critics accused the president of selling out the nation's security in the name of shortsighted and outdated economic principles.²⁹ Many of these critics attacked

the New Look's alleged inadequacies by *implicitly* rejecting Eisenhower's view that the American economy could not sustain the high level of expenditures necessary to support a highly diversified military establishment. John F. Kennedy's use of the missile gap carried these critiques to the next level because Kennedy *explicitly* argued that the profound threat posed by the missile gap necessitated far greater defense spending.

While Eisenhower was not ignorant of the economic ramifications of his military decisions, the perceived need to rein in defense spending was the dominant consideration within his overarching national strategy of the New Look. More troubled by recession and unemployment than inflation and government deficits, Kennedy campaigned, and governed, from a different perspective. Where Eisenhower had resisted the urge to use defense dollars to compensate for economic dislocation, Kennedy embraced this philosophy on the campaign trail. Explicitly appealing for support from unemployed defense workers who had been adversely affected by the economics of the New Look, Kennedy promised to boost spending on the very weapons systems needed to close the missile gap.

Ironically, given the extent to which national security issues factored within his presidential campaign, Kennedy opted to expand only modestly the size of the nuclear deterrent force that he inherited from his predecessor.³⁰ But the economic state of the nation, and the appropriate means for altering the status quo, had changed in January 1961 with the new administration. Kennedy did push ahead with a conventional arms buildup that was reflected in a considerable realignment of the individual services' budgets during

the early 1960s. He did replace the New Look with Flexible Response. He did this, in part, because he was more willing than his predecessor had been to entertain the notion of using government spending and fiscal policy, in general, and military spending, in particular, in order to boost the domestic economy. And he was able to enact these policy changes, in part, because of the political economy of the missile gap.

John F. Kennedy and the Political Economy of the Missile Gap

Key Questions

This dissertation, therefore, examines the key questions surrounding the political economy of the missile gap. General Maxwell Taylor recorded that President Kennedy once turned to his National Security Council and asked, perhaps rhetorically, “Who ever believed in the missile gap?” Fortunately for scholars, John F. Kennedy and his advisers left behind a documentary record that helps to answer the question. Millions of Americans believed in the missile gap, and as a nation they were determined to close it. JFK believed in the missile gap – and he promised to close it. Information that would have proved the gap illusory was available to lawmakers, including Senator Kennedy, as early as January 1960, but he chose to believe those intelligence estimates, promulgated by journalists and maverick intelligence officers, which most inflated Soviet missile strength.

We have since learned that there was no missile gap. Newly declassified information reinforces a key fact: there was never a missile gap. At no time did the Soviets

have a qualitative or quantitative superiority in nuclear missile technology over the United States. The overwhelming superiority of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, dispersed at military bases worldwide, was never in danger of being incapacitated by a surprise Soviet attack. Further, we also now know that John F. Kennedy had learned that there was no missile gap as early as January 1961, and yet he moved forward with his program of military spending ostensibly intended to close the gap.

To repeat, there was no missile gap. Knowledgeable people, including John F. Kennedy himself, knew this as early as January 1961. Given these observations, the “who” question – “Who ever believed in the missile gap” – which is easily answered, must be displaced by a more relevant “why” question – “Why did people, including John F. Kennedy, come to believe in a missile gap?” By examining how someone as well-informed and well-connected as Kennedy came to believe in the missile gap, this dissertation will explain how millions of less-well-informed Americans came also to believe in the myth.

The central “why” question can be broken down still further into three more related “why” questions. One, why did the missile gap succeed as a critique of the New Look where other critiques, such as the bomber gap, had failed? Two, why did Kennedy use the missile gap to achieve political success? And finally, three, why did Kennedy expand weapons systems intended to close the missile gap, even after he had learned that there was no gap? This dissertation addresses all three of these questions. And the answer, in all three instances, is the political economy of the missile gap.

Scope

Accordingly, to address each of these questions, this dissertation studies John F. Kennedy and the political economy of the missile gap at three levels. First, this dissertation examines the military and strategic critiques of the New Look, of which the missile gap became the most colorful, and therefore the most politically salient, in order to answer why the missile gap succeeded as a critique of the New Look where other critiques had failed. Second, this study considers John F. Kennedy's political use of the missile gap critique in the mid-term congressional elections of 1958 and in the presidential election of 1960 in order to understand how Kennedy used the missile gap for political gain. Third, this paper analyzes the economics of defense spending in the late 1950s and early 1960s, generally, and of Eisenhower's New Look and Kennedy's Flexible Response, specifically, in order to understand why the political economy of the missile gap continued to drive national security policy, even after it was learned that there was no gap.

At the outset, the missile gap must be considered within the context of the political, economic, and strategic milieu of the late 1950s. Within the permanent warfare state that existed during the Cold War, military hardware was produced in the United States by, and through, a public-private partnership that included government, industry, labor unions, local civic organizations, and political pressure groups.³¹ The political activities of these groups were often inextricably connected to perceptions of how economic interests were tied to

defense spending. Put simply, if a community or business stood to gain economically from the development and manufacture of a particular weapon system, the members of the community tended to support it – and these same people, likewise, were generally inclined to support politicians who pushed these same projects. This same support occasionally translated into support for a specific military strategy when that strategy was tied to a particular weapon or product. Therefore, a pattern of defense spending that reflected the political and economic interests of a number of different groups developed throughout the United States during the Cold War.³²

The political economy of defense spending during the Cold War affected all communities in the United States, even those that were not directly involved in the manufacture and deployment of military hardware. In periods of widespread insecurity, such as existed in the late 1950s, and particularly in the post-*Sputnik* period after October 1957, citizens who did not have direct economic ties to a particular weapon system or national security strategy were nonetheless concerned about national defense on a more abstract level. The entire nation's sense of security was shaken during the missile gap period and individuals were more inclined to bear a greater economic burden in order to close the missile gap than they had been during Eisenhower's first term.

Therefore, in response to the first key question – Why did the missile gap succeed as a critique of the New Look? – this study argues that the political economy of the missile gap was made particularly relevant by a coalition of economic and national security concerns

that became acute in 1958. The missile gap itself was a new and more sensational representation of the prevailing critiques of Eisenhower's New Look military strategy. These critiques had raged for several years, but their political effect had been relatively limited. Other controversies over the readiness or vulnerability of U.S. military forces had arisen and subsided during Eisenhower's two terms as president. Few people questioned Eisenhower's strategic judgment. By the late 1950s, however, the missile gap had gained traction as a political issue. This dissertation argues that the political economy of defense spending in the late 1950s, and the ascendancy of John F. Kennedy, contributed to the rise and success of the missile gap as a critique of the New Look where others had failed.

This conclusion leads naturally to the second key question – Why (and implicitly how) did John F. Kennedy use the missile gap to achieve political success? Kennedy became a leading political figure in the late 1950s, but he was not the most important political figure of his era. Kennedy was not the first person to refer to a missile gap. He was not the only politician to use the issue for his own political gain. Yet, Kennedy's political ascendancy neatly coincided with the rise of the missile gap. The missile gap became a winning political issue for Eisenhower's critics in the late 1950s, and John F. Kennedy was one of the first politicians to recognize its political value. And he capitalized on it. He did so because he understood the special significance of the political economy of the missile gap.

Many have since charged that Kennedy knowingly and deliberately deceived the nation into believing that there was a missile gap. This dissertation does not seek to answer this question; it is unanswerable.³³ Nor does this dissertation seek to characterize Kennedy's use of this issue as either skillful or reckless. Rather, it concentrates on the underlying political and economic factors that contributed to the particular salience of the missile gap as a campaign issue.

This dissertation will explain how the missile gap in particular, and national security in general, influenced domestic politics during the Cold War. It will analyze these issues within the context of the crucial mid-term elections of 1958. It will then consider the relative significance of the missile gap issue during the presidential election of 1960 in order to establish a political context for Kennedy's subsequent national security decisions as president.

Which leads to the third key question. The political economy of the missile gap continued to factor into Kennedy's policy thinking even after he had achieved his ultimate political success, and even after Kennedy had learned that there was no missile gap. Why?

Again, we must look to the political economy of the missile gap to answer that question. The political economy of the missile gap was characterized by three distinct forces: the security concerns and personal motivations of military leaders and defense analysts; the economic concerns of defense workers, their families, and their communities; and Congressional and presidential politics. These forces led Senator John F. Kennedy to

advocate programs and policies necessary to rectify the potentially dangerous and destabilizing inferiority represented by the presumed missile gap. These same forces led President John F. Kennedy to implement changes to the nation's military that were unnecessary once the gap was proved to have been a fiction in 1961. Long after the strategic concerns of the missile gap were proved unfounded, the political economy of the missile gap lived on because weapons built in order to close the missile gap remained in the U.S arsenal for many years. Some remain in the arsenal to this day.³⁴

The extent to which military strategy was tied to economic policy was demonstrated in the late 1950s when John F. Kennedy and other Democratic politicians attacked the Eisenhower administration's military strategy on economic grounds. Anything that constrained spending on defense, as the New Look was designed to do, threatened the economic well being of entire communities that depended heavily upon military spending. Generally speaking, any political program that boosted defense spending, as Kennedy's Flexible Response promised to do, was favored by defense workers and the communities in which they worked. Kennedy's promise to close the missile gap may have contributed to his electoral success. This study will also show how Kennedy's national security policies may have contributed to a short-term economic revival in areas hit hard by Eisenhower's New Look.

The missile gap was a critique of the strategic foundations of the New Look. The missile gap was a critique of the economics of the New Look. The missile gap was a

political critique of the Eisenhower presidency. A study of any one single element, standing alone, cannot completely explain the history of the missile gap. A study of all three elements, taken together, explains not just a single episode in U.S. history, but helps to explain the entire history of the Cold War.

Previous Literature

The historical literature on the missile gap is vast and varied. None of these works, however, discuss the political economy of the missile gap. The first scholarly account of the crisis was Edgar Bottome's *The Missile Gap*, published in 1971. Bottome chronicles the public debate in exquisite detail, but lacks information from then-classified sources. In spite of this, Bottome's work remains an essential starting point for those seeking a general understanding of the politics of the missile gap as interpreted by the popular media.³⁵

After the publication of *The Missile Gap*, several other books focused attention on the missile gap, but most did so only tangentially. In 1982 political scientist Desmond Ball, depending heavily upon interviews with numerous Kennedy administration officials, studied the missile gap controversy within the broader context of the Kennedy-McNamara defense build-up.³⁶ In that same year, John Prados's book *The Soviet Estimate* included a crucial discussion of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), the source of considerable confusion during the missile gap debate, but Prados himself devoted only one chapter to the missile gap phenomenon per se.³⁷ David Alan Rosenberg's analyses of the complexity of

the policy-making process provide the intellectual foundation necessary to study the missile gap's significance within the context of the formulation of defense policy and the development of military force structure. Rosenberg also discusses the competing interpretations of the efficacy of nuclear deterrence. These ideological battles were being waged within the government long before they were popularized in the media. Nevertheless, Rosenberg never specifically discusses the missile gap.³⁸

Robert Divine's *The Sputnik Challenge* includes some data culled from formerly classified documents at the Eisenhower Library, as well as previously unpublished notes from the Stuart Symington collection at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. But it is notably lacking in data from the Kennedy library. In fact, Divine abruptly concludes his brief survey in the middle of 1958 and therefore fails to examine the politics of the missile gap within the context of the 1958 mid-term elections and the 1960 presidential election.³⁹

Most recently, Peter Roman's *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, focuses considerable attention on policy-formulation during the Eisenhower years. Although Roman discusses Eisenhower's response to the missile gap critique in detail, he neglects the Kennedy-McNamara military build-up that was predicated on Kennedy's pledge to close the missile gap inherited from his predecessor.⁴⁰

None of the works listed above pay particular attention to the economic foundations of the New Look and Flexible Response. Other works address economic issues in the context of national security strategy, but not in a comprehensive fashion. For example, John

Lewis Gaddis's *Strategies of Containment* compares and contrasts national security strategies throughout the Cold War, and Gaddis' analysis notes the significance of economic factors with respect to these strategies. And yet Gaddis' scope is too broad, and his focus too wide, to provide a full understanding of the specific political and economic issues associated with each of these strategies.⁴¹ Iwan Morgan's *Eisenhower Versus "the Spenders"* examines Eisenhower's economic philosophy and the competing economic beliefs of Eisenhower's critics. Morgan also devotes attention to the political debate over the defense budget, and he discusses how Eisenhower's economics influenced his national security policies. He does not compare and contrast Eisenhower's policy making, however, with that of his successor, Kennedy.⁴² Other works that focus specifically on Eisenhower and Kennedy's economic policies generally do not consider how these policies may have had an impact upon national security policy.⁴³

Meanwhile, the scholarship associated with the theory of political economy is relatively limited. The basic text remains Ethan Kapstein's *The Political Economy of National Security: A Global Perspective*. In this work, Kapstein builds upon earlier works by James Schlesinger and Charles Hitch and Ronald McKean, and identifies important international components to build his definition of political economy. But Kapstein's work is intended chiefly as an introduction to the theory of political economy, and it does not presume to resolve the spirited scholarly debate surrounding issues such as the nature and

character of defense spending within the domestic economy. Likewise, Kapstein does not consider the significance of defense economics within the context of domestic politics.⁴⁴

The Political Economy of National Security

Scholars will best understand the nature of the Cold War arms race by understanding the pervasive relationship between economics, politics, and national security. By confining itself to a relatively narrow issue, but by doing so within the context of three overriding themes – national security theory, politics, and economics – this dissertation will be the first to produce a formal and integrated analysis of the missile gap through the lens of the political economy of national security in the nuclear age. As such, this dissertation moves beyond previous studies of the missile gap, specifically, and of the Cold War, generally. And thus, the story of John F. Kennedy and the missile gap becomes a metaphor for elucidating many aspects of the Cold War military-industrial complex.

This study of Kennedy and the political economy of the missile gap is conducted within the context of a broad, philosophical framework of the political economy of national security. Modern military history can provide a fuller picture of how technological development relates to strategic and tactical innovation by considering the complex role that industry plays in the development of military strategy. Military planners are constrained by the weapons and forces that they have at their disposal at any given time. Military strategy

guides which weapons will be manufactured in the service of national security; it does not *dictate* this process. This is a crucial distinction. Military strategy cannot create new weapons out of thin air. Strategists can recognize the shortcomings of existing technology. Military thinkers can direct technological improvements. Occasionally, a particularly brilliant innovator conceives of a new and unique way to use existing technologies. As often as not, technologies designed for peaceful purposes are adapted for use in wartime. Ultimately, the mix of weapons and other technologies that are available to military planners at any given time guides which military strategy, or strategies, will be used in various crises.

Given this fundamental reality, the study of the political economy of national security is concerned with the manner in which industry and labor cooperate with political and military leaders in order to design, develop, and manufacture implements of warfare. The study of this cooperation within liberal-democratic political systems is particularly significant because democratic governments have a limited ability to compel businesses to manufacture certain products. Likewise, except in times of great crisis, democratic governments cannot require individuals to work in particular places, or within particular industries.

The planning and distribution of economic resources in wartime is intricately tied to the physical abilities and limitations of industry, specifically, and of the entire economy, generally. Governments cannot dictate that military hardware will be produced without also

considering the necessary trade-offs within the civilian economy. Again, in a liberal political system government and industry cooperate with one another in order to achieve a balance between the needs of national security and the desires of citizens and consumers.

Therefore, the development and manufacture of military technologies, and the formulation of military strategy, is conducted within the context of diverse political and economic forces. Those works that fail to consider all of these factors fail to describe accurately the effects of warfare on society as a whole. The study of the political economy of national security addresses the processes by which the three parts of the military - industrial troika – the military, industry (including both business owners and laborers), and government – cooperate to produce weapons and materials for the armed forces. This paper studies all three of these institutions, and focuses, in particular, on the “nexus” – the point at which these three institutions meet, or overlap (See Figure 1): This nexus forms the foundation of, and provides a thematic boundary for, this dissertation.

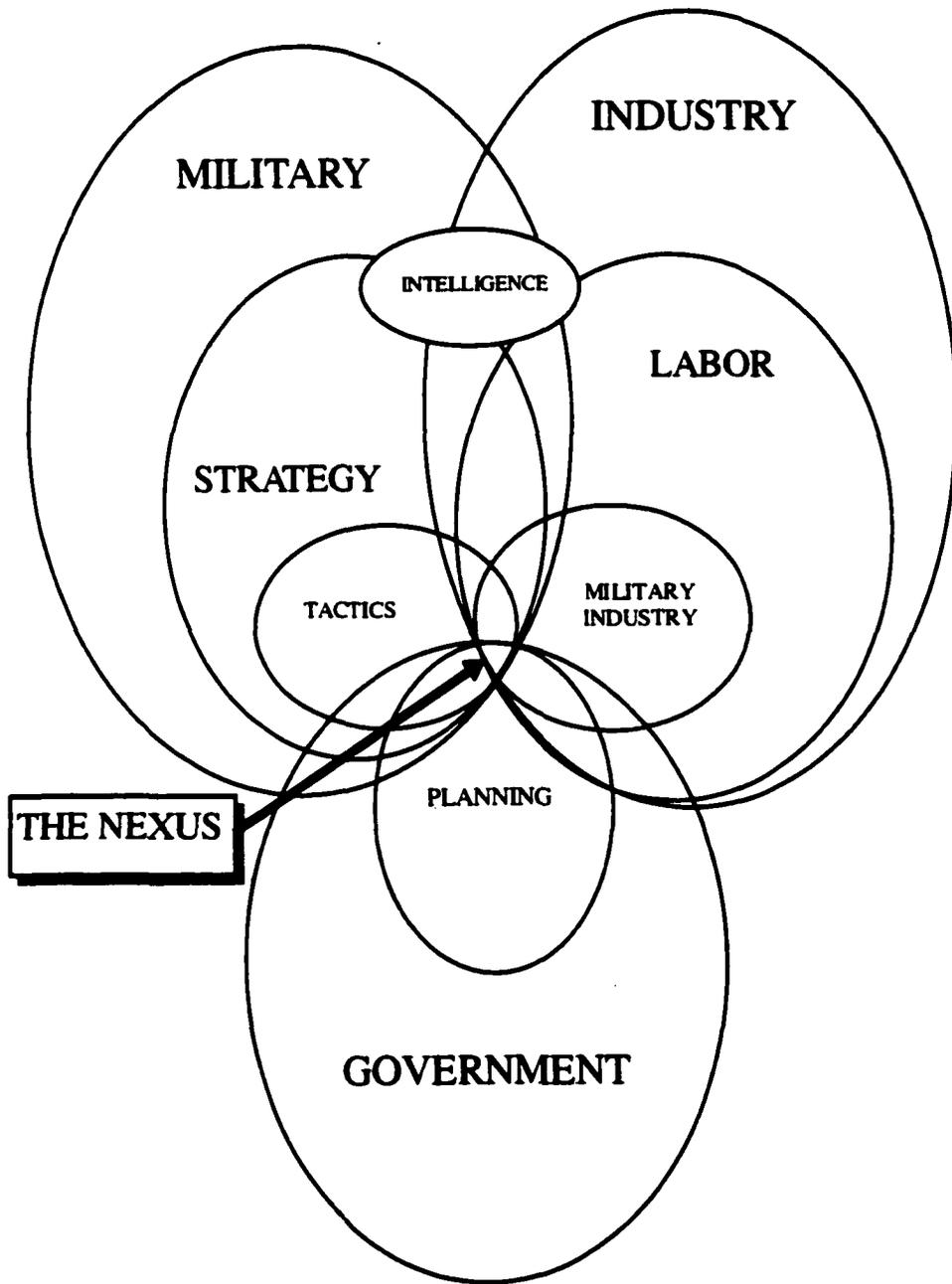


Figure 1 - Studying History at the Nexus

Unlike those critiques of the so-called military-industrial complex that focus exclusively on the leaders of government and industry, my research builds on the premise that the political and economic power of defense workers and labor unions can give important impetus to the development of military industry in a particular region. Business leaders also apply direct pressure to military leaders and politicians on behalf of their products. Still, their individual political influence within democratic political systems should not be overstated. A single business owner has, after all, only one vote to cast. When the political and economic interests of a single business owner coincide with hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of workers who manufacture a product, however, then one begins to appreciate the true nature of the political power of industry. Given the close relationship between military strategy and military technology, one can see that the formulation of strategy is influenced by the same factors that influence the development of particular weapons systems.

In short, this dissertation views the formulation of national security policy as both an economic and a political phenomenon. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach within the context of the political economy of national security, this study will show that national security strategy and tactics guided military force structure during the Cold War. It will also demonstrate that the political economy of the missile gap added an "irrational" element to an otherwise rational process by contributing to a continuation of the problem of nuclear "overkill."⁴⁵

The Structure of the Narrative

This dissertation begins by examining the historical context within which the strategic critique of the New Look, which became the missile gap, originated and grew. Chapter Two discusses the contemporary critiques of the New Look in detail. This chapter focuses on the strategic components of these critiques, and it also considers the underlying economic elements of these critiques. By gaining a better understanding of the economic ramifications of the New Look, this study establishes a context for the congressional and mid-term elections of 1958, and the presidential election of 1960, when economic recession fostered anger and resentment that was directed at the president and his party.

Having established the political, economic, and strategic context that existed during the late 1950's, Chapters Three and Four examine John F. Kennedy and the politics of the missile gap. The political phenomenon of the missile gap, made manifest, in part, by Kennedy's election to the presidency, grew out of the economics of defense spending in the late 1950s. Kennedy's missile gap rhetoric tapped into the crucial relationship between the economic interests of workers in defense industries and the political interests of military leaders and politicians. As will be shown in this dissertation, John F. Kennedy recognized and exploited this relationship beginning in 1958.

The missile gap was a major element of Kennedy's presidential campaign because the political economy of the missile gap was a political winner for Kennedy and his fellow

Democrats in the late 1950s. The missile gap, in effect, constituted a powerful one -two punch against the popular president. On the one hand, Eisenhower was charged with indifference to Soviet gains and U.S. decline, hence the gap. On the other hand, Eisenhower's alleged reluctance to spend more on defense was also blamed for throwing hundreds of thousands out of work.⁴⁶

The missile gap – and the political economy of the missile gap – provides scholars with a unique opportunity to examine the complex interaction of competing and divergent forces (the military services, intelligence agencies, congressional and presidential politics, and the media) within the military strategy-formulation bureaucracy.⁴⁷ By studying the actions of those outside of the official national security bureaucracy, scholars can gain a better understanding of how certain individuals may have influenced national security policy decisions into the 1960's and beyond.

Therefore, Chapter Three also highlights the seminal role played by several of these key outsiders – most notably the journalist Joseph Alsop. Alsop's repeated warnings of the impending gap made a significant impression on the young senator from Massachusetts. Beginning in 1957, Alsop consistently conveyed his beliefs to Kennedy; by 1960, JFK had largely bought into Alsop's arguments. Joe Alsop was the missile gap's most persistent salesman, and John Kennedy was Alsop's most loyal customer. Once he was convinced that a missile gap loomed over the horizon, Kennedy was particularly receptive to the more

sophisticated critiques of Henry Kissinger, and of Generals James Gavin and Maxwell Taylor, that specifically called for closing the gap.⁴⁸

In spite of the drama associated with Kennedy's narrow victory in the election of 1960, few scholars have scrutinized the specific policy issues of the campaign as expressed in Kennedy's campaign speeches. Using these speech records, as well as additional archives, Chapter Four examines his campaign in four key states – Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, and California – to show how Kennedy turned foreign policy and defense issues to his political advantage. Promises made to prospective voters in these campaign speeches form the crucial context for Kennedy's defense policy decisions as President, and the missile gap was a central element of this campaign. By assigning both rationality and agency to labor, this study shows that the distribution of military industries during the Cold War era resulted from a combination of occasionally competing, but frequently cooperating, influences. One of these was electoral politics. By analyzing the missile gap within the context of electoral politics, this study will also determine whether or not Kennedy's missile gap rhetoric contributed to his narrow victory during the presidential campaign of 1960.

Chapter Five studies the missile gap in the context of Kennedy's national security policies as president. Kennedy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara pushed forward with new spending for nuclear deterrent forces, even after they learned that there was no missile gap. More than two years after Kennedy had first learned that there was no missile gap, the president asked for an explanation of its origins. A series of reports issued by the

NSC and the Department of Defense sought to answer this question. This dissertation will argue that Kennedy and his staff actively sought a particular interpretation in these reports that would reflect most favorably on himself and his administration. Kennedy wanted the historical record to let him off the hook for using the missile gap during the presidential election, and as a foundation for his military strategy, even after his administration had dismissed the missile gap as a fiction.

Why did Kennedy and McNamara push for an expansion of weapons programs in April and May of 1961 to close a missile gap that they knew was nonexistent by early February?⁴⁹ What prompted Kennedy and McNamara to push for still more defense spending, even when military and strategic realities did not warrant such an expense? In a word – jobs; jobs that Kennedy had promised to create while on the campaign trail. It was here, in the early months of 1961, that Kennedy’s political promises, and the economic realities facing the new President – the political economy of the missile gap – intruded upon the strictly rational calculus that would have urged an immediate halt to the nuclear arms buildup begun under Eisenhower. Chapter Five will conclude with an examination of three companies – North American Aviation, General Dynamics’ Convair division, and Bell Aircraft. By studying the economic ramifications of Kennedy’s references to a missile gap – either real or impending – this dissertation demonstrates the specific economic effects that the New Look, the missile gap, and Flexible Response had on the hundreds of thousands of men and women who worked for these companies.

The explicit link between defense spending and employment was a permanent feature of the federal government's military procurement policies throughout the Cold War period. In keeping with his belief that the federal government should play a larger role in the domestic economy, Kennedy had promised to use Defense Manpower Policy Number Four (DMP-4) to award defense contracts in areas of high and persistent unemployment. Chapter Six examines the long-term political and economic effects of this policy.

John F. Kennedy was not the only politician to use the economics of defense against an incumbent administration. By way of an epilogue, this dissertation will conclude with a brief study of several areas where Kennedy's missile gap rhetoric appears to have been most significant in an effort to ultimately determine the long-term political and economic effects of the missile gap, and by extension, the political economy of the Cold War itself.

Conclusion

The missile gap stands as one of the enduring cultural legacies of the Cold War.⁵⁰ And the political economy of the missile gap helps us to understand the political and economic nature of the military build-up throughout the Cold War. So long as there was a Cold War, there would be jobs for millions of Americans employed in defense industries. There would be jobs for the millions more who worked and lived in communities that were home to defense industries.

But the story of the missile gap is much more than a mere metaphor for the political economy of the Cold War. The story itself is inherently interesting, involving colorful personalities, dramatic political twists and freshly relevant insights into the nature of our country's political and economic development during the past 50 years. The missile gap itself may have been a short-term political phenomenon with relatively limited long-term effects. By contrast, as this dissertation will show, the political economy of national security – of which the political economy of the missile gap was one important element – was a pervasive characteristic of the American domestic political landscape, and the American economy, during the entire Cold War.

2. THE NEW LOOK AND ITS CRITICS

A program for rapidly building up [military] strength...will be costly. [But, b]udgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that our very independence as a nation is at stake.¹ – from NSC 68, April 1950

To amass military power without regard to our economic capacity would be to defend ourselves against one kind of disaster by inviting another.² – President Dwight D. Eisenhower, January 1954

[R]ecent economic policies...have cost the United States its world leadership and gravely threatened its survival as a nation....It is time to base economic policy on the evidence of history rather than on imaginary future catastrophes.³ – James Tobin, March 1958

Scholars have identified crucial differences among the national security strategies of the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations. Cost was one determining factor in these divergent strategies. The first three presidents of the nuclear era primarily differed with one another in their perception of the appropriate level of taxation and spending that could be supported within the domestic economy. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, as at other times during the Cold War, each of these commanders-in-chief asked themselves the crucial question: How much is enough? Or, conversely, how much is too much?⁴

Many of the contemporary critiques of Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy focused on Eisenhower's belief that the domestic economy could not support the expenditures necessary to field a modern conventional army large enough to deter the Soviet Union from launching a conventional attack on U.S. allies in Europe, and, to a lesser extent, allies in Asia. Guided by such concerns, Eisenhower's national security strategy depended on a robust, forward-deployed nuclear force intended to deter would-be adversaries from unleashing an attack upon the United States itself, or its allies and vital interests around the world. Such a nuclear deterrent force, Eisenhower reasoned, would be far less costly than a

more diversified military capable of fighting, and winning, conventional as well as nuclear wars.

National Security under Truman

Eisenhower was not the first president to confront such dilemmas. Eisenhower's predecessor, Harry S. Truman, had drastically cut military expenditures immediately after the end of World War II on the presumption that the United States' preponderant military and economic power would serve as a deterrent to Soviet aggression. Truman also feared that a burdensome military budget would fundamentally alter the nature of the U.S. political and economic system.⁵

As the Cold War deepened, and as U.S. national security commitments around the globe began to strain military resources, Truman initially resisted efforts to increase the size of the defense budget. In July 1949, for example, faced with a sluggish economy, and with expenditures for defense and foreign aid consuming over fifty percent of the federal budget, Truman called upon the Defense Department to reduce projected spending by \$2 billion, and to establish a ceiling of \$13 billion on future outlays.⁶ Louis Johnson, who had replaced James Forrestal as Secretary of Defense in March 1949, joined Truman in his cost-cutting crusade. A West Virginia lawyer widely believed to have political ambitions of his own, Johnson came to the Pentagon with a clear mission – to reestablish political control over the military.

He also intended to cut costs. Johnson, like many other conservative southern Democrats, believed that a balanced budget was key to the nation's overall economic health. As Secretary of Defense, Johnson consistently resisted efforts to increase the military budget. He battled with the military chiefs who were feeling overextended during the late 1940s, and who were seeking greater funding for their respective services. Johnson fought these battles, in part, because he was convinced that one of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin's aims was to induce the United States to spend itself into bankruptcy. Prompted by such concerns, Johnson precipitated one of the most infamous of inter-service battles, the "Revolt of the Admirals," when he abruptly canceled construction of the Navy's first super-carrier in a move to cut costs.⁷

Other fiscal conservatives in the Truman administration, including Edwin Nourse, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA), joined Johnson in his battle against rising defense expenditures. Nourse and Johnson generally opposed increases in defense spending because they believed that high government deficits threatened the nation's economic health.⁸ Nourse, a former president of the American Economic Association and later head of the Institute of Economics at the Brookings Institution, argued in August 1949 that military spending at current levels (\$13 billion) could be sustained for a short period of time, provided that the faltering economy recovered quickly, and provided also that tax revenues maintained pace. Nourse also noted, however, a growing resistance on the part of

the public to pay “war taxes in peacetime” and he questioned whether Congress would resist the urge to cut taxes further.⁹

As John Lewis Gaddis observes, however, several of Truman’s more liberal advisers were “eager to apply Keynesian techniques to the management of the domestic economy.”¹⁰ For example, Nourse’s colleagues on the CEA, John Clark and Leon Keyserling, adopted a dramatically different view of the economy, and they questioned the wisdom of maintaining or reducing military spending, particularly during an economic downturn. Clark and Keyserling argued that the economy could “sustain – in fact must be subjected to policies which *make it able to sustain* – such military outlays as are vital” in order to maintain national security.¹¹ This dissenting argument was grounded in an economic philosophy that Robert Collins and others have characterized as growthmanship. Less troubled by temporary federal deficits and modest inflation than by the specter of an economy operating below its full potential, Clark, Keyserling, and other adherents to this philosophy pressed home their argument for expanded government spending by building upon the national security debate of the late 1940s.¹² Events in the late summer and early fall of 1949 forced this national security debate to the surface, and placed new pressures on President Truman to increase the defense budget.

Keyserling was at the center of this policy debate. Born in South Carolina in 1908, Leon Keyserling studied economics at Columbia University and later earned a law degree at Harvard in 1931. He returned to Columbia for post-graduate work in economics with

Professor Rexford G. Tugwell who, at the time, was advising then-New York Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In 1933, when Roosevelt and Tugwell moved to Washington, Keyserling followed. During the next 30 years, he occupied a number of key advisory positions in the nation's capitol, serving as a legislative assistant to New York Senator Robert F. Wagner, as a lawyer and eventually General Counsel with the National Housing Authority, and as a consultant to Senate Committees on a number of topics including banking and currency, industrial recovery and public works, housing, labor relations and employment.¹³

First appointed to the CEA in 1946, Keyserling was serving as Vice Chairman of the Council when Nourse resigned in October 1949. He immediately assumed the title of Acting Chairman, and was ultimately named Chairman in May 1950. Keyserling's ascension to this position represented an important turning point in Truman's defense policies because Keyserling rejected Nourse's argument that defense spending in excess of six to seven per cent of gross national product (GNP) could cause undue harm to the domestic economy. Keyserling believed that the economy could easily sustain defense expenditures that consumed as much as twenty per cent of GNP. Further, Keyserling maintained that the government could stimulate the domestic economy, and tolerate short-term federal budget deficits, because tax revenues from increased economic activity would eventually close these temporary shortfalls.¹⁴ A key feature of this philosophy was the belief that the U.S. domestic economy was not operating at its full potential, and that

government action would be capable of turning this around. In his public writings, Keyserling argued that the U.S. economy, which was producing \$255 billion worth of goods and services in 1949, could be as large as \$300 billion, or even larger, by the mid-1950s, with proper direction by the government.¹⁵

Fiscal conservatives progressively lost control over spending when Keyserling replaced Nourse. The CEA's *Annual Economic Review*, published in late 1949, repeated Keyserling's argument for expanding national output from slightly less than \$260 billion in 1949 to over \$300 by 1954. Truman endorsed this economic program when he delivered the report in his annual message to the Congress in early January 1950.¹⁶

At the same time, Keyserling immediately embraced a vast increase in defense expenditures when he played a role in the drafting of NSC 68, a document that mapped out a new military and economic strategy for fighting, and winning, the Cold War. The economic assumptions of this new strategy were built squarely upon Keyserling's view of the "true" size of the U.S. economy. Keyserling may not have had a direct hand in composing NSC 68, but his views permeated all levels of government in late 1949 and early 1950.

Into this philosophical and intellectual milieu stepped Paul Nitze, the principal drafter of NSC 68. A forty-three-year-old with over ten years of experience in Washington, D.C., Nitze became the head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff (PPS) on January 1, 1950, replacing the legendary George F. Kennan. By this time, Nitze was

already well on his way to becoming a legend in his own right, a role for which he had been well groomed.¹⁷

Paul H. Nitze was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, but he spent much of his early childhood in Chicago. His father, a professor of foreign languages, had accepted the post of chairman of the department of romance languages and literature at the University of Chicago, and he moved the family to Chicago when Paul was still very young. After attending the University of Chicago High School, Nitze traveled east to attend The Hotchkiss School, an elite preparatory school in Connecticut, and then to Harvard, where he graduated in 1928. He joined the New York investment firm of Dillon, Read and Company in 1929, and became vice president of the prestigious firm in 1937, at the age of thirty. Nitze returned to Harvard for graduate study in 1938, and after a brief attempt to go it alone in the world of high finance, he returned briefly to Dillon, Read in 1939.

Nitze first arrived in Washington, DC in June 1940 as an aide to James Forrestal, the former president of Dillon, Read. During World War II, Nitze worked on the newly formed U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS).¹⁸ In this capacity, Nitze was one of the first Americans to witness first hand the destruction and devastation wrought by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Ever-mindful of the horrific effects of nuclear warfare, and chastened by the announcement in August 1949 that the Soviets now had the atomic bomb, Nitze set out – at the behest of Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and

with the tacit support of Keyserling and others – to remake U.S. national security strategy for the Cold War.

Nitze's appointment to head the PPS coincided with the drafting and release of NSC 68. In January 1950 Truman was not prepared to apply Keyserling's economic principles across-the-board, and he seemed particularly reticent to do so with respect to defense expenditures. He initially resisted the views and recommendations of NSC 68 when they were presented to him in April 1950. The original document advanced no precise cost estimates, but they were expected to be "high." Truman reacted cautiously. He appointed a commission to review the document and to estimate the cost to implement its recommendations. At the time, according to Truman biographer Alonzo Hamby, Truman told Budget Director Fred Lawton that "fiscal conservatism [was] his overriding priority."¹⁹ But the shock of the Korean War, combined with the ascendancy of communism in China and recent advances in the Soviet nuclear weapons program, ultimately convinced Truman of the need to increase dramatically the defense budget.²⁰

When Truman approved NSC 68 as official policy in September 1950, it represented a marked shift in the government's attitude toward defense spending and economic growth.²¹ The authors of NSC 68 noted that the concerted military build up called for in the document would be costly and might require sacrifices in the form of either higher taxes or reductions in other forms of government spending. The document stressed, however, that "[b]udgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that

our very independence as a nation may be at stake.”²² And while the text offered up these stark and dramatic warnings, it also held out hope that the very defense spending called for within would increase aggregate demand, increase economic activity, and assist the nation in achieving its goal of a \$300 billion economy.

Noting that the Soviet Union was dedicating as much as 13.8 percent of GNP to defense, NSC 68 recognized that the United States was limited more by “the decision on the proper allocation of resources” than by its ability to produce more military hardware. Because a far lesser percentage of available resources within the United States were currently being dedicated to defense (20 percent as opposed to 40 percent for the Soviets), “the United States,” the authors argued, “could achieve a substantial absolute increase in output and could thereby increase the allocation of resources to a build-up of the economic and military strength of itself and its allies without suffering a decline in its real standard of living.” Noting that total U.S. output had declined from 1948 to 1949, NSC 68 pointed to the president’s *Economic Report* of January 1950, which had called for an increase in total output. The *Report* argued that progress toward this goal “would permit, and might itself be aided by, a buildup of the economic and military strength of the United States and the free world.” “Furthermore,” the report continued:

If a dynamic expansion of the economy were achieved, the necessary build-up could be accomplished without a decrease in the national standard of living because the required resources could be obtained by siphoning off a part of the annual increment in the gross national product.²³

“In other words,” Aaron Friedberg observes, “if [increased defense expenditures] were not entirely offset by higher taxes, [they] would add to aggregate demand and help to fuel economic expansion; properly managed, the buildup could be made to pay for itself.”²⁴

According to Friedberg “NSC 68 was, in essence, a battering ram with which its authors hoped to shatter the existing budget ceiling.”²⁵ By the time that NSC 68 had established a budgetary estimate for its military proposals, after the outbreak of war in Korea, it envisioned a defense budget of as much as \$40 billion, an increase of nearly 300 percent.²⁶ In this context, projected expenditures under NSC 68 of as much as \$50 billion would constitute approximately fifteen percent of total national output, and would not – it was implied – cause an undue burden on the economy.²⁷

Scholars have debated the relative long-term impact of NSC 68 on U.S. policy and strategy. What they do not debate is that this document signaled a new opening (if it did not actually open the door) for substantial increases in military spending in 1950. Combined with the events of late 1949 and early 1950, the economic mobilization for the Korean War – based, as it was, on the spending principles of Leon Keyserling and NSC 68 – marked a dramatic turning point in the prosecution of the Cold War. The impact of this mobilization made its most indelible impact on economic policy-making. As Paul Pierpaoli observes, where governments had once determined the aggregate budget and then adjusted programs to fit into that budget, “the opposite became the rule after 1950: policymakers determined

national security requirements first and then adjusted aggregate fiscal policy to meet security demands.”²⁸

The high water mark for “growthmanship” within the Truman administration likely came in late 1950 when Keyserling published an essay entitled “The Economics of National Defense.” At the time, Washington was debating whether or not the economy could provide for the necessities of war without forcing drastic cuts within the domestic economy. Keyserling reiterated that the difference could be achieved by expanding the nation’s industrial base. Ultimately, with the active support of Keyserling and the CEA, the advocates of growthmanship won the day, and Keyserling’s essay – which became the “Fifth Annual Report on the President from the Council of Economic Advisers, December 1950” – was later hailed as a classic essay on war mobilization.²⁹

Keyserling publicly defended the economic assumptions inherent in NSC 68 in an essay published in the *Washington Post* in December 1950. Bristling at recent criticisms that his projections for economic growth were recklessly optimistic, Keyserling noted that the economy had grown 75 per cent between 1939 and 1944. He then pointed out that growth at only one-third that rate – or 25 per cent – would create total economic output of nearly \$350 billion in 1955. Even these “conservative” estimates, Keyserling explained, would enable the economy to grow, while also providing necessary support for national security expenditures.

Keyserling also pointed to projections from early 1949, which had forecast annual output of nearly 300 billion dollars by 1954. Although these estimates were met with “a chorus of protest and misinterpretation,” he noted that by the middle of 1950, “even before the upward impulse given to the economy by the Korean outbreak, we were so near a 300 billion dollar output level” that people had begun to accept that the earlier goal could be achieved two or three years *before* 1954. In this context, the \$350 billion estimate for 1955 looked even more conservative by comparison.³⁰

In this same essay Keyserling also sought to clarify his position with respect to “guns and butter” – in response to those who criticized his promise to provide for national defense while not causing undue hardship or sacrifice within the civilian economy. Keyserling claimed that he had always supported “a tax program heavy enough to take away from business and consumers at least as much buying power...as is being poured into the market by total Government outlays including an expanded defense program.”³¹ Nonetheless, he continued, these “necessary” controls were less “vital than expanding production in the face of the long, hard pull” which confronted the nation in the coming years of the Cold War. Therefore, “only by expanding total production can we build military strength without dangerously undermining the industrial strength and civilian morale upon which enduring military power must rest.” If the nation relied “solely on controlling and redividing what we already have,” Keyserling warned, “then more assuredly we shall be sunk.”³²

Truman appears to have settled on the course of “growthmanship” with some reluctance. He likely never abandoned his own belief that long-term deficits were both unwise and immoral. Evidence of the president’s backsliding on the question of defense spending and growthmanship was clear in early 1951. For example, in February of that year he requested \$10 billion in additional taxes to pay for increases in defense spending, with the intention that the Korean mobilization would be conducted on a pay-as-you-go basis. But fear of a general war had subsided, and Congressional Republicans, emboldened by Truman’s sliding popularity, sided with conservative southern Democrats to alter dramatically Truman’s tax and spending proposals. Congress approved only \$5.6 billion in additional taxes in October 1951, and ultimately cut more than \$2 billion from the president’s military budget for FY 1953.³³

Further, after the mid-term elections of November 1950, Truman faced an increasingly hostile Congress dominated by Republicans and conservative Democrats. This new Congress pressured Truman to reduce spending in other areas, and to hold steady, or reduce, taxes.³⁴ Aaron Friedberg observes that the Korean War may have “weakened the constraints on defense spending” but “it did not do so completely or permanently.” Rather, what Friedberg finds most remarkable “about the events that followed the North Korean invasion is just how brief the opening for an accelerated [military] buildup actually was, and how quickly the forces opposing high expenditures reasserted themselves.”³⁵

Keyserling was feeling this pressure in early 1952. In response to a critical editorial published in *Business Week* magazine on January 26, 1952, Keyserling claimed that the economic downturn that many predicted and feared in anticipation of *reduced* defense spending after the end of the Korean War would be less than had been reported. The *Business Week* editors had argued that the downturn expected after World War II had been offset between 1944 and the middle of 1950 by a “backlog” of pent-up consumer demand. These same conditions were not expected to exist in 1954 and 1955. But Keyserling countered that the total reduction in defense spending which was projected to occur after the end of the Korean conflict was also far less, both in real terms and as a percentage of total output, than that which had taken place after World War II. Therefore, “If there is no perfect analogy between the ‘backlog’ situation at the end of WW II and the likely ‘backlog’ situation a few years hence,” he wrote, “there is certainly no analogy at all between the size of impact upon the economy of cutbacks in defense outlays after WW II and any likely cutbacks within the next few years.”³⁶

Keyserling also countered, however, that the high level of demand in recent years had not been caused by a pent up ‘backlog’ from World War II, but was rather a reflection of the appropriate balance of production and consumption that had been achieved since that time. According to Keyserling, both production and consumption “were kept at a fairly good equilibrium at very high levels” and this condition could be sustained going forward, even in the absence of high defense expenditures.³⁷

There were other signs that growthmanship was in retreat in the latter stages of Truman's second term. When the Bureau of the Budget projected a deficit of \$10 billion for FY 1951 and \$12 billion for FY 1952, Truman in mid-July 1951 requested a reappraisal of NSC 68, to be completed by October 1951. This reappraisal of NSC 68, observe Richard Immerman and Robert Bowie, proved to be "an extremely contentious and protracted process" as State's Charles Bohlen, a member of the NSC Senior Staff charged with drafting the review, attacked many of the views expressed in NSC 68. More than one year after Truman had first requested the report, the NSC issued Bohlen's study of the "Bases of Soviet Action" in the summer of 1952. Truman approved the report as NSC 135/3 on September 25, 1952.³⁸

Bohlen's study chiefly took issue with Nitze's interpretation of the aggressive nature of Soviet foreign policy. Unlike Nitze, Bohlen believed that the Soviet leadership would not take aggressive actions that were likely to threaten the regime. He also dismissed Nitze's notion of a year of maximum danger, believing instead that Soviet moves would be cautious, and confined largely to exploiting opportunities on the periphery, in areas of Western weakness. Given that Soviet aims were likely to be circumscribed, NSC 135/3 advised against an aggressive "rollback" strategy that might aggravate international tensions.³⁹

However, just as NSC 135/3 recommended a less aggressive strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, this study also found that U.S. forces were badly overextended. Accordingly,

the report called for a reappraisal of current spending programs to determine if scarce resources might be better allocated for the purposes of national defense. Further, the authors agreed with the essential economic assumptions of NSC 68, arguing that national security programs could be accelerated or expanded without damaging the U.S. economy.

A follow-on study called for by NSC 135/3 – later dubbed NSC 141 – concluded that, in spite of a reassessment of the Soviet threat, current spending programs were still inadequate. Approved on Truman's last day in office, on January 19, 1953, NSC 141 differed with many of the specific conclusions and policies of previous reports, but it largely reaffirmed and extended the spending principles of NSC 68. Both NSC 135/3 and NSC 141 emphasized one clear point: military budget cuts were unwise and unwarranted. Both documents called for still more spending on a diversified defense establishment. Truman's military budget for fiscal year 1953 dedicated nearly 14 per cent of Gross National Product to defense, the highest of the post-World War II era, and his final budget submitted in January 1953 projected total defense spending of \$45.5 billion for fiscal year 1954.⁴⁰

Truman appeared to adopt the softer language inherent in the latter reports when he eschewed talk of "rollback" in his farewell address. However, the general direction of U.S. military planning at the end of the Truman years suggested the need to prepare for a number of near-term contingencies in order to respond to Soviet threats throughout the globe – in Europe, in the Middle East, and in the Far East.⁴¹ By his words and by his actions, Truman bequeathed to his successor a national security strategy based largely on the economic

principles espoused by Leon Keyserling and the advocates of growthmanship and by NSC 68, respectively. These principles held that the economy could “sustain – in fact must be subjected to policies which make it able to sustain – such military outlays as are vital” in order to maintain national security, and that “budgetary considerations [would] need to be subordinated” to meet the demands of national security.

Eisenhower’s National Security Strategy

Eisenhower and his advisers did not agree. The new administration responded with a different national security strategy based upon a very different understanding of the relationship between defense spending and economic growth. Rather than planning for a “year of maximum danger” in the near future, Eisenhower – believing that the Cold War could last for many years – designed his strategy around the “long pull” or “long haul.” This strategy, ultimately delineated in NSC-162/2 and later dubbed the “New Look” by contemporary observers, was a military strategy, but the underlying rationale of the strategy was economic – namely Eisenhower’s belief that the nation’s economy could not sustain the level of expenditures envisioned by Truman’s NSC 68 and NSC 141.⁴²

Whereas NSC 68 had argued that means could – and must – be expanded to fit the nation’s perceived security interests, Eisenhower believed otherwise.⁴³ Instead, Eisenhower intended to establish a balance between military needs and the capabilities of the domestic economy. These attitudes had been formed long before Eisenhower become president. In

1947, Eisenhower explained to his longtime friend and adviser, Walter Bedell (“Beetle”) Smith that there was “very obviously a definite limit to our resources.” He feared, therefore, “internal deterioration through the annual expenditure of unconscionable sums on a [defense] program of indefinite duration, extending far into the future.” Strategists, Eisenhower concluded, must recognize that “national security and national solvency are mutually dependent” – otherwise the U.S. economy could crumble under the “crushing weight of military power.”⁴⁴

Eisenhower repeated this theme time and time again. In testimony before Congress in 1951, Eisenhower stressed that the United States must maintain its military strength in the face of competition from the Soviet Union, but he emphasized that this must be done within the reasonable constraints of the domestic economy. “[O]ur system,” Eisenhower said, “must remain solvent, as we attempt a solution of this great problem of security. Else we have lost the battle from within that we are trying to win from without.”⁴⁵ Eisenhower reiterated this philosophy in his State of the Union address in 1954: “Our problem,” he said, “is to achieve adequate military strength within the limits of endurable strain upon our economy. To amass military power without regard to our economic capacity would be to defend ourselves against one kind of disaster by inviting another.”⁴⁶

This interpretation of means, and more specifically the belief that the nation’s means were finite, in turn, shaped Eisenhower’s perception of interests. Unlike some within the Republican Party who envisioned a return to isolationism, Eisenhower was decidedly not an

isolationist. But he recognized the lure of isolationism, and he feared that the American people might drift in that direction if the burdens of internationalism became too great. In June 1953, Eisenhower noted that it would not be easy to convince the public of the need to endure recessions and a drop in living standards in order to build up other nations. Further, he also recognized – particularly in the wake of Korea – that the public’s appetite for sacrifice would be sorely tested in the context of limited and inconclusive wars that would become more and more prevalent in the nuclear age.⁴⁷

Eisenhower was also convinced that the level of spending envisioned by NSC 68 and NSC 141 might fundamentally alter the relationship between the citizen and the state. His concern grew out of his long-standing belief that over-burdensome defense spending – in excess of 10 percent of GNP, in Eisenhower’s view – would create a so-called garrison state.⁴⁸ He warned that the United States risked creating a garrison state if the burden of military spending exceeded a set amount because he envisioned national security to be a product of *both* military strength and economic strength, a function that he referred to as the “Great Equation.” “Spiritual force, multiplied by economic force, multiplied by military force is roughly equal to security,” he explained, “If one of these factors falls to zero, or near zero, the resulting product does likewise.”⁴⁹

Beyond this, Eisenhower had no intention of involving the United States in another Korea-style conventional war. Accordingly, he justified significant cuts in conventional forces – the Army and Navy especially – through his faith in nuclear deterrence.

Eisenhower himself may have doubted the efficacy of nuclear weapons, particularly as an extended deterrent for the Western alliance, and he once warned against seeing nuclear weapons as a “cheap way to solve things.”⁵⁰ But while Eisenhower may have voiced such concerns privately, the public pronouncements of his administration implied an affinity for nuclear weapons that horrified many contemporary observers. When Secretary of State John Foster Dulles declared in January 1954 that the United States would deter aggression by responding “at places and with means of its own choosing . . . [with] massive retaliatory power” the most memorable phrase from his speech became synonymous with Eisenhower’s overarching national security strategy. For the next seven years, the contemporary debate would revolve around the wisdom or folly of the New Look’s apparent over-reliance on nuclear deterrence, and around the related question of the economic burdens of defense spending.⁵¹

Eisenhower’s Economic Philosophy

Eisenhower’s basic economic philosophy was articulated publicly during the 1952 presidential campaign. In keeping with his long-held belief in the importance of a balanced budget, Eisenhower argued that deficit spending was a sign of weakness. In his travels around the country, Eisenhower was critical of the expansion of the federal government that had occurred under Truman and Roosevelt. He also pointed to declining purchasing power. This was of particular concern. Eisenhower was more troubled by inflation than by

unemployment. When forced to choose between taking action against one of these two problems, he was more inclined to tackle the problem of rising prices. This was particularly true during his second term when a growing international balance of payments problem gave new urgency to the need for anti-inflationary policies.

Although he was generally skeptical of politicians playing an active part in the economy, Eisenhower accepted the president's role – to borrow a term from John Sloan – as manager of prosperity. This role had been developed during the New Deal, but Eisenhower, according to Sloan, “imbued [the role] with a Cold War perspective” by relating the challenges of the domestic economy to the contest between the United States and the Soviet Union. Late in his second term, Eisenhower, in a letter to his brother Milton S., argued that foreign policy and economic policy were intricately related. The “American economy, like that of foreign affairs,” he wrote, “should flavor every single talk that is delivered formally or informally by one in my position. These two subjects cannot be separated from each other.”⁵² In this context, the president pledged to dedicate the full resources of the nation, both public and private, to ensure that there would never be another depression because a dramatic economic downturn would represent a victory for the Soviet Union.⁵³

On fiscal policy, in keeping with his commitment to balance the budget, Eisenhower resisted calls within his own party to reduce taxes immediately upon taking office because he believed that such tax cuts would simply expand the federal budget deficit. By his actions, many critics assumed that Eisenhower's attitude toward government spending,

taxes, and a balanced budget reflected a reactionary or old-fashioned understanding of economic policy. There was more to Eisenhower's economic philosophy, however, than a simple aversion to government spending, and a slavish devotion to a balanced budget.⁵⁴ In practice, Eisenhower exhibited a willingness to use government spending that was often ignored by contemporary critics, and has often been understated by scholars. For example, Ike pushed through two enormous public works projects (the Interstate Highway System and the St. Lawrence Seaway), refused to roll back most major New Deal programs (and expanded Social Security), increased foreign aid, and submitted to Congress only three balanced budgets out of eight.⁵⁵

Herbert Stein, in his comprehensive study of fiscal policy from the Great Depression to the 1980s, observes that modern fiscal policy argued that deficits were appropriate during economic downturns. This concept of countercyclical fiscal policy, which was embraced during the 1930s, continued to be understood through the interpretive lens of the Depression, even after economic conditions had improved. Accordingly, Stein writes, "[w]illingness, and indeed eagerness, to accept deficits came to be the litmus-paper test of modernity." Eisenhower's unwillingness to accept persistent budget deficits during reasonably good economic times, Stein argues, demonstrated Eisenhower's understanding of "modern" economic principles because Eisenhower understood the "essential point...that the desirability of balancing the budget was not given by some eternal principle but depended upon economic conditions which would vary."⁵⁶

Notwithstanding occasional economic ups and downs in which governmental action was warranted, however, Eisenhower did hope to contain rising federal spending. He especially resisted the impulse to increase the defense budget. As much as any other endeavor, Eisenhower – the former military officer – fought hard to reduce defense expenditures during his two terms in office. In NSC discussions, Eisenhower frequently staked out a middle ground between budget hawks such as Treasury Secretary George Humphrey and Budget Director Joseph Dodge who argued for more cuts in defense spending, and military leaders who argued for more money.⁵⁷

Sherman Adams, Eisenhower's top administrative assistant, recorded that Eisenhower's concern for the domestic economy was superceded only by his concern for foreign affairs. And yet, in spite of his genuine interest in the subject, Eisenhower recognized his own lack of expertise in the area of economic policy. He delegated economic analysis to a number of experts, and he turned to these advisers for policy guidance. The policies adopted by the administration during Eisenhower's eight years as president were guided, therefore, by the occasionally contradictory goals of a handful of individuals who served in a few key positions including that of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

The most influential of Eisenhower's economic advisers was George M. Humphrey, who served as the Secretary of Treasury from the beginning of Eisenhower's first term until

July 1957. Humphrey had initially supported Robert Taft for president in 1952, but he was named chairman of the finance committee for the Republican Party during Eisenhower's presidential campaign, and he quickly became one of Eisenhower's most trusted advisers. He was also a close friend. It was with Humphrey, probably more than any other figure in the administration, that Eisenhower established a close personal relationship. Both men were approximately the same age, they loved hunting and fishing, and they were reflexively averse to deficit spending. Eisenhower vacationed several times at Humphrey's estate in Georgia, and at least once suggested that Humphrey might make a good Republican presidential candidate.⁵⁸

Born in Cheboygan, Michigan in 1890, Humphrey earned a law degree from the University of Michigan, and was admitted to the Michigan State Bar in 1912. He practiced law for several years in his father's firm, and then joined the Mark A. Hanna Company in 1917. For the next thirty-five years, Humphrey steadily ascended the corporate ladder of the Cleveland-based steel conglomerate. He was named president in 1929, and he was elected Chairman of the Board in 1952.⁵⁹

Humphrey was a self-made millionaire. He was also a dear friend of the business community. But he was not, in the modern parlance, a "supply-sider," even though he did support reducing taxes on businesses; rather, Humphrey adopted a particularly hard-line stance with respect to inflation – which he called "theft" – and which he believed was

caused primarily by budget deficits. Accordingly, Humphrey pushed for budget cuts first, to be followed by tax reductions later.⁶⁰

In the context of reducing government expenditures, Humphrey was particularly concerned about the size and scope of the military budget. Defense spending, according to Humphrey, was especially wasteful because it made “no additions to the permanent wealth of the country.”⁶¹ Further, military expenditures were inherently inflationary because they pumped dollars into the domestic economy without creating enough goods for consumers to buy. In general, high federal expenditures could only be justified by a national emergency, he argued, and the Cold War did not always qualify. The nation must maintain a sufficient military force to deter the legitimate threat posed by the Soviet Union, Humphrey believed; beyond that, however, he expected that the government could achieve substantial spending reductions by simply applying the “cost-cutting techniques of successful businesspeople.”⁶²

Humphrey, the businessman, was frequently at odds with academic economists such as Arthur Burns, Eisenhower’s first chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA). The Employment Act of 1946 had created the CEA with the vague and ambiguous mission of fostering economic stability and growth. Congress had dramatically reduced funding for the advisory committee in 1952, but some credit Burns with having resuscitated the troubled body, in part because of his crucial advisory role during Eisenhower’s first term.⁶³

Burns, an Austrian-born Ph.D. economist, had been named to the influential National Bureau of Economic Research during the Depression. Over time, he gained

notoriety as an expert on the business cycle. Burns was both a believer in and a critic of certain elements of Keynesian economics. For example, Burns believed that government should do something to foster economic growth, but he was skeptical of economists' ability to forecast economic conditions. He was especially opposed to the concept of "fine tuning" the economy to maintain aggregate demand.⁶⁴

His own views were compatible with the president's in that Burns sought to reconcile New Deal welfare liberalism with economic conservatism. He was not opposed in principle to government action in the economy, and this often brought him into conflict with the more conservative-minded Humphrey. Burns and Humphrey quarreled often during Eisenhower's first term. Eisenhower frequently sided with Humphrey, but Burns was more influential during critical periods of time. This was particularly true early in Eisenhower's first term, when Burns directed an aggressive anti-recession program during the economic downturn of 1953 and 1954.

Robert B. Anderson replaced Humphrey as Secretary of the Treasury in July 1957, when Humphrey resigned to return to private life. Born and raised in Texas, Anderson served as Secretary of the Navy, and later as Deputy Defense Secretary, during Eisenhower's first term.⁶⁵ Eisenhower had first met Anderson in 1951, and he was immediately impressed by Anderson's ability to explain arcane subjects in simple terms. In a 1954 letter to his friend "Swede" Hazlett, Eisenhower called Anderson "just about the

ablest man that I know anywhere” and declared that “[h]e would make a splendid President of the United States.”⁶⁶

The tall, soft-spoken Anderson was well-connected politically with his fellow Texans – congressional leaders Sam Rayburn and Lyndon B. Johnson – and he was more politically astute than his predecessor, although his own economic philosophy was every bit as conservative as Humphrey’s. Most importantly, Anderson’s views were well-aligned with Eisenhower’s during the late 1950s. Like many Keynesians, Anderson believed in budget surpluses during economic good times, and automatic deficits during economic downturns. He also believed, however, that Democratic control in Congress, and a growing accommodation with inflation, had generated an “inflationary psychology” within the country. The Congress had prevented the Eisenhower administration from achieving the level of budget cuts and tax reductions that the administration had sought when the nation should have been in surplus. Therefore Anderson turned to monetary policy and away from fiscal measures that might run afoul of the Democratic-controlled Congress in order to control inflation.⁶⁷

At the CEA, Raymond Saulnier replaced Arthur Burns in late 1956. Like Burns, Saulnier had earned his Ph.D. in economics from Columbia, and he had later served with Burns on the National Bureau of Economic Research. He developed an expertise in mortgage financing, advising the Truman administration on farm credit issues, and was

hired by Burns as a special consultant to the CEA in 1953. He became a member of the council in his own right in 1955.

Philosophically more conservative than Burns, Saulnier rejected the view that a little inflation was necessary within a growing economy. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) was rising at a rate of 3.5 percent a year when Saulnier became chairman of the CEA, and he believed that his most important function was to advise the president on ways to control inflation. From a policy perspective, Saulnier advocated more aggressive monetary policies, lower income taxes for upper-income individuals and corporations, and a balanced budget.⁶⁸

Neither Saulnier nor Anderson achieved the level of personal influence with the president of their predecessors, but the new Treasury Secretary fared better than the new Chairman of the CEA. Changed circumstances within the administration and external factors partly explain Saulnier's more limited role as economic policy adviser. First, the growing international balance of payments problem pushed Eisenhower more and more towards the Treasury Department's natural position vis a vis controlling inflation. Second, Eisenhower became less and less interested in compromising with Congressional Democrats during his second term, and he rejected some economic policy proposals that might have been warranted strictly on their merits because he perceived them to be too political.⁶⁹

The other leading economic policy-maker in the Eisenhower administration was the director of the Bureau of the Budget (BOB), a position that was held by four different men – two bankers and two accountants – during Eisenhower’s eight years as president. For Eisenhower, the goal of a balanced budget became a powerful weapon that he wielded in order to impose his vision of a more limited role for the federal government. The men appointed as Directors of the BOB – Joseph Dodge, Rowland Hughes, Percival Brundage, and Maurice Stans – all adhered to the president’s view, and they diligently carried out this vision of fiscal restraint in their day-to-day activities. Their actions assisted Eisenhower in achieving three balanced budgets during his presidency, and enabled him to propose balanced budgets for FY 1961 and FY 1962.⁷⁰

In his excellent study of Eisenhower’s economic policymaking, John Sloan concludes that modern observers credited Eisenhower with compiling a solid economic record. “Nevertheless,” Sloan writes, “as he left office in January 1961 Eisenhower was seriously criticized because of the three recessions and the sluggish rate of growth during his second term.” Eisenhower was especially frustrated and disappointed by the lack of political support that he received for his willingness to fight the occasionally unpopular battle against inflation.⁷¹

But stable prices in the post World War II era were not sufficient. The public’s expectations had risen during the 1950s. Although Eisenhower’s critics, including many liberal Democrats and other proponents of Keynesian economics, conceded that the

administration had achieved some success, these same critics argued that it was possible to achieve much more given the knowledge of economic conditions that was available to policymakers in the 1950s. Specifically, these critics believed that less concern with a balanced budget, and a looser monetary policy would have produced faster economic growth and less unemployment during Eisenhower's terms as president.⁷²

Defense Spending and the Economy

Inflation, a concern for a balanced budget, and the relative merits of public versus private spending, were not the only issues that separated Eisenhower and his detractors. Eisenhower also differed from his critics in his conception of the potential detrimental economic effects of military spending.

The connection between defense spending and employment, particularly during periods of economic downturn, was an *explicit* policy goal of the federal government throughout the Cold War. This faith in the efficacy of using defense spending to counteract economic distress was not confined to either political party, and was not limited by ideology. Even an avowedly conservative political leader such as Eisenhower called upon this federal power during his presidency. For example, during the early stages of an economic downturn in late 1953, Eisenhower told chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Arthur Radford that the nation should "take the same approach to military production that we do to public works.... In other words, you put the heat on this

production when we face an economic depression and take off the heat when the economy is going at full tilt.” Four years later, in the midst of the recession of 1957 and 1958, Eisenhower pushed a package of government spending initiatives that included an acceleration of defense contract awards.⁷³

And yet, despite Eisenhower’s apparent willingness to alter the distribution and timing of defense contracts during recessionary periods, he was generally less inclined to use this discretionary spending power in “normal” economic times.⁷⁴ Casual observers might characterize Eisenhower’s attitude toward the economic displacement associated with changing defense needs as callous or indifferent, but to do so would be misleading. In Eisenhower’s view, military spending diverted finite resources from the domestic economy. And because Eisenhower believed that military spending was inherently wasteful and unproductive, he strenuously opposed any major shift in the balance between military needs and domestic priorities.⁷⁵

Eisenhower’s attitude toward the necessary trade-offs between defense spending and domestic needs was clearly stated very early in his first term. In March 1953, journalist Samuel A. Lubell recommended that Eisenhower reach an agreement with the Soviets to limit defense expenditures. Although the president questioned the feasibility of verifying such an agreement, he was intrigued by the Lubell proposal. In the next few weeks, Eisenhower worked with the staff of his new administration to convey the concept of

choosing “butter over guns.” The result of these efforts was Ike’s famous “Chance for Peace” speech.⁷⁶

In the speech delivered before the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 16, 1953, Eisenhower explained the parameters of the Cold War in stark terms. The worst to be feared, he said, was atomic war. The best to be hoped for would be “a life of perpetual fear and tension; a burden of arms draining the wealth and the labor of all peoples; a wasting of strength that defies the American system or the Soviet system or any system to achieve true abundance and happiness for the peoples of this earth.” He continued:

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.

This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement.

We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat.

We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people.⁷⁷

In short, the nation’s resources were finite. Spending on the military took money away from domestic needs. Eisenhower believed that private enterprise could make more efficient use of scarce resources than could government. Therefore, in simple terms,

spending by individuals and businesses was better than government spending. Beyond this, however, Eisenhower believed that military spending was a profoundly unproductive form of government spending.

As has already been discussed above, the New Look planned to reduce military spending – especially relative to the expenditures envisioned in NSC 68 and NSC 141. However, real reductions in the size and scope of the military budget were largely temporary.⁷⁸ During the 1950s, conventional forces were significantly reduced, but defense spending as a share of GNP remained relatively high as most of the New Look's spending priorities shifted resources from the Army and Navy to the Air Force. Communities that were home to firms that built weapon systems for the Army and Navy did suffer some economic distress during the Eisenhower years.

When pressed by critics, including some members of his own administration, to spend more on defense, Eisenhower was unmoved. He was not indifferent to the hardships faced by the hundreds of thousands of men and women who were thrown out of work by the New Look's spending priorities; rather, as was clearly explained in his Chance for Peace speech, Eisenhower genuinely believed that these individuals would find more productive work elsewhere. Workers who once built tanks could now build automobiles. Engineers who once designed missiles could now design homes, or schools, or bridges. Men who once worked as soldiers and sailors could now work as doctors to care for the sick, or farmers to grow food to feed the hungry, or any number of other occupations dedicated to

serving the needs of the general public, as opposed to the relatively narrow needs of the military.

Contemporary Critiques of the New Look

Part I - The Military and Strategic Critique of the New Look

In many critical respects, Eisenhower rejected the economic – and by extension military – philosophy espoused by many of Truman’s advisers. Not surprisingly, during Eisenhower’s eight years as president, these same policymakers and their ideological allies rejected Eisenhower’s belief in the need for balancing military and domestic spending needs. Still stinging from Republican charges of weakness during the very early days of the Cold War, Democrats in the mid- to late-1950s turned the tables on the GOP by charging – time and time again – that Eisenhower was selling out the nation’s security in the name of outdated economic principles.

These critiques of the New Look must first be considered within the context of the strategic theory of the 1940s and 1950s. Eisenhower’s national security strategy was based on the principle of nuclear deterrence. The very earliest works to consider the potential deterrent effects of nuclear weapons were built on an ambiguous theoretical framework. While some in the 1920s and 1930s, including Italian theorist Giulio Douhet, had postulated that the threat of strategic bombing would deter aggression, the Second World War had taught otherwise.⁷⁹ The existence of strategic air forces had not prevented

Germany, Japan, and Italy from engaging in wars of aggression in Europe, Asia, and Africa. And once the world was consumed in a global war, massive aerial bombing of the belligerents had failed to bring that conflict to a hasty end. In fact, military leaders and defense intellectuals who studied the impact of strategic bombing after the war were shocked and amazed at the resiliency of the civilian population. Aerial bombing had not brought the citizenry to its knees, nor had it halted industrial production. And, as has been discussed above, Paul Nitze had been among a small group of individuals who had learned these lessons first hand while at the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey during World War II.⁸⁰

Early theorists of nuclear deterrence had not had much time to resolve this confusion.⁸¹ When the Soviet Union developed and tested a nuclear device in 1949, the strategic focus shifted from deterring conventional acts of aggression to deterring the Soviets from directly attacking the United States with nuclear weapons.⁸² The Rand Corporation, initially home to economists charged with calculating the industrial capacity of potential military targets, expanded to become a leading research center in the field of nuclear deterrence theory. The work of the Rand analysts was classified, however, and was largely restricted for distribution within the higher offices of government.⁸³

One of the earliest and most comprehensive published critiques of the New Look, and of the strategic doctrine of massive retaliation, appeared in William W. Kaufmann's edited volume *Military Policy and National Security*. Published in 1956, the book

collected essays by several respected scholars including Kaufmann, Roger Hilsman, Morton Kaplan, and Gordon A. Craig, and included discussions of national security issues from both a theoretical and practical perspective. Perhaps the most influential essay from this volume was Kaufmann's own, "The Requirements of Deterrence." In this essay, Kaufmann, then an associate professor at Princeton University, noted that extended nuclear deterrence had important practical limitations. The expansion of the Soviet Union's ability to inflict a nuclear attack on the United States, Kaufman argued, increasingly eroded the credibility of the American threat to retaliate against Soviet aggression, including a conventional attack on Europe, with nuclear weapons. In short, as the Soviet nuclear stockpile grew relative to that of the United States, extended deterrence became equated with the implausible pledge to commit suicide.⁸⁴ This argument would become increasingly prevalent in the latter half of the 1950s.

For example, Henry Kissinger also questioned the utility of extended nuclear deterrence. In his widely read book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, published in 1957, Kissinger argued that nuclear weapons had rendered warfare nearly obsolete because there appeared to be no legitimate causes that would justify the use of such weapons. This stalemate had effectively paralyzed the United States' strategy "[b]ecause the consequences of our weapons technology [were] so fearsome, [and because the U.S. had] not found it easy to define a *casus belli* which would leave no doubt concerning our moral justification to use force."⁸⁵

Kissinger thought the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons to be “questionable,” and he viewed deterrence as an inherently passive strategy. “If the Soviet bloc can present its challenges in less than all-out form,” Kissinger postulated, “it may gain a crucial advantage. Every move on its part will then pose the appalling dilemma of whether we are willing to commit suicide to prevent encroachments.” Accordingly, the Soviets, Kissinger argued, would seek to make small gains that did not meet the criteria of the United States’ all-or-nothing strategy.⁸⁶

Kissinger likened the American situation in 1957 to that of France of 1936. In the tense years before World War II, the French had based their military strategy on a series of defensive fortifications known as the Maginot Line. The failures of that strategy had been dramatically displayed in the summer of 1940.⁸⁷ In this same context, Kissinger discussed the B-36 controversy and the associated Revolt of the Admirals at length. After the “Revolt,” when it was assumed that all wars would be total wars, the United States faced a limited conflict in Korea. Just as the French failed to keep pace with strategic realities in the late 1930s as they hung behind their Maginot Line, Kissinger contended that the United States’ strategy of the late 1950s did not align with realistic threats.⁸⁸

Kissinger made the case for a strategy that would include “intermediate applications of power which in the nuclear age may bring much higher political returns than resort to all-out war.” The need for an intermediate strategy had become even greater given the changing nature of deterrence, which had been brought on by nuclear stalemate.

In a time of nuclear stalemate, numbers of weapons had become meaningless. “To seek safety in numerical superiority, or even in superior destructiveness,” Kissinger charged, “may come close to a Maginot-line mentality – to seek in numbers a substitute for conception.”⁸⁹

According to Kissinger, as the power of modern weapons grew, the threat of all-out war would lose its credibility and its effectiveness. Therefore, limited war had become the only form of conflict that would enable the United States to derive the greatest strategic advantage from its industrial potential.⁹⁰ Kissinger also argued that the nuclear stalemate forced a reconsideration of earlier conceptions of strategic deterrence. “Douhet’s classic description of air strategy” was “now obsolete,” Kissinger charged, and he argued instead that “[t]he best strategic posture for an all-out war [depended] on the proper ‘mix’ of offensive and defensive capabilities.”⁹¹

At the time (Kissinger was writing in early 1957), Kissinger argued that the Soviets would be unable to achieve complete surprise, and therefore their capability for delivering a knock-out blow was extremely limited. Nonetheless, the devastation on both sides would be great, regardless of who struck first. Consequently, the “only outcome of an all-out war will be that *both* contenders must lose.”⁹² Kissinger did envision, however, that technological change could alter the balance and because “the stalemate for all-out war [was] inherently precarious,” he argued that it would “require a tremendous effort” by the United States “simply to stay even.”⁹³

Kissinger was not alone in his characterization of the risks and limitations of a nuclear deterrent strategy that presupposed an “all-out” war. Robert E. Osgood also made the case for a limited war capability. In his book *Limited War*, also published in 1957, Osgood stressed how the very nature of nuclear weapons – and of the tendency of nuclear warfare to become total – necessitated the adoption of an alternative strategy that would substitute limited, conventional warfare in the place of a global thermonuclear holocaust.

Osgood adopted a common format to present his case, considering the theoretical and historical roots of his thesis before offering a series of practical answers in the third section of his book. This third and largest section of Osgood’s book considered American strategy pre- and post-Korea, and moved beyond Kissinger’s analysis in crucial respects by concluding with a region-by-region analysis of how limited war might be used to further U.S. interests.⁹⁴

The cost for maintaining such a capability was indeed great. Kissinger noted, for example, General Maxwell Taylor’s estimation that twenty-eight modern divisions were necessary to meet foreseeable dangers.⁹⁵ President Eisenhower reported to the National Security Council “that he ‘had nearly fainted’ on hearing” Taylor’s recommendation.⁹⁶

Eisenhower’s underlying fear of the garrison state, and his attention to the “Great Equation” – that is “balancing requisite military strength with healthy economic growth” – would ensure that proposals such as Kissinger’s and Osgood’s (and Taylor’s) never became policy within an Eisenhower administration because they were based, in part, on

an implicit rejection of Eisenhower's economic views.⁹⁷ The president's detractors knew all of this, and yet the criticisms continued.

Part II – Sputnik, the Gaither Report and the Missile Gap

These criticisms generally failed to arouse popular sentiment during Eisenhower's first term. Then in the latter half of 1957, men and women who had not previously questioned Eisenhower's strategic judgment began to harbor doubts about the state of the nation's defenses. This shift in attitudes was prompted by three successive revelations relating to the Cold War nuclear arms race, which raised the anxiety level for millions of Americans.

In July 1957, Stewart Alsop revealed in the nationally syndicated column "Matter of Fact" that the Soviet Union had successfully launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). In that same month, Alsop disclosed that Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson intended to hold expenditures for missiles to less than 10 percent of the total military budget. Stewart was frustrated by the president's attempt to hold down defense expenditures. He was also annoyed by Eisenhower's penchant for secrecy. In a sarcastic note to Joe, his brother and business partner, Stewart conveyed the widespread sentiments of many of the president's critics when he wrote: "It is nobody's business, of course, if the administration decides to let the Soviets beat us to the ICBM, in order to cut taxes in the next election year."⁹⁸ The Soviets confirmed that they did, in fact, possess an ICBM on

August 26, 1957 and American officials, who had initially dismissed the story as an elaborate bluff, conceded in September – after a second successful launch observed by U.S. sensors – that the Soviets, and the Alsops, were telling the truth.⁹⁹

Then, on October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*, the world's first man-made earth-orbiting satellite. Measuring twenty-two inches in diameter, and weighing 184 pounds, *Sputnik* was hailed by scientists as a tremendous achievement for mankind. Less than a month later, on November 3, the Soviet's launched *Sputnik II*, a satellite weighing more than 1,100 pounds, and carrying a living creature into space – a dog named Laika. The American satellite program had intended to launch a much smaller satellite, *Vanguard*, in early 1958; prompted by the Soviet space shots, Eisenhower promised to launch a rocket into space before the end of the year. Ominously, the first test of *Vanguard* crashed on the launch pad at Cape Canaveral, Florida on December 6. Suddenly, casual observers in the United States, who had taken American technological leadership for granted, feared that the United States had fallen behind the Soviets in the space race.¹⁰⁰

This growing perception of technological inferiority vis-à-vis the Soviets was only reinforced when the contents of a secret report detailing the anticipated shortcomings of the U.S. nuclear weapons program were leaked to the media in December 1957. While the *Sputnik* launches had attracted considerable attention among the general public, the findings of the Security Resources Panel generated anxiety about nuclear weapons among

lawmakers and policymakers in Washington. Initially chaired by H. Rowan Gaither and since that time known as the Gaither Committee, President Eisenhower had charged the panel with studying the nation's civil defense needs. The panel's report, written by Paul Nitze and Colonel George Lincoln, went beyond this narrow mission and echoed the increasingly pessimistic attitude of the late 1950's. "We have found no evidence," the report's introduction stated, "to refute the conclusion that USSR intentions are expansionist." Consequently, the panelists warned of "an increasing threat which may become critical in 1959 or early 1960" and went on to highlight the widening disparity between the United States' and the Soviet weapons programs. The report concluded by advocating an acceleration of U.S. programs at an estimated cost of an additional \$44 billion in order to close this gap.¹⁰¹

Given Paul Nitze's central role in the drafting of both the Gaither Report and NSC 68, it is perhaps not surprising that much of the language in the Gaither Report was similar to that of the earlier document. What is striking, however, is that Nitze's views, which had been so soundly repudiated by Eisenhower's own words and actions during the intervening seven years since Truman adopted NSC 68 as official government policy, would be given so prominent a forum within Eisenhower's own administration. Nitze seized this forum with relish, repeating, almost verbatim, many of the same recommendations that had been included as part of NSC 68.¹⁰² For example, the Gaither Report stressed that the next two years would be "critical," whereas NSC 68 foresaw a

year of maximum danger on the near horizon. Failure to act “at once” to redress the deficiencies in the nation’s security programs would be “unacceptable” the Gaither panelists warned.¹⁰³

Further, the Gaither Report – like NSC 68 before it – argued that the U.S. economy could easily support and sustain – and might even be helped by – the spending necessary to provide for an expanded national security program. For example, the Gaither Report noted that current spending on all national security programs constituted less than ten percent of the nation’s total production, whereas 41 and 14 percent of GNP had been dedicated to defense programs in World War II and Korea, respectively. The total spending envisioned by the Report, the panelists explained, would still be less than what was required during the Korean War.

In order to support the Report’s defense spending proposals, the authors called for an increase in the debt limit, increased taxes, “a somewhat larger Federal debt, substantial economies in other government expenditures, and other curbs on inflation.” Nonetheless, the authors contended, “[t]he demands of such a program...on the nation’s economic resources would not pose significant problems.” Rather, the “increased defense spending” was expected to have “some influence on capital investment,” would help to sustain production and employment during a moderate recession, or, conversely, might “have some inflationary effects” under a condition of full employment which could be controlled by “monetary and credit restrictions.”¹⁰⁴

Eisenhower disagreed with the Committee's findings. He objected to the high costs of the Gaither Report's proposals. He did not believe, as the panelists had argued, that the economic effects of a dramatically expanded military and national security infrastructure would have no deleterious effect on (and might even boost) the nation's economy.¹⁰⁵ Given these and other concerns, Eisenhower specifically directed that the report be kept secret. The contents, however, were widely leaked. By December 1957 journalists were speaking openly of the "secret" NSC report.¹⁰⁶

Early the following year, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund published a series of reports that repeated and refined many of the prevailing criticisms of the Eisenhower administration. Published in January 1958, the report entitled "International Security – The Military Aspect" claimed that the United States was "rapidly losing its lead in the race of military technology." The report, written under the direction of Henry Kissinger, urged immediate action to reverse the trends.¹⁰⁷ In this context, the Rockefeller panelists argued that the nation's security needs transcended "normal budgetary considerations and that the national economy [could] afford the necessary measures." The panelists hoped that the recent Soviet "advances in the field of earth satellites [would] serve to spark a deep review of the basic attitudes and policies affecting the security of our country and of the free world." Finally, the authors viewed the United States's lag in the missile development and space exploration as "a symptom and not a cause" of "national complacency over the past dozen years."¹⁰⁸

The Report argued that the U.S. military establishment must be capable of deterring general war and also must be prepared to react to limited aggression. It also asserted, as had the Gaither Report and Kissinger's earlier work, that more effective civil defense measures must be considered as part of the United States overall strategic posture. Other specific recommendations included modernization of aircraft procurement, acceleration of IRBM and ICBM development and deployment, improved readiness for the Strategic Air Command (SAC), and expedited development and deployment of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). The additional costs for such programs were estimated at approximately \$3 billion each year for the next several fiscal years.¹⁰⁹

In its brief discussion of the economic burden that an expanded military program would impose upon the economy, the authors alluded to a second study – then being conducted – that would address the economic issues associated with national defense in greater detail. Even without that review, however, the panelists asserted that current military expenditures could not meet the needs of even the current force levels, let alone the increased level of forces called for in their report. And while they conceded that the price for ensuring the nation's survival would not be low, the panelists were “convinced...that the increases in defense expenditures [were] essential and fully justified.” “We can afford,” the authors concluded, “to survive.”¹¹⁰

Desmond Ball observes that the Gaither and Rockefeller reports were “invariably mentioned together” during the defense debates of the late 1950s. “Their findings and

recommendations were very similar,” Ball writes, “and there were half a dozen members common to both groups” including Colonel George Lincoln, James Fisk, and James Killian. Other prominent foreign policy experts, including Walt W. Rostow, Roger Hilsman, and Roswell A. Gilpatric, a principal author of the Rockefeller Report, advised Democratic politicians in the late 1950s. As such, Ball continues, “The Rockefeller Report was...often regarded as something like an unclassified version of the Gaither report.”¹¹¹

Eisenhower may have objected to many of the findings of these two reports, but he did not simply dismiss the recommendations out of hand. In fact, during the late 1950’s, Eisenhower presided over a substantial expansion of the United States’ nuclear weapons programs. For example, in the two years *before Sputnik*, the nation’s nuclear stockpile had expanded dramatically, growing from 2,110 weapons in 1955 to 5,420 in 1957. Meanwhile, the destructive force of these weapons had expanded even faster – from a mere 154 MT in 1955 to over 16,000 MT in 1957.¹¹² By the time that he had left office in 1961, Eisenhower had failed to rein in the “overkill” widely perceived to have been driven by the expanding strategic target list included within the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP), despite his growing belief that the U.S. nuclear arsenal had grown far larger than strategic requirements dictated.¹¹³

There is no evidence, however, that the Gaither Report influenced Eisenhower’s behavior in the late 1950s. Much of the work to diversify and stabilize the security of the

nuclear deterrent force had been prompted by the report of the Technological Capabilities Panel, headed by James R. Killian, which had been created by Eisenhower to study the challenge of confronting – and surviving – a surprise attack on the United States by the Soviet Union.¹¹⁴ Among its several recommendations, the report, issued in February 1955, called for accelerating intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) programs, as well as the Polaris submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).¹¹⁵

Eisenhower took these recommendations to heart. In the final years of his presidency, Ike placed particular emphasis on the expansion of the Polaris and Minuteman programs. Polaris was a medium-range nuclear missile capable of being launched from submarines. The Minuteman was an ICBM deployed in hardened, underground silos. These so-called second-generation, solid propellant, missiles were more stable than the liquid-fueled Titan and Atlas rockets that formed the foundation of the U.S. nuclear missile force in the late 1950s. These second-generation missiles were also less susceptible to a surprise attack than manned bombers. Collectively, improvements to the nuclear deterrent force initiated during Eisenhower's tenure moved the United States considerably closer to its goal of developing a survivable second-strike capability, even in the event of a massive surprise attack.

By 1962, the development and deployment of the second-generation weapon systems had fundamentally changed the dynamics of the nuclear arms race.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, many of these efforts were not immediately apparent to Eisenhower's critics,

who focused on the highly visible signs of U.S. decline relative to the Soviet Union, often for political gain. Some might conclude that these attacks were entirely political. The Rockefeller Fund, however, was hardly the exclusive preserve of liberal Democrats. Participants included Eisenhower's former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, Arthur Burns; Henry R. Luce, a life-long Republican; and James Fisk and James Killian, who had both advised Eisenhower on science and technology issues. Eisenhower himself, meanwhile, had initiated the Gaither Report. By the early spring of 1958, it was clear that the president's critics were emerging on many fronts, and in many quarters. Eisenhower's repeated attempts to defuse a growing sense of crisis were largely unsuccessful as his public reassurances that all was well only contributed to the perception that the president was complacent and out of touch.

Part III – The New Look vs. The New Economics

The combined shocks of *Sputnik* and the findings of the Gaither and Rockefeller Reports were received within the context of a slowing economy. As the economy slipped still further into recession in late 1957 and early 1958, the implicit economic attacks underlying the defense debate became more explicit. Critics attacked the economic theory that underlay the New Look with increasing fervor, and economists and public policy analysts stepped forward with their own views of the proper balance between national security "needs" and domestic "wants."

In contrast to Eisenhower's cabinet of businessmen and conservative economists, many of these critics, according to John Sloan, "advocated a more aggressive form of Keynesianism...which called for a more active manipulation of aggregate demand by fiscal and monetary policies to reach the full employment potential of the economy."¹¹⁷ Many of these individuals had served during earlier Democratic administrations, and they vigorously disputed Eisenhower's charge that excessive government spending and high taxes were depressing business activity and increasing inflation.

One such critic was Walter Heller, a leading liberal economist from the University of Minnesota who was credited with having coined the term the "New Economics." Born in Buffalo, New York in 1915, Heller earned his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Wisconsin in 1941. After working in the Treasury Department during World War II, Heller took a teaching position at the University of Minnesota in 1946. He became chairman of the Economics Department there in 1957. Heller's early writings were generally confined to economics textbooks and scholarly journals, and he did not play a particularly public role in framing the economic debate in the early 1950s. This economics professor would play an increasingly important role in the late 1950s, however, and he became an important economic adviser within the Democratic Party during this period.

Heller criticized the Eisenhower administration for not embracing deficit spending more enthusiastically in 1953 and 1954, but later conceded, in June 1957, that budget

deficits were unwise during a period of economic growth and relative prosperity.¹¹⁸

Looking back on the Eisenhower years in 1966, Heller criticized Eisenhower for being too focused on “minimizing the fluctuations of the business cycle” and for failing to realize “the economy’s great and growing potential.” Heller concluded that the “continued fear of inflation kept policy thinking in too restrictive a mold in the late 1950’s.”¹¹⁹

Another proponent of the New Economics, Seymour Edwin Harris, was one of the most prolific economics writers of his day. By the time that he was named chairman of the Economics Department at Harvard in 1955, Harris had written or edited 25 different books and monographs. He would go on to publish at least another 18 works during his lifetime. He also served as editor of the *Review of Economics and Statistics* and was associate editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

Born in New York City in 1897, Harris earned his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1926. He would go on to lecture and teach there for over forty years. He served on a number of advisory boards and committees during World War II, was elected vice-president of the American Economic Association in 1947, and was appointed to Harry Truman’s Council of Economic Advisers in 1950. A self-described Liberal Democrat, Harris was an economic adviser to Adlai E. Stevenson from 1954 to 1956. He was also an outspoken critic of the Republican’s economic policies.

In the waning days of the 1956 presidential campaign, Harris published an essay on “Taxes and the Economy” in which he questioned whether the president and his

academic advisers had learned any lessons from the previous twenty years about the proper relationship between tax policy, government spending, and economic growth. He also questioned Eisenhower's apparent preoccupation with the national debt. "Surely there is something wrong," Harris opined, "if the government would put the size of the debt above the material needs of the nation."¹²⁰ Harris questioned why, after a period of twenty years in which the national debt had risen from \$25 billion to nearly \$275 billion, this would be a concern. During this same period, Harris observed, gross national product had risen from \$56 billion to \$387 billion.¹²¹

Other issues also separated the two sides of the economic debate, Harris noted. The political parties were at odds over the use of public spending to stimulate the economy. Harris questioned whether the true nature of the GOP's reluctance to boost public spending resulted from the "businessman's administration" sharing the "prejudice of businessmen against public spending."¹²² Harris criticized the Eisenhower administration's "major but questionable" achievement of cutting military spending by \$10 billion. These same savings had not been reinvested in other forms of public spending, he noted. In fact, in spite of the decline in military spending, there had also been cuts in welfare outlays.¹²³

A more balanced approach to spending and tax reductions, Harris explained, might have included \$15 billion in tax relief, and an increase in welfare outlays of \$10

billion. Such an alternative, Harris continued, would have been “in contrast to those of the Eisenhower administration when the gains of an advancing economy were concentrated on the taxpayer who, in comparison with the beneficiary of social outlays, is relatively well-to-do.”¹²⁴

Harris hammered away on this theme. Eisenhower’s tax and spending policies, he explained, had reduced spending on the poor, while concentrating tax benefits for the wealthy. Whereas Republicans stressed “the importance of incentives” and held that “heavy taxes tend to discourage investment,” Harris argued, “Democrats contend that the remission of taxes should directly benefit the consumer” and that “[i]ncreased consumption should stimulate investment.”¹²⁵

In the concluding paragraphs to his essay, Harris laid out the essential issues of the 1956 campaign. The Republicans would take credit, he explained, for balancing the budget, reducing taxes, and for lessening government spending. But the Democrats, by contrast, would stress that “some things are more important than finance.” For example, Adlai Stevenson had said that “drastic cuts in military spending to provide resources for cutting taxes had proved costly in the loss of prestige abroad” and he had criticized Eisenhower’s welfare spending as “niggardly.” “Why,” Harris asked, “after 25 years of persistent schooling [did] the Eisenhower administration still [adhere] to the pre-depression theory that the objective of tax policy is to balance the budget instead of to contribute towards the stabilization and also the growth of the economy.”¹²⁶

These arguments persisted long after Eisenhower's overwhelming victory over Stevenson in the election of 1956,¹²⁷ and they were sharpened in late 1957 and early 1958. For example, the former chairman of the CEA Leon Keyserling stepped forward to attack the president's failed policies in early 1958. In the span of two months, Keyserling penned three essays emphasizing the importance of achieving higher levels of economic growth. In *The New Republic*, Keyserling argued that economic growth in the United States must average about 4.5 percent in order to "make new jobs for the growing labor force" as well as "those displaced by technological progress." The United States had exceeded these growth rates between 1947 and 1953, but growth in the period from 1953 to 1957 had averaged only slightly more than 2.5 percent, and growth in 1957 had fallen to only 2 percent. As a result, total production had fallen short of the full production targets by \$32 billion.

Keyserling charged that the Eisenhower administration's economic policies had "not only failed to modify these trends" but had actually "augmented them." Federal spending had bought "far less national security and domestic programs than we needed and could afford" and as a whole the federal budget had "pulled us downward instead of giving us a lift."¹²⁸ Claiming that as much of a third of the lag in total economic activity was due to cuts in federal spending, Keyserling argued that a more expansive federal budget would "expand jobs, consumption, and production." Further, he questioned why spending for national security had declined from 10.75 percent of total economic activity

during the fiscal years for 1954 through 1958, but constituted only 9.69 percent for 1958 alone, “despite the rising international threat.”¹²⁹

In the following month, *The Washington Post* published a lengthy letter from Keyserling on similar themes. Calling for a “vast increase in public outlays of many kinds” Keyserling again stressed that national output fell far below its full employment capacity. “[W]e now need,” he argued, “a tremendous upsurge of demand to absorb our existing productive capacities and to lift our rate of real economic growth to even 40 per cent of that registered by the Soviets in recent years.” The president’s budget provided for far less than was needed, however, and was actually smaller than in either of the two immediately preceding years.¹³⁰

When Keyserling returned to these themes yet again in a letter to the editor of *The New Republic* in March 1958, he repeated some of the claims that he had made as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Specifically, Keyserling argued that the slower growth in output and income of the late 1950s had occurred because public and private economic policies had failed to generate sufficient growth while the people still had “unsatisfied wants and needs” and did not “have the purchasing power to expand their buying.” To argue otherwise, Keyserling alleged, was “a blind euphemistic way of hiding our inability to meet human wants and needs, which are always present, through the full utilization of our productive capabilities.”¹³¹

Keyserling disputed that public spending and tax reductions were mutually exclusive. Recent proposals by Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois to cut taxes by up to \$5 billion, he explained, would not be sufficient to close the gap between actual and full employment production. Foreseeing the coming economic conditions to be “characterized...by a dangerously inadequate rate of growth in output and income, a consequent long-term rise in unemployment, and the resumption in price inflation in a retarded economy,” Keyserling urged that the government take bold actions, including *both* a tax cut, and a similar increase in federal spending. In the wake of *Sputnik*, he closed with an ominous reference to recent Soviet gains. “[T]he Russians,” he said, “are expanding their production by 7-10 percent a year. They are ‘affording’ what they think they need; while we think we ‘cannot afford’ what we know we need.”¹³²

A new generation of economists also stepped forward in the late 1950s to attack Eisenhower’s economic philosophy, particularly as it related to national security spending. One of these young economists was James Tobin, a professor of economics at Yale University who had earned his Ph.D. in economics at Harvard while studying under Seymour Harris and Alvin Hansen. Tobin had been schooled in modern liberal politics and economics since his youth. As he would later record, he had “learned of the human suffering of unemployment and poverty” from his mother, a social worker who directed the family service agency of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, for over a quarter century. Born and raised in Champaign, in the shadow of the University of Illinois, Tobin received a full

scholarship to attend Harvard University, where he earned his undergraduate degree in 1939. After service in the Navy during World War II, Tobin returned to Harvard to earn his Ph.D. in Economics in 1947.¹³³

During his sophomore year at Harvard, in 1936, Tobin had been introduced to the works of John Maynard Keynes,¹³⁴ and Keynesianism formed the foundation for Tobin's largely economic critique of the Eisenhower administration's national security policy. In an essay in the *Yale Review* published in the spring of 1958, Tobin criticized the administration for reducing defense spending "at a time when the world situation cried out for accelerating and enlarging our defense effort."¹³⁵ In Tobin's view, fears of large federal government budget deficits and high inflation, and an aversion to high taxes and more generous government spending, were forcing "Uncle Sam [to fight] with one hand tied behind his back."¹³⁶

Central to Tobin's message was his belief that public needs outweighed private indulgence. "A nation on the edge of starvation might of necessity be on the edge of insecurity," he wrote, but "The United States has no private uses of resources so compelling that they justify keeping the Western World in...a precarious position." Still later he reiterated and reinforced this theme. "The unfilled needs of defense are great and they are urgent," he wrote, "Whether we wish to try to meet them depends on how we weigh...the urgency of these defense needs against the urgency of those private uses of

resources that would have to be sacrificed.” Anyone with an awareness of “the luxury standard of living of the United States” would “strike the balance only one way,” he argued, preferring “to save our lives rather than our leisures” and valuing “freedom over fashion.”¹³⁷

While Tobin slammed some familiar targets from within the Eisenhower administration, including Treasury Secretary Humphrey and Defense Secretary Wilson, he also criticized one of the Democrats’ own, Senator Harry S. Byrd of Virginia, the conservative chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Indeed, to generalize, Tobin directed the weight of his argument against the classical economic philosophy of those who believed that the expansion of the federal government and the burden of taxation would drain the nation’s productive strength and stifle economic growth. He dismissed the national debt as largely irrelevant, because it was held by the people and “so to speak, within the family,” and he argued that excessive inflation could be restrained “by resolute taxation” and by tight money policies at the Federal Reserve Board. Meanwhile, echoing Harris’s sentiments, he rejected the argument that high taxation would discourage business activity. Pointing to the recent years in which “American businessmen have striven as earnestly and diligently as ever,” in spite of relatively high levels of taxation, he argued “[i]t is time to base economic policy on the evidence of history rather than on imaginary future catastrophes.”¹³⁸

Repeating Kissinger's arguments from the year before, Tobin argued that the nation's strength would "be decided by forces in being, not by potential strength. The weapons that our factories *could* produce, our engineers *could* design, or our scientists *could* invent – could if they had plenty of time – will neither defend us nor retaliate." In World War II, the United States had had time, barely, to mobilize. In World War III, Tobin warned, "we may not have days, much less years."¹³⁹

Tobin sought to bring his readers out of their complacent faith in American ingenuity with harsh and bold language. "[M]ilitary strength is not achieved by making civilian goods," he warned, "Let us not fool ourselves...that the use of talent and other resources to design, say, more automatic and more powerful automobiles is contributing to our national strength." The Soviets had "overtaken the United States" even though their "overall productive capacity" still fell far short, Tobin explained, because "in the grim calculus of relative military strength, much of our vast production is just thrown away, while they have concentrated on building the capacity and advancing the technology of military strength."¹⁴⁰

Finally, echoing Keyserling and others, Tobin affirmed his own belief that government itself was the key to the growth of the nation's productive power. Accordingly, he denigrated the ideology of those who believed that "dollars spent by governments are *prima facie* unproductive [while] dollars spent by private individuals and firms [are] productive." Rather, public needs outweighed private indulgence.¹⁴¹ Tobin

assailed what was, in his view, the misallocation of resources in the private sphere. He wrote:

Government dollars spent for such things as fire and police protection, education, postal service, highways, parks, hospitals, libraries, sanitation, and flood control, need have no inferiority complex with respect to private dollars spent for steaks, television, freezers, alcohol, horse racing, gasoline, comic books, and golf.¹⁴²

Conservatives had “greatly overestimated the weight of considerations that oppose defense spending and other governmental programs,” and “[t]he president’s budget for 1958-59,” Tobin explained, demonstrated “the continuing force of this tragic overestimate.” By refusing to consider the “possibility that many private uses of resources might be much more logical candidates for sacrifice than governmental programs,” the president had left “the way clear for *all* of the growing capacity of the economy to be channeled into still further elevation of our standards of luxury.”¹⁴³ In a time of relative prosperity there were no private uses of resources that would “justify keeping the Western World in...a precarious position.” A wise person, Tobin wrote, would immediately sacrifice private luxury and leisure in order to provide for national security.¹⁴⁴

Others who explicitly criticized the economic theories underlying Eisenhower’s views with respect to government spending, in general, and defense spending in particular joined Tobin. John Kenneth Galbraith, a professor of Economics at Harvard and a leading liberal intellectual during the 1950s, also played a prominent role in framing the intellectual debate around the New Look and the New Economics in the late 1950s.

Galbraith's theories of the proper balance between private desires and public needs, which echoed many of Tobin's same sentiments, were incorporated into the contemporary critiques of the New Look. Beyond this, however, Galbraith alleged that the Eisenhower administration had enabled some to prosper while others were mired in poverty – and this theme resonated particularly well within a Democratic Party eager to expand their majorities in Congress in 1958, and to win back control of the White House in 1960.¹⁴⁵

Born in Ontario, Canada, in 1908, Galbraith earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Toronto and then attended graduate school at the University of California, completing his Ph.D. in economics in 1934. After teaching assignments at both California and Princeton, he joined the Harvard faculty in 1948. Galbraith had already published three books when his most influential work, *The Affluent Society*, was published in the spring of 1958.¹⁴⁶

Galbraith was serving at that time as chairman of the economic advisory group within the Democratic Advisory Council (DAC). Formed in late 1956 after Eisenhower defeated Adlai Stevenson for the second consecutive time, the creation of the DAC reflected a dispute within the Democratic Party over the proper political strategy to be used against Eisenhower and the GOP. Legislative leaders such as Lyndon Johnson and Sam Rayburn had generally cooperated with the popular president. But other Democrats including Stevenson, Hubert H. Humphrey, and Estes Kefauver, disagreed with this

approach. Eventually other rising stars within the Democratic Party including John F. Kennedy and Stuart W. Symington joined the group.¹⁴⁷

In *The Affluent Society*, Galbraith consistently attacked “the conventional wisdom” which had not adapted itself to the new economic realities of prosperity. The world had known only poverty for most of its history, and, for most of man’s history, economics had concerned itself with the problem of scarcity, privation, and want. Accordingly, the conventional wisdom – crafted by the works of Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Thomas Malthus in the 18th and 19th centuries – addressed aggregate growth and decline within the economy, but took inequality for granted. In fact, these men and their followers went so far as to reject any reforms that sought to alter the distribution of resources within society.¹⁴⁸

But in the late 1950s, with the United States experiencing a rare period of affluence, Galbraith explained, economic policy was “guided, in part, by ideas that are relevant to another world” and he warned “[w]e enhance substantially the risk of depression and thereby the threat to our affluence itself” by continuing to be guided by these outmoded theories.¹⁴⁹ “In large areas of economic affairs, the march of events – above all, the increase in our wealth and popular well-being,” Galbraith alleged had “again left the conventional wisdom sadly obsolete.”¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, Galbraith set out to attack this now discredited conventional wisdom.

For example, the balanced budget was one key element of the conventional wisdom. The goal of achieving a balanced budget, Galbraith explained, had gradually changed and adapted in the 1930s and 1940s. Franklin Delano Roosevelt intended to balance the budget in the midst of a crushing depression. He never succeeded. The budget was never balanced during the depression. However, “not until 1936 did both the necessities and the advantages of this course begin to triumph in the field of ideas,” Galbraith explained. “In that year,” he continued, “John Maynard Keynes launched his formal assault in *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Thereafter, the conventional insistence on the balanced budget under all circumstances and at all levels of economic activity was in retreat.”¹⁵¹

There also had been major changes to notions of equality and insecurity. The unbroken faith in the inevitability of inequality had been eroded during the 1940s and early 1950s and American views of wealth had shifted during this period as well. The lowest levels of society had seen their fortunes rise, whereas the richest five per cent had actually seen their income after taxes decline from 1941 to 1950.¹⁵² In the midst of the Great Depression, the belief that government action could do nothing – in fact, should do nothing – to address people’s needs also was steadily eroded. “By the end of the decade, under the combined influence of Keynes and the sanguine and experimental mood generated by the New Deal, there was a widespread belief that depressions could be at

least partially prevented,” Galbraith wrote. “The notion that they must be allowed to run their course was virtually extinct.”¹⁵³

The conventional wisdom may have been in retreat during the Great Depression, but it had not been defeated. The United States had experienced “a mountainous rise in well-being,” Galbraith explained, and yet “the older preoccupations remain[ed].”¹⁵⁴ In this vein, one of Galbraith’s longest chapters addresses “The Illusion of National Security.” In a far-ranging discussion, Galbraith assailed the conventional wisdom, which held that *military needs must compete with consumer needs in times of crisis*. For decades, Galbraith explained, most observers had assumed that the size of a nation’s economy was directly related to its capacity to wage war. But Galbraith pointed to the fallacy of that view. Echoing the same sentiments expressed by Tobin, Galbraith questioned the balance struck by the Eisenhower administration between public and private spending. “It will be evident...that it is not gross output but usable military output which counts.” Galbraith made clear, “If all that is produced is required to sustain civilian consumption and none remains for military use, then production may be large and military strength can be very small indeed.”¹⁵⁵

Through this discussion, Galbraith sought to explode the myth that “military power [was] a function of economic output.” “Our wealth is a valuable weapon,” Galbraith noted, “[but] as things now stand it is largely unavailable, and to the extent that it is available its usefulness is gravely impaired.”¹⁵⁶ For example, in the midst of the most

recent military crisis – in Korea – the civilian economy and the effort to maintain the “standard of living,” Galbraith argued, “became an immediate and clear-cut threat to the effective prosecution of the war.” “The efforts of consumers to sustain...what persuasion had caused them to regard as a minimum standard of living effectively pre-empted the total output of the economy and more.” The resulting inflation caused by such actions necessitated price controls, Galbraith complained, and, meanwhile, military production rose slowly.¹⁵⁷

And yet, the conventional wisdom continued to emphasize the importance of the economy and its rate of growth in assessing military power. In spite of very recent evidence, which Galbraith alluded to in a footnote, that Russian technological advances had begun to challenge this conventional wisdom, industrialists in Eisenhower’s cabinet such as Wilson and Humphrey had “stoutly maintained throughout this period that what the United States could spend on defense was strictly circumscribed. It would be dangerous, they warned repeatedly, to spend more than we could afford.”¹⁵⁸ By their actions, Wilson, Humphrey, and others had not merely expressed the conventional wisdom, which held that civilian consumption must be maintained at the expense of military power; they had also affirmed their own deeply held beliefs. “Men who have spent their lives making automobiles, or providing raw materials to that industry,” Galbraith noted coldly, “do not easily conclude that automobiles are unimportant.”¹⁵⁹

For the balance of the book, Galbraith studied the nature of consumer credit and spending, inflation, price stability and monetary policies. Underlying these discussions, however, is a clear view – explicitly stated at times, at other times left unsaid – that unfettered consumption and consumerism were threatening to squander the true rewards that were now attainable within the context of an affluent society. Again, in language strikingly similar to that which had been used by Tobin, Galbraith observed that public services had been the victim of “a remarkable attack.” “All private wants, where the individual can choose,” he believed, had been rendered “inherently superior to all public desires.” Meanwhile, Galbraith noted, “it was argued...that expanding government posed a grave a threat to individual liberties.”¹⁶⁰ It is implied, yet clear, that in each instance Galbraith dismissed such attitudes as absurd, grounded in a conventional wisdom that should have long since been abandoned.

Having exploded “the myth that production...is the central problem” in an era of affluence, Galbraith put forward proposals to “redress the balance” between private consumption and public needs.¹⁶¹ But having passionately argued that poverty itself must be eliminated, alleging that its mere existence in an affluent society was a disgrace, the true direction of Galbraith’s critique is demonstrated by his decision to conclude his lengthy argument with a discussion of “security and survival.”¹⁶² Galbraith explained that he returned to this theme in the closing chapter of his book because it had been nearly two

years since he had drafted his earlier chapter on national security. “At that time,” he wrote, “it seemed hard to believe that people might soon be persuaded that crude increases in production had little to do with national defense and that the attitude that stressed such calculations was positively damaging.”¹⁶³ Since then, he continued, the Soviet Union had “revealed a breath-taking series of scientific and technical advances.” Such gains, he noted, were not handicapped by limited means. Rather, it had become evident that the United States’ failure to match this achievement was the result of the failure to concentrate the requisite resources on the desired ends.”¹⁶⁴

While many had blamed poor decision-making, interservice rivalry, and inadequate administration for the relative decline of American technological superiority over the Soviets, Galbraith saw a far deeper cause – “that our economy, and the economic theory that explains and rationalizes its behavior, immobilizes all but a minor fraction of the product in private and, from the standpoint of national security, irrelevant production.”¹⁶⁵ “[O]ur hope for survival, security, and contentment,” Galbraith concluded, “returns us to the problem of guiding resources to the most urgent ends.”¹⁶⁶

As has already been shown, members of both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations had – at various times – pledged themselves to the goal of attaining a balanced budget. Truman, challenged by crises in China and Korea, and advised by those who attacked the conventional wisdom, had ultimately conceded the point, and had bequeathed large budget deficits to his successor. Eisenhower and his advisers had not

dismissed the conventional wisdom, but they had not embraced it entirely either.

Galbraith himself had praised the Eisenhower administration in January 1955 for showing “considerable grace and ease in getting away from the clichés of a balanced budget and the unspeakable evils of deficit financing.” At that time, Galbraith commended the administration for showing “a remarkable flexibility of mind in the speed with which it has moved away from these slogans.”¹⁶⁷

In the wake of *Sputnik*, however, and following the findings of the Gaither and Rockefeller Reports, the political and economic circumstances had changed. Galbraith was far less willing to give Eisenhower credit for his economic achievements. Instead, by the spring of 1958, he viewed Eisenhower as simply a guardian of the status quo, a narrow-minded adherent to the conventional wisdom that had been discredited by events, and by theory. Galbraith was not alone in his views. Paul Samuelson, a professor of economics at MIT, also argued that measures taken to hold down prices might be holding down economic growth. “Avoiding inflation,” he later wrote, “is not an absolute imperative, but rather is one of a number of conflicting goals that we must pursue and that we may often have to compromise.” Accordingly, Samuelson envisioned a constant struggle, necessitated by growth at or near inflationary levels, which would enable the economy to enjoy the benefits of growth without the uncertainty of volatile price shifts.¹⁶⁸

In addition to Heller, Harris, and Keyserling, a new generation of economists including Galbraith, Tobin, and Samuelson attacked the economics of the New Look. This new generation helped to establish the parameters of the economic debate for the remainder of the decade, and the debate over Eisenhower's national security policy – predicated as it was on the president's economic philosophy – intensified.¹⁶⁹

Conclusions

The debate over the economics of national security in the nuclear era related directly to the nature of defense spending vis-à-vis the domestic economy. Truman was initially reluctant to embrace the enormous increases in defense spending called for in NSC 68; by 1952, he was generally committed to spending more money on *both* nuclear and conventional forces. Conversely, the keys to Eisenhower's ability to largely hold down defense expenditures were his faith in the principle of nuclear deterrence, his willingness to cut military spending – particularly on conventional forces – and his commitment to strategic planning for the “long haul.” In spite of charges from his political adversaries that he was conceding the periphery to the communist advance, Eisenhower refused to become engaged in protracted conventional conflicts, and he generally refused to spend money on forces designed to fight such battles.

Critics of the New Look, then and since, questioned the utility of nuclear deterrence, particularly in the era of nuclear plenty – when both the United States and the

Soviet Union had acquired such a number of nuclear weapons that neither party could reasonably expect to achieve a strategic advantage. Such a condition of nuclear parity did not actually occur until the late 1960s, but strategists in the mid-1950s had already begun to prepare for such a contingency. Eisenhower himself was not particularly sanguine about the “benefits” of nuclear weapons, but he believed that they were an effective deterrent to total war. His critics – a distinguished group of strategy intellectuals – identified the many problems associated with nuclear deterrence and massive retaliation, but they ultimately failed to offer an attractive alternative.¹⁷⁰ Ultimately, those who criticized the United States’ over reliance on nuclear weapons asked many important questions, but in the absence of compelling alternatives, nuclear deterrence persisted, even to the present day.

The crux of the critics’ arguments, however, always attacked Eisenhower’s overarching economic vision – that the nation’s means were finite, that the public sector was generally not an efficient vehicle for allocating these scarce resources, and that – of all forms of public spending – military spending was the least efficient, and least effective, vehicle for fostering economic growth. A lack of appreciation for the limits of power occasionally led policy makers to pursue goals that placed an unacceptable burden upon the U.S. economy during the Cold War. Eisenhower pursued an alternate strategy – he placed limits on the exercise of power largely (although not exclusively, or even primarily) because he specifically did not wish to burden the U.S. economy.

Scholars should move beyond the arguments and sentiments of contemporary critics by refining our understanding of the economics of the New Look. Eisenhower certainly resisted pressures to increase the defense budget; however, as has been shown in this chapter, there was more to this resistance than a simple aversion to all forms of government spending. If anything, Eisenhower appears to have been *most* strenuously opposed to using *defense* monies to boost the nation's economy. While he was not ignorant of the economic ramifications of his military decisions, the perceived need to maintain fiscal discipline remained paramount.

Scholarly opinion on the wisdom or folly of Eisenhower's economic worldview varies. Most of the contemporary criticisms of the New Look *implicitly* rejected Eisenhower's view that the U.S. economy could not sustain the high level of expenditures necessary to support larger conventional forces. Many of these critics dismissed his economic beliefs as outdated, at best, and ignorant, at worst. These criticisms were firmly grounded in the prevailing economic theory of the late 1950's and early 1960's. Our scholarship, however, need not be. By contrast many modern observers, with the benefit of hindsight, have praised Eisenhower for his fiscal restraint. In 1991, when a balanced federal budget was thought to be impossible, Richard Immerman observed that Eisenhower could "hardly be derided for his penny-pinching ways and fiscal orthodoxy." Meanwhile, in the previous year, Iwan Morgan concluded that Eisenhower's "military economies did not undermine the nation's security."¹⁷¹

The formulation of military strategy and national security policy is always susceptible to political pressures, and the New Look was not immune to such pressures. As this chapter has shown, the debate over the New Look did not become a major *public* issue until Americans began to fear for their own survival. These fears rose when a growing number of military leaders and strategic thinkers claimed that the United States' nuclear deterrent strategy was flawed, and rose still further when journalists began to speak of a looming missile gap. Meanwhile, the debate over the New Look did not become an *economic* issue until the ramifications of Eisenhower's defense economics began to take their toll within communities that had become dependent upon defense spending during the early 1950s. In the midst of a deepening recession in early 1958, these communities saw new economic opportunities in the new military spending programs that were needed to close a missile gap.

When *both* of these things happened – when fears about the state of the nation's defenses grew, and when the economy turned down – the debate over the New Look became a *political* issue. Suddenly politicians and policymakers who had criticized Eisenhower's fiscal restraint on philosophical grounds for years had a more tangible political issue with which to attack the president and his policies. The missile gap became their rallying cry. The rising political controversy surrounding the New Look in the late 1950s, of which the missile gap critique was a crucial component, had a measurable impact on the mid-term elections of 1958, and fundamentally altered the relationship

between President Eisenhower, the Congress, and the American people for the remainder of Eisenhower's presidency.

3. SENATOR JOHN F. KENNEDY AND THE MISSILE GAP

We are rapidly approaching that dangerous period which . . . others have called the 'gap' or the 'missile-lag period.' – Senator John F. Kennedy on the floor of the United States Senate in August 1958.¹

In the closing paragraph of his *Yale Review* essay, James Tobin argued that new leadership would prove the key to regaining U.S. technological superiority over the Soviet Union. Tobin believed that the American people might be willing to pay higher taxes and make other sacrifices if the nation's leaders accurately conveyed "the dangers [that] the country and the world face[d]." Recent Soviet success in space, he predicted, would "be well worth the blow it has dealt our national pride if it frees national policy from the shackles of fiscal orthodoxy." He further hoped that "[t]he Russian satellites [might] shake the American people from their complacency and cause them to demand the kind of leadership that elected democratic leaders are supposed to provide."²

At least one young politician aspiring for a position of leadership took Tobin's arguments against the New Look to heart.³ Although John F. Kennedy was not a Keynesian, he was not – in the words of James Tobin – "shackled" by fiscal orthodoxy. Kennedy himself had frequently supported additional spending for the nation's defense. As such, his critiques of the Eisenhower administration's defense policies during the late 1950s were grounded in a criticism of the president's *economic* philosophy.

Senator Kennedy stepped confidently into the intellectual and political milieu of the missile gap years. In the years leading up to *Sputnik* and the missile gap, Kennedy had labored in relative political obscurity even while his personal charm had made him a favorite of the Washington social scene. His political fortunes began to improve following

his surprise bid for the Vice Presidential nomination in 1956. Physically hampered for years by a weak back and Addison's disease, an adrenal condition, Kennedy experienced temporary relief from both ailments during the late 1950's. In 1957 the young, lanky senator who had once been bullied by more seasoned politicians, including Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, was handed a plum committee assignment on the Labor Committee; by early 1958 he had submitted two major labor-reform initiatives that solidified his liberal credentials on the domestic front. Service on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, meanwhile, established him as a respectable liberal internationalist and enabled him to distance himself politically from his father Joseph P. Kennedy, an outspoken isolationist prior to World War II.⁴

Kennedy had long held an interest in foreign policy and national defense. During his undergraduate studies at Harvard, Kennedy majored in political science, with a concentration in international relations. In his senior year, he wrote a research paper examining England's military unpreparedness prior to World War II. Later published as a book with the assistance of ghostwriter Arthur Krock and with a foreward by Henry Luce, *Why England Slept* reportedly sold over 80,000 copies.⁵

Kennedy believed that fear was a powerful motivator for democratic societies, which would otherwise be too slow to respond to genuine national security threats. In *Why England Slept* Kennedy primarily blamed the British public for failing to come to grips with the challenge posed by Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. The leaders in Great Britain in the

1930s were captives to, rather than shapers of, public opinion, and these leaders ultimately failed to convince their constituents of the need to rebuild the nation's defenses.⁶

Drawing on this and other lessons from history, Kennedy defined political courage as the ability of leaders to generate support for necessary national security programs. This point of view was celebrated in Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Profiles in Courage*. Published in 1956, very little of the book was actually written by Kennedy. Ted Sorensen, Kennedy's able and gifted assistant, later said that he had "prepared the materials on which the book" was based. Politicians have had a long history of publishing ghostwritten books to help their greater political ambitions, but they rarely win prizes for their efforts. Some have suggested that Joe Kennedy's old friend Arthur Krock influenced the trustees of Columbia University, who awarded the prize.⁷

Regardless of who actually wrote *Profiles*, Kennedy was certainly very familiar with the book. On balance, he agreed with its precepts. In practice, however, Kennedy himself showed the type of courage celebrated in *Profiles* only occasionally. For example, Kennedy's support for civil rights in the 1950s was lukewarm, at best. On four major civil rights votes in the Senate during this period, Kennedy sided with liberals twice, and, according to David Burner, "on issues of greater importance" Kennedy sided twice with conservative southerners.⁸

Burner observes that Kennedy's record on civil rights was a matter of indifference. On issues of great importance to him personally – including questions of national security

and defense – Kennedy was willing to challenge prevailing popular opinion. Above all, however, Kennedy was a practical man. He valued similar qualities in his advisers.⁹ And while Kennedy was not above taking a stand on principle, his political senses sharpened in the late 1950s. Early on, Kennedy realized the political value of the missile gap. In contrast with the British politicians whom Kennedy had criticized in 1940, and who had become nearly paralyzed with a fear of war with Germany, Kennedy used fear as a motivator to convince the American public in the late 1950s of the need to support national security programs necessary to close the missile gap.¹⁰

The Revolt of the Generals

The intellectual milieu of the missile gap continued to develop in 1958. While the writings of many critics were confined to classified reports and obscure scholarly journals, a number of prominent critiques of the New Look reflected the practical perspectives of senior military officers. The first of these works was Matthew Ridgway's *Soldier*, published in 1956. Born in Virginia in 1895 into a military family, Ridgway lived almost his entire life in the shadow of the Army. He graduated from West Point in 1917, and later returned to West Point as an instructor, where he taught for six years.¹¹

During World War II Ridgway commanded the 82nd Airborne Division one of the most-celebrated fighting units in World War II. In 1950, he was appointed commander of the U.S. 8th Army in Korea, and in the following year he replaced Douglas MacArthur as

commander of the United Nations forces in Korea, and of the Allied occupation forces in Japan. He was serving as Supreme Commander Allied Forces, Europe, a job formerly held by Dwight Eisenhower, when he was named Army Chief of Staff in August 1953.¹²

Ridgway's memoir *Soldier* blended recollections from his long military career with a series of pointed criticisms of the direction of U.S. military policy. Ridgway appreciated the importance of civilian control over the military, but he also stressed his obligation to represent the needs of the armed services in the interest of national security. In particular, Ridgway criticized the interservice wrangling that had been driven by Eisenhower's economy measures. He contended that the Army unfairly bore the brunt of these budget cuts – with uniformed troops reduced by 500,000 and the Army's budget slashed from \$16.2 billion to \$8.9 billion.

Ridgway was reluctant to criticize Eisenhower directly; instead he singled out Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson and Treasury Secretary George Humphrey for much of the blame. A letter submitted to Wilson in June of 1955, only three days before Ridgway's official resignation from the Army, was reprinted in full in the appendix to the book. It is a useful summary of the concerns of many Army officers during the era of massive retaliation.¹³

In his letter to Wilson, Ridgway discussed the nature of the Soviet threat and the likely Soviet strategies in the event of general war. He also proposed a strategy for the United States designed to meet these challenges. Ridgway emphasized that the Soviet's

were committed to an offensive strategy, and that they and their allies retained the initiative in engaging in conflicts worldwide. He also underscored that the circumstances of “nuclear plenty” had effectively cancelled out the advantages of nuclear deterrence. In light of this, he questioned the wisdom of continuing to base American strategy on the threat to use nuclear weapons. “[S]ince national objectives could not be realized solely by the possession of nuclear capabilities,” he wrote, “no nation could regard nuclear capabilities alone as sufficient, either to prevent, or to win a war.” Accordingly, Ridgway called for an “immediately available mobile joint military force...in which the versatility of the whole is emphasized and the preponderance of any one part is de-emphasized.”¹⁴

Ridgway’s book was reviewed in a number of prominent national publications and major newspapers including *The New York Herald Tribune*, *The New York Times*, the journal *Foreign Affairs*, and weeklies such as *The New Yorker* and *Saturday Review*. One reviewer in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* argued that “there [were] honest men who [would] not agree with Ridgway, but none [would] dispute the sincerity” of his memoir. Another review in the *Christian Science Monitor* argued that Ridgway’s “honest and forthright appraisal of our military situation [deserved] careful reading.”¹⁵

Ridgway was one of the first senior military officers to publicly criticize Eisenhower’s national security strategy; he was hardly the last. Two years after the publication of Ridgway’s *Soldier*, in the wake of *Sputnik* and the Gaither and Rockefeller Reports, retired Army General James M. Gavin published *War and Peace in the Space Age*.

Born in Brooklyn, New York and orphaned at a young age, Gavin quit high school early to enlist in the Army. Within fifteen months of his enlistment he secured an appointment to West Point, where he earned his commission in 1929. Gavin served in Europe during World War II, participating in airborne landings at Sicily and Normandy. Later, as a major general at the age of 37, he led the 82nd Airborne Division during the bold but ill-fated attempt to secure an early allied bridgehead over the Rhine during Operation Market Garden.¹⁶

After being named the Army's Chief of Research and Development in 1955, the outspoken general increasingly found himself on the losing side of a series of contentious military debates. Gavin's increasingly vocal criticism of the administration's spending priorities and of the operations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff brought him into conflict with many of his putative superiors. In November 1957, only a few weeks after the launch of *Sputnik*, Gavin boldly called for an expansion of the Army's missile programs to meet the new challenge posed by the Soviet space satellite and the Soviet ICBM. These recent Soviet successes, according to Gavin, were evidence "of what informed Americans have long known: that the Soviets are making rapid progress in adapting missiles to their national needs—and the international situation."¹⁷

Then in early January 1958 Gavin abruptly announced his retirement. Rejecting Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker's offer of the choice of a major assignment and a promotion to four stars, Gavin explained in a special interview with the *New York Times*

that he believed he could “do more on the outside for national defense than on the inside.”¹⁸

Gavin repeated these claims when he formally quit the Army on March 31, 1958. Again citing his frustration with budgetary constraints and interservice rivalry, Gavin openly advocated a resumption of nuclear testing and an acceleration of missile development in order to close the missile gap.¹⁹

Less than five months later Gavin published *War and Peace in the Space Age*. Building on Ridgway’s earlier assessment, and on the events surrounding the launch of *Sputnik*, Gavin’s book was a blunt and outspoken critique of the New Look. According to the dust jacket, Gavin showed why the United States “fell behind the Russians.” Further, he explained “how limited thinking crippled our ability to win limited wars and how poor decision making at the top and timid decision makers led us into our present grave position.” According to the publishers, Gavin named names, and fixed “responsibility in the highest places.” Indeed, he did all of these things, and more.²⁰

At the outset, Gavin wrote openly of the missile lag. He predicted that during the years of the missile lag – “a period...that we are now entering” – the nation’s “offensive and defensive missile capabilities will so lag behind those of the Soviets as to place us in a position of great peril.”²¹ The lag, in Gavin’s view, was exacerbated if not actually caused by faulty decision-making within the Pentagon that placed greater emphasis upon the Navy’s *Vanguard* than upon the Army’s competing *Redstone* rocket program under the direction of Wernher von Braun. But it was not too late; the missile lag, he stressed, could

be closed by concerted action. In many respects, Gavin's work can be seen as a more critical iteration of Ridgway's earlier concerns about the nature and direction of the nation's defense programs, particularly as they related to the balance of forces between the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Gavin's warnings, however, were made all the more urgent by the events of the previous twelve months – especially the Soviet ICBM, and the launch of *Sputnik* – and therefore had greater political resonance than Ridgway's earlier work.

Gavin's book was immediately greeted by favorable reviews in a number of magazines and newspapers including *The New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.²² In a mixed review of Gavin's work that appeared in *The New Republic* in September 1958, James E. King, Jr. sensed the influence of Henry Kissinger within Gavin's argument. For example, Gavin, like Kissinger, doubted that "massive retaliation" would continue to deter limited wars. The United States had neglected to prepare itself for lesser threats and, as such, Gavin feared that the nation might be outmaneuvered during the Cold War in those crises that did not merit the use of nuclear weapons. Gavin also agreed, King observed, with the Rockefeller and Gaither Reports, which had called for more funding for defense and he referred approvingly to those who argued that the nation could afford to spend much more on defense without harming the domestic economy.²³

Other Critiques of the New Look

In the summer of 1958, Eisenhower's New Look was also assailed by the vocal concerns of industry and business leaders in *The Problem of National Security: Some Economic and Administrative Aspects*, a report published by the Committee for Economic Development (CED). Founded in 1942 by liberal-minded businesspeople and academicians, including Paul Hoffman and Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, the CED hoped to reconcile the competing interests of government and business. The CED sponsored research supporting Keynesian economic principles, a departure from the economic planning pushed by the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) during World War II. The CED's Board of Trustees in 1958 was chaired by Donald David of the Ford Foundation, and included 150 senior executives from the nation's largest corporations.²⁴

The Problem of National Security began by arguing that it was impossible to know what form aggression might take, and therefore there was not just one "best way of dealing with [the Soviet threat] that will permit us to dispense with the cost of preparations for alternative threats."²⁵ The main purpose of their study, the authors explained, was to establish "the considerations upon which decisions with respect to the size of our defense program should...be based; and to clear away what we think are certain false ideas that have governed these decisions in the past." The most significant of these considerations was the false notion of the need for economies in defense. "[W]e must not hobble ourselves," the

authors maintained, "by the notion that there is some arbitrary limit on what we can spend for defense, now within reach, that we can exceed only with disastrous consequences to the economy."²⁶

The CED report established certain assumptions about the hostile intent of Soviet leaders and also noted the recent technological gains achieved by the Soviets.²⁷ The authors attributed these successes to two principal factors. First, the Soviets were able to extract more security from their military for less money by spending less on pay, comfort, and safety for their troops. Further, the Soviets were dedicating their most productive resources to the manufacture of military goods. Therefore, the second primary factor contributing to the Soviets' recent military gains stemmed from their conscious decision to dedicate their economy to supporting defense industries and economic growth "and not toward satisfying consumers' wants."²⁸ As a result, the authors argued, Soviet leaders had managed to achieve a rate of investment that was far greater than that in the United States, and they had managed to concentrate resources "on projects conducive to industrial and military development, whereas a large proportion of our best brains are engaged in designing and merchandising consumer goods and services."²⁹

Eisenhower, as has been shown above, would likely have considered this to be a sign of American economic strength, not weakness.³⁰ But the authors of the CED report and, one presumes, a majority of the members of the CED, did not agree with Eisenhower about the proper balance between military needs and consumer wants. For example, the

authors tacitly agreed with the president when they observed “the strength of the United States rests overwhelmingly in the public and its resources, not in Washington.” However, the authors continued, in a direct affront to the president, “[t]he United States need not turn itself into a ‘garrison state,’ but it may have to divert to national security a larger proportion of its output ... and forego standards and practices that impair the nation’s strength but are not at all indispensable parts of our way of life.”³¹

The authors highlighted the “need for prudence” in order to ensure military security. “We cannot afford,” they argued, “to gamble for the sake of the economy.” For example, the report highlighted the need to develop a number of different weapon systems to insure technological superiority. Because the development of modern military forces required years of advanced planning, the authors argued, “prudence requires that we insure against error, that we cover several bets on decisions involving high stakes.”³² Again, this contradicted Eisenhower’s view that the “prudent” course was to protect the domestic economy against wasteful and duplicative military spending.

In discussing the relative burdens of defense spending since the end of World War II, the authors pointed to the years immediately before and after the Korean conflict. In 1948, when the Secretary of Defense and the service chiefs had called for a military budget of at least \$18 billion, the President and the Bureau of the Budget had demanded that this figure be held to no more than \$15 billion out of concern for harming the economy; but when defense spending after the Korean War rose to more than \$50 billion, it had no

appreciable negative impact upon the American economy.³³ In spite of this evidence from recent history, the authors believed that concerns about a “sound economy” continued to impede “rational” decision-making by the nation’s leaders. The strong belief in the “debilitating effects of large defense expenditures on the economy,” the authors wrote, stood “in striking contrast to the paucity of our economic knowledge about such effects.”³⁴ As such, while the authors conceded that they did not know whether a new analysis of military needs would necessarily lead to more spending, they also believed that “[p]reconceptions about the expenditures we can afford, the taxes we can stand or the debt we can bear should not be allowed to interfere with informed and rational balancing of the gains and losses from enlarged national security programs.”³⁵

The authors considered the economic parameters of the national security debate at some length. Just as Keyserling, Tobin, and others had argued, the members of the CED foresaw that economic growth was a key element in the ability of the United States to provide for its security. The authors believed that high inflation was more likely in times of full employment, but was less of a concern during periods when the economy was operating below full capacity. In addition, they argued that inflation could be controlled “if the American public [was] willing to let itself be taxed sufficiently.”³⁶ Further, the authors largely dismissed the possible detrimental effects of diverting skills, materials and resources from civilian industries to defense.³⁷

Most importantly, and again in sharp contrast to Eisenhower's belief in a "danger point" in taxation, the CED did not believe that there was a "sharp breaking point" at which high levels of taxation would have a marked impact upon the economy. While they did believe that the structure of taxation might be altered to give greater incentives to savings and investment, they also argued that the American economy could "stand without becoming debilitated" the total amount of taxes now collected. What was more, "a somewhat larger burden" would be "fairly safe" from their point of view.³⁸

The authors conceded that the "[p]rovision for national security [was] expensive" and that expenditures had already increased from a little over one per cent of gross national product in the 1930s to over eleven per cent in recent years. But they declared that "even this huge amount may have been inadequate" to meet the Soviet threat.³⁹ Then, in an argument that was repeated by observers – both liberal and conservative – in later years, the CED reiterated that fears "that a high defense burden will weaken the economy ha[d] been exaggerated." The United States, the authors wrote, had "not reached a point at which anxiety over a healthy functioning of the economy demands that defense expenditures be slashed."⁴⁰ By contrast, "[w]e see no need to be apprehensive about whether or not the American economy can stand the strain of ... a considerably larger budget. The risk that defense spending of from 10 to 15 per cent of gross national product, or if necessary even more, will ruin the American way of life is slight indeed." "There is no factual basis for the notion that we are within reach of or exceeding some 'breaking point' beyond which tax-

financed expenditures will critically impair economic growth,” and they concluded, with emphasis, “We can afford what we have to afford.”⁴¹

Eisenhower expected criticism from disgruntled former officials from the Truman administration. He did not seek the approval of liberal academic economists. He was disappointed, but not surprised, that Army officers would question cuts in their service. The CED’s findings and opinions are interesting, however, because they reflected the attitudes of business leaders. When the president’s presumed ideological allies leveled criticisms against Eisenhower’s national security and economic policies, then the president’s critics had still further ammunition to use against him. Several years later, liberal economist Seymour Harris specifically cited some of the CED’s criticisms to support his contention that the Eisenhower administration had “greatly overstressed” economic considerations in reducing ground troops and in relying too heavily on nuclear deterrence.⁴²

Congressional leaders also hammered away at Eisenhower’s national security program during a series of hearings in the winter and early spring of 1958. But after firm assertions in April by both Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy and Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Quarles that there was no missile gap, the debate briefly subsided.⁴³ Attention turned during the late spring and early summer to other events, including Eisenhower’s plan to reorganize the Department of Defense.⁴⁴

By the late summer of 1958, however, a number of other studies had taken direct aim at many of Dwight D. Eisenhower’s most closely held beliefs with respect to national

security and the economy. Military theorists such as Kissinger, Osgood, and Kaufmann had criticized the very foundation of the United States' nuclear deterrent strategy. Military leaders, including Ridgway and Gavin, had questioned the direction of the nation's military programs. Economists Tobin, Galbraith, Harris, and others had categorically rejected Eisenhower's contention that the burden of military spending would cause undue harm to the domestic economy, and might lead to the creation of a "garrison state." Even Eisenhower's natural allies in the business community had called for more defense spending to meet the Soviet challenge. Armed with such information, journalists and politicians who had questioned the wisdom of Eisenhower's entire defense program for years embarked on a new round of charges and countercharges centered around the missile gap. Most prominently, syndicated columnist Joseph Alsop, the man who would later claim to have coined the term "missile gap," joined with an up-and-coming politician with his eyes on the White House to push the missile gap into the headlines once again.

Senator Kennedy, Joseph Alsop and the Missile Gap – Part I

The Alsop brothers, Joseph and Stewart, were one of the most successful journalistic teams in the 1950's. Born to a prominent family whose forbears included the Roosevelts of Oyster Bay, New York, the Alsops had cultivated their social standing with education at the finest eastern schools. The older Joe had preceded his younger brothers Stewart and John at Groton. Then, while his younger brothers had attended Yale, their

father and grandfather's alma mater, Joe broke with family tradition to attend rival Harvard.⁴⁵

Joe differed from his parents and siblings in other ways. Whereas Corinne Alsop's uncle, Theodore Roosevelt, passed on his Republican leanings to many within the Alsop clan, Joe especially identified with his mother's cousin, Eleanor, and her husband, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. As a hungry young journalist with a nose for a good story, Joe adopted a notably interventionist stance in the years leading up to World War II and he was generally supportive of many of FDR's domestic initiatives.⁴⁶

Joseph and Stewart Alsop were reunited in Washington, DC after World War II, and they immediately began to collaborate on a regular, syndicated column for the *New York Herald Tribune*. The Alsops' "Matter of Fact" consistently conveyed the new internationalism of their generation, and the column circulated widely during the next decade. By the mid-1950's they had become particularly critical of Eisenhower's efforts to restrain defense spending, but Joe's increasing predilection for the Democratic Party troubled his long-time partner, and the siblings formally split in 1958. For the remainder of his career, Joe Alsop would be the sole author of "Matter of Fact," while Stewart continued on to a successful career with *The Saturday Evening Post*, and later *Newsweek*.⁴⁷

With his newly-obtained independence, Joe embarked upon a new round of charges and counter-charges against the Eisenhower administration and the missile gap.⁴⁸ He had long had a keen interest in the subject. As was discussed in Chapter Two, the Alsops had

been among the first to break the story of the Soviet ICBM test in August of 1957. In the spring of 1958, Joe wrote an idiosyncratic piece in the journal *Encounter* decrying the United States' strategic disadvantage vis-à-vis the Soviets in the wake of the missile gap.⁴⁹ Then in early August he penned a piece entitled "Our Government Untruths." Alsop accused the Eisenhower administration of a "gross untruth concerning the national defense of the United States," and he declared that Eisenhower himself had been either "consciously misleading" the American public, or had been badly misinformed when he assured the nation that his defense program was adequate. Alsop claimed that only a "vastly greater national effort" could eliminate the "deadly danger" that the nation would face "during the period the Pentagon calls 'the gap' – the years between 1960 through 1963 or 1964."⁵⁰

Alsop assumed that the Soviet Union would put its new long-range bomber into early production, and that the United States' manned bomber force would be increasingly vulnerable. The greater disparity, however, was in medium- and long-range missiles. He declared that the Soviets would have between "1,000 and 2,000 ballistic missiles with suitable ranges to neutralize or destroy all [U.S.] overseas bases, on which the striking power of our manned bomber force heavily depends." Alsop projected the following missile "scorecard" in the years from 1959 to 1963:

	U.S. ICBMs	Soviet ICBMs
1959	0	100
1960	30	500
1961	70	1,000
1962	130 (plus a few submarine-borne Polaris, perhaps)	1,500
1963	130 (plus more Polaris)	2,000

As for new weapons in development, he accused the administration of “gambling the American future” on the Minuteman missile even though that weapon, according to Alsop, could not “possibly be ready for operational use before the end of 1963 or early 1964,” or even later. A few more Polaris submarines would not appreciably alter the balance in the United States’ favor, he wrote. Accordingly, Alsop predicted that the United States would progressively slip further and further behind the Soviet Union; the “indisputable” effect of this policy would be to “allow the Soviets to gain an overwhelming superiority in over-all nuclear striking power.” The United States was allowing the Soviets to gain this advantage, he concluded, while the “last chance to save ourselves [was] slipping through our hands.”⁵¹

On the heels of his broadside against the administration’s national security policy, Alsop approached John F. Kennedy about delivering a speech on the floor of the Senate on the subject of the missile gap. Few pundits doubted that Kennedy’s political ambitions extended beyond the Bay State, but Joseph Alsop believed that Kennedy would be the likely Democratic nominee for president in 1960. He also believed that the missile gap would be a major issue in that campaign. Alsop was happy to provide his friend with ammunition for the ensuing rhetorical battles.⁵²

Kennedy had spoken of the missile gap on previous occasions. Kennedy was gearing up for his first Senate re-election campaign when *Sputnik* traced across the evening sky and into the morning headlines. In early November 1957 he charged that “the nation was losing the satellite-missile race with the Soviet Union because of...complacent miscalculations, penny-pinching, budget cutbacks, incredibly confused mismanagement, and wasteful rivalries and jealousies.”⁵³ Then, in a speech in Chicago in early December 1957, Kennedy noted that the United States was “behind, possibly as much as several years, in the race for control of outer space and in the development, perfection, and stockpiling of intermediate range ballistic missiles and long range ballistic missiles.”⁵⁴

Explicitly prompted by Alsop and encouraged by favorable reviews of Gavin’s recent book, Kennedy delivered a major speech on the afternoon of August 14, 1958.⁵⁵ The speech itself was replete with historical references that had already become a Kennedy trademark. He began with dramatic comparisons to the British loss of Calais in 1558, which represented the last vestige of British power on the Continent. “There is every indication,” he declared, “that by 1960 the United States will have lost its Calais – its superiority in nuclear striking power.” But Kennedy urged his countrymen not to despair. The British adjusted to their defeat at Calais with a new military strategy based on supremacy on the seas, and they secured for themselves “new power and new security.” Kennedy was confident that the United States could do the same.⁵⁶

Depending heavily upon the arguments of Alsop, Gavin, and Kissinger, Kennedy eschewed the encouraging words that were typical of Eisenhower's statements about the gap. "We are rapidly approaching that dangerous period," Kennedy explained, "which General Gavin and others have called the 'gap' or the 'missile-lag period.'" Then, quoting directly from Gavin's book, Kennedy noted that during this period of the gap, the United States' "offensive and defensive capabilities will lag so far behind those of the Soviets as to place us in a position of great peril." Still later, Kennedy declared that "discussions of new armaments are not enough – and too late to halt the gap." He predicted that "the gap will begin in 1960," and he foresaw that "the years of the gap" would be a period in which "our threats to massive retaliation" and "our exercises in brink-of-war diplomacy [would] be infinitely less successful."⁵⁷

Kennedy also dealt out his share of economic criticism. Calling Eisenhower's fiscal restraint a sign of complacency, Kennedy charged the president with placing "fiscal security ahead of national security." He then ridiculed Eisenhower for the "appealing shibboleths proclaimed to the nation each year" which held that military security could be obtained within the constraints of the budget. Quoting directly from several of the president's statements, Kennedy argued that "during that period when emphasis was laid upon our economic strength instead of our military strength, we were losing the decisive lead against the Soviet Union in our missile capacity." Calling these the "years the locusts have eaten," Kennedy explained that it was "quite obvious" that the United States had "obtained

economic security at the expense of military security.” He predicted that this policy would bring “great danger within the next few years.”⁵⁸

Averring that he had “never been persuaded” by the president’s views with respect to the economy and defense spending, Kennedy believed “that to emphasize budgetary limitations without regard to our military position was to avoid an inconvenient effort by inviting the disaster that would destroy all budgets and conveniences.” “Surely,” Kennedy continued, “our nation’s security overrides budgetary considerations.” “Then why,” he asked rhetorically, “can we not realize that the coming years of the gap present us with a peril more deadly than any wartime danger than we have ever known?” Kennedy found this all to be “tragically ironic,” because “our nation could have afforded, and can afford now, the steps necessary to close the missile gap.”⁵⁹

Having fixed the blame for the missile gap firmly at the feet of the president, Kennedy then described the steps that would need to be taken in order to reverse the nation’s dangerous decline. The initial focus, he said, should be on short-range steps to turn the tide immediately. Praising Senators Johnson, Stuart Symington of Missouri, and Henry M. “Scoop” Jackson of Washington State for their “thoughtful addresses” and “committee actions” on these issues, Kennedy called for more “air tankers to refuel SAC bombers,” and more air-to-ground missiles to defend bombers from Soviet interceptors. He urged an expedited program for developing longer-range ICBMs and IRBMs, including investments in solid fuels, and he specifically endorsed the Polaris and Minuteman programs. He also

called for new continental defense measures, and he argued for the need to “reverse what General Gavin [described] as the ‘critical cut’ in our military manpower begun in 1954.”⁶⁰

In the ensuing debate in the Senate, Kennedy’s colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle – including Senators Symington and Jackson – rose to praise his call for more spending on defense in order to close the missile gap. Earlier that day, Symington had aroused the ire of Republicans when he had inserted into the *Congressional Record* a series of published reports highly critical of the administration’s response to the missile gap. When Kennedy rose later in the day to deliver his speech, he was confronted by an already hostile Republican minority.⁶¹

After his speech, several of these Republicans pressed Kennedy to define the precise size and scope of his called-for military build-up. For example, Homer Capehart of Indiana asked Kennedy if the nation should spend more for defense. Kennedy replied in the affirmative, but he refused to commit to defining a complete “military program.” When Capehart then asked if enough money had been appropriated for defense, Kennedy replied that there had “been insufficient appropriations for the past 6 years, beginning in 1953.”⁶²

Capehart pressed again, asking Kennedy if defense appropriations should be increased from \$40 billion to “perhaps \$45 billion or \$50 billion.” Kennedy refused to discuss specific numbers. Noting that he was not a member of the Armed Services Committee and was “therefore not privy to confidential information” which was available to other senators, Kennedy referred instead to “a responsible column appearing in the

Washington Post and elsewhere” which had predicted Soviet ICBM strength at 500 missiles in 1960, and “something like” 1,000 ICBMs by the end of 1961, and 1,500 in 1962.

Kennedy openly conceded that he did not know whether the numbers were true; but he believed that “the Soviet Union [knew] the answers” and he thought “it would be well for the United States to know.” “In any event,” Kennedy continued, “we have not done enough.”⁶³

Republican Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin wanted to know how the military build up would be funded, and he repeatedly asked Kennedy if taxes would have to be increased. Kennedy replied that he was “certain that the funds” could be raised “in order to do the things which must be done.” He suggested that the difference could be funded either by tax increases or by deficit spending. Wiley continued his questioning. Concerned that the United States did not “crack up our economy with a \$12 billion deficit,” Wiley again asked if taxes should be increased. JFK demurred saying only, “I think the effort should be made to close the gap. Whether taxes should be increased now or whether deficit spending should be incurred now is uncertain. But I think the effort should be made to close the gap.”⁶⁴

Despite the loud protestations of Capehart and other Senate Republicans, who criticized Kennedy and the Democrats for demeaning the strength of the nation’s military and “selling the United States short,”⁶⁵ Kennedy’s speech might have escaped the attention of most observers had it not been for Joseph Alsop. In his nationally-syndicated column

published a few days later, Alsop called Kennedy's speech "one of the most remarkable. . . that this country has heard since the end of the last war" which "every thoughtful American ought to read and ponder." He also asserted that because Kennedy was not "impeded by. . . access to classified information," he could speak frankly of the need to close the gap.⁶⁶ Then on August 18, Alsop followed up with his second column in two days on the Kennedy speech. Alsop claimed that Kennedy "had spoken no more than the truth...with no whit of exaggeration." He also noted how several other senators, including Washington State's Jackson and Missouri's Symington, had risen to defend and praise Kennedy's performance.⁶⁷

In addition to filing these two columns praising Kennedy's courage and wisdom, Alsop went out of his way to bring Kennedy's speech to the attention of other journalists. He sent Richard Rovere, then of the *New Yorker* magazine and a prominent critic of the Eisenhower administration, a synopsis of the events surrounding Kennedy's speech, calling it "the most astonishing Senatorial debate I have ever heard." Three weeks later Alsop tried to convince a skeptical Henry Luce, chairman and publisher of *Time* magazine and a long-time Republican insider, of the need for aggressive action to close the gap.⁶⁸

All told, Joe's kind words and deeds were not lost on the ambitious young senator. The missile gap speech, originally Alsop's idea, was a clear political winner. Kennedy appreciated the wise and timely counsel. JFK, who had known Alsop for several years,

personally thanked the prominent journalist “for your very fine columns and your original suggestion.”⁶⁹

Kennedy’s speech would factor prominently in that year’s mid-term elections. The Democratic National Committee asked Kennedy to distribute copies of the missile gap speech, “United States Military and Diplomatic Policies – Preparing for the Gap,” and a second speech, “Who Killed the Kennedy-Ives Labor Reform Bill?” to all key Democrats, party leaders, and public officials. In a cover letter sent to then-Governor Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut, Kennedy wrote “[a]lthough these issues – of national defense and labor reform – may not at present be crucial in your particular area,” he hoped that the materials would help prepare Democrats on subjects which would “certainly figure in political debates across the nation.”⁷⁰ Kennedy characterized his speech on the missile gap as an attempt “to summarize the lag in our defense preparedness over the last six years of Republican rule, and the future implications this holds for our military and foreign policies.” Although he conceded that some Republicans had objected “to such warnings being sounded on the floor of the Senate,” he was convinced that these were “facts the public [needed] to know.”⁷¹

In that same month Kennedy called attention to his missile gap speech in the pages of *The Reporter* magazine. He wrote, “I recently spoke on the Senate floor about...closing the military ‘gap’ [including the] most pressing technological problem [of] the missile lag between the United States and the Soviet Union, which seems certain to continue to grow

during the next five years.” Kennedy also pointed out that “the other instruments of our military power, including our capacity to wage limited war and to airlift troops to trouble spots immediately” must not be overlooked. “[O]ur ability to maintain a balanced ratio of nuclear deterrence and our ability to defy the non-nuclear threat of the Soviet Union and China, especially in the years of 1960-1964,” he explained, “must be vigilantly analyzed and corrected in the next two years – not at some future date when the Soviet Union [would] have consolidated all the military advantages.”⁷²

Kennedy also spoke of the missile gap in his own re-election campaign. For example, during a speech in Massachusetts he called for a “step up” in U.S. missile development in order to address the danger posed by the “missile lag.” Repeating many of the same claims that he had made on the Senate floor a month earlier, Kennedy claimed that the missile lag placed the nation “in a position of grave peril.” The Soviets were continuing to increase their power relative to that of the United States, and this shift, he warned, might “open to them a new shortcut to world domination.” Kennedy openly questioned why, in spite of these dangers, the United States was still emphasizing budgets over security.⁷³

The missile gap combined with a deep recession in 1958 to provide a dynamic one-two punch against Republican candidates. During the recession of 1953-1954, Eisenhower used aggressive measures to counteract an economic decline. Eisenhower remained concerned about inflation during this first economic crisis of his presidency, but was more concerned about being painted as the next Herbert Hoover. Inflation was of greater

concern, however, in 1957 and 1958. The Federal Reserve raised interest rates on August 23, 1957, an action that historian John Sloan characterized as the worst mistake of the 1950s. The action failed to arrest rising prices – the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 2.1 percent during the economic downturn – and also exacerbated unemployment, which rose to a high of 7.4 percent.⁷⁴ In mid-February 1958, Eisenhower announced several proposals to counteract the economic downturn. These federal spending initiatives included an increase in federal highway expenditures, an acceleration of defense spending, and modernization of post offices. Economist Herb Stein concluded that the decision to extend unemployment benefits made the biggest difference in preventing still further economic decline.⁷⁵

The actions were not sufficient, however, to turn around the faltering economy before it became a political issue. Kennedy and his fellow Democrats fixed upon this issue, and it resonated with the electorate. The mid-term elections of 1958 delivered a stunning victory for the opposition party. The Democrats increased their majority in the House by nearly fifty seats, and they added another sixteen members in the Senate. When the dust had settled, the Democrats held majorities of 292 to 153 in the House, and Democrats outnumbered Republicans in the Senate by a margin of 65 to 35.⁷⁶

Results in other major elections were no more encouraging for the president's party. Although relative newcomer Nelson Rockefeller was elected governor of New York, and a rising star from Arizona named Barry Goldwater was elected to his first term in the Senate,

the GOP lost in other major statewide races nationwide including the gubernatorial race in California, where Edmund G. "Pat" Brown defeated Republican William F. Knowland. Local issues and local candidates certainly affected the Republicans' fortunes. Individual candidates, including Knowland and John Bricker of Ohio, had run on "right to work" platforms that roused organized labor in a concerted effort to defeat them. The GOP was also hurt in farm states by Agriculture Secretary Ezra Taft Benson's effort to reduce government supports for agriculture.⁷⁷ As a national issue, however, the missile gap won the day because it tapped into deeply felt anxieties about national security *and* the economy.

Eisenhower had not taken a very active role during the campaign, having bestowed this thankless task on Vice President Nixon.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, as nominal party leader, the experience shook his confidence. The results of the 1958 elections made his dealings with Congress even more difficult during the final two years of his presidency.⁷⁹ The groundwork for this defeat had been laid in the weeks and months after *Sputnik*. The missile gap was a political winner. John F. Kennedy, who easily won re-election to the Senate, knew this as well as anyone. He was poised to continue to use the issue in 1959 and beyond.

Prelude to an Election – The White House vs. The Congress

With the Democratic Party more firmly in control of Congress than at any time during Eisenhower's presidency, the debate surrounding the missile gap continued to center on the wisdom or folly of dedicating crucial national resources to military spending. On November 22, 1958, only a few weeks after the Democrat's sweeping victories, Representative George Mahon of Texas, the Chairman of the House Military Appropriations subcommittee, blasted the administration for proposing cuts in the Army and Marine Corps despite a congressional mandate that had called for maintaining manpower at then-current levels. Although the administration was struggling to close an expected \$12 billion budget shortfall, the Democrats' Mahon countered that recent Soviet moves in Berlin and elsewhere made it unsafe for the United States to cut defense spending.⁸⁰

Columnist Rowland Evans, who had penned the Mahon story for the *New York Herald Tribune*, agreed. Repeating many of Mahon's same arguments in an editorial, Evans claimed that Eisenhower's most recent economy drive seemed almost designed to "install the Democrats in the White House in 1960," as Vice President Richard Nixon would be forced to defend his role within a "do-nothing" executive branch. Evans reported that these economy measures were "stirring up some sharp discord on the Eisenhower team" with one unnamed Cabinet member reportedly telling the President that "fiscal retrenchment [would] have drastic political repercussions in 1960." The "secret debate in

the Cabinet” Evans predicted, might “spill out into the open in an embarrassing way before it ends.”⁸¹ In fact, the internal debate over Eisenhower’s spending priorities had spilled out many times, but in the years after *Sputnik* the missile gap served as an important subtext to this internal battle over the budget and emboldened the president’s critics.

Yet, throughout 1959, as he had in his earlier years in office, Eisenhower continued in his struggle to contain government spending. His political opponents fought him every step of the way. For fiscal year 1959, government outlays had exceeded projections, and Eisenhower faced a \$12.4 billion deficit. In this case, as Iwan Morgan notes, the Defense Department was not the chief culprit for the cost overruns. Although defense spending exceeded targets by \$1.4 billion, this paled in comparison to civil benefits, which exceeded projections by over 28 percent, and agricultural spending, which came in 41 percent over budget.⁸² Eisenhower was determined to achieve a balanced budget for FY 1960, the final budget of his administration. In the end the president got his way. He bequeathed to his successor a budget with a \$1 billion surplus, and *Time* magazine praised him for achieving the “political miracle” of “making economy popular.”⁸³ This miracle seems all the more remarkable in retrospect given that Eisenhower faced many other challenges in his final two years in office. As difficult as his many tasks would have been in their own right, Eisenhower had to accomplish them with a badly disorganized and inexperienced administration operating amidst the growing turmoil and distraction of an approaching presidential election.

The president had lost some of his most-trusted and able lieutenants during the first two years of his second term. Treasury Secretary George Humphrey, one of Eisenhower's closest advisers, resigned from his post in July 1957. Charles E. Wilson, a politically unpopular but managerially savvy secretary of defense, also departed on his own volition several months later, in October of 1957. Then, in October 1958, White House Chief of Staff Sherman Adams resigned from his post after members of Congress and the media raised questions about his past business dealings.⁸⁴

The biggest blow, however, came in early 1959, when Secretary of State John Foster Dulles resigned from his post, only months before losing a battle with lung cancer. Dulles had advised Woodrow Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. He was a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations in 1945. He had helped negotiate the final peace treaty with Japan in 1950 and 1951. He had served briefly in the U.S. Senate.⁸⁵ This strong-willed and highly intelligent paragon of the Eastern Establishment was a perfect number two for a plainspoken midwesterner like Dwight David Eisenhower. In spite of their differences, and there were many, Dulles consistently supported the president in public. For example, in 1956 and 1957, Dulles and Eisenhower repeatedly clashed over the nature of nuclear deterrence. In each instance, Eisenhower's view prevailed. Dulles' disagreements with the president were carefully concealed from the public and the media.⁸⁶ They were, in many respects, a team.⁸⁷

While this fact has become more clear in retrospect, it was lost on many contemporaries. One exception was nationally-syndicated columnist Arthur Krock. In July 1959, Krock recorded that “[i]t was quite a break when John Foster Dulles died,” given that “[n]o subordinate was ever more assiduous” in establishing the president’s authority. In a meeting with Krock and several other journalists, Eisenhower himself said that Dulles “used to give [him] little lectures” on the importance of administration officials supporting the president and his policies.⁸⁸

Dulles and Eisenhower had established a professional rapport that would not be easily replicated. When Eisenhower appointed Christian Herter, a loyal Republican who had been serving as undersecretary of state for two years, to complete Dulles’s term, both Dulles and Eisenhower recognized that the president would assume a greater responsibility for articulating administration positions on foreign policy issues. Meanwhile, key State Department deputies, whose concerns about the New Look had been voiced in NSC debates by Dulles, but which had not surfaced in public, knew that they would find a receptive audience for their concerns about strategic and military insecurity in the inexperienced and ill-informed Herter.

The difficulties of maintaining a consistent administration message were manifest soon after Dulles’s death, in July 1959. A particularly troublesome miscommunication prompted an exasperated Eisenhower to lecture his subordinates “on the need for proper measures, such as Foster Dulles had consistently employed, to insure that State Department

action and my own thinking were exactly in step.” Eisenhower blamed himself in part for the problem, but the message was clear: where Dulles had helped to ensure that the State Department reflected the president’s wishes, Ike would now have to do that himself.⁸⁹ Within this environment of major change at the top of the administration, and growing dissatisfaction within the mid-level bureaucracy, Eisenhower would spend as much time trying to convince his own Cabinet of the wisdom of his decision to hold down defense expenditures as he did trying to convince a skeptical nation.

Meanwhile, intelligence estimates in 1958 and 1959 about the true extent of the so-called missile gap ranged from cautious to fantastic, further confusing the national security debate. For example, in a long feature article that appeared in *The Reporter* magazine in early January 1959, retired Army General Thomas R. Phillips quoted intelligence reports as saying that the Soviets had manufactured about 20,000 ballistic missiles and had fired more than a thousand of them.⁹⁰ Later, when Defense Secretary McElroy declared that the U.S. had “no positive evidence” that Russia was ahead of the United States in the development of ICBMs, General Phillips countered that there was no such thing as “positive evidence” in intelligence reports. Phillips predicted that senators and representatives were now ready to challenge the man “whom former Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson called ‘the greatest military expert in the world,’ in his own field.”⁹¹

In truth, they had already been doing this for years. The criticisms did intensify, however. Senator Symington flatly denied administration claims that the United States was

leading the Russians in the development of military missiles. After hearing the official CIA estimates, Symington predicted that the Soviets would lead the U.S. by a margin of four to one.⁹² Dr. Wernher Von Braun said during an appearance before the Senate Joint Hearings on Missile & Space Activities that it would take five years “even with the utmost effort” in order to catch up with the Soviets. “[W]e are behind them,” he continued, “and we have to drive faster than they if we are to catch up with them.”⁹³

Informed sources disputed these pessimistic figures. For example, in late November 1958, Air Force General Bernard Schriever, a leading force behind the development of the Atlas missile, declared that the United States had made important gains in this field, and that the United States might have an equivalent number of operational ICBMs with the Soviets.⁹⁴

Either way, the exact source of these myriad numbers remains a mystery. Hard evidence of Soviet successes or failures was limited, but the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) that formed the foundation for the administration’s testimony (NIE 11-5-58) did report that the Soviets had tested at least four, and perhaps as many as six, missiles with a range of approximately 3,500 nautical miles. Based upon this data, the intelligence community predicted that the Soviets might have as many as 10 “prototype” ICBMs in calendar year 1959, or perhaps in late 1958.⁹⁵ And while the report projected between 100 and 500 ICBMs in the Soviet arsenal in the coming years, depending upon whether or not the Soviets would choose to embark upon a “crash program” to build up their missile

strength, the authors hastened to add in a footnote to these findings that their numbers were “selected arbitrarily in order to provide some measure of the Soviet capacity to produce and deploy ICBMs.” The numbers “did *not*,” the authors emphasized, “represent an estimate of probable Soviet requirements or stockpiles.”⁹⁶ Administration officials returned to this theme time and time again. If nothing else, the widely disparate estimates of Soviet missile strength in 1959 point to the confusion and uncertainty inherent in the intelligence of that era.

Agreement within the intelligence community alone, however, would not have been sufficient to calm the troubled political waters because the controversy remained, at its core, a dispute over spending priorities. The administration chose not to spend on a crash program to close a presumed “gap” that was based, in turn, on Soviet capabilities. What the Soviets *could* do, the administration consistently pointed out, was not the same as what they *would* do.

The president’s most fervent critics repeatedly accused him of deliberately neglecting the nation’s defenses. When Senator Symington pressed Secretary of Defense McElroy for answers during testimony before the Joint Committee on Missile and Space Activities in late January 1959, McElroy admitted that the Soviets would likely do more than the United States in the field of ICBMs. Symington then paraphrased the secretary’s statement to say that the United States was “voluntarily passing over the Russians production superiority in the ICBM missile field because we believe that our capacity to

retaliate with other weapons is sufficient to permit them that advantage despite the great damage that we know we would suffer if they instigated an attack.” McElroy claimed that he would “modify the expression a bit” but that his own words would not be “very much different from what” Symington had said.⁹⁷

Other key members of the administration attempted to make the case in congressional hearings. Before the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on January 23, 1959, General Nathan Twining, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, argued, “We would like to beat [the Soviets] in everything. According to our intelligence now, if they do what we think they *can* do, they will have more than we have for a while. There is no question about it.”⁹⁸

Then on February 4, 1959, McElroy explained that the Soviets would have more ICBMs than the United States if the Russians used their full production capabilities. The secretary stressed that the administration did not know whether the Soviets would exercise these capabilities but he continued, “we are assuming that they probably will.”⁹⁹ McElroy reiterated this view again two days later. When pressed by Congressman Samuel Stratton of New York that the Soviets would have more ICBMs than the United States, and that this was “the result of a deliberate decision on our part not to utilize our full ICBM capacity” McElroy agreed that there was a conscious decision on the part of the United States not to build more ICBMs. But he disagreed with Stratton’s contention that the Soviets *would* have more ICBMs than the United States. “We do not say,” McElroy added, “that they will have

this. We say they can have this.”¹⁰⁰ The administration, McElroy later reiterated, did not intend “to match, missile for missile, in the ICBM category, the Russian *capability* in the next couple of years.”¹⁰¹

Although some members of Congress were impressed by the administration’s forthright testimony, Senator Kennedy locked horns with JCS chair Twining during his testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations in late January 1959. A few weeks earlier, W. Barton Leach, a professor from Harvard Law School who advised the Air Force Chief of Staff and who had previously worked in the Truman administration, had counseled JFK to keep hammering away at the administration in an effort to discredit Eisenhower’s budgetary restrictions. When Kennedy questioned the validity of the administration’s predictions about the missile gap, an exasperated Twining again explained the importance of the range of weapons available in the U.S. arsenal. Kennedy was not convinced; after the hearing, he and other Democrats on the committee held a press conference to complain that the administration did not recognize the gravity of the situation.¹⁰² A few weeks later, the *Boston Herald* argued that the United States had surrendered to the Soviets.¹⁰³

Projections about Soviet missile strength were speculative at best, but the administration could not even get agreement on the number of missiles in the *United States’* arsenal. Before the House Armed Services Committee in early February, McElroy admitted that the United States did not, at that time, possess any ICBMs. He maintained, however, that there would be “a few” ICBMs in the U.S. arsenal by July of 1959, and “a few more”

by December 1959. "This," he went on to say, was "within a few missiles of what we would expect that the Russians might have at that time – a few missiles one way or the other."¹⁰⁴ Prominent senators disagreed. Senator Richard Russell of Georgia dismissed administration claims, arguing that Russia was well ahead of the United States. Symington also disputed such assertions, arguing in particular with McElroy's claims that the United States was "about even" with the Soviet Union in the production of ICBMs.¹⁰⁵

Deputy Defense Secretary James Douglas complained to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on February 17, 1959, that it seemed as though the Congress was "providing for a wholly unnecessary overkill" by focusing on the number of missiles that the Soviets were expected to have.¹⁰⁶ Two days later, when pressed by Congressman Mahon, Douglas conceded that the Soviets would be ahead of the United States in ICBM production, and that this lead might be considerable. Yet he added that he did not think that this lead would be important. When Mahon asked Douglas "If you had the money and the ability to do so, would you close the ICBM gap between the United States and the Soviet Union now," Douglas answered that, although he believed it important to close the missile gap at some point, he "would not try to do it in the 1960 period with the 1960 budget." Air Force Chief of Staff General Thomas D. White seconded this view. The crucial point throughout this testimony, driven home by Michigan Congressman Gerald R. Ford, was that of timing: it was important to close the gap, but it did not have to be done all at once.¹⁰⁷

The debate continued to rage throughout early 1959, with knowledgeable outsiders, such as Lyndon Johnson, Stuart Symington, and Wehrner von Braun arguing that there was a missile gap,¹⁰⁸ while knowledgeable insiders – including Twining, McElroy, and the president himself – argued either that there was no gap, or that it was not militarily significant.¹⁰⁹ Some objective observers attempted to draw a balanced picture by laying out both arguments.¹¹⁰ Others recognized the deeper economic issues associated with this debate.¹¹¹ In general, many observers believed that there was a missile gap between the United States and the Soviet Union, but there were competing interpretations about the relative military significance of the gap.

The doubts lingered. One observer questioned how “it happened that the White House revised its estimates of Soviet missile capabilities downward just as it was submitting its balanced budget to Congress.” Although McElroy had flatly denied that politics had anything to do with the revised estimates Symington and others thought this “coincidence” to be “too neat.”¹¹²

Other administration experts stepped forward to make the case that the missile gap had been overstated. In September 1959 Herbert York, the Defense Department’s director of research and engineering, said in an interview with *U.S. News & World Report* that while the Russians “were very much ahead of [the United States] at one time,” he hoped and he believed that the United States was closing the gap. While York refused to predict when the gap would ultimately be closed, he did explain that the United States had surpassed the

Soviets in guidance and accuracy. He also pointed out that the United States was “probably...somewhat better off” with respect to the number of warheads in its nuclear arsenal.¹¹³ He repeated these claims less than a month later during a press conference at the Pentagon convened to discuss the significance of recent Soviet successes in space. While York conceded that the Soviets led the United States in space research, the two nations, he said, were “roughly equal in the development” of ICBMs.¹¹⁴

Joseph Alsop disagreed. In his interpretation of York’s statement about the nature of the strategic balance, Alsop alleged that the United States continued to lag well behind the Soviets. York had claimed that the United States and the Soviet Union’s ICBM development programs were “essentially in the same position.” Calling York’s statement an “offense against human decency,” Alsop reiterated missile gap numbers similar to those he had published in August a year earlier which still credited the Soviets with a tremendous advantage over the United States.¹¹⁵

In many ways, then, the missile gap debate of 1959 was waged between two competing interpretations of the proper balance of defense and non-defense, and private and public, spending. As often as not, the participants in this debate simply talked past one another. To those who charged that the United States was “risking” a missile gap and must spend more, others replied that the total package of defense spending was more than sufficient to deter the Soviet Union, and that it would be risky to spend too much on defense. As the controversy raged in Congress, and in warring headlines, the public was

generally not convinced that this was a major issue. As Peter Roman notes, nevertheless, “For Johnson, Kennedy, and Symington, the missile gap debate promoted their presidential aspirations by depicting them as experts in defense policy, and indicting Richard Nixon – certain to be the Republican Presidential nominee – for the administration’s laxity.”¹¹⁶

More Critiques of the New Look

The debate surrounding the missile gap was not confined to Washington, DC. Leading intellectuals continued to question Ike’s strategic judgment, and these doubts often centered on the missile gap. One such critic was Rand analyst Bernard Brodie. Brodie, who had joined Rand in 1949, led a small group of intellectuals who studied the strategic implications of nuclear weapons. He was one of the first to study atomic warfare,¹¹⁷ and by the time of the publication of *Strategy in the Missile Age* in 1959, the former professor of international relations at Yale University had had an opportunity to refine significantly his earliest impressions of the ultimate weapon.¹¹⁸

In *Strategy in the Missile Age*, Brodie openly questioned crucial elements of the theory of strategic bombing, including the targeting of civilians within cities, and by extension massive retaliation. He advocated a continued commitment to nuclear deterrence, with particular emphasis on the survivability of a nuclear second-strike. But while Brodie articulated a comprehensive military and strategic argument for a vigorous nuclear deterrent, he also criticized the adoption of a nuclear deterrent strategy on economic

grounds. The nation, he argued, must also develop and maintain its ability to fight and win non-nuclear limited wars. Although he conceded that this would require “quite considerable funds beyond those already provided,” he explicitly rejected the notion that the economy could not support considerably more defense spending as, in his words, “persons who have no competence for making such a judgement” had argued.

“Very few if any economists,” he asserted, “would support the proposition that the United States could not safely spend more than 10 per cent of its gross national product on defense.” Later, Brodie wrote: “military spending would have a serious adverse effect on the economy only if it seriously cut into investment for the civilian economy or caused an inflation rapid enough to have self-intensifying effects.”¹¹⁹ In the late 1950s Brodie’s arguments accorded both with prevailing economic theory and with many of the political critiques of Eisenhower’s New Look strategy.

Another Rand analyst, Albert Wohlstetter, focused on the stability of the nuclear deterrent. Wohlstetter presented to the public the same arguments he had been making in confidential circles for years in the classic essay “The Delicate Balance of Terror,” published in the January 1959 issue of the journal *Foreign Affairs*. Wohlstetter stressed that nuclear deterrence was neither automatic nor easy. It was, however, essential to American security. He therefore urged the protection of nuclear forces, and the expansion of missile and bomber programs in the interest of fostering greater diversity among delivery systems.¹²⁰ These ideas circulated in Washington long before publication. Kennedy had an

advance copy of Wohlstetter's article when he delivered his missile gap speech in August 1958, and he explicitly referred to the "balance of terror."¹²¹

Another prominent critic of the New Look, retired Army General Maxwell Taylor, joined Brodie, Wohlstetter, and others in late 1959 with a published critique of U.S. national security policy that included specific references to the missile gap. Born in Missouri in 1901, Maxwell Davenport Taylor graduated from West Point in 1922. During World War II, Taylor served with the 82nd Airborne Division, and later led the 101st Airborne. After the war, Taylor served as superintendent at West Point, and later commanded forces in Berlin and in Korea. He succeeded Ridgway as Army Chief of Staff in 1955. Taylor was one of the most celebrated military leaders of his time, and he was well-connected politically. Political connections and prowess on the battlefield notwithstanding, Taylor repeatedly clashed with the commander-in-chief. His outspoken criticisms of the New Look became increasingly vocal, and he resigned his post in the spring of 1959.

Taylor is credited with having coined the term "flexible response" that later became synonymous with the Kennedy administration's defense program. But Taylor, one of the most important military advisers in the Kennedy administration, was not an avid Kennedy supporter in the years leading up to the election of 1960. Taylor's views in *The Uncertain Trumpet* were exclusively his own, and they were presented before the nation as a guide for the next presidential administration – be it either Republican or Democratic.¹²²

In *The Uncertain Trumpet*, Taylor echoed the sentiments of Ridgway and Gavin – that the Army had unfairly borne the brunt of defense budget cuts, and that a more diversified, limited war-fighting capability was needed. While all three men criticized Eisenhower’s insistence upon holding down defense expenditures, Taylor went one step further by arguing that the fixed size of the defense budget had “become the prime cause of the service rivalry which [was] undermining national confidence in our military programs.”¹²³

Taylor ridiculed the use of the budget to drive national security strategy. Charging that the determination of strategy had become no more than an “incidental by-product of the administrative processes of the defense budget,” he claimed that the nation’s military strategy was “a result of administrative and budgetary happenstance rather than of an analytical appraisal of our military requirements.” Taylor called instead for “a scientific budget formulation directed at supporting [military] requirements with all of the resources available for national defense.”¹²⁴ Such a shift in policymaking would require a considerable realignment of these national resources. Specifically, Taylor called for a 20 percent increase in total military spending. He conceded that such an increase would require sacrifices by all Americans, including higher taxes, in order to “get over this dangerous period.”¹²⁵

Prominent magazines and journals reviewed Taylor’s book in early January 1960. The *Christian Science Monitor* declared “[o]f all the voices raising questions recently about

the wisdom of the Eisenhower administration's defense policies, General Taylor's most deserves a hearing."¹²⁶ Walter Millis in *Saturday Review* called *The Uncertain Trumpet* a "reasoned critique" of the New Look and he praised, in particular, the appendix of the book, which included an article that Taylor had written for the journal *Foreign Affairs* but had been rejected by government "censors." This text alone, Millis wrote, "would be worth the book's price."¹²⁷

Along these same lines, a review published several months later in the British journal *The Spectator* noted that Taylor spoke with the "authority of a recent Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and without the limitations which law and convention would impose upon a British retired soldier in a similar position." Max Beloff praised Taylor for his "important contribution to a debate which, for all its horrific implications, should be the concern of all serious citizens on both sides of the Atlantic."¹²⁸ Another leading expert on military matters, Jack Raymond of *The New York Times*, noted that Taylor's book was timed to coincide with the opening of Congress "in the hope that it might trip off a great debate on national security in the final year of the Eisenhower Administration." As Douglas Kinnard observed years later, "it did that and more."¹²⁹

Besieged by his critics, Eisenhower found himself becoming increasingly isolated within his own administration. As the "Revolt of the Admirals" had shown, bureaucratic infighting among the military services was not unique to the Eisenhower administration. Eisenhower was president of Columbia University when the Revolt erupted in 1949, but he

had remained active in military matters, serving at times as *de facto* Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He learned some important lessons from this incident. As president, he was determined to prevent a "Revolt of the Generals" from becoming front-page news, but Taylor's book posed a special challenge for Eisenhower. Stung by Taylor's criticism, Eisenhower hoped that the service chiefs would speak frankly of their concerns, privately, rather than waiting to air their complaints publicly. The service chiefs, he knew, would be called before Congress and asked for their "personal views." They would be asked about their original recommendations in the hopes of exposing differences within the administration. In an attempt to forestall such criticisms, he urged the Chiefs to come see him whenever they wanted to in order that they might "find a program in which all would believe." Then they could all appear before the American people, and the Congress, with unity.¹³⁰

Ike had been concerned about such matters for years. He had suffered through Matthew Ridgway's criticisms largely in silence, at one point arguing explicitly that Ridgway was sincere in his denigration of massive retaliation. The Chief of Staff had crossed the line in 1955, however, prompting an angry rebuke from the president.¹³¹ Ridgway had still been in uniform at the time, but Eisenhower believed that an officer's duty to support the civilian chain of command did not stop after they had taken off their uniform. Maxwell Taylor did not share Eisenhower's point of view. Taylor had been

outspoken in his criticisms of the New Look as Chief of Staff. He felt no obligation to support the president as a private citizen.

Recognizing this, Eisenhower considered his options to suppress Taylor's criticisms. In preparation for Taylor's impending appearance before a congressional committee, members of the administration anticipated that discussions of past NSC meetings were likely to come out during his testimony, placing the spotlight once again on the administration's internal squabbles. According to notes from a meeting with special assistant Gordon Gray, Eisenhower directed the Judge Advocate General of the Army to brief him on "what 'strings' there were on retired officers in such situations as that of Max Taylor and whether any action could be taken [to restrict his testimony]. He recalled that in earlier times retired Army officers had been dealt with for being critical of the administration in power."¹³²

But retired officers were not Eisenhower's only problem. As Peter Roman observed, the missile gap "debate allowed the services to state their objections to the Eisenhower program and gave them an opportunity to cultivate allies for the post-Eisenhower period."¹³³ The military's persistent criticisms of the budgetary limitations of the New Look did not recede, even after new intelligence on the nature of the Soviet buildup raised new questions about the need for more nuclear weapons. This nascent "Revolt of the Generals" was brewing as yet another key administration official departed

the scene. The president, seeking an improvement in the Pentagon, orchestrated Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy's resignation in December 1959.¹³⁴

McElroy met with Eisenhower in November 1959 to discuss the transition. The discussion quickly turned to the subject of the defense budget. The departing secretary believed that his successor and former deputy, Thomas S. Gates, was well-suited for the job. He also believed that Air Force General Nathan Twining, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, would help to carry the FY 1961 budget through Congress. McElroy cautioned, however, that the service chiefs were "genuinely concerned...as to whether the nation will have what it really requires if the budget [was] held within the" \$41 billion spending limit that Eisenhower had specified. McElroy's concerns did not fall on deaf ears, but the president remained convinced that his proposed defense budget was sufficient. Eisenhower told McElroy that the correct balance could be found "only if the Congressional committees want to do what is right, rather than make political attacks."¹³⁵

Two guiding principles continued to govern Eisenhower's actions and words during these tumultuous months in late 1959 and early 1960. First, in spite of what his critics argued, Eisenhower still believed that deficit spending was a sign of weakness. He did not think that the public would support military programs if the tax burden necessary to support defense spending became too onerous. More importantly, even as Eisenhower became increasingly concerned about the devastating effects of a global nuclear war, he estimated the likelihood of such a war occurring as increasingly remote. According to Campbell

Craig, "the avoidance of a thermonuclear war with the Soviet Union" became the primary objective of Eisenhower's presidency as early as 1956.¹³⁶ Richard Immerman and Robert Bowie argue that this was Eisenhower's primary objective dating back to 1953.¹³⁷

Eisenhower believed Nikita S. Khrushchev when the Soviet leader had told him "we are coming to the time where neither side can afford to declare or initiate missile warfare." Eisenhower simply did not "believe that when the Soviets got all their missiles ready, they would turn them loose against us." Khrushchev had told him, he related to the National Security Council, "We know you won't start a war," and Khrushchev had been emphatic about "stopping Russian plant production."¹³⁸ Accordingly, the president continued to stress nuclear deterrence. "We must keep certain missiles so that neither side can bluff the other," he told McElroy, "Beyond that the need on both sides is to disarm."¹³⁹ Nuclear deterrence had stabilized.

The president stressed these themes when he called the military service chiefs together at Augusta, Georgia in late 1959. He was also seeking still more reductions in defense spending. JCS chairman General Twining volunteered that costs were increasing faster than anticipated, thereby making continued cuts even harder to accomplish. Eisenhower was unmoved. He turned to Chief of Naval Operations Arleigh Burke and to Army Chief of Staff Lyman M. Lemnitzer, and urged them to proceed with further force reductions by focusing on "things that have become simply a matter of habit."¹⁴⁰

The nation's economy was threatened by burdensome defense spending, he explained. He knew that everyone was concerned about the nation's security and safety, but he appealed for everyone to look at the defense establishment afresh, since changes in technology had changed defense needs. For Eisenhower, the issue revolved around "putting too much money in certain things" and he urged the service chiefs to approach the question of what "needs to be done within a pattern that will keep our economy healthy and expanding."¹⁴¹

One specific difference of opinion within the administration revolved around the B-70, the next-generation manned bomber. The B-70 was the darling of Air Force generals but left Eisenhower "cold in terms of making military sense." In the November meeting, Air Force Chief of Staff General Thomas Dresser White offered a spirited defense of the manned bomber. Missiles, he said, could not be relied on in every respect because they had not yet been tested with a nuclear warhead. Further, he explained, missiles could not be recalled once launched.

The president, however, was not persuaded by such arguments. He doubted that the B-70 could be put into production in less than eight years "too far into a period in which the major destruction would come from missiles." Eisenhower was "convinced that the age of aircraft [was] fast coming to a close," and he saw the fight over the B-70 as yet another example of people trying to hang onto "the old forms of warfare too long." "Talk of bombers in the missile age," he said, was akin to talk "about bows and arrows at the time of

gunpowder.” When White countered that the continuation of the program would be worthwhile because the nation would gain from having different systems for attack, Eisenhower retorted that in ten years each nation’s missile capacity alone would be sufficient to destroy both countries “many times over” and he despaired over the chiefs’ apparent willingness to go “overboard in different ways to do the same thing.” The duplication inherent in the B-70 program, he said, was the very kind of savings that he had hoped the chiefs would find. His arguments failed to convince the assembled brass, however: when he informally polled the group, only Admiral Burke opposed extended funding for the project.¹⁴²

Eisenhower found that the chief’s civilian bosses – the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force – were equally committed to duplication and redundancy within the nation’s weapons systems. So too were many of the president’s other advisers. For example, Herbert York, speaking on behalf of science advisor George Kistiakowsky, urged the president to go forward with the B-70 “even if there [was] no good military reason” because it was technically sound. A frustrated Eisenhower replied that he was not interested in building an aircraft for civilian uses. For him, the only meaningful issue was the strength of the nation’s deterrent force. Accordingly, he said, “If the Soviets think the B-70 is more effective than missiles, then it has value. If they do not, it is valueless.”¹⁴³

As troubling as such internal squabbles were for Eisenhower, he was most concerned about “undercover sniping” at the defense program. He explicitly directed the

service secretaries to back a uniform program that everyone could support. When Eisenhower informed Army Secretary Wilbur Brucker in November 1959 that he intended to stick to his plan for reducing the number of personnel in the National Guard and Reserves, he was told that some members of Congress intended to fight him on that issue. The president did not back down. Conceding that the question revolved around “how much to fight for what is. . . right, or how much to bow to expediency,” Eisenhower intended to “stick to what he thought was right” even as he realized that he would probably be defeated. “Congress,” he complained, “would take things out of the [national security] program that he wanted and put things in that he did not want.”¹⁴⁴

The administration was crafting this national security program in late 1959. One of Thomas Gates’s first tasks as Secretary of Defense was to convince the president of the need for more ICBMs for the U.S. arsenal. In December 1958 Eisenhower had approved a substantial increase in the number of ICBM squadrons from the planned 13 (9 Atlas and 4 Titan) to a total of 20 (9 Atlas and 11 Titan), and an increase in the Polaris program from 6 to 9 submarines. One year later, DOD was requesting still further increases in all three programs. When Gates appeared before a meeting of the National Security Council in January 1960, the Pentagon was calling for 27 ICBM squadrons – a total of 270 operational missiles – and an additional three Polaris missile submarines, bringing the total complement to 12.¹⁴⁵ These increases were deemed to be reasonable and responsible. Eisenhower accepted Gates’s recommendations without objection.

The next item on the NSC's agenda, however, two newly-released National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) of Soviet strategic capabilities, raised new questions about the need for more weapons. CIA Director Allen W. Dulles presented a summary of these estimates (NIEs 11-4-59 and 11-8-59) for the first time, predicting that they would evoke many questions in the upcoming Congressional session.¹⁴⁶ Throughout the missile gap controversy, Eisenhower had asserted that existing nuclear weapons programs were a sufficient deterrent force. The president believed that Soviet leaders would never risk a first strike against the United States, knowing that such an attack would likely result in their own annihilation. Accordingly, Eisenhower had always doubted pessimistic intelligence reports that the Soviets were engaged in a crash program to build nuclear missiles while a more promising solid-fueled alternative would soon render such first-generation weapons obsolete. A similar belief in a crash program, he frequently pointed out, had created the illusory bomber gap in 1955.¹⁴⁷ Further, during their face-to-face meetings in September 1959, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev explained why the Soviets would not agree to an arms control pact at that time. Khrushchev confided to Eisenhower that the United States possessed an overwhelming strategic advantage over the Soviets, and he would not agree to anything that would effectively freeze this American superiority into place.¹⁴⁸

Eisenhower's confidence about the true nature of the Soviet buildup was bolstered yet again by classified intelligence – including photos from the U-2 surveillance aircraft. The U-2 program had failed to locate missile construction or testing sites in large numbers.

While some within the intelligence community were reluctant to ascribe too much weight to so-called “negative” intelligence (that is, the intelligence agencies’ *inability* to find ICBMs in great numbers), the absence of hard evidence of Soviet ICBMs confirmed Eisenhower’s own beliefs about the limited nature of the Soviets missile build-up. These findings were then reflected in a set of new intelligence estimates prepared in the autumn of 1959 in which projections of Soviet ICBM strength were revised substantially downward from previous reports.¹⁴⁹

The past intelligence estimates, which had talked about what the Soviets were *capable* of doing, rather than estimating what they would *probably* do, had speculated that the Soviets had 100 ICBMs in their current inventory, and that they would have as many as 500 by mid-1961.¹⁵⁰ Such estimates formed the basis for McElroy’s claim in early 1959 that the Soviets would have a three-to-one advantage in ICBMs over the U.S. in the coming years – a substantial missile gap.

Since that time, however, intelligence analysts had found no hard evidence that the Soviets had built as many missiles as their *capabilities* would allow. The new estimates reflected these findings and concluded that there was “virtually. . . no missile gap.” Gates recognized that “the U.S. [had] a very strong deterrent force” if the estimates were correct. While this was good news, the newly-appointed Secretary of Defense also recognized that the administration “was in a difficult position” with regard to its upcoming testimony before Congress as many members of Congress would question the sudden change.

The president believed that the administration, in testimony before Congress, should stress that there was no evidence that the Soviets had launched a “crash” program for the development of missiles. Vice President Nixon continued that thought. The “missile gap” in the earlier intelligence estimate, Nixon observed, had “resulted from an assumption that the Soviets would do all they were capable of doing and would make no mistakes...and from the further assumption that we would not do all we were capable of doing and would make a number of mistakes.” Such assumptions were flawed, and “the new intelligence estimate [was] based on what the Soviets [would] probably do rather than what they [were] capable of doing.”¹⁵¹

The strength and credibility of the nation’s deterrent was far more important than the new estimates of *Soviet* missile numbers for Eisenhower, but he would need the new NIE numbers to back up the administration’s defense budget before Congress. These intelligence numbers, however, as the NSC soon learned, were derived from a jumble of competing interpretations, differing assumptions, and, in Allen Dulles’s own words, “guesswork,” particularly for the period after 1961.¹⁵² The consensus opinion of the United States Intelligence Board (USIB), as expressed in the new NIE, predicted Soviet ICBM strength at 50 in mid-1960, and reaching as many as 560 total ICBMs by 1963. Substantial disagreement, however, emerged within a series of dissenting footnotes contributed by Air Force Major General James H. Walsh, that service’s Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence. Whereas a majority of the members of the Board predicted that the Soviets

would have between 450 and 560 ICBMs in their inventory, and between 350 and 450 on launchers, by mid-1963, the Air Force predicted 800 in the Soviet inventory, and 640 on launchers, for the same period.¹⁵³

The Air Force estimate was predicated on a substantially different reading of Soviet intentions than that of a majority of the board, a panel that included representatives from the Army, Navy, and Air Force. However, in spite of the persistent efforts of General Walsh and his staff to convince them otherwise,¹⁵⁴ the majority expressed their opinion in the text of NIE 11-8-59, concluding that the Soviet's primary goal in attaining "a substantial ICBM capability at an early date" was "to provide a substantial deterrent and pre-emptive attack capability." This interpretation was consistent, the report continued, "with the present deliberate and orderly tempo of the Soviet ICBM test-firing program, with current Soviet military doctrine," and with the Soviet's "observed policy" of maintaining balance "between the several branches of their military."¹⁵⁵ In other words, as Eisenhower had consistently maintained, there was no – and there had been no – "crash program" to build ICBMs within the Soviet Union.

Contrast this with the Air Force's dissenting views. The same assumptions that had governed the United States' estimates of Soviet intentions since the end of World War II resonated in Walsh's lengthy dissent. He did not believe, he wrote, that Soviet behavior warranted "the judgment that their objectives would be satisfied by attainment of only substantial deterrence and pre-emptive attack capability." Rather, "the Soviet rulers [were]

endeavoring to attain...a military superiority over the United States” so as to “enable them to either force their will on the United States through threat of destruction,” or to launch an attack so that “the United States as [a] world power would cease to exist.” “Conceptual levels of deterrence,” he argued, would be insufficient if, as Walsh believed, “the Soviet leaders intended...to exploit their capabilities in political offensives.”¹⁵⁶

Because the majority opinion of the NIE echoed Eisenhower’s own beliefs, he rejected the Air Force’s pessimistic claims. He could not, however, keep a lid on their dissent: the assumptions of the Air Force estimate had already been circulated widely. Within weeks, their opposing point of view would move from the footnotes of classified government reports to the front pages and headlines of the nation’s leading newspapers.

Ominously for the administration, controversy and disagreement was not restricted to intelligence estimates. As Eisenhower planned to battle Congress, members of his own administration appeared ready to join the other side, figuratively speaking. For example, the Army was also engaged in a program to circumvent both the president’s wishes. On January 7, 1960, Presidential Science Advisor George Kistiakowsky learned that “a highly volatile controversy [was] building up in the Pentagon” over the Nike-Zeus. Although DOD had recommended that additional funds not be allocated to the short-range missile intended to intercept incoming Soviet ICBMs, one of Kistiakowsky’s assistants had learned in “conversations with informed Pentagon officials” that “the Army [would] spare no effort to oppose this position (regardless of the technical facts) and [was planning to] appeal both

directly and indirectly to the Congress and the public” in order to secure more funding for the controversial weapon systems.¹⁵⁷

The memo to Kistiakowsky implicated Army Secretary Wilbur M. Brucker in the conspiracy. Brucker, Kistiakowsky was told, instructed Army officials that the service would continue to push for production and deployment “at the earliest possible date” regardless of DOD decisions to the contrary. In addition, Watters had learned that Brucker had notified officials in the service “that anyone who deviated from this position would be considered disloyal both to the Army and to him personally.” Watters concluded that Brucker, in a remarkable display of parochialism, was unwilling to accept budgetary restrictions on Nike-Zeus simply because he did not want to lose funds to another service.¹⁵⁸

Such attempts to contravene the president’s wishes were bad enough. But Ike was equally concerned about preventing such disputes from becoming public. The president had always been concerned about leaks.¹⁵⁹ The arrival of the new year – an election year – gave him reason to be more, not less concerned. Political adversaries could easily use perceived failures in any weapons program, no matter how small, against the administration. Such concerns filtered down through all layers of the administration. Even Kistiakowsky, Eisenhower’s politically insulated science advisor, fretted over a particularly critical General Accounting Office study of the Nike-Zeus program because he feared that if the report were made public it would “provide ammunition to those who [would] choose to attack [the] administration.”¹⁶⁰

Eisenhower was also concerned about the threat to national security posed by press leaks. Such a threat greeted White House officials on the front page of the *Washington Post* only days after the NSC meeting of January 7th: a summary of that secret meeting had been assembled by veteran Washington reporter John Norris. Yet, while Norris got many of the details correct, the distortions and inconsistencies of his report created a unique challenge for the administration.

Norris correctly reported that Eisenhower had agreed to expand missile programs by “about one third,” but his estimates of Soviet missile strength were still based upon the flawed “old” intelligence estimates. For example, he reported that although “some estimates” showed the Soviets with “well over 1000 ICBMs by 1963,” even the Air Force’s most pessimistic estimates from the NSC meeting, and as reported only in the footnotes of the most recent NIE, had predicted Soviet missile strength at only 800 by 1963.¹⁶¹ Further, Norris claimed that the proposed missile increases were to be paid for through reductions in the B-70 and Navy construction programs, even though such issues had not been discussed during the NSC meeting. An Associated Press article that appeared alongside Norris’s missile article provided only circumstantial evidence for such a claim when it reported that the Navy had postponed construction on five warships “because of lack of funds.” Both articles lent considerable weight, however, to those who had argued for years that Eisenhower’s budgetary restrictions were forcing painful trade-offs in the development of

the nation's weapons systems. Implied, but left unsaid, was that such "trade-offs" weakened the nation's overall defense posture.¹⁶²

The unhappy task of informing the Commander-in-Chief of the leak fell to presidential aide Gordon Gray. When Gray told Eisenhower the news, he was greeted, in Gray's words, by the president's "most vigorous irritation." In response, Gray suggested the Cabinet receive a missile briefing similar to that presented to the NSC in order that all parties within the administration speak "from the same set of facts and conclusions." Gray was certain that the leak had not come from the NSC, and given that Norris, who covered defense matters for the *Post*, had broken the story, he was "pretty sure" that the leak had come from the Pentagon. Eisenhower asked his assistant to convey his "deep concern" to Secretary of Defense Gates.¹⁶³

Gates already had more than enough to worry about. He expected a tough line of questioning when he appeared before a series of congressional panels with the new intelligence estimates. He got something worse than that. Just as Eisenhower, Nixon, and Dulles had predicted, Congress and the media greeted the new estimates with great skepticism, prompting yet another round of missile gap charges and counter-charges.

The Missile Gap and the Beginning of the Presidential Campaign of 1960

These controversies within the administration were conducted amidst a presidential campaign that had begun years earlier, but which became "official" in January 1960. Using

one of the most lop-sided victories in Massachusetts' history in the senatorial campaign of 1958 as a springboard for his presidential ambitions, John F. Kennedy began planning for a presidential run in early 1959. By the turn of the new decade, Gallup Polls showed Kennedy leading all Democrats; he led runner-up Adlai Stevenson, the party's nominee in the past two elections, by twelve percentage points.¹⁶⁴ Few insiders were surprised when he came forward to announce his candidacy for the presidency before a crowd of supporters in Washington, D.C. on January 2, 1960.

Kennedy's campaign announcement stressed many of the same themes that he had been speaking of for years. The presidency, "the most powerful office in the Free World," he said, held the key for a "more vital life for our people" and a "more secure life" around the globe. The most crucial decisions of this century – "how to end the burdensome arms race, where Soviet gains already threaten our very existence . . . and how to give direction to our traditional moral purpose, awakening every American to the dangers and opportunities that confront us" – would have to be made in the next four years. He closed with a prediction that the American people would help the nation to fulfill "a noble and historic role as the defender of freedom in a time of maximum peril."¹⁶⁵

Kennedy was not the first to declare his candidacy. Minnesotan Hubert Humphrey had announced his intention to run a week earlier. The pugnacious campaigner and eloquent orator intended to fight Kennedy in the primaries. But Humphrey's bread-and-butter issues pertained to the economy, civil rights, and federal aid for education and urban

areas. He enjoyed the support of Northern liberals, a core Democratic constituency in several primary states. Kennedy planned to counter this strategy with a better-funded, better-organized campaign. He deliberately down-played his differences with Humphrey by saying "we're both liberal democrats." Kennedy's message, and his emphasis, however, was different. Running slightly to the right of Humphrey, Kennedy hoped to gain the support of at least some conservative Southern Democrats by emphasizing foreign policy and defense issues, and by downplaying talk of civil rights, during his campaign.¹⁶⁶

This strategy was immediately apparent. Reporter Chalmers Roberts's front-page article in *The Washington Post* highlighted Kennedy's views on the budget and defense.¹⁶⁷ Roberts reported that Kennedy's prepared remarks stressed the arms race, and rebuilding the country's stature in science and education. Roberts also noted that in the ensuing question-and-answer session the senator declared that relations with Russia and Red China would be "the top campaign issue." Kennedy proclaimed the lame duck administration's proposed new military budget to be too low by "a substantial margin." Regarding the missile gap, Kennedy added that Russia would have an important and significant "missile lead," but he expressed hope that this would not be decisive.¹⁶⁸ The following day, on the NBC television program "Meet the Press," Kennedy repeated this theme, arguing that the United States was "going to be faced with a missile gap which will make the difficulties of negotiating with the Soviet Union and the Chinese in the 1960's extremely difficult."¹⁶⁹

Foreign policy and defense, then, would be two of the main issues for the leading candidate for the presidency in the Democratic Party.¹⁷⁰ Kennedy was expected to hammer away at the administration for its perceived complacency in the face of the “missile gap” and he would criticize Eisenhower and the rest of his administration – including Vice President Nixon – for allowing American prestige to wane. On the day that Kennedy announced his candidacy, Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates was preparing to sell the administration’s defense program for Fiscal Year 1961 to a skeptical Congress. The man most responsible for responding to Kennedy’s charges had been in office for exactly one month. It was a recipe for disaster. That Gates and the rest of the administration would struggle was almost a foregone conclusion, but Gates’s task was certainly complicated by his own inexperience. The wrangling and infighting within the Eisenhower administration made Gates’s mission all the more difficult.

Gates’s first responsibility was to refute McElroy’s erroneous assertion from the previous year that the Soviets could outproduce the United States toward gaining a 3 to 1 advantage in nuclear missiles. Before the Senate Armed Service Committee, Gates informed the Senators that McElroy had been mistaken: new intelligence data showed that the Soviet Union had far fewer missiles than had been earlier estimated. The Soviets, therefore, lacked “sufficient power to justify a ‘rational decision’ to attack this country.”¹⁷¹ While Gates’s claims encouraged some Democrats, including committee chairman Richard Russell of Georgia, the secretary found himself in the crossfire of an increasingly

contentious political fight between two powerful Democratic senators – Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, and former Secretary of the Air Force Stuart Symington – as they angled for a good shot at the Eisenhower administration in the hopes of boosting their own presidential aspirations. Symington, in particular, asserted that Eisenhower’s proposal to hold defense spending below \$41 billion would lead to the United States becoming “a second-rate power.”¹⁷²

Gates must have thought that he had a bullseye painted on his chest. His efforts to portray accurately the nation’s strategic posture grew more difficult as other administration officials, senior military officers, and members of Congress challenged his statements. What began as a concerted effort to clarify the administration’s position ended as a hopeless muddle of confusion and contradiction.

For example, only hours after Gates’s appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the commander of the Strategic Air Command, General Thomas S. Power, raised new questions about the latest intelligence estimate when he appeared to give official credence to Khrushchev’s inflated and unsubstantiated claim that a single Soviet factory was “turning out some 250 missiles a year.” In remarks before the New York Economic Club, Power declared the 100 U.S. facilities from which nuclear weapons could be launched to be “soft targets” that could be “virtually wipe[d] out” by only 300 Soviet missiles.¹⁷³

Power’s true motives will never be known, but the evidence suggests that he and other senior military officers deliberately exaggerated the Soviet threat in order to boost

their claims that a substantial increase in U.S. missile and bomber programs was still needed. But while Power's motives are obscure, the result in the context of January 1960 is clear: whereas the Air Force and General Walsh were practically alone within the intelligence community in arguing that Soviet missile production was progressing rapidly, Power's well-publicized remarks were afforded instant legitimacy in the public realm. Within days, the administration's critics stepped up their attacks. Gates's claims, when juxtaposed with those of other "informed" sources within his own Department, left the impression that he was misinformed, at best, or giving false testimony before Congress, at worst.

Amongst this confusion over the latest intelligence estimates, the missile gap debate intensified. Take, for example, an article that appeared in the partisan magazine *Missiles and Rockets*. The article, published less than a week after Gates's first appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee, proclaimed in its headline that "Gates Sees Narrower 'Gap,'" but the lead paragraph of the same article declared that the "Nation's view of the size of the Missile Gap remained cloudy." Gates's "rosier" new estimates, the magazine reported, were "retouched in more somber tones" by congressmen, including Symington, and military leaders such as Power. The magazine quoted from Symington's speech on the floor of the Senate, and repeated Power's claim that the "Russians could almost wipe out all U.S. retaliatory power in 30 minutes with . . . 300 ICBMs and IRBMs."¹⁷⁴

These numbers were central to Power's charges that the Soviets would soon have enough missiles to incapacitate the U.S. deterrent force. They were equally important to the administration's claim that the Soviet Union lacked "sufficient power to justify a 'rational decision' to attack this country."¹⁷⁵ Gates ultimately tried to divert attention from Power's numbers toward the more important point that there was no "deterrence gap," which was essentially the same argument that McElroy had made a year earlier.

Gates also explicitly denied that politics had prompted the recalculation of the intelligence numbers; reporters, politicians, and military officers were skeptical. John Norris's front page story in the *Washington Post* on January 21, 1960, compared the new "system" of estimating Soviet missile strength on the basis of intentions rather than capabilities to one of the most serious intelligence failures in the nation's history: the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson charged Gates with adopting a "dangerous new method for estimating Soviet" missile strength and he criticized the administration's emphasis on Soviet intentions. "The missile gap cannot be eliminated with the stroke of a pen," he said, and he blasted the administration for staking the lives of "175 million Americans on the ability . . . to read Nikita Khrushchev's mind."¹⁷⁷

All signs pointed to continued disagreement, punctuated by partisan wrangling, and the media showed no signs of wanting the conflict to subside. On January 23 former President Truman and Washington Senator Henry M. Jackson stepped forward to criticize

the Eisenhower administration. An even more ominous sign for the administration, however, was the report that General Taylor would testify before Johnson's Preparedness Committee in the coming week.¹⁷⁸

This fact was much on the mind of Eisenhower and his advisers, Army Colonel Andrew Goodpaster, the president's staff secretary, and JCS chair Twining, when they met in the White House on January 25.¹⁷⁹ Twining tried to put the best possible spin on the past week's activities, but he admitted that he, too, had become tangled up in the "argument over intelligence based on intentions v. capabilities." A week earlier, Twining had sharply criticized those "writers and commentators" who were "inclined to degrade the capabilities of the American people" while at the same time reporting Soviet achievements in "glowing terms."¹⁸⁰ In anticipation of the coming week, Twining was troubled by the practice of Lyndon Johnson's Preparedness Committee to require the JCS to testify under oath. Committee staffers, he explained, had been "talking to military and civilian personnel up and down the line in the Pentagon and gathering all kinds of material, much of it non-authoritative," in a deliberate effort to set them up for contradicting the administration. The president had a simple solution for such situations: "any military man who appears before the groups and is required to take an oath," he said, "should refuse to give opinion and judgment and limit his testimony strictly to facts."¹⁸¹

But such measures, even if legal, would not have stopped the momentum of the growing controversy, because the many different interpretations of the "facts" within the

administration could not be confined to hearings before Congress. For example, on the same day that Eisenhower and his lieutenants pondered new ways to frame the missile gap debate, syndicated columnist Joseph Alsop launched into yet another bitter critique of Eisenhower's defense policies. In the first of a five-part series, Alsop highlighted the administration's differences by presenting information from Gates's and Twining's recent testimony alongside excerpts from Power's speech. Presenting Power as the man most responsible "for bridging the missile gap," Alsop declared Power's speech to be "the first authoritative statement" on the danger.¹⁸²

Alsop's criticism revolved around the wisdom of "gambling" the nation's future on new estimates of questionable accuracy. His front-page article in the *New York Herald Tribune* on January 25, 1960, appeared directly below another article in which Air Force Secretary Dudley Sharp had proclaimed that there was no deterrent gap. Sharp stressed that this was true "even if the Soviet Union now has more ICBMs than the United States."¹⁸³ *Tribune* readers would have to decide who to believe – the civilian Secretary of the Air Force (and, by extension, the entire chain of command - the president, the secretary of defense, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs) or a single subordinate commander.

Alsop had chosen to believe the latter. He led the next day's column with a direct quote from Power's speech, and he compared the SAC commander's statements with those of his putative superiors, Twining and Gates. With the nation's survival hanging in the balance, Alsop argued, Gates had placed far too much confidence in the latest "official

guess” at Soviet military capabilities.¹⁸⁴ The stage was easily set for the third article in the series in which Alsop declared that the Eisenhower administration was “gambling the national future” on flawed assumptions and a flawed estimate, yet another in a long and “consistent series of gross . . . underestimates of Soviet weapons achievements” dating back to 1946.¹⁸⁵

Tribune readers again had a choice of whom to believe, for even as Alsop blasted Eisenhower, the commander-in-chief’s response was printed inches above Alsop’s column on that paper’s front page. During his weekly press conference, Eisenhower defended the new intelligence estimates and argued against engaging in a debate over intentions or capabilities. Reporters were not convinced. Warren Rogers of the *New York Herald Tribune* opined that Ike had “tossed . . . an election year hot potato back” to his secretary of defense when he failed to ultimately end the confusion surrounding the new estimates.¹⁸⁶ When reporters repeated Gates’s statement from the previous week that the new estimates were based upon what the Soviets would do, as opposed to what they could do, Eisenhower demurred, contending that Gates had been misunderstood. Reminding reporters again of the mythical bomber gap of the mid-1950s that had arisen on the basis of inaccurate intelligence estimates, the president argued that both intentions and capabilities were important in formulating intelligence projections; the new estimates, he said, were simply more accurate than past estimates.

Eisenhower's answers were insufficiently forceful to change the minds of skeptical reporters and editors. His words of encouragement were crowded out on the front page of the *Baltimore Sun*, for example. The headline over the press conference story "Intelligence on Russia Improves" was contradicted by a sub-head "U.S.-Soviet Missile 'Gap' Seen Likely to Get Worse" – a reference to comments made by Senator Richard Russell of Georgia – and an additional front-page article which criticized the Pentagon for its "inept handling" of the new intelligence estimates.¹⁸⁷ Senator Symington, meanwhile, refused to ascribe the confusion to "inept handling," charging that the administration was deliberately manipulating the intelligence estimate to mislead the public. The missile gap, he said, was greater than three-to-one in favor of the Soviets and growing. "The intelligence books have been juggled," Symington concluded in a written statement, "so the budget books may be balanced."¹⁸⁸

Eisenhower planned a full-scale information blitz of his own in yet another attempt to get everyone in his administration talking from the same script. For the president the real danger came not from Soviet missiles but "from the possible failure of understanding on the part of our people of what the situation really is." Given that he had "long felt that communication . . . was important," Eisenhower said that he would approve a plan to bring "responsible people in positions of leadership to Washington" for briefings on national security, provided that the discussions did not become "absorbed with considerations of numbers of missiles, [and] bombs."¹⁸⁹

Such an effort was already taking place. Gates and Air Force Chief of Staff White deliberately avoided talk of “numbers” during presentations before television audiences again stating explicitly that the U.S. was strong enough to deter the Soviets from starting World War III based on the overall balance of the deterrent forces.¹⁹⁰ And yet it was nearly impossible for the administration to make its case clearly. When Gates rejected Power’s contention that only 300 missiles could wipe out the nation’s deterrent force, Symington and other skeptics on the Senate Defense Appropriations subcommittee confronted him. Under questioning Gates conceded that the Soviets would continue to out-produce the U.S. in missiles over the next three years, but this advantage was “more than offset by U.S. preponderance in air and sea strength.”¹⁹¹

Eisenhower’s most carefully orchestrated efforts at “spin control” were thwarted. Consider again the case of the controversial B-70. The Air Force continued to push for the B-70 aircraft, in spite of Eisenhower’s clearly-stated misgivings, behind the scenes. Just as Twining had predicted in his meeting with Eisenhower and Goodpaster the month before, when asked about the B-70, the JCS chairman reluctantly testified that he was opposed to halting the program, contrary to the administration’s official position. But some generals only feigned reluctance. On January 11, SAC Commander Power had advised Air Force Chief of Staff White of the advantages of the B-70’s.¹⁹² Armed with this information, General White pushed for continued spending on the B-70 on two separate occasions during the next two weeks. When asked explicitly during a television interview if “he thought it

necessary for a general who disagrees to get out of the service before speaking his mind,” White replied that he “had absolutely no fear” about speaking out, even when his opinions conflicted with those of the administration.¹⁹³

A former member of the JCS, recently-retired General Taylor, also had no fear about speaking out. On February 4, 1960, Taylor testified before Congress, repeating many of his themes from *The Uncertain Trumpet*. Taylor’s son and biographer notes “[o]ut of uniform his testimony was far more blunt than it had been as chief of staff.” As he had in his best-selling book, Taylor called for “heroic measures” to build up the nation’s defenses. He foresaw that “from about 1961 on the tide will run against us,” and he predicted that it would require “men, money and sacrifice” to change the current trend toward “military inferiority.” If the nation did not make the necessary sacrifices, he warned, then this inferiority would threaten the nation’s very survival. “[T]here is no living long with communism as an inferior.” Under questioning, Taylor further quantified what sacrifices would be necessary. Taylor suggested in his testimony, as he had written in *The Uncertain Trumpet*, that the defense budget grow to roughly \$50 to \$55 billion per year, “as opposed to the \$41 billion being proposed by the Administration for the upcoming fiscal year.”¹⁹⁴

In spite of these outspoken critiques, the media began to speak of a conspiracy within the Eisenhower administration to muzzle dissenting points of view. Joseph Alsop charged that a “uniformity of viewpoint” had been enforced by the administration, and he claimed that the White House had condemned those who disagreed with the president’s

position as “non-team players.”¹⁹⁵ On the very same day, columnist George Dixon postulated that some military leaders might “take the fifth” rather than openly criticize the administration before Congress. In a caustic article that ridiculed Eisenhower for supposing that he was better informed than most for judging the nation’s military needs, Dixon suggested that senior military officers should be assigned to read a manual on how to testify before Congress rather than receive a rebuke from the president. The latest victim of the commander-in-chief’s displeasure, according to Dixon, was SAC commander General Thomas S. Power.¹⁹⁶

By the second week in February, the president had grown decidedly pessimistic about his ability to frame the national security debate. Fear of security leaks from Congress came to dominate consideration of almost any issue relating to the nuclear deterrent force.¹⁹⁷ Meanwhile, the behind-the-scenes interservice battle within the administration raged on. For example, Ike was troubled by Admiral Burke using his appearance before Congress to push for yet another Polaris submarine.¹⁹⁸ The Air Force was also concerned about Burke’s independent push for additional Polaris submarines, albeit for different reasons. Anxious to retain control over the nation’s nuclear deterrent, the Air Force had pushed on several occasions for Polaris missiles to be placed under a single unified command, preferably SAC. In a series of memoranda in early February, prominent New Look critic William W. Kaufmann presented General White with ammunition that could be used against the Polaris program in his testimony before Congress.¹⁹⁹ It was clear that if

Burke and the Navy went around the president again with a direct appeal for more Polaris submarines, the Air Force had a ready reply.

The administration's effort to present a "united front" on questions of weapons and intelligence estimates came crashing down once and for all when, on top of all that had happened during the previous six weeks, Air Force General Walsh made public his dissent from the official intelligence estimate. In testimony before Lyndon Johnson's committee – alongside fellow Air Force generals White and Power – Walsh stated unequivocally that the Soviet Union had considerably more ballistic missiles than was previously reported. White, just for good measure, pressed again for continued development of the B-70.²⁰⁰

These military men were motivated by a genuine desire to protect the nation's security. Their differing interpretations of what was required to accomplish these goals reflected their own diverse backgrounds and experiences. The proper functioning of the JCS – or of any other consultative body – depends upon differing points of view. It is not at all surprising that General Power believed that the Strategic Air Command was the best vehicle for ensuring the nation's survival. Likewise, it is not surprising that Admiral Burke favored the Polaris; or that Generals Ridgway and Taylor believed in the need for a larger conventional army. For any one of these men to have argued that his own service was *not* prepared to defend the interests of the nation would have been tantamount to surrender. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that these men *deliberately* mistook the true nature

of the Soviet arms build-up, or that they *mischaracterized* their individual service's ability to fulfill their mission as specified by the commander-in-chief.

Senator Kennedy, Joseph Alsop, and the Missile Gap – Part II

While the motivations of the nation's military leaders are relatively clear, the motivations of politicians and journalists are somewhat harder to divine. As has already been shown, Joseph Alsop had re-joined the chorus of criticism in a five-part series on the missile gap published in late January 1960, only days after Power's speech; the long-term impact of Alsop's newest missile gap crusade, however, came a month after these columns were first published. John F. Kennedy was not actively engaged in the missile gap debate in January and early February of 1960. His friend Joe Alsop piqued his interest in the topic once again.

Alsop had gone to extraordinary lengths to promulgate his ideas among Washington's elite, hoping to influence that year's debate over military spending as well as the presidential race. When Alsop assembled his most-recent missile gap articles into a specially-prepared pamphlet and distributed them to every member of the Senate, as well as to the members of the House committees on Appropriations and Armed Services, he received a relatively tepid response. The one exception to this rule was John Kennedy. Whereas the Alsop files contain numerous form letters perfunctorily acknowledging receipt of the pamphlet, a personal, hand-written note from John Kennedy stands out. On February

27, 1960, Kennedy wrote, "Thank you for sending me your series of articles on The Missile Gap. I have read these as published, but will read them again with great interest. You have done a great thing for the country and I hope we may see results. Sincerely, John."²⁰¹

Further evidence that Alsop's arguments had resonated in Kennedy's mind were dramatically displayed only two days later when Kennedy delivered a scathing critique of Eisenhower's military budget on the floor of the Senate. The speech borrowed liberally from the Alsop series. Kennedy called for a diversification of the nation's defenses, focusing especially on closing the missile gap. He began by referring to Winston Churchill's argument that it was necessary to arm for war in order to deter war. Kennedy agreed. "We depend on the strength of armaments, to enable us to bargain for disarmament," he said; but while he alluded to a speech that he intended to deliver later in the week on the subject of disarmament, he highlighted the state of the nation's current and future defense needs. Kennedy tacitly agreed with Eisenhower's contention that the current mix of forces was "undoubtedly" far superior to that of the Soviets. Still, there were other areas where the United States was deficient. In particular, the senator-turned-presidential-candidate was most concerned about the nation's shortcomings in the field of ballistic missiles, which were "likely to take on critical dimensions in the near future."²⁰²

Kennedy admitted that "[w]e cannot be certain that the Soviets will have...the tremendous lead in missile striking power which they give every evidence of building – and we cannot be certain that they will use that lead to threaten or launch an attack upon the

United States.” Nevertheless, he disagreed mightily with those who argued that such uncertainties provided justification for holding defense spending below a certain level. Counting himself among those who called “for a higher defense budget,” and who were accused of “taking a chance on spending money unnecessarily,” Kennedy turned this criticism around. “[T]hose who oppose these expenditures,” he said, “are taking a chance on our very survival as a nation.”²⁰³

Kennedy noted the irony that the electorate would never have a chance to determine who was right. “For if we are successful in boosting our defenses,” Kennedy explained, “and no Soviet attack is ever launched or threatened, then we shall never know with certainty whether our improved forces deterred that attack, or whether the Soviets would never have attacked us anyway.” “But, on the other hand,” the candidate continued, “if the deterrent gap continues to go against us and invites a Soviet strike sometime after the maximum danger period begins, a large part of our population will have less than 24 hours of life in which to reflect that the critics of this administration were right all along.”²⁰⁴

For Kennedy, the only real question was over which “gamble” the nation should take. While it would be “easier” to gamble with survival because it saved money now, and balanced the budget now, Kennedy proposed an alternate course. “I would prefer,” he said, “that we gamble with our money – that we increase our defense budget this year – even though we have no absolute knowledge that we shall ever need it – and even though we would prefer to spend the money on other critical needs in more constructive ways.”

Although agreeing that there were other uses for this money – including “schools, hospitals, parks and dams” – he predicted that the total needed to close the gap would be less than one percent of gross national product, less than the total of the projected budget surplus. It was “an investment in peace that we can afford – and cannot avoid.”²⁰⁵

Kennedy called for increased funding for a number of missile programs including Polaris, Minuteman, and “long-range air-to-ground missiles,” that would close the gap when completed. In the meantime, he urged a step up in the production of the Atlas missile, in order to “cover the current gap as best we can.” Finally, Kennedy called for rebuilding and modernizing our “Army and Marine Corps conventional forces, to prevent brush-fire wars that our capacity for nuclear retaliation is unable to deter.”²⁰⁶

His subsequent comments further indicate Kennedy’s prevailing attitudes and opinions about the missile gap:

Whether the missile gap – that everyone agrees now exists – will become critical in 1961, 1962, or 1963 . . . whether the gap can be brought to a close . . . in 1964 or in 1965 or ever – on all these questions experts may sincerely differ. . . [T]he point is that we are facing a gap on which we are gambling with our survival.²⁰⁷

Kennedy traced the genesis of the gap by comparing the histories of the defense programs in the United States and in the Soviet Union in the 1950s. In the years since 1953 – a crucial year, in which the H-bomb transformed the military situation – the Soviets “made a clear-cut decision to plunge their resources into ballistic missiles.” In that same

year, the United States “embarked on a policy of emphasizing budgetary considerations in the formulation of defense goals.”²⁰⁸ The result of these policies was a steady decline in the relative strength in the United States vis-à-vis the Soviets in the field of missiles.

There was a similar relative decline in U.S. conventional forces. While the Soviets expanded and modernized their ground forces under the guidance of Khrushchev and Marshal Georgi Konstantinovich Zhukov, in the United States the “new look” held. General Ridgway lost the funding battle that Zhukov had won. Conventional ground forces, in the Army and Marines, were consistently cut. The nation similarly failed to modernize the remaining forces, and likewise failed to provide the necessary airlift and sealift capacity to provide these forces with the mobility that they would need to protect U.S. commitments around the globe.

For Kennedy, this failure was particularly significant because events since 1953 had shown that nuclear power alone was not sufficient to deter those forms of Communist aggression which were “too limited to justify atomic war.” Nuclear weapons would not prevent the Soviets and their allies from using “local or guerilla forces” to take over power in “uncommitted nations.” Nuclear weapons could not be used in “so-called brush-fire peripheral wars.” Nuclear weapons alone, therefore, could not “prevent the Communists from gradually nibbling at the fringe of the free world’s territory and strength, until our security had been steadily eroded in piecemeal fashion – each Red advance being too small to justify massive retaliation, with all its risks.” “In short,” Kennedy concluded, “we need

forces of an entirely different kind to keep the peace against limited aggression, and to fight it, if deterrence fails, without raising the conflict to a disastrous pitch.”²⁰⁹

These were the facts, Kennedy explained. The president had argued the week before that “knowledgeable and unbiased observers” respected the nation’s strength, but Kennedy disagreed. Although the range of opinions made public during the past few months suggested, at best, disagreement and confusion over the true nature of the missile gap, Kennedy saw only one message emerging. “[E]very objective committee of knowledgeable and unbiased observers” including the Killian, Gaither, and Rockefeller Committees,” he said, “every private or public study; every objective inquiry by independent military analysts; every statement by Generals Gavin, Ridgway, Taylor, Power,...and others; every book and article by scholars in the field,” all of these observers, “regardless of party, have stated candidly and bluntly that our defense budget is not adequate to give us the protection for our security [and] support for our diplomatic objectives.” Every study, he said, agreed with the Rockefeller Brothers Report which concluded:

[A]ll is not well with present U.S. security policies and operations . . . corrective steps must be taken now. We believe that the security of the United States transcends normal budgetary considerations and that the national economy can afford the necessary measures.²¹⁰

Kennedy stressed that time was short. Yet, he was confident that the situation that “should never have been permitted to arise” could be resolved if the nation took

immediate action. He implored his fellow senators, and the nation, "If we move now, if we are willing to gamble with our money instead of our survival, we have, I am sure, the wit and resource to maintain the minimum conditions for our survival, for our alliances, and for the active pursuit of peace." He stressed that his was not "a call for despair." It was a call for action, "a call based upon the belief that at this moment in history our security transcends normal budgetary considerations."²¹¹

Kennedy closed by reaffirming his faith that these measures would ultimately enable the nation to turn towards disarmament, to "an end to war," and to "an end to these vast military departments and expenditures." "We are taking a gamble with our money," Kennedy reaffirmed, "But the alternative [was] to gamble with our lives."²¹²

Conclusions

Who had the final word during these rocky months? Ironically, it came from the man who had had little to say about the missile gap during the first eight weeks of his presidential campaign, but who would derive the most benefit from it in the final eight weeks – John F. Kennedy. Kennedy's views on foreign policy and defense were well-publicized long before he secured his party's nomination at the time of the Democratic convention in July 1960.²¹³ Kennedy would continue to emphasize these themes throughout the fall campaign.

His motivations for using these themes were varied. Kennedy genuinely believed, as did Joseph Alsop and other prominent critics of the New Look, that Eisenhower's national security strategy took unnecessary risks in the name of protecting the nation's economy. Kennedy and his fellow Democrats believed that the federal government should spend more money, including more money for defense. Kennedy was also motivated, however, by his political ambition. The missile gap was a salient political issue. Charges that the nation had fallen behind the Soviet Union resonated with voters.

In the final analysis, Eisenhower's strategy had failed. He had tried to convince his countrymen that it was unwise to spend more money on defense when the nature of the threat was unclear. He had hoped to present "a united front" to the American people, but he had failed to redirect attention to the "deterrent" value of the nation's defenses rather than to a presumed missile gap. He was unable to resolve disagreement amongst the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff over the military budget and over major weapons systems, such as the B-70. And even his most persistent, perhaps even unconstitutional, attempts to keep such disagreements out of the headlines had also failed, or even backfired.²¹⁴ In the end, John Kennedy and the president's harshest critics had the final word on national security strategy and the missile gap. Kennedy would continue to frame the debate in the coming months.

Perhaps Eisenhower can be faulted for his naiveté. The career military officer did not believe it proper for officers to publicly question the decisions of the chain of command.

While writing his memoirs in 1962, Eisenhower deleted a mildly critical passage referring to the growing conflict in Indochina. Writing of this incident in 1992, Fred Greenstein and Richard Immerman observed: "It seems likely that the former president, who reverted to the lifetime rank of general of the army after leaving office, would have felt obligated to back the incumbent."²¹⁵ Perhaps. But Eisenhower might also have wanted no part of a repeat of the "Revolt of the Generals" – Ridgway, Gavin, Taylor, Power, White, and Walsh – that had caused him so much anguish in the closing days of his White House career. For whatever reason, the ex-President refrained from publicly criticizing his successors, Kennedy and later Lyndon Johnson, the two politicians who had derived such benefit from the "revolt," even as their misjudgments dragged the nation into a deepening quagmire into Southeast Asia.

4. THE MISSILE GAP AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1960

Just as long as Kennedy can keep Nixon at least neutralized on foreign affairs, he can club him to death with domestic issues. However, foreign and domestic issues must constantly be related to each other by the point that we cannot be strong abroad if we are not strong at home.¹ – Pollster Louis Harris to John F. Kennedy, October 1960

For years, scholars have downplayed the significance of particular policy issues during the presidential election of 1960.² Most observers have attributed Kennedy's ultimate success in this pivotal historical event to other factors, not related to specific policy proposals. Some focus on Kennedy's success in a series of televised debates, while others emphasize Kennedy's religion as a factor, working either in Kennedy's favor, or to his detriment.³ Some emphasize Kennedy's call for Americans to embark on a national crusade toward a "New Frontier," while still others credit John Kennedy's personality, and a superior campaign organization, for his ultimate success.⁴

With the notable exception of Robert Divine, few historians have examined the relative significance of foreign policy and national defense issues in the campaign. Divine's *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, Volume 2, 1952-1960*, devotes over one-hundred pages exclusively to foreign policy issues in the 1960 campaign, from the primaries through to the general election. Divine notes that Kennedy himself believed as early as December 1959 that foreign policy would be the paramount issue of the campaign.⁵

Divine concludes that foreign policy cost the Democrat votes, and that John Kennedy's rhetoric notwithstanding, the differences between Nixon and Kennedy on foreign policy were remarkably small. A more nuanced view suggests that while the two candidates agreed on the underlying goals of American foreign policy, they differed over the

appropriate means for achieving these common goals. These differences were even more pronounced between the two political parties. In exploring these differences, this chapter pays particular attention to Kennedy's references to the "missile gap" and to declining American "prestige" in his campaign speeches.

Kennedy's message of the need to get the country moving again addressed both foreign and domestic concerns. The external threat of Communism enabled Kennedy to ask more from his audiences. He called on voters to make sacrifices in their personal lives in order to serve the needs of their fellow Americans. By raising living standards across the board at home, the nation would send a strong message to those living abroad who looked to the United States for guidance and inspiration in their struggle against Communism. In this way, Kennedy combined his discussion of foreign policy with a reference to domestic economic policy. This combined message was a persistent theme throughout Kennedy's campaign.

To the Nomination

Religion, not foreign policy or economic matters, dominated the early intra-party contest between John F. Kennedy and Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, Kennedy's only major rival in the primaries.⁶ Kennedy's first major victory over Humphrey, in Wisconsin in early April, was inconclusive. Critics attributed Kennedy's success to the disproportionate number of Catholics in the state. The true test came in West Virginia,

which held its primary on May 10. Kennedy confronted the religious issue head on by suggesting on numerous occasions that a vote against him was a vote for bigotry. He won 61 percent of the votes cast in a decidedly un-Catholic state. Detractors who argued that no Catholic could ever be elected president were quieted.⁷ Soon thereafter, prominent Democrats including Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and Ohio Governor Michael DiSalle, endorsed Kennedy.⁸

Although other issues crowded out foreign policy concerns during Kennedy's run-up to the nominating convention, the missile gap remained a crucial element of his overarching theme that the nation must accelerate its efforts on a broad front. In the magazine *Ground Support Equipment*, Kennedy explained that the Soviet Union possessed "rocket engines of far greater thrust" than any in the U.S. arsenal. "This lead," he declared, accounted "for Soviet superiority in the field of ICBM's." He feared that new developments in space technology would lead "almost inevitably...to scientific breakthroughs of military importance." "The Russians," the candidate warned, "must not be first with these breakthroughs."⁹

Then in June, after securing another primary win in Oregon, Kennedy raised the issue of the missile gap, and of the deficiencies in the nation's military, in another speech on the floor of the Senate.¹⁰ The nation's task, Kennedy began, was to rebuild its strength "to prove to the Soviets that time and the course of history [was] not on their side, that the

balance of world power [was] not shifting their way.” “The hour is late,” Kennedy said, “but the agenda is long.”

The items on that agenda included many of the same reforms that Kennedy had been advocating for years. First, the nation must move to “make invulnerable a nuclear retaliatory power [that was] second to none...by stepping up our development and production of the ultimate missiles” including Polaris, Minuteman, and long-range air-to-ground missiles. Such measures, Kennedy argued, would “close the gap” and would ensure that the nuclear deterrent force would not “be wiped out in a surprise attack.” In the meantime he urged an increase in the production of Atlas missiles, a hardening of nuclear weapons bases, and improvements to the nation’s “continental defense and warning systems.”¹¹

Beyond missile programs, Kennedy articulated a broad-based program for regaining the initiative in the Cold War. The nation must be able “to intervene effectively and swiftly in any limited war anywhere in the world,” and this necessitated increasing “mobility and versatility” for conventional forces. Kennedy also called for “more flexible and realistic tools for use in Eastern Europe,” and a reassessment of the nation’s policy towards China. Finally, he argued that the nation “must begin to develop new, workable programs for peace and the control of arms.”¹² In closing, Kennedy reiterated his long-standing belief that national security was tied to the nation’s economic security. “We must work,” he declared, “to build the stronger America on which our ultimate ability to defend the free world

depends.” Specifically, Kennedy sought “to create an America with an expanding economy, where growth is not dissipated in inflation, and consumer luxuries are not confused with national strength”¹³

Kennedy’s speech kept the missile gap in the spotlight. Concerns about the gap continued to influence President Eisenhower’s behavior in the spring of 1960. In May a planned summit meeting between Eisenhower and Nikita Khrushchev collapsed after an American U-2 reconnaissance plane was shot down over Russia. Photographs from this highly successful program had provided Eisenhower with his most conclusive evidence that there was no missile gap. The Soviets had been aware of these flights, and had tracked the aircraft as they crossed at high altitudes over their otherwise secluded country; but before that fateful flight on May 1, they had been unable to bring down the high-flying spy planes.¹⁴

Eisenhower approved the flight only a few weeks before the planned summit in spite of the risk that a disclosure of the program would derail the meeting between the two superpowers. He wanted to know more about the nature and extent of the Soviet arms buildup. He also wanted more ammunition to be used against his political opponents, including John F. Kennedy, who continued to speak of the missile gap. Evidence from this U-2 mission might have further dispelled any notion that the Soviet Union was leading the United States in missile development.¹⁵

When the spy plane failed to land at the appointed time, the Eisenhower administration issued a statement saying that the United States had lost an aircraft conducting weather research. Confident that pilot Francis Gary Powers would never be taken alive, Eisenhower believed that he could maintain the secrecy of the entire U-2 program. Within days, however, the Soviet media was parading images of the captured pilot for the world to see. Eisenhower traveled to Paris for the planned summit on May 14, but when he rebuffed Khrushchev's demand for an apology, the Soviet premier left the summit before it had begun.¹⁶

Contemporary observers bemoaned the failure of the summit, and criticized the president for conducting the overflight so close to the summit; but they also used the occasion to blast Eisenhower's defense program. The Democratic Advisory Council (DAC) criticized the "Eisenhower-Nixon Administration [which had] floundered in a series of contradictory statements." The incident, the DAC said, made it clear that the inadequacies of the United States in building economic growth...and in strengthening its defenses" were threatening the prospects for world peace. In recommending a program to restore the nation's standing, the DAC called for an expansion of the nation's economic growth and security, and stronger "tactical" forces for the Army and Navy – including a restoration of the Marine Corps – in order to "deter local aggression aimed at limited objectives, and to defend our interests when this local deterrence fails."¹⁷ Although John Kennedy himself had recommended similar changes to the nation's military, he was less willing to criticize

Eisenhower so harshly. Backing off from the tone of the DAC statement, Kennedy added, in a lone dissent, that Eisenhower “could not have avoided...attending the conference without harm to the prestige of the United States.”¹⁸

Kennedy could not distance himself so easily from the platform of the Democratic Party on which he ran, nor did he wish to. Kennedy advisor Abram Chayes, a Harvard University Law Professor, was staff director for the Democratic Platform Committee. Chayes took a leading role in drafting the platform to ensure that the issues of primary concern to Kennedy were afforded a prominent place in the document that would guide the party’s efforts in the coming campaign.¹⁹ Reflecting the importance of foreign policy and national security in Kennedy’s campaign, the platform led off with an outspoken attack upon the Eisenhower administration’s military policies, stating, in part, that the United States had lost its “position of pre-eminence” relative to the Russians, the Chinese, and their satellites. The platform stressed that these criticisms were not “a partisan election-year charge,” because “high officials of the Republican Administration” had said in testimony before congressional committees “that the Communists [would] have a dangerous lead in intercontinental missiles through 1963 – and that [there were] no plans to catch up.”²⁰ These same officials had allegedly admitted that the nation’s conventional forces had been “dangerously slashed for reasons of ‘economy.’” “[A]s a result,” the platform claimed, “our military position today is measured in terms of gaps – missile gap, space gap, limited-war gap.” The Democrats pledged to close these gaps.²¹

The platform also addressed the subject of economic growth. The Democrats believed that the economy could achieve an annual level of growth of at least five percent without the risk of inflation. They called for an end to “tight money,” they reaffirmed their commitment to full employment as a “paramount objective of national policy,” and they called for “action to create new industry in America’s depressed areas of chronic unemployment.”²²

John F. Kennedy would repeat many of these themes over and over again on the campaign trail. He did so for the first time as the Democratic Party’s official nominee in his acceptance speech on July 15, 1960. Although Kennedy made no mention of the missile gap in his address, his discussion of domestic problems was framed within the context of the global challenges confronting the United States. “Abroad, the balance of power is shifting,” Kennedy warned. “[C]ommunist influence” had “penetrated further into Asia, stood astride the Middle East and now festers some ninety miles off the coast of Florida.” These threats called for bold actions. “We stand today on the edge of a New Frontier,” Kennedy declared, “the frontier of the 1960’s – a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils – a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats,” and he pledged to lead the nation into this New Frontier.²³

The Democratic Platform alleged that officials within the Eisenhower administration had implied, deliberately or otherwise, that more could be done to protect national security. Such comments bolstered the Democrats’ case against Eisenhower’s

defense program. Then, in late July 1960, Vice President Richard Nixon met with New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller. In a secret meeting at Rockefeller's home in New York City, the two erstwhile rivals for the Republican presidential nomination reached agreement on a number of foreign policy and defense issues. The so-called Fifth Avenue Compact declared that new efforts were necessary in national defense because of "the swiftness of the technological revolution – and the warning signs of Soviet aggressiveness."²⁴

"The two imperatives of national security in the 1960s" the statement read, were, first, a nuclear retaliatory force "capable of surviving surprise attack to inflict devastating punishment on any aggressor," and second, a "modern, flexible and balanced military establishment with forces capable of deterring or meeting any local aggression." According to the statement, these security imperatives required "more and improved bombers, airborne alert, speeded production of missiles and Polaris submarines, accelerated dispersal and hardening of bases, full modernization of the equipment of our ground forces, and an intensified program for civil defense."²⁵

The statement by these two leading Republicans was widely interpreted as a slap against President Eisenhower's defense program. Joseph Alsop reported years later that Eisenhower was planning a last-minute push to increase military spending by as much as \$4 billion in late July 1960. The president allegedly changed his mind, however, after the release of the Nixon-Rockefeller agreement. According to Alsop, Eisenhower concluded

that a decision to increase defense spending at such a late stage in his administration would have given the appearance of “admitting the validity of the criticism” included within the statement.²⁶

Rockefeller and other liberal Republicans posed major problems for the Eisenhower administration. The Fifth Avenue Compact demonstrated that the persistent criticisms of Eisenhower’s defense program would continue to dog the vice president. Nixon harbored doubts about Eisenhower’s economy measures, and he – like Kennedy – was genuinely committed to expanding the nation’s defenses. Nixon, however, had been reluctant to criticize his most important political asset – a still-popular president.

John F. Kennedy skillfully exploited Nixon’s quandary, in part by citing Rockefeller’s criticisms in order to highlight the bipartisan nature of his missile gap critique. Believing that Eisenhower’s defense program was Nixon’s primary political liability, Alsop told an interviewer that, given the “approach that Kennedy took, the character of Nixon’s campaign, including the defensiveness which resulted from the fact that...Nixon, genuinely believed that the Defense effort was inadequate,” “it would have changed political history” if Eisenhower had decided to increase defense spending in the summer of 1960.²⁷

Alsop’s speculation notwithstanding, however, the defense budget did not receive a last minute boost. Kennedy continued to be concerned about, and he continued to speak of, the missile gap. He remained convinced of the need for more defense spending in order to

close the gap. Kennedy's concerns were not dispelled by a series of intelligence briefings given by the Eisenhower administration. He would receive a total of *three* such briefings by the CIA prior to the election, between July and November. He was also briefed by the Defense Department in early September.²⁸ The precise content of these briefings has become the subject of intense historical speculation.²⁹ Most scholars who have studied them have focused on Cuba, and not the missile gap, *per se*. Some have charged that Kennedy was advised of a plan to overthrow Cuban leader Fidel Castro, and that Kennedy then used this information against the vice president during the campaign.³⁰ With respect to the missile gap, many scholars simply assume that Kennedy was informed of the specifics of the Soviet missile program, and that he – in spite of this information – continued to speak of a missile gap.³¹

One may surmise that any information about the true nature of the Soviet missile build-up did not differ substantially from that which the administration had already said, privately and publicly, during the preceding two years. As was shown in Chapter Three, Kennedy and his fellow senators had been told in 1959 that whatever missile gap there might have been was militarily insignificant. Then, in January and February 1960, the administration presented their revised intelligence estimates, which showed that there was no missile gap. Kennedy and the president's other critics, however, were skeptical of the administration's method for determining the size and scope of the Soviet forces. They rejected the new intelligence estimates, and continued to speak of a missile gap.

By late July of 1960, at the time of the first intelligence briefings, Kennedy and the rest of the country also knew about the U-2 program. Accordingly, they had greater reason to accept the validity of Eisenhower's numbers. Nonetheless, JFK and others continued to question Eisenhower's repeated assertions that there was no missile gap. It is unlikely that any further denials, provided to Kennedy during one of these special briefings, would have changed the candidate's mind at such a late date. In any event, the administration's briefings did not affect Kennedy's public statements – he continued to speak of a missile gap throughout the electoral contest, up to and including the very last days of the campaign.

The Kennedy Campaign: The Best and the Brightest

Kennedy's team of foreign policy advisers included some of the most vocal proponents of the missile gap. After winning the Democratic nomination, the Kennedy campaign acquired a handful of advisers who had worked for JFK's Democratic rivals including Roswell Gilpatric, Adam Yarmolinsky, and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. The core Kennedy group, however, remained unchanged. Kennedy's most important political advisor was his brother Robert, who had observed Adlai Stevenson's failed presidential campaign of 1956 at close range.³² Speech writing, meanwhile, was dominated by Theodore "Ted" Sorensen and Richard Goodwin. Sorensen had joined Kennedy's senatorial staff in 1953. By 1960 he had become one of Kennedy's most influential advisers.³³ Goodwin had clerked for Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter and then

worked on the House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight, investigating, among other things, the television quiz show scandals. He officially joined the campaign in late 1959.³⁴ Harris Wofford had been assisting Kennedy from time-to-time since early 1959, and was responsible for crafting some of Kennedy's early foreign policy speeches.³⁵ Finally, pollster Louis Harris was also an influential adviser. Harris was one of only nine people, including the candidate's brother Bobby, father, Joseph, Sr., and brother-in-law Steve Smith, who attended the first organized meeting of the campaign in April 1959.³⁶ Harris's confidential polling reports for the campaign specifically documented the relative significance of various issues on a state-by-state basis.

Kennedy and his staff devised a strategy for addressing the candidate's known weaknesses. First and foremost, millions of Americans were expected to vote against Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, on religious grounds.³⁷ The campaign believed that Kennedy's youth and inexperience might also be used against him, particularly on foreign policy issues, and the campaign developed a series of counterattacks or responses for this as well. For example, the campaign pointed out that Kennedy and Nixon had been elected to Congress in the same year and Nixon had served in the Senate for only two years before becoming vice president, while Kennedy, first elected to the Senate in 1952, had served in that body for nearly eight years. On foreign policy, specifically, Kennedy stressed his service on the influential Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where he chaired the Subcommittee on Africa.³⁸

Another part of Kennedy's strategy for defusing Nixon's alleged expertise in foreign policy was to assault Republican foreign policy failures during the past eight years.³⁹

Kennedy explained to Harris Wofford in the spring of 1959 that he wanted to craft a new foreign policy that would "break out of the confines of the cold war."⁴⁰ He favored an expanded role for the United Nations, more cooperation with lesser-developed nations, and more social and educational contacts between Americans and those abroad.

Kennedy's campaign advisers urged him to conduct an aggressive campaign based on foreign policy and national security. For example, William Atwood suggested that "The main theme of the campaign should be the competition with Communism."⁴¹ Atwood's view, however, was at odds with that of Kennedy's more liberal advisers who instead recommended that he emphasize traditional domestic themes, with defense and foreign policy far down the list.⁴²

Several other advisers urged caution on both fronts, particularly as defense spending related to employment. Although many "vital center" liberals favored arms control and nuclear disarmament, in principle, Democrats remained wary of being perceived as "soft on communism." An additional factor, the concerns of defense workers, further mitigated Democrats' zeal for cutting defense spending. Before he embarked on a grand new initiative to replace persistent Cold War conflict and cooperation with cooperation and coexistence, the candidate received advice that "the hundreds of thousands of people who

are employed in defense industry are entitled to know that some thought is being given to their place in a peaceful world.”⁴³

On the subject of military policy and strategy, Kennedy promised to strengthen the nation’s defenses in order to close the missile gap. He proposed expanding several specific weapons systems including the B-70 bomber, the Atlas and Minuteman missiles, and the Polaris missile submarine. More generally, Kennedy advocated a stronger conventional force bolstered by expanded airlift capabilities in order to fight limited, non-nuclear conflicts. He also favored extending the draft. Kennedy had spoken to all of these issues at various times during his political career. At a later stage during the campaign, however, Kennedy further tied defense spending to economic issues by pledging his support for Manpower Policy Number 4, a procurement regulation first promulgated during the Korean War that specifically sought to award defense contracts in areas of high unemployment. On a related note, Kennedy also proposed to reform federal procurement policies to enable small firms to compete with large firms for defense contracts.⁴⁴

Each of these issues appeared only sporadically in Kennedy stump speeches. By contrast, the nation’s sagging prestige was a constant, and it reflected deficiencies in both foreign and domestic affairs.⁴⁵ Kennedy pledged to restore the nation’s prestige through a combination of progressive reforms, both at home and abroad. By combining his critique of Republican ineptitude and apathy with respect to the domestic economy with frequent

observations about Soviet successes, Kennedy succeeded in killing two birds – addressing both foreign and domestic policy – with one rhetorical stone.

Foreign policy and national security were tied to domestic concerns in other ways as well. As they had done throughout the 1950s, the criticisms of the Eisenhower administration's defense policies by Kennedy and his fellow Democrats included a critique of the GOP's economic philosophy. This critique harkened back to the failed policies of Herbert Hoover in the early 1930s. But a new voice, and a new critique, emerged in 1960, when Walt Whitman Rostow, a professor of economic history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*.⁴⁶

The Stages of Economic Growth was a formal rebuke of Marx's dialectical materialism. Rostow's assessment of the U.S.-Soviet military confrontation included some of the most enduring myths of the Cold War years. Rostow distinguished himself, however, from many other prominent cold warriors by combining virulent anti-communism with a plausible and cogent argument against the Marxist-Leninist paradigm that saw imperialism as a natural, and necessary, by-product of capitalism. His work was, as his subtitle suggested, a non-Communist manifesto: it was Rostow's explicit goal to formulate a theory to refute communist dogma. He did this, in part, by crafting arguments that were not narrowly deterministic, offering a decidedly non-economic explanation for imperialism in recent history.⁴⁷

The Soviets, he argued, had accumulated a relative military advantage through their deliberate control of domestic consumption. The Soviet economy, including its system of resource allocation, was therefore of direct concern to the United States. His work was an appeal to the West, and to newly-independent countries throughout the world, that economic growth was essential in order to demonstrate the superiority of capitalism. As a leader of the West, the United States had an obligation to lead this effort, and as such the Soviet Union should be perceived as a *business* rival, as well as a strategic threat. It was bad enough that a weak U.S. economy meant that millions of Americans were unemployed or underemployed. It was worse, however, that this weakness sent a message abroad. In this vein, the strength of the U.S. economy relative to that of the Soviet Union had profound ramifications in Rostow's – and ultimately John F. Kennedy's – worldview.

Rostow played, as he told an interviewer in 1981, a "minor role," in the Kennedy campaign. The two men had first met in February 1958, and Kennedy was interested in Rostow's views on economic development. Rostow impressed upon the senator the need to "get the country moving again," one of Kennedy's most persistent campaign slogans, which he first used while campaigning prior to the Democratic primary in Oregon.⁴⁸ In addition to Rostow, Kennedy was advised by a number of prominent Keynesian economists including James Tobin, Walter Heller, Paul Samuelson, and John Kenneth Galbraith. These men helped to shape Kennedy's complex, and at times contradictory, economic philosophy that

called on Americans to sacrifice in order to turn the tide in the Cold War, while also calling on government to do more to help those citizens in need.

Throughout his political career, as Michael Meagher notes, Kennedy considered the “call to arms” to be one of the most noble forms of political leadership.⁴⁹ These views were popularized in Kennedy’s best-selling *Profiles in Courage* published in 1956. Kennedy’s broad national security vision was further sharpened during the missile gap era. His views on foreign policy and defense in the wake of the missile gap were summarized within a collection of JFK speeches entitled *The Strategy of Peace*, published in early 1960.⁵⁰

Kennedy’s authorship of these and other works has long been a subject of scholarly debate. Harris Wofford wrote a majority of the entries in *The Strategy of Peace*.⁵¹ Ted Sorensen drafted many of the other essays and articles eventually published under Kennedy’s name.⁵² One article published under Kennedy’s by-line in the national weekly, the *Saturday Review*, provided a succinct and revealing glimpse into Kennedy’s strategic vision for the future. In a review of B. H. Liddell Hart’s *Deterrent or Defense*, Kennedy neatly summarized the arguments in the book to a single grand theme – “The West must be prepared to face down Communist aggression, short of nuclear war, by conventional forces.”⁵³

Kennedy repeated the British military critic’s call for military reforms, which, like James Gavin’s and Maxwell Taylor’s before, included increased mobility for conventional forces, and an expansion of forces under NATO command. In pushing this force structure,

Kennedy explicitly endorsed Liddell Hart's underlying strategic vision. Behind this vision was a judgment, Kennedy wrote, "That responsible leaders in the West will not and should not deal with limited aggression by unlimited weapons whose use could only be mutually suicidal." Kennedy then seized the opportunity to pitch his own national security agenda to a wide audience by warning that the nuclear deterrent was vulnerable to a sudden attack, and he concluded by again calling for an acceleration of "the new generation of mobile missiles, notably Polaris and Minuteman" as he had done in the Senate, and on numerous occasions during the campaign.⁵⁴

Kennedy was also interested during the late stages of his campaign in the writings of an American general, John B. Medaris. Medaris, formerly head of the Army's Ordnance Missile Command, retired from the service in January 1960 to write *Countdown for Decision*, yet another in a long line of books by former military officers frustrated by the perceived failures of the nation's defenses. While the book appears to have been overshadowed by the heated presidential campaign, Kennedy specifically asked CIA Director Allen Dulles for his opinion of Medaris's book when they met for an intelligence briefing at Kennedy's home in mid-September.⁵⁵

In substance, Medaris's critique of the military services and of the Eisenhower administration did not differ substantially from that of Ridgway, Gavin, and Taylor. Medaris was particularly critical of the Air Force, however. He argued that the Army and the Air Force should again be merged, and he questioned the duplication inherent in the

Atlas, Titan, and Minuteman ICBM programs. His criticisms were not entirely parochial. He called the Navy's Polaris missile program "the best bet for retaliatory striking power" in the coming years.⁵⁶

Elements of all of these foreign policy and national security themes are discernible within one of Kennedy's most important speeches of the campaign, given before the American Legion meeting in Miami Beach, Florida, on October 18th, 1960.⁵⁷ Kennedy came before the group as a fellow Legionnaire, routinely stressing their common heritage, and he underscored the need for the nation to sacrifice for the good of the world, as they had all done in World War II.

Calling "the steady erosion of American power relative to that of the Communists" the "fundamental problem of our time," Kennedy harshly attacked the Republican administration. "No amount of oratory," he said, "can hide the harsh facts behind the rhetoric [and] the soothing words that our prestige has never been higher and that of the Communists never lower. They cannot hide the basic facts that American strength...has been slipping, and communism has been steadily advancing."⁵⁸

The key to the "Communist drive for power," according to Kennedy, was their military power. "[I]t is here that the Communist advance and relative American decline can be most sharply seen, and it is here that the danger to our survival is the greatest."⁵⁹ Citing a host of bipartisan critics including H. Rowan Gaither, Nelson Rockefeller, and again generals Gavin and Taylor, who had all argued that the United States was "slipping...into a

period of danger,” Kennedy called for an aggressive new program to rebuild the nation’s defenses including a “crash program” to build the Polaris submarine, and the Minuteman missile, “which will,” he said, “eventually close the missile gap.”⁶⁰

Arguing that the Soviets questioned America’s will and determination “for a long, long hard fight,” Kennedy challenged the assembled Legionnaires to do more and he concluded on an aggressive but chilling note:

I want to make it very clear to Mr. Khrushchev and to anyone else who wonders, I will not cut our present commitments to the cause of freedom . . . I don’t want to be the President of a nation perishing under a mushroom cloud of a nuclear warhead. . . . But neither do I wish to be the President of a nation which is being driven back, which is on the defensive, because of its unwillingness to face the facts of our national existence, . . . [and] to bear the burdens which freedom demands.⁶¹

This speech by Kennedy, and a similar address by Nixon, who also spoke to the convention on the same day, were afforded extensive coverage in the national news media, including side by side stories on the front page of *The New York Times*.⁶² But while the two candidates “faced off” – figuratively speaking – on the front page of major newspapers, the literal face off that took place during a series of televised debates had a far greater impact on the presidential election of 1960.

The General Election, Part I – The Debates

The Kennedy-Nixon debates are often cited as the most important events of the 1960 presidential campaign.⁶³ In the course of these four verbal confrontations, Kennedy

never once spoke explicitly of a missile gap; however, the underlying themes of his campaign – that the country’s prestige had fallen, and that bold, new actions were needed to recover the initiative in the global competition with the Soviet Union – came across clearly in each debate.

Kennedy’s broader strategy of tying foreign policy to domestic matters was demonstrated in the very first of the four televised debates held on September 26, as Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev and Cuban leader Fidel Castro were on United States’ soil, appearing before the United Nations and stealing headlines. Although debate moderator Howard K. Smith explained that the first debate, per the candidates’ own rules, was to be “restricted to internal or domestic American matters,” Kennedy repeatedly invoked the threat to national security to justify his domestic agenda.⁶⁴

In his opening statement, Kennedy hearkened back to Abraham Lincoln’s 1860 campaign, when the question before the voters was whether the nation could live half slave and half free. “In the election of 1960,” Kennedy said, “the question is whether the world will exist half slave or half free.” The answer, he believed, would depend “upon what we do here in the United States, on the kind of society that we build, on the kind of strength that we maintain.” Foreign policy and domestic policy were inseparable. “We discuss tonight domestic issues,” he said, “but I would not want that [to imply] that this does not involve directly our struggle with Mr. Khrushchev for survival.”⁶⁵

The stakes were particularly great because the burden of the world rested on the shoulders of the citizens of the United States. In a phrase repeated many times during his stump speeches around the country Kennedy explained, "If we do well here, if we meet our obligations, if we are moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world. If we fail, then freedom fails." Kennedy was optimistic, but the situation called for immediate action. "I think it's time America started moving again," he said.⁶⁶

Kennedy was not satisfied with the country's growth. Alleging that the United States had "the lowest rate of economic growth of any major industrialized society in the world," Kennedy explained the significance of this lag in terms of the international competition. "[E]conomic growth," he said, "means strength and vitality. It means we're able to sustain our defenses; it means we're able to meet our commitments abroad."⁶⁷

Beyond the candidates' differences over the role of the federal government within the domestic economy, Kennedy and Nixon discussed other related issues, including the federal debt, interest rates, and inflation. In a lively exchange with Stuart Novins of CBS News, Kennedy said that he did not believe that the nation would "be able to reduce the Federal debt very much in 1961, 2, or 3," because of the "heavy obligations which affect our security which we're going to have to meet." Novins followed up, asking about Kennedy's call for a reduction in the interest rate in order to reduce the Federal debt. Kennedy stood firm. He explained that, in his judgment, "the hard money – tight money policy, fiscal policy of [the Eisenhower administration had] contributed to the slowdown in our

economy.” These same policies, he explained, had “helped bring the recession of ‘54,” had “made the recession of ‘58 rather intense,” and had “slowed, somewhat, our economic activity in 1960.” In a similar vein, Kennedy explained that while he believed “in the balanced budget,” he “would unbalance the budget...if there was a grave national emergency or a serious recession.”⁶⁸

The broader debate revolved around where the nation’s resources were concentrated – the public sector, or the private sector. For example, Nixon claimed that the Eisenhower administration had had monies for schools, hospitals, and highways, because the administration had “encouraged individual enterprise.” The result was “the greatest expansion of the private sector of the economy” in the nation’s history.

Kennedy disagreed. “I think we have a rich country. And I think we have a powerful country,” but this was not enough. Instead, Kennedy believed that the president and the nation’s political leaders must “set before our country exactly what we must do in the next decade...so that by the year 1970 the United States is ahead” of the Soviet Union.⁶⁹

Nixon, who passed up several opportunities to attack Kennedy’s positions during this first debate,⁷⁰ challenged Kennedy’s central contention that the Soviet Union was going to surpass the United States. While it was technically accurate to say that Soviet growth had exceeded that of the United States, the Soviets remained far behind the United States in total economic output. But then, reflecting his own ambiguity about the

wisdom of Eisenhower's policies, Nixon weakened his argument. The United States' relative economic strength, he said, should not be a cause for complacency. The Soviet leaders "are determined men, they are fanatical men, and we have to get the very most out of our economy. I agree with Senator Kennedy completely on that score. Where we disagree," he said, "is in the means that we would use to get the most out of our economy." He reaffirmed his personal belief that private enterprise was better suited than the government to spend scarce resources.

In his closing comments, Kennedy agreed with Nixon in one respect: the goals for all Americans, as they looked at their own country and at the world around them, were the same. The people, and the candidates, he explained, disagreed on the means to achieve those goals. In this context, the choice was clear: "If you feel," he said to the 70 million television viewers, and to the millions more listening on the radio:

that the relative power and prestige and strength of the United States is increasing in relation to that of the Communists, that we are gaining more security, that we are achieving everything as a nation that we should achieve, that we are achieving a better life for our citizens and greater strength, then I . . . think you should vote for Mr. Nixon.⁷¹

Kennedy appealed to those who believed otherwise, to those who yearned for a president who would "set before the people the unfinished business of our society." The question before the nation, he said, "is: Can freedom in the next generation conquer, or are the Communists going to be successful?" The stakes were high. If the nation met its responsibilities, then freedom would conquer; but "If we fail," Kennedy warned, "if we

fail to move ahead, if we fail to develop sufficient military and economic and social strength here in this country, then I think that the tide could begin to run against us, and I don't want historians," to say that "these were the years when the tide ran out for the United States."⁷²

The candidates rejoined the verbal battle less than two weeks later in a second debate held on October 7, 1960. As in the first debate, the gulf separating the two parties was again made clear. For example, on the subject of taxes, Hal Levy of *Newsday* noted that Kennedy in his acceptance speech at Los Angeles had said that his campaign "would be based not on what [he] intend[ed] to offer the American people, but what [he] intend[ed] to ask of them." Given that Kennedy had said a year earlier that he "would not hesitate to recommend a tax increase if [he] considered it necessary," Levy asked if Kennedy intended to raise taxes.⁷³ Kennedy said no: he did not think that a tax increase would be "desirable" given the current economic conditions; but he added that he would not hesitate to suggest "a tax increase, or any other policy which would defend the United States," if he deemed it necessary. "These are going to be very difficult times in the 1960's," he told his fellow citizens, and "we're going to have...to bear any burdens in order to maintain our own freedom and in order to meet our freedom around the globe."⁷⁴

As he had in the first debate, Nixon agreed with Kennedy on several crucial points. For example, Nixon also believed that spending for defense would increase in the coming years. Accordingly, although Nixon hoped that he could "economize elsewhere" in order to

reduce the need for new taxes, he said that he too “would have no hesitation to ask the American people to pay” more, even as early as 1961.⁷⁵

Nixon was caught in another potential contradiction with the Eisenhower administration when Edward Morgan of ABC asked him to explain how well the country was doing in the Cold War. In his past statements, the vice president had said that the nation was “doing basically well.” But how, Morgan asked, did this “square” with the “considerable mass of bipartisan reports and studies, including one prominently participated in by Governor Rockefeller,” which had concluded “almost unanimously” that the nation was not reaching its full potential? In his response, Nixon was unable to differentiate his position from that of his Democratic opponent. He said, in part, “no matter how well we’re doing in the cold war, we’re not doing as well as we should, and that will always be the case as long as the Communists are on the international scene.” And while he complained of the “distortions” about the nation’s prestige that had been put out by Kennedy and others, he concluded by saying that he, too, was “not satisfied with what we’re doing in the cold war because I believe we have to step up our activities and launch” an economic, technical, and ideological “offensive for the minds and hearts and souls of men.”⁷⁶

Kennedy returned to Morgan’s original question, stressing the bipartisan nature of the criticisms leveled against the Eisenhower administration. “Governor Rockefeller,” he noted, had “been far more critical in June [sic] of our position in the world than I have been.” But many others, he argued, had also criticized the administration, lending

credibility to his position that America was in a period of relative decline. As he had in February on the floor of the Senate, Kennedy noted that:

The Rockefeller brothers report, General Ridgway, General Gavin, the Gaither Report, [and] various reports of congressional committees, [had] all indicate[d] that the relative strength of the United States both militarily, politically, psychologically, and scientifically, and industrially, . . . compared to that of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists together, [had] deteriorated in the last 8 years.⁷⁷

Alvin Spivak of the United Press International then asked the candidate how he would “go about increasing the prestige you say we’re losing” and further, could this be done “without absolutely wrecking our economy?” Kennedy responded in the affirmative: not only did he think that “the United States [could] afford to do these things” he further stated that “we could not afford not to do these things.” If the country was “developing its economy to the fullest, which we are not now,” he continued, “we’ll have the resources to meet our military commitment [sic] and also our commitments overseas.”⁷⁸

The need for action was so critical because the world depended upon the United States to lead the cause of freedom. Alluding to the arguments of Walt Rostow and others, Kennedy claimed that “[I]n the next 10 years the balance of power is going to begin to move...towards us or towards the Communists and unless we begin to identify ourselves not only with the anti-Communist fight, but also with the fight against poverty and hunger,” then the people of the world would “begin to turn to the Communists as an example.” Such

measures would not, as Spivak suggested, “wreck the economy.” On the contrary, Kennedy said, “if we build our economy the way we should,” then the nation can and must “afford to do these things.”⁷⁹

Responding to a later question about the costs of his proposals, Kennedy reiterated that he believed in a balanced budget “unless we have a national emergency or unless we have a severe recession” and in an off-hand comment he noted that the nation had had “the worst unbalanced budget” in its history under Eisenhower in 1958, “\$12 billion dollars larger,” he claimed, “than in any administration in the history of the United States.”⁸⁰

The candidates later defended their specific proposals for combating unemployment. Nixon pointed to aid to “so-called depressed areas,” as well as tax cuts to stimulate business activity, but he rejected “massive Federal spending programs.” By contrast, Kennedy argued that the government should actively stimulate the economy, and he noted that Eisenhower had twice vetoed area redevelopment bills. He repeated that the Eisenhower administration’s “hard money, high interest rate policy” had “helped intensify...the recession of 1958” and had also contributed to the “slowdown of 1960.” If the country moved into recession in 1961, Kennedy explained, then he would put more money into the economy, either by new spending programs, or by altering taxes “to stimulate our economy.”⁸¹

Beyond these specific discussions of economic policy, Kennedy, as he had in the first debate – and as Nixon also had done, from time to time – repeatedly tied domestic

economic conditions to the Cold War, and to the competition with the Soviet Union and global Communism. Kennedy reiterated that the nation's "power relative to that of the Communists" had declined and, as a result, the nation was "facing a very hazardous time in the '60's." The debate, and the election, Kennedy said, should focus on what would be done in the coming years to reverse this decline. The American people would have to make the choice on November 8, Kennedy said, "between the view of whether we have to move ahead faster; whether what we're doing now is not satisfactory; whether we have to build greater strength at home and abroad, and Mr. Nixon's view." He and the vice president, Kennedy noted, differed greatly on this question, because Nixon had been a member of an administration that had not "met its responsibilities in the last 8 years."⁸²

The candidates carried these discussions into the next debate held less than a week later on October 13. Once again, the two candidates stressed their differences over tax and spending proposals, as well as Kennedy's proposals to boost the economy by "loosening" the money supply; and once again these discussions were conducted within the context of the global contest between Communism and the Free World. For example, Douglas Cater of *The Reporter* magazine asked Kennedy about his plans to build up the nation's military strength before entering into another summit conference with the Soviets. In a discussion of the U-2 incident and the failed Paris summit during the second debate, Kennedy had turned to the advice of Theodore Roosevelt, who had said, "Be strong. Maintain a strong position, but also speak softly." Kennedy agreed. "I believe we should be stronger than we now

are," he said, and he further maintained that this position of strength would have helped the United States in its negotiations with the Soviets, and would help in the future.⁸³

In a follow up to that statement, Douglas Cater asked how long would it be before there could be progress on arms control and nuclear disarmament, given that weapons systems took "quite a long time to build?" "It may be a long time," Kennedy conceded, "but we must get started immediately." Specifically, he called for an immediate increase in conventional forces, and a greater airlift capability for these forces. He also advocated a "full time" effort on missile production, particularly on the Minuteman and Polaris missiles.⁸⁴

Later, the discussion turned to the price tag of Kennedy's various proposals. Nixon had claimed that Kennedy's proposals would cost at least an additional \$10 billion each year. This estimate conformed to what Maxwell Taylor and others had recommended earlier in the year. Cater asked the Democrat to supply his own figures. Kennedy began by reiterating his support for a balanced budget, noting that he had stated as much in both of the previous debates, and during his years in Congress. "The only two times when an unbalanced budget is warranted," he continued, "would be during a serious recession" or during "a national emergency where there should be large expenditures for national defense."⁸⁵ The Democrat did not directly answer Cater's question; instead, Kennedy stressed that the costs of his proposals could be alleviated by a change in monetary policy. He maintained that the administration's "high-interest-rate policy...added about \$3 billion a

year to interest on the debt,” and that “it would be possible to reduce that interest rate burden [by] at least a billion dollars.”

Nixon immediately attacked Kennedy’s call for a looser monetary policy, charging that such a move would politicize the Federal Reserve and generate inflationary pressures on the economy.⁸⁶ The vice president was hardly off the hook, however, on questions of economic growth and government spending. Roscoe Drummond of the *New York Herald Tribune* noted that Nixon and Governor Rockefeller had said “that the Nation’s economic growth ought to be accelerated.” Drummond further pointed out that the Republican platform called for the nation “to quicken the pace of economic growth.” The journalist asked if it was fair, therefore, “to conclude that you feel that there has been insufficient economic growth during the past 8 years; and if so, what would you do beyond present administration policies to step it up?”⁸⁷

Nixon was again caught in the middle between defending Eisenhower’s policies of the last eight years, and acquiescing to Rockefeller’s – and Kennedy’s – complete rejection of these policies. As he had in the first two debates, Nixon replied that he was “never satisfied with the economic growth of this country...even if there were no communism in the world.” Although Nixon bristled at Kennedy’s repeated criticisms that the nation had been standing still under President Eisenhower, he believed that “we can and must move faster, and that’s why I stand so strongly,” he said, “for programs that will move America forward in the sixties.”⁸⁸ In the end, in his prescriptions for greater economic growth,

Nixon seemed to be articulating half-hearted imitations of Kennedy's proposals. This opened him up to further criticism from his opponent. For example, when the vice president called for government action to stimulate economic activity in so-called distressed areas, Kennedy immediately pointed out that the administration had twice vetoed aid bills passed by Congress.

The broader issue separating the two men revolved around achievable and acceptable levels of growth; these issues had been at the center of the debate between the two political parties for many years. Kennedy disputed Nixon's claim that the nation had not been standing still. The nation "had the lowest rate of economic growth," Kennedy said, "of any major industrialized society in the world in 1959." During the past eight years, growth had averaged only two and half percent, and the nation had failed to achieve full employment, whereas the appropriate level of economic growth, as called for by both Governor Rockefeller and the Democratic platform, was five percent.⁸⁹

The nation's prestige was also debated. Drummond asked Kennedy to "spell out...more fully" how the nation "should measure American prestige, to determine whether it is rising or whether it is falling." The issue was critical, Kennedy agreed, because the United States was "so identified with the cause of freedom." "If our prestige is spreading," he explained, then those who were standing "on the razor edge of decision... wondering whether they should use the system of freedom to develop their countries or the system of communism," would be "persuaded to follow our example." Kennedy noted that he was

not the only person to have claimed that prestige was declining. George Allen, head of the U.S. Information Service (USIA), had said that the United States' failure to be first in space had caused a decline in American prestige. Beyond this, the Soviet Union's economic growth was as much as two to three times greater than that of the United States, and that also contributed to the view, Kennedy said, that "our prestige is not so high."⁹⁰

The fourth and final debate was focused on foreign policy, and is perhaps best known for Nixon's creative response to a question pertaining to an alleged covert operation to aid anti-Castro elements in Cuba. Nixon later highlighted this exchange in his own memoir, *Six Crises*.⁹¹ Yet in addition to this discussion, other familiar themes about American prestige, the state of the nation's defenses, and the health of the economy also emerged.

Although Nixon criticized Kennedy in his opening statement, he agreed with the challenger on several points. For example, the vice president, like his opponent, said that while the United States was the strongest country in the world, it must increase its strength so that "we will always have enough strength...regardless of what our potential opponents have." In addition, while Nixon argued that the economy had grown over the past seven years, he believed that it could and would grow even more in the next four years. This growth was critical, Nixon said, "because we have things to do at home, and also because we're in a race for survival; a race in which it isn't enough to be ahead....We have to move ahead in order to stay ahead." For these reasons, Nixon explained, he had made policy

recommendations which he believed would “move the American economy ahead,...so that there will never be a time when the Soviet Union will be able to challenge our superiority in this field.”⁹²

Kennedy’s prepared remarks focused on a series of central questions: “Are we moving in the direction of peace and security? Is our relative strength growing? Is – as Mr. Nixon says – our prestige at an alltime high...and that of the Communists at an alltime low?” Kennedy answered no. He continued, “The question which we have to decide as Americans: Are we doing enough today? Is our strength and prestige rising? Do people want to be identified with us? Do they want to follow the United States leadership?” Again Kennedy said no: “I think we’re going to have to do better.” While Kennedy agreed with Nixon that the United States was the “strongest country in the world,” he also believed that the nation was “far stronger relative to the Communists five years ago.” “The balance of power,” Kennedy warned, was “in danger of moving with them.”⁹³

This change in the relative strength of both nations was evident in missile technology. Although he made no explicit reference to the “missile gap” during any of the debates, Kennedy came closest in this fourth and final contest. The Soviets, Kennedy alleged, had “made a breakthrough in missiles,” and he predicted that “by 1961, ‘2, and ‘3, they will be outnumbering us in missiles.” Accordingly, he was not as confident as the vice president that the United States would “be the strongest military power by 1963.”⁹⁴

America's relative decline vis-à-vis the Soviets was also evident in the economy and it had wide-ranging ramifications. "What we do in this country...will tell whether freedom will be sustained around the world," Kennedy said. The nation's economic growth was hardly cause for celebration, however. "[I]n the last 9 months of this year," Kennedy continued, "we've had a drop in our economic growth rather than a gain," the "lowest rate of increase," during this same period "of any major industrialized society in the world." This was of particular concern because the fate of the United States was tied to the fate of the free world. Kennedy closed his opening statement with a by-now familiar refrain: "when we are strong and when we are first," he said, "then freedom gains. Then the prospects for peace increase. Then the prospects for our society gain."⁹⁵

At one point during his opening remarks, Kennedy explained that the nation's declining prestige was so dramatic that the State Department was unwilling to release the results of recent polls conducted by the USIA. Following up on this comment, Walter Cronkite of CBS asked Nixon about this USIA poll. Was the vice president aware of such a report, Cronkite asked, and shouldn't the report now be released to the public given "the great importance this issue has been given in this campaign?" Nixon was aware of the report, he said, but he charged that Kennedy had contributed to the decline in the nation's prestige. While his opponent "ha[d] a responsibility to criticize those things that are wrong," Nixon proclaimed, he also had "a responsibility to be right in his criticisms."⁹⁶

Kennedy bristled at the charges. He emphasized that he had downgraded the leadership the country was getting, not the country itself. For example, Kennedy believed that the Soviet Union was first in outer space in part because of displaced priorities in the United States. These differing priorities were highlighted in Nixon's famous "kitchen debate" with Khrushchev in which the vice president had said to the Soviet leader "You may be ahead of us in rocket thrust but we're ahead of you in color television." Kennedy countered that he believed that color televisions were not as important as rocket thrust. Nixon's comments to Khrushchev spoke directly to the broader critique that the United States had squandered its lead over the Soviet Union by focusing too much on consumer goods.⁹⁷

Questions about an impending summit also surfaced in this final debate, as they had in the second and third debates. Kennedy stayed on message, arguing that the nation "should not go to the summit until there [was] some reason to believe that a meeting of minds can be obtained." Before this could happen, however, the nation needed to build up its strength. Kennedy believed that a summit could not be successful "until we're strong here, until we're moving here." Therefore, Kennedy argued, "the next President should go to work in building the strength of the United States," because the "Soviet Union does understand strength."⁹⁸

In his closing remarks, Kennedy reiterated his reasons for seeking the presidency. "I run," he said "because I believe this year the United States has a great opportunity to make a

move forward, to make a determination here at home and around the world, that it's going to reestablish itself as a vigorous society." "The Republican party," Kennedy continued, had "stood still here in the United States, and [it had] stood still around the world." Underutilized resources, such as steel production – where the U.S. was using only 50 percent of its total capacity - and economic hardships, including recessions in 1954 and 1958, demonstrated this lack of progress. Accordingly, it was incumbent upon the next president, Kennedy believed, "to get this country moving again, to get our economy moving ahead, to set before the American people its goals, its unfinished business." If the nation could get new leadership, Kennedy said, from a party "which believes in movement, which believes in going ahead," then he was confident that the nation could reestablish its position in the world. This pre-eminent position would be characterized by a strong defense and strong economic growth.⁹⁹

While Kennedy targeted his comments for a domestic audience, he had a message for foreign observers as well. "I want Mr. Khrushchev to know," he said, "that a new generation of Americans who fought in Europe and Italy and the Pacific for freedom in World War II have now taken over in the United States, and that they're going to put this country back to work again." The possibilities for the United States were limitless. "I don't believe that there is anything this country cannot do," Kennedy said, "I don't believe there's any burden, or any responsibility, that any American would not assume to protect his country, to protect our security, to advance the cause of freedom." Now was the time to act.

“We must give this country leadership and we must get America moving again,” Kennedy declared, because the United States must become “the defenders of freedom.”¹⁰⁰

The General Election, Part II - The Campaign in the States

The broad themes of the Kennedy campaign were clear. To a national audience – during the debates, in print, and in major addresses carried by the national media – Kennedy charged that the nation’s prestige was falling and that more must be done to get the country moving again. Within this overarching message, Kennedy devised separate strategies for delivering his message in different states.

Kennedy’s rhetoric and language changed from place to place. These changes of message and tone are discernible within Kennedy’s stump speeches. These speeches, juxtaposed with documents from the Kennedy Presidential Library, show that Kennedy altered his references to foreign policy and national security issues depending upon the perceived interests of voters in particular areas. Such a practice is customary. Likewise, Kennedy was aided by fellow Democratic office-holders as he made his way across the country. Again, as is customary, JFK campaigned with these people on the stump. He solicited their advice on particular issues. On several occasions he incorporated this advice directly into his campaign speeches.

This section focuses on John F. Kennedy’s campaign in three large states – Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan – where Kennedy won 97 electoral votes, over one

third of the total needed to win. Finally, this chapter will also study Kennedy's campaign in California. Kennedy ultimately failed to carry Nixon's home state, but he waged a spirited campaign there. In each of these four states, Kennedy spoke of the broad themes that had served him so well in the run-up to the nomination, and that also succeeded in the televised debates. He tailored these themes for local audiences, and he further modified his message as the campaign drew to a conclusion.

This section also considers the local media's coverage of Kennedy's campaign. Although the newspapers routinely spoke of the size and enthusiasm of the crowds that greeted Kennedy, in truth only a handful of voters actually saw him in person. For the millions of others who did not, Kennedy depended upon newspaper reporters to repeat his locally-tailored messages on his behalf. At times, his message that the nation must do more, and that foreign policy was related to domestic policy, did not come through clearly in the stories filed by journalists.

Pennsylvania – Philadelphia the Key to the Keystone State

Pennsylvania's 32 electoral votes made it the second-largest prize (tied with California, and second only to New York) in the election of 1960. The state had voted for Democrats in the past – including Governor David Lawrence, a Catholic and a Kennedy-ally – but had cast 57 percent of its vote for the Republican Eisenhower in 1956, and had not voted for a Democrat for president in 20 years. A large plurality in the state's urban

areas – particularly Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Erie – would be the key to victory statewide.

A survey of voter sentiments taken in early September by Kennedy pollster Louis Harris showed the Democratic nominee holding a slight lead in the Keystone State with 44 percent to Nixon's 42, with the remainder undecided.¹⁰¹ On specific issues, this same poll found that voters were less concerned about "War and Peace" than about "Economic bite" and "Taxes and Waste in Government." Foreign policy, the poll showed, worked to Nixon's advantage. Further, two other issues which had worked for Kennedy elsewhere, rebuilding American prestige and "doing something about Cuba," here favored the vice president. Harris argued that the voters of the state needed "to be awakened on the fundamental issues of the loss of U.S. prestige and the need to rebuild our strength throughout the world. As long as they sleep, they will contentedly believe that all has been rosy under the Eisenhower administration." But while the prestige issue, per se, did not yet work to the Democrat's advantage, voters did think that Kennedy was strong on defense. In this apparent paradox, Harris saw a dilemma; but he also saw opportunity. Harris recognized that by urging Kennedy to "work hard on foreign policy" he was asking him to tackle issues that were not currently working for him. Nevertheless, "the issue must be met – and turned." This would "require alerting the voters – at least of Pennsylvania – to the need for solutions."¹⁰²

Kennedy set out immediately to implement this strategy by tying foreign policy themes to domestic concerns. During a brief swing through central and southeastern Pennsylvania in mid-September, Kennedy called his campaign “an effort to mobilize the great strength [of] the great American Republic . . . for the grand struggle.”¹⁰³ Stressing that “the United States cannot be strong in its foreign policy unless it is also strong domestically,” he called for a “liberal foreign policy marked by . . . a domestic policy here in the State of Pennsylvania and around the country that moves,” and he warned:

We will not win the greatest contest in our history if our economy limps along at the lowest rate of growth of any major industrialized society in the world . . . The resources that we need for the great contest of the 1960's . . . are lost . . . when men are out of work and cannot find work, and when we have a lack of economic growth.¹⁰⁴

On the following day, Kennedy drew attention to Pennsylvania's unused resources and related this to the global struggle. “When half of the steel mill capacity in this State is unused and, therefore, half of the steel-workers in this State do not find a good job,” he told a crowd in Lebanon, “then you know that a basic asset which distinguishes us from our adversaries, [our] productive capacity, . . . is not being used.”¹⁰⁵

However, Kennedy's references to the need for developing unused resources were not sufficiently explicit to satisfy some of his listeners. A leading newspaper in the state, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, criticized the candidate for not promising to provide jobs in depressed areas. Kennedy “spoke of the reduced operation of the State's steel mills, which he said resulted in unemployment,” the story read, “but he did not take advantage of the

opportunity to make an all-out pledge of job development.” This was of particular concern in Reading, “where several thousand unemployed workers jammed Market Square hoping to hear him discuss plans to provide work.”¹⁰⁶

The Inquirer's criticisms notwithstanding, Harris's second poll in the state showed that JFK had widened his lead over the vice president by hammering away on *economic* issues; foreign policy, Harris found, continued to work for Nixon in the state. By deliberately avoiding foreign policy issues that would serve him well in other states, Harris predicted confidently that Kennedy could score an upset victory by focusing in the industrial centers of the state and by discussing solutions “to the economic problems besetting the people.”¹⁰⁷

Harris placed particular emphasis on the importance of Philadelphia in carrying the state.¹⁰⁸ Seeking as much as 60 percent of the popular vote in the greater Philadelphia area, Kennedy returned to the “City of Brotherly Love” in the waning days of the campaign. He carried his message of sacrifice to suburban voters as well as to the strong Democratic base within the city's environs. Images of declining prestige and the nation's lackluster performance vis-à-vis the Soviet Union continued to pay dividends here for Kennedy. He also mixed in some humor. Kennedy poked fun at his rival's boast to Khrushchev during their famed “kitchen debate” in 1959 that the United States had built the biggest shopping center. Kennedy countered that the Soviets had built “the largest dam, the largest missile, the largest army.” And while, in Kennedy's words, Nixon had “put his finger in Mr.

Khrushchev's nose, and said, 'you may be ahead of us in rockets, but we are ahead of you in color television,'" Kennedy declared, "I would rather take my television black and white and have the largest rockets in the world."¹⁰⁹

Kennedy also hit Nixon for his inconsistent statements about the United States' standing in the world. At one point during the campaign Nixon had said that the nation was still "first in space and the strongest power militarily in the world." According to Kennedy, however, "the vice president's own written statement on space had said 'The space gap is not yet closed.'" Kennedy's caustic observation that "we would really have an interesting discussion...if Mr. Nixon and Mr. Nixon would debate," drew laughter and applause from the assembled crowd.¹¹⁰

These comments were not lost on John S. McCullough, covering Kennedy's visit for *The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. Noting that the size and enthusiasm of the crowds that greeted Kennedy were greater than those that had greeted the vice president during Nixon's visit the preceding week, the reporter highlighted Kennedy's repeated charges about declining American prestige worldwide.¹¹¹

But while Philadelphia was a crucial area for Kennedy, he did not ignore the concerns of voters in the heart of the anthracite coal communities to the north and east of the state's largest city. In Pottsville, Pennsylvania, he explicitly raised the issue of high unemployment in a speech on October 28. Perhaps having learned from the criticisms he received in nearby Reading the month before, Kennedy proposed channeling defense

contracts to areas of high unemployment by reinstating Defense Manpower Policy Number 4, repealed, as he told his audience, in 1953 by a Republican Congress.¹¹²

Harris's third and final poll found Kennedy with a "decisive" lead in the state, with respondents supporting him by a margin of 48.1 to 40.4 percent. Harris predicted that Kennedy would win easily if the undecided vote held, but an "all-out effort" was called for, particularly in Philadelphia.¹¹³ Harris's prediction proved particularly prophetic. When the final vote was counted, Kennedy won Pennsylvania with 51.1 percent of the popular vote. A majority of those earlier "undecideds" had broken for Nixon, but Philadelphia proved to have been the key to Kennedy's victory. With a fervor that left veteran politicians "glassy-eyed and speechless," according to *The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 88 percent of registered voters in Philadelphia turned out on election day, and they voted for the Democrat by a decisive two-to-one margin.¹¹⁴ Although Kennedy believed that more must be done to build the nation's defenses, and to regain the initiative in the Cold War, Harris had urged Kennedy to downplay foreign policy and defense in his campaign speeches in Pennsylvania. Neither of these issues were a major factor in Kennedy's victory in the state. Kennedy would tailor his message in other states as well.

New York – One State, Worlds Apart

John F. Kennedy had reason to worry about his prospects for victory in New York.¹¹⁵ The state's 45 electoral votes had been in the Republican column since 1948.

With the exception of native New Yorkers Franklin Roosevelt and Al Smith, no Democrat had carried the state since Woodrow Wilson in 1912. Kennedy knew that success in the state depended upon big pluralities in New York City. Additionally, nevertheless, the Senator directed attention to the string of industrial towns along the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario, far removed from Gotham in both spirit and outlook. His messages to voters in these two places are notable for their differences.

After two brief visits to the state in August, Kennedy returned for one day of campaigning in New York City in mid-September. During this stop, Kennedy laid heavy emphasis on domestic and economic issues, including the problem of joblessness. He tied these themes to broader international issues. Before a Citizens for Kennedy rally the candidate said that the nation could not “possibly separate our domestic policy from our foreign policy as the Republicans seek to do.”¹¹⁶ That evening, in a speech before the New York Liberal Party Convention, Kennedy declared that “The cause of liberalism...cannot content itself with carrying on the fight for human justice and economic liberalism here at home. For here and around the world the fear of war hangs over us every morning and every night.” The situation called for actions, not words. The nation could not banish this fear of war, he continued, “by repeating that we are economically first or that we are militarily first, for saying so doesn’t make it so.”¹¹⁷

After these few brief visits, a new Harris poll taken in mid-September found Kennedy with a slight lead of 43 to 40 percent in the state over Nixon, with the remainder

undecided. In contrast to polls in neighboring Pennsylvania, where economic issues were of primary concern, this poll of New York voters found “War and Peace” to be the leading issue of concern (55 percent) with “Taxes and Spending” second (40 percent). Harris determined that “The roster of issues . . . in New York” worked for Kennedy and he predicted that this could “provide an enormous momentum in this state.”¹¹⁸

Harris observed that the relative importance of foreign policy did not automatically favor Nixon in New York. “The issue of rebuilding this nation’s prestige” was a leading issue, and it worked for the challenger. Harris therefore recommended a continued emphasis on the need for action. There were some indications, Harris wrote, that “the Kennedy theme” of “promising action and motion that can propel America from the ‘stalled on a dime’, ‘standstill’ sorry lot we have now fallen into” was just beginning to penetrate. “However, as with all massive concepts,” Harris urged, it would require “constant reiteration.”¹¹⁹

Further, while foreign policy worked for Kennedy, Harris found that the defense issue and “getting tough with the Russians” continued to work to Nixon’s advantage. The pollster concluded, therefore, that in the East Kennedy had not made his case for a stronger national defense. Harris cautioned, however, that while the issue of the nation’s declining defenses “must be pinpointed,” it should not be done “to the point of conjuring up an image of sword-rattling,” which would open up the candidate to the “charge that . . . the Democrats are the party of war.”¹²⁰

Kennedy was mindful of these concerns, but he was committed to the need to rebuild the nation's defenses. He also recognized the political value of stressing this theme. Two weeks after Harris's study was written, Kennedy eschewed caution in a bold-faced appeal for the votes of defense industry workers. Earlier in the day, in Erie, Pennsylvania, he had hit the administration for the nation's declining prestige abroad and its flagging industries at home.¹²¹ He then traveled less than one hundred miles east to speak at the Bell Aircraft Corporation factory in Niagara Falls, New York. The factory that had once employed 10,000 during the Korean War had seen the number of jobs cut to a mere 1,800 in recent years. Before 900 of these workers, Kennedy began by asserting that the "Democratic Party stands for a stronger America; not strong if, but, when or something, but strong this year, now, period." The next president, he said, should "send a message to Congress in the first 3 months of his office which will request appropriations which" would place the United States "in a position to stand up to the Soviet Union or the Chinese Communists or anyone else who wishes to threaten our security."¹²²

From there Kennedy moved immediately to the issue of full employment. He deplored the underutilization of factories and resources in the United States. He reaffirmed his belief that defense spending and employment went hand-in-hand. "If this country is moving ahead," he said, "if we have fiscal and monetary policies which stimulate employment, if we have a defense policy which provides not only protection for the United

States but strength for our economy,” then this would “provide security for our people,” and “security for freedom.”¹²³

Then, no doubt mindful of criticisms lodged against him in Pennsylvania two weeks earlier, Kennedy called for governmental action to solve the problem of unemployment. When asked during the ensuing question and answers session “Why are all the defense contracts going to California, to the west coast?” Kennedy again made clear his views about the interrelated nature of defense industry and regional economic development. “I represent a section of the United States, New England,” he began, “which has had the same problem that upper New York has had, defense contracts leaving, industries laying off, and we have begun to bring them back.” He continued:

I think defense contracts should be fairly distributed across the Nation. I also support the reestablishment of the Defense Manpower Policy No. 4, which was thrown out in 1952, which provided that . . . defense contracts would go to those areas which were able to meet the competitive price and had over 8 percent unemployment.¹²⁴

“I think we can use defense contracts to strengthen the economy as well as strengthen the country,” he said, and he pledged, if elected, to “try to distribute defense contracts fairly so that it protects the United States and protects the economy.”¹²⁵

Comments such as these played well in the upstate cities of Buffalo, Rochester, and Niagara Falls. One front page account in *The New York Times* observed that the Democratic nominee’s emphasis on three big themes including the “contention that Republicans were committed to limitations on the nation’s productive capacity [were] a

popular theme...in areas where incomes have been hit by curtailed steel production and layoffs in airplane and electrochemical plants.”¹²⁶

Kennedy then shifted his message again. When he returned to New York in mid-October, he concentrated his efforts within New York City, and he downplayed any talk of using defense spending to boost employment. In a speech before the Democratic National and State Committees, Kennedy questioned Nixon’s zeal for action “at a time when we have been steadily reducing our conventional forces and inviting a lag in missile power.”¹²⁷

Then, during a series of visits the following day, Kennedy declared that he and the Democratic Party stood for making the nation stronger “here at home...so that people around the world who wish to be free,” would “identify themselves with us,” and follow American leadership.¹²⁸ Kennedy also emphasized that the welfare of union workers, and the security of the country, were inextricably connected, and he declared that “the labor movement and all Americans” had “an obligation to participate in strengthening our country, making it work, making our system move.”¹²⁹

By all media estimates, Kennedy’s visit was a stunning success. Still, his message relating foreign policy to domestic concerns was often drowned out by other considerations. For example, news coverage focused primarily on the size of the crowds – estimated in excess of one million people, the largest in the city since Charles A. Lindbergh’s triumphant return – that greeted the candidate.¹³⁰ Domestic policy was the only substantive issue

addressed by the major papers, and it was relegated to page 26 within the massive Sunday edition of *The New York Times*.¹³¹

That same page did contain some good news for the Kennedy campaign as the results of a *Daily News* poll showed the Democrat with a slight lead in the state. Kennedy's own poll, taken during the second week of October, also found him holding a slight lead, but Harris had warned that the "Catholic vote is far from satisfactory." Moreover, he viewed Kennedy's weakness on foreign policy as a concern that must be "frontally assaulted."¹³²

When Kennedy returned to New York a few days later, he did just that. Before the Trade Union Council of the Liberal Party, Kennedy attacked the nation's declining prestige.¹³³ Later, in Queens, Kennedy charged that the country was "not moving ahead like it is going to have to move ahead if we are going to meet our responsibilities to ourselves, to those who come after us, [and] to those who look to us around the world for leadership."¹³⁴

These last-minute efforts seemed to have paid off. The third and final Harris poll in the state, taken during the last week of October, found Kennedy pulling away from Nixon. Noting that "war and peace" had "soared in importance and now works for Nixon to a slight degree," Harris hastened to add that "this does not mean the Senator should not talk about foreign policy." Instead, Harris urged, Kennedy "should tie in his foreign policy recommendations with the domestic issues as he so often has during the campaign saying

that in order to rebuilt [sic] prestige throughout the world we must also move here at home.”¹³⁵

In the end, Kennedy carried New York with a comfortable 52.5 percent of the popular vote, bettering Stevenson’s 1956 vote total by more than 1.1 million. Although New York City was a crucial factor in Kennedy’s win, his appearances in upstate New York, where jobs were so closely tied to the defense industry, appear to have been particularly effective. In Erie County, for example, Kennedy won a sizable 56.6 percent of the popular vote, a significant improvement over Stevenson’s showing in 1952 and 1956. Kennedy won a narrow victory in Niagara County, home to the Bell Aircraft factory in Niagara Falls. Finally, while he failed to carry Monroe County (which includes Rochester, New York), his 48.8 percent of the popular vote represented a significant increase over Stevenson’s 33.2 percent of the vote in 1956.

Michigan – The Motor City and Macomb County

Michigan’s 20 electoral votes were crucial for the Kennedy campaign. There were similarities between Kennedy’s campaign strategy in Michigan and that used in New York and Pennsylvania. As in both of those states, Kennedy was depending upon big pluralities in the state’s urban areas, particularly Detroit. Unlike his campaign in the two eastern states, however, Kennedy had important allies in Michigan, including outgoing governor G. Mennen Williams, United Auto Workers (UAW) chief Walter Reuther, and state party

chairman C. Neil Staebler. These men intended to help Kennedy to become the first Democrat to carry the state since 1944.¹³⁶ Now, with that battle behind them, Williams, Reuther, Staebler, and the other members of the state Democratic machine intended to help Kennedy to become the first Democrat to carry Michigan since 1944.

During the course of the campaign, from August through November, Kennedy campaigned in Michigan no less than five days. Kennedy's first visit to the state, however, had little to do with local concerns. In late August, Kennedy appeared before the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Convention in Detroit. He used the occasion to emphasize his own wartime service and to praise the VFW for taking a firm stand for a stronger defense.

In his speech to the convention, Kennedy blasted Republicans for offering "rosy reassurances" that all would be well in the future. Asserting that national prestige was at an all-time low, with enemies treating the nation with a lack of respect, and with friends doubting the country's resolve, Kennedy laid out the "facts." "Our security and leadership are both slipping away from us...the balance of world power is slowly shifting to the Soviet-Red Chinese bloc," he said, and "our own shores are for the first time since 1812, imperiled by chinks in our defensive armor."¹³⁷ While Kennedy argued that the United States of America was still the "greatest Nation on earth," he questioned whether the same would be said five or ten years hence. The candidate was doubtful, and he used the missile lag to press home his point: "The facts of the matter are that we are falling behind in our rate of growth. The missile lag looms large."¹³⁸

Believing in a defense capability that was second to none, Kennedy called for accelerating the Polaris, Minuteman, and other missiles programs; expanding and modernizing conventional forces; and providing greater protections for the nuclear retaliatory force from a “knockout blow.” He also pledged to streamline the “Defense Establishment to give primary attention to our primary needs.”¹³⁹

Concluding that “the American people [were] ready to face the facts and pay the cost” Kennedy reminded his fellow veterans that:

the enemy has the power to destroy – but . . . he also seeks, by economic and political warfare, to isolate us. He intends to outproduce us. He intends to outlast us. . . . And the real question now is whether we are up to the task – whether each and every one of us is willing to face the facts, to bear the burdens . . . to meet our dangers.¹⁴⁰

Although Kennedy’s VFW speech attracted national attention, many of the details of his address were overshadowed in the Michigan papers by other campaign-related stories. For example, the banner headline “AFL-CIO Endorses Kennedy” dominated the front page of the *Detroit Free Press*. Nonetheless, *Free Press* reporter Ray Courage gamely chronicled the details of Kennedy’s speech including Kennedy’s specific proposals for strengthening the nation’s defenses.¹⁴¹

The press coverage was not, however, uniformly positive; *Free Press* editors painted an ambivalent picture of the Democratic candidate’s charges. “Perhaps without intending to, Senator Kennedy in his Detroit speech brought the entire question of national defense down to a final choice,” they wrote, in an editorial published on the day after the

speech. “By stating that ‘the harsh facts of the matter are that our security and leadership are both slipping away from us’ he put it up to the individual citizen-voter: Are you going to accept the statement of your President to the effect that we are holding our own against the Russians, or are you going to follow Senator Kennedy?” Although the editors did not provide an answer to their own rhetorical question, an associated editorial cartoon on the same page suggested that Kennedy was playing political football with defense facts.¹⁴²

Skeptical *Free Press* editors aside, Kennedy still had important political allies in Michigan. Several days after the VFW speech, the candidate received some advice for use during his campaign in the state from the office of Michigan Senator Philip Hart. According to a memo drafted by members of Hart’s staff, unemployment – calculated at 8.9 percent in Michigan, and 9.6 percent in Detroit – was the leading issue in the state. “The cause of Michigan[’s] unemployment has been a major state political issue since 1957,” the memo stated. “The GOP blames Governor Williams for fostering an ‘unfavorable business climate,’” but Hart’s staff pointed instead to the “almost complete loss of defense contracts as emphasis on wheeled vehicles has declined,” during the Eisenhower administration. On the question of defense contracts, Hart’s staff noted that “The Chrysler Missile facility at [Redstone] Arsenal [was] laying off workers as the Army[’s] production of the Redstone and the Jupiter missiles comes to an end.” “Secretary of Defense Gates told Senator Hart,” the memo continued:

that as far as the Department of Defense is concerned they consider this facility is no longer needed in our national defense effort. This is in

Congressman Jim O'Hara's district, and at peak employed about 11,000 workers. The failure to utilize this missile production facility – that produced the missile that put the first satellite into orbit – is a point that could well be mentioned.¹⁴³

At another point, Kennedy was advised of the importance of the Detroit Tank Arsenal at Centerline, which had been reactivated to build the M-60 tank. "The community is quite sensitive to the need for the modernization of the army's equipment," the memo concluded, "and it is this type of defense contract that means the most to the Michigan industrial complex."¹⁴⁴ Government figures confirmed Hart's contention that cutbacks within particular military spending programs had had an adverse effect on Michigan's economy. A government report issued in 1963 reported that purchases of tanks and automotive equipment, weapons, ammunition, and production equipment constituted over 50 percent of the goods delivered in 1953. By 1961, these same goods combined for less than 13 percent. Michigan's declines were closely tied to these procurement shifts. Over 10 percent of prime contract awards during World War II went to companies in the state, and this volume was nearly equaled during the Korean War. By 1961, however, only 2.7 percent of prime contracts were flowing to the state.¹⁴⁵

Kennedy returned to the home of the nation's auto industry on Labor Day, with advice from the Hart memorandum in the front of his mind. During a series of addresses, Kennedy stressed issues of concern to the hundreds of thousands of autoworkers in the state; he also managed to work in references to foreign policy and defense. In a written

statement, Kennedy explained that “The free labor movement has played, and will continue to play, an important role in stopping Communist aggression.”¹⁴⁶ Later, at Cadillac Square in downtown Detroit, Kennedy repeated his charge that Russia was growing while the United States lagged behind. Evidence of this disparity was abundant. “Our workers have seen it in shorter workweeks,” he said, “our steel industry sees it in producing 50 percent of capacity, and Mr. Khrushchev sees it when he promises to bury us.”¹⁴⁷ Arguing that “this country’s power is unlimited...if the President of the United States will just merely set before us our national goals,” Kennedy believed that the nation would be “willing to bear the burden that must come to reach those goals.”¹⁴⁸

Although Kennedy pledged a larger federal role in employment, with full employment as a clear goal, he made no specific mention of defense, nor of using defense contracts to solve employment problems during this Labor Day campaign visit. On the heels of this visit to the state, Kennedy received additional advice from pollster Louis Harris. A poll taken during the first week of September reported Nixon with a slight lead in Michigan. This same poll also showed the vice president to have a particular edge on the issue of “War and Peace,” which was the leading issue of concern among those surveyed. This was the “chief source of worry for most people” in other states, Harris observed, but whereas the issue worked for neither candidate in California and Ohio, Nixon was

benefitting from the issue in Michigan. Accordingly, Harris recommended a two-tiered strategy. First, he wrote, Kennedy:

must blunt the edge of the issue by hammering at Republican do-nothingism while Communism has made strides in the underdeveloped countries of the world. Second, he must continue his declarations that America must grow in courage and spirit as well as in materials possessions if it is to be the leader of the new free world.¹⁴⁹

Harris called for "a major effort" in order to "decrease total concern" over this issue. If this could be done, he was confident that Kennedy's superiority on other issues would become "much more valuable than it presently [was] in the shadow of the foreign affairs issue."¹⁵⁰

Within a month, Kennedy appeared to have turned the corner. Harris's second poll of prospective voters in Michigan, taken during the first week of October, showed Kennedy with a "fair, though not safe, majority."¹⁵¹ The key appeared to have been Kennedy's ability to carry through on Harris's advice from the preceding month. Harris found that "War and Peace" remained the number one concern among 43 percent of respondents, but this was down from 50 percent in an earlier poll; meanwhile economic issues had risen in importance, with 39 percent of those surveyed now counting this issue as a matter of primary concern. Attributing much of Kennedy's reversal of fortune to his success during the first televised debate, Harris urged the candidate to stick with familiar themes. The pollster determined that Kennedy had "almost completely negated Nixon's former advantage on rebuilding prestige;" he could now speak freely on this subject. Likewise, Harris found that Kennedy had overcome Nixon's advantage on the subject of dealing with

Russia, and he had increased his edge on national defense. Harris predicted, "Just as long as Kennedy can keep Nixon at least neutralized on foreign affairs, he can club him to death with domestic issues." He further emphasized that "foreign and domestic issues must constantly be related to each other by the point that we cannot be strong abroad if we are not strong at home."¹⁵²

Kennedy stressed these points during a day of campaigning in metropolitan Detroit in late October. He also used the advice that he had received from Senator Hart, and his recent experiences in upstate New York and Pennsylvania, to make the case for using defense dollars to rectify regional economic distress. For example, in Warren, in Macomb County, Kennedy focused on several problems alluded to by Hart's staff by demonstrating how local issues related to the global contest. "In your two arsenals," Kennedy noted, "you have seen employment go from 10,000 to 2,000. This area of the State depends on the Jupiter, and the Jupiter missile program may be coming to an end." "We have to find jobs in Michigan," Kennedy promised, "and we have to find jobs in the United States, [because] unless we have people working we are not able to maintain our position any place around the world."¹⁵³

Kennedy had spoken in general terms of the federal government's role in boosting regional employment during his first visit to Michigan in early September. On this occasion Kennedy called for reviving Defense Manpower Policy Number 4. His declaration that the nation "could use...defense contracts to put people to work as well as make weapons" drew

cheers from the crowd. He further recommended that defense industry be planned on a long-range basis, so “we take advantage not only of the skills of the people in the area, but we also recognize their needs.” Additionally, he called for passage of an area redevelopment bill to attract industry to the region. Finally, Kennedy deplored “[t]he overnight cancellation of contracts [that left] thousands of men stranded on the beach.”¹⁵⁴

Kennedy’s emphasis on regional unemployment resonated with some local reporters. One story, for example, quoted Kennedy as saying that “Those who say we’ve never had it so good should come to Michigan and talk to its unemployed – some of whom haven’t had a job since the 1958 recession.”¹⁵⁵ The press covering Kennedy’s other campaign treks in Michigan, however, afforded relatively little attention to specific issues, opting instead to document the size of crowds. “Shrieking, shouting teen-agers” greeted Kennedy in Macomb County, according to one report, and he was “cheered like a football hero” and greeted by signs in Polish, Ukrainian, and English in the Democratic stronghold of Hamtramck.¹⁵⁶

A majority of the men and women who turned out on Election Day cast their ballots for Kennedy. While the margin of victory in the Wolverine State was close as a percentage of the total vote, Kennedy still managed to win a 66,841 vote plurality.¹⁵⁷ In retrospect, the limits of Kennedy’s victory in Michigan are as striking as his ultimate success. As in other states, labor and urban voters were central to the Kennedy win, but urban Wayne County, which includes Detroit, and neighboring Macomb County to the north, were the key to his

victory statewide. In Wayne County, Kennedy garnered 66 percent of the popular vote en route to a 378,842 vote plurality. By contrast, Stevenson had won less than 58 percent of the vote in Wayne County in both 1952 and 1956. Meanwhile, in Macomb County, Kennedy's appeal to displaced defense workers appears to have paid dividends. Home of the Redstone Arsenal alluded to in Senator Hart's memo, Macomb County gave Kennedy 62.8 percent of the popular vote, a considerable improvement over Stevenson's 49.1 and 51.7 percent of the vote in 1952 and 1956, respectively. Many years later, Bill Clinton pollster Stanley Greenberg declared Macomb to have been "the most Democratic suburb in America" in the election of 1960.¹⁵⁸ Kennedy won only 13 of the state's 83 counties, but just two counties – Macomb and Wayne – accounted for 52 percent of all the votes cast for Kennedy in the entire state of Michigan.¹⁵⁹

California – The Land of (Missed?) Opportunity

Kennedy could not depend exclusively upon a lopsided urban vote in California. After winning the nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in July, Kennedy returned to California as his party's standard-bearer on at least two separate occasions. He spent over six days campaigning in the state. Kennedy's foray into Nixon's backyard seems unwise if viewed in isolation. Yet it makes sense when viewed through the lens of Kennedy's broader campaign strategy of relating foreign policy and defense issues to the economic concerns of voters.

Although California's non-agricultural employment had risen two and half times faster than the nation as a whole between 1949 and 1959, employment in the aircraft and ordnance sectors in both Los Angeles and San Diego had declined sharply during the Eisenhower administration. An April 1960 report by the California Department of Labor reported aircraft employment in the state had fallen to its lowest level in over seven years. The declines continued through the summer of 1960. By September, the number of people employed in the aircraft industry in Greater Los Angeles alone was down 17.5 percent from the previous year.¹⁶⁰ The situation was even worse in San Diego, where in June the state reported "the most marked reversal of nonfarm employment trends in the first half of 1960 compared with 1959."¹⁶¹

These declines carried over to other industries as well. Reflecting continued reductions in the aircraft and ordnance industries, employment in durable goods manufacturing had dropped by eight percent since the beginning of the year, as compared with a three percent increase during the same six-month period in 1959.¹⁶² Amidst the anxieties of thousands of displaced workers, Kennedy found fertile ground for his campaign that pledged to "get the country moving again." Accordingly, during nearly every appearance in the state, but particularly in Southern California, Kennedy focused on the related issues of jobs and of rebuilding the nation's defenses.

During a four-day campaign swing through California that took him from the Oregon border to San Diego, Kennedy shifted his message from place to place to address

local concerns, as is customary. Within the small farming communities of northern California, for example, Kennedy focused on resource development, water and irrigation, and power generation. He then related these issues to the global confrontation with Communism by pointing out that the Soviets were quickly gaining on the United States in the development of their hydroelectric capacity.¹⁶³ Then, after lingering only briefly in the San Francisco area with a speech in Oakland that stressed the issues of substandard housing, hunger, and unemployment, Kennedy's campaign turned inland again. In Stockton he said that the United States could do better. In Modesto, Merced, and Madera, Kennedy stressed that America could both take care of its own people while also serving as the leader of the free world. In each place, he continued to hammer away at themes of sacrifice and of a willingness to accept the burdens of prosperity in order to lead the free world.¹⁶⁴

Kennedy also put forward his belief that by building more weapons he would achieve a lasting peace. Achieving peace in an era when both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed thermonuclear weapons, he noted, was the one problem facing the entire nation.¹⁶⁵ In Fresno, Kennedy confronted directly the view that his own party was "the party of war." He asserted that all Americans wanted to live in peace and security but the prerequisite for such security, he argued, was military strength. Only from a position of strength could the United States then negotiate with the Soviets toward global disarmament.¹⁶⁶

Kennedy concluded his train travels through the state's central valley in Bakersfield before boarding a plane to Los Angeles, where he addressed a large crowd in the Shrine Auditorium. After traveling over 3,000 miles through the state, Kennedy said, he thought that California would be "a good place to settle this election, right here in the Vice President's own backyard." Then he repeated his charges from his train campaign, again blending foreign policy and domestic issues. On everything from agricultural surpluses, to economic growth, to the training of scientists and engineers, what the United States accomplished had importance not only for the people of this country, but for the people of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Western Europe as well.¹⁶⁷

During a brief press conference in Burbank after the address, Kennedy was asked what "sacrifices" were needed. The candidate reiterated that a "[b]igger effort in the field of national defense" was required, including a continuation of the draft, and the strengthening of conventional forces with new technology. Although Kennedy conceded that this might require higher taxes, he also did not rule out the need for deficit spending, arguing that the greater threat at that time was deflation, not inflation.¹⁶⁸

Kennedy's travels through California took him to San Diego on the fourth and final day of his long tour. Home to thousands of workers employed in defense industries, Kennedy lost no time trying to attract their support. Before a small crowd at Lindbergh Field, Kennedy reminded his audience that "[t]he basic issue which separates the Republicans and Democrats in this campaign is whether we are doing as well as we can

do.” The Democrats held the view, he explained, “that while this is a great country, we can do better; while this is a great State, we can do better; while this is a powerful country, it can be stronger.” And he predicted that San Diego, a leading place for building “American strength and American force and American vitality,” would direct the Democratic tide.¹⁶⁹

Later in the day, Kennedy focused almost exclusively on the related questions of national defense and employment by recognizing the unique role of military spending in the area. In San Diego, Kennedy said, “which is particularly dependent upon those industries which serve our national defense, you have seen the effect of a governmental policy which I consider to be shortsighted, and that is a policy which takes risks...with our national security.” By contrast, Kennedy argued that the nation “should strengthen itself, and I think this city,” he said, “has a particular role to play in that strengthening.”¹⁷⁰ Kennedy committed himself to “make a greater effort in the field of missiles,” to expand the nation’s airlift capacity, and finally to strengthen the country’s retaliatory capacity with “the traditional manned bomber,” and he concluded his remarks with a firm pledge: “I think we can do more,...and having known we can do more, I think we should not do less.”¹⁷¹

Kennedy’s bold appeal for the support of defense workers was immediately apparent to local reporters covering his campaign visit. For example, *San Diego Union* reporter Henry Love stressed the prominent role that Kennedy had afforded to San Diego in his national defense program.¹⁷² But not everyone welcomed such promises. While Kennedy’s speech in San Diego explicitly combined a pledge to build the nation’s defense

with an indirect promise to those seeking employment opportunities in defense industries, this was equally clear to conservatives who remained unalterably opposed to any federal employment initiatives, defense-related or otherwise. Editors in the *San Diego Union* ridiculed Kennedy's "Campaign of Promises for All" and questioned the wisdom of spending "billions more for the American military machine, thus providing fat overtime checks for the [United Auto Workers], and other industrial hands."¹⁷³

Undeterred from such criticism, Kennedy returned to California late in the campaign. He focused his efforts almost entirely in the defense-dependent areas of Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego. During a two-day foray into Nixon's backyard, Kennedy again emphasized foreign policy and defense issues, particularly as they related to the economic well-being of these communities. The local press took note. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* recorded Kennedy's criticisms of the GOP's "arbitrary" budget slashes on aircraft and missile programs. "The Republican decision to cut national defense and defense employment, without regard for either our national security or the needs of our workers," Kennedy argued, "should shock every citizen."¹⁷⁴

Still, Kennedy realized almost as soon as he had arrived that his efforts in California may have been misdirected. Although enthusiastic crowds greeted him, Kennedy was upstaged by the president's belated decision to release over \$155 million for the B-70 bomber, which was to have been built by North American Aviation Corporation in Long Beach, California. The Democrat attempted to put his own spin on the president's decision.

He charged that Eisenhower's objective was "not to increase national defense [but rather] to increase Republican votes." The Democratic Congress had twice tried to increase defense spending, Kennedy explained, but these efforts had been blocked by the economy-minded Eisenhower, who had chosen to impound funds appropriated for a number of defense programs. "In short," Kennedy's statement concluded, "while the Republicans are willing to take desperate measures to win votes, they are doing less than the Congress has stipulated in building the Nation's defenses."¹⁷⁵

Contemporary media accounts of Kennedy's final campaign visit to the state varied. The *Los Angeles Times* on November 2 covered Kennedy's visit to the area beneath a huge banner headline in their final edition and ran two different front-page stories detailing his travels. Lou Fleming of the *Times* noted that Kennedy emphasized full employment and national defense in his final appeal for the voters' support, while another article noted Kennedy's criticisms of the GOP's "arbitrary" budget slashes on aircraft and missile programs.¹⁷⁶

Kennedy was also on the defensive in California for his support of Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 and other procurement reforms that might have shifted defense jobs out of the state. In response to charges that he wanted to relocate defense jobs to the East, as he said he would do while campaigning in Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan, Kennedy stressed that he was for "employment in California and New York and across the nation," whereas his opponent thought that unemployment was "inevitable."¹⁷⁷

When Kennedy traveled south to San Diego on November 2nd, he blasted Nixon for suggesting that Kennedy would take defense jobs away from Californians. "To show you how desperate and despicable this campaign has become," Kennedy explained, the Nixon forces "are handing out outside defense plants a poster which says 'Attention Defense workers: Jack Kennedy is after your job. He urges moving defense industries back east.'" Kennedy, however, categorically rejected Nixon's claims. "If I were President of the United States," he stressed, "I would represent the United States." "The defense plants were put out here for good reason," he continued, "and they are going to stay here for the same reason. It has not anything to do with whether I come from Massachusetts or California." Meanwhile, to further prove his point, Kennedy noted that "California [had] seen defense plants leave," during Nixon's tenure as vice president.¹⁷⁸

"I want Mr. Khrushchev to know," he continued, "that a new generation of Americans . . . is going to fight in the 1960's for the defense of freedom in the United States and all around the world." Kennedy was ready to lead that fight. He emphasized that he had voted to appropriate over \$300 million for the B-70 aircraft, and he reaffirmed his determination to build the nation's defenses. As before, San Diegans were assigned a crucial role in that effort. Kennedy exhorted his audience, "I ask you in this community, hard hit, but a basic defense area of the United States, I ask you as citizens of the country, can we entrust the leadership to Mr. Nixon and the Republican Party?" For Kennedy, the answer was a clear and resounding "no." He said that he wanted to see "this country move

again,” and he called on the people of San Diego and California to help him “in securing the future.”¹⁷⁹

Again Kennedy’s appeal to Southern Californians was hampered by an unsympathetic press. The *San Diego Union*’s story of JFK’s visit was overshadowed by a banner headline proclaiming Eisenhower’s decision to release funds for the B-70.¹⁸⁰ *Union* reporter Henry Love reported only that the Democratic nominee had “accused the GOP administration of failing to produce defense contracts” in San Diego.¹⁸¹ Although reporting within these articles were generally favorable, the newspaper’s campaign coverage was dominated by Eisenhower and Nixon’s visit to New York City, and included several editorials that were critical of Kennedy.¹⁸²

Less than one week later, Californians went to the polls. A narrow majority of these men and women voted for Kennedy, but he failed to win the support of several thousand absentee voters. Nixon was ultimately declared the winner in the state, over a week after the election nationwide had already been decided. Although Kennedy lost the state by a narrow margin, his efforts might have paid off within the grand scheme of the national campaign. The 1958 mid-term elections had shattered GOP hopes of an easy victory in the state in 1960, and Nixon was forced to divert resources during the last two weeks of the campaign to secure a narrow victory in his home state. Time and money spent by Nixon partisans in California might have been better invested in the East, where Kennedy won most of the electoral votes needed to win the election.

In California, and especially in San Diego and Los Angeles, Kennedy tried to tie defense spending to local employment. The relative success of this effort is unclear. At first glance, Kennedy made gains, especially as compared to Adlai Stevenson's campaigns in 1952 and 1956. For example, voters in San Diego County, who had given Stevenson only 36.5 and 35.2 percent of their votes in 1952 and 1956, respectively, gave Kennedy 43.3 percent. Kennedy's gains in Los Angeles County were more impressive. Improving upon Stevenson's totals by nearly 314,000 votes, Kennedy won a slim majority over Nixon, who had been raised in the Los Angeles suburb of Whittier. Statewide, Kennedy improved upon Stevenson's vote totals significantly.

Upon further analysis, however, Kennedy's performance in the state was significantly worse than should have been expected. He professed to have modest expectations for success in California, but using recent history as a guide, Kennedy should have won easily.¹⁸³ Edmund G. "Pat" Brown had won the governor's race in 1958 by a margin of over one million votes. Democrats outnumbered Republicans in the state by more than one million registered voters. Kennedy may have narrowly won Los Angeles County – garnering a plurality of less than 22,000 votes – but he ran behind local Democratic Party candidates for state assembly by 200,000 votes.¹⁸⁴ Democrats in other statewide races both before and after the presidential contest of 1960 also did much better.¹⁸⁵ Kennedy lost San Diego County by more than 50,000 votes, to the mild surprise of veteran GOP watchers. GOP Congressman Bob Wilson congratulated the Nixon

campaign for its strong showing in the city.¹⁸⁶ Kennedy's *failure* to win in California is doubly striking given the negative impact that Eisenhower's New Look had upon hundreds of thousands of defense workers throughout the state. Kennedy's appeal for their support ultimately failed to resonate. The reasons for this failure will be explored further in Chapter Six.

Conclusions

John F. Kennedy and his campaign advisers recognized how foreign policy issues might work to the senator's disadvantage during the course of the presidential campaign. Kennedy responded to this challenge by regularly tying foreign policy to domestic issues while on the stump. Although such a strategy is common, Kennedy went beyond this conventional strategy with an innovative use of Louis Harris's public opinion polling. Harris's polls at the state level helped Kennedy to tailor his message.¹⁸⁷ In some areas, the candidate was advised to downplay foreign policy and defense. In other areas, Kennedy was urged to hammer away at his opponent's foreign policy. In each instance, however, Harris urged Kennedy to connect foreign policy and national security to the local concerns of individual voters.

The central rhetorical vehicle for this message was Kennedy's reference to the country's declining "prestige." The country, Kennedy said, could not be strong abroad if it was not strong at home. Unused industrial capacity, regional unemployment, and poorly

distributed surpluses were all, in Kennedy's stump-speech scenarios, signs of a nation in decline.

The missile gap was another sign of the United States' relative decline. Kennedy referred to a missile gap, either current or impending, on several occasions during the course of the campaign. Former military officers and defense intellectuals such as James Gavin, Maxwell Taylor, Henry Kissinger, John Medaris, and B.H. Liddell Hart had all argued that the nation's defensive needs had grown while military capabilities had shrunk. Several of these men had discussed the missile gap. Borrowing heavily from their books and articles, Kennedy spoke often of the weakness and vulnerability of the nation's defenses.

Occasionally, Kennedy's case was bolstered by criticisms of Eisenhower's defense program voiced by Republicans – including Nelson Rockefeller – and by inconsistent and contradictory statements made by officials within the Eisenhower administration. Kennedy was also aided by Nixon's inconsistent views on economic growth, defense spending, and the missile gap.

Given that criticisms of Eisenhower's defense program, and allegations of a missile gap, emanated from members of both political parties, what can be said of the political significance of the missile gap? Was it a decisive issue for Kennedy in his successful campaign for the presidency in 1960? Did Kennedy's allegations that a missile gap existed between the United States and the Soviet Union cause voters to doubt whether President Dwight Eisenhower's defense budgets had left the nation vulnerable to a Soviet nuclear

attack? Did Kennedy's promises to close the missile gap by strengthening the nation's defenses win him support among the men and women employed in defense-related industries? On all of these questions scholars disagree. Former Kennedy national security adviser McGeorge Bundy suggested that "the missile-gap debate was narrow and its resonance limited." He stressed that in the waning days of the presidential campaign, when Kennedy increasingly found himself on the defensive on foreign policy issues, he made only one reference to the missile gap. Bundy conceded that Kennedy's references to declining American prestige worked for him politically. He concluded, however, that "the most respected voice in the country on foreign issues...belonged to Eisenhower." "In terms of what actually happened," Bundy wrote, "Eisenhower won the missile gap debate."¹⁸⁸

Careful analysis of the contents of Kennedy's campaign speeches suggests a more complex phenomenon at work. While the term "missile gap" appears only five times in the index to Kennedy's campaign speeches, his repeated references to declining American prestige, of which the perceived missile gap was a crucial component, were a staple of his campaign. Long before the campaign ever began, Kennedy had linked himself intellectually with some of the Eisenhower administration's most vocal opponents. He was also associated with those who repeatedly argued that the nation was threatened by a missile gap. Kennedy likely believed that a missile gap existed in 1960, and not simply that there would be a gap in the future if actions were not taken, as some have suggested. On at least two separate occasions during the campaign, Kennedy stated explicitly that a gap existed at the

present time, and would loom *larger* in the future, if dramatic action were not taken to reverse the decline. Intelligence briefings by officials from the Eisenhower administration, conducted on several occasions during the course of the campaign, apparently failed to alter Kennedy's position on the missile gap. An analysis of Kennedy's speeches given before and after these briefings reveals little change in his rhetoric; he continued to refer to the missile gap, and the related prestige gap, until the very last days of the campaign.¹⁸⁹

Even these semantic differences obscure the true meaning of the issue within the broader context. Kennedy's references to a missile gap – either real or impending – were addressed to the entire defense establishment, not simply missile and rocket forces. Inherent in his charge that the Eisenhower administration was not adequately providing for the nation's defenses were two crucial assumptions: one, that "a greater effort" in national defense was both necessary and wise; and two, that an over-reliance on nuclear weapons threatened to undermine the nation's ability to conduct wars in the future. Neither of these assumptions was considered extreme at the time. Respected foreign policy observers from both parties openly questioned Eisenhower's alleged dependence upon the threat to use nuclear weapons during international crises, even those crises that did not involve the use of nuclear weapons. They had also questioned Eisenhower's judgment that excessive defense spending threatened the nation's economic security.

In this context, Desmond Ball provided perhaps the most balanced assessment of Kennedy's use of the missile gap for political gain when he wrote:

It is . . . possible to be highly critical of the political use which Kennedy made of the issue without impugning his personal integrity. For while the issues of deteriorating U.S. strength and prestige were deliberately stressed by Kennedy for the campaign, they were not completely artificial; Kennedy was probably sincere in his themes, but he undoubtedly exaggerated the issue for electoral reasons.¹⁹⁰

Kennedy would soon come to recognize the dangers of this political strategy when, as president, he was forced to contend with the enduring myth of the missile gap – a myth that he himself, consciously or otherwise, had helped to build.

5. THE NEW FRONTIER AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE MISSILE GAP

Could you let me know that progress has been made on the history of the missile gap controversy[?] . . . I would like to know its genesis; what previous government officials put forth their views and how we came to the judgment that there was a missile gap. – President John F. Kennedy to McGeorge Bundy, February 11, 1963.¹

I want to be able to demonstrate that there was a military and intelligence lag in the previous administration that started the missile gap. – Kennedy to Bundy, May 15, 1963.²

[O]fficials of the Eisenhower Administration themselves created the environment and made the case that there was a missile gap – and presented considerable evidence to back it up. – William Y. Smith to Bundy, June 20, 1963.³

Introduction

As discussed in earlier chapters, John F. Kennedy's references to the missile gap were integral to a carefully crafted political strategy that combined both economic and strategic critiques of Eisenhower's defense policy. Kennedy's promise to spend more on defense in order to close the missile gap was intended, in part, to address the anxieties of workers displaced by the New Look. This commitment to spend more on defense also reflected Kennedy's long-held belief – a belief that he shared with others in the late 1950s – that the New Look was not an effective strategy for dealing with local, non-nuclear forms of aggression.

There was a downside to Kennedy's use of the missile gap issue. As the previous chapter demonstrated, John F. Kennedy's missile gap rhetoric may not have been singularly significant during the presidential campaign of 1960. Nonetheless, within a few weeks after the election JFK came to realize the political risks of having focused on the missile gap during his campaign. The politics of the missile gap influenced Kennedy's defense policy decisions during the first year of his presidency. This chapter begins by examining the

decline and disappearance of the missile gap as a salient political issue. Part Two then revisits some of the promises Kennedy made on the campaign trail, and relates how his defense policies did, or did not, fulfill these promises.

Part I – Policymaking in the Kennedy Administration in the Wake of the Missile Gap

John F. Kennedy began his presidency as he had begun his campaign for the office – with a pledge to close the missile gap. Ever mindful of his razor-thin margin of victory, Kennedy invited a number of Eisenhower administration officials, including CIA director Allen Dulles and Undersecretary of State C. Douglas Dillon, to join his administration. He did not, however, moderate his criticism of the departing president. He was determined to make the changes to the nation's military that he deemed necessary. In early January 1961, prior to his inauguration, Kennedy continued his assault on the Eisenhower administration's defense program. In a published reply to a query from the American Legion, he again called for a "crash" program in order to secure the nation's nuclear deterrent.⁴

Eisenhower responded in kind. In his final state of the union message, Eisenhower asserted that the nation "must not return to the 'crash program' psychology of the past when each new feint by the Communists was responded to in panic." In particular, the president pointed out that the missile gap, like the bomber gap before it, was a fiction.⁵ Less than a week later, in his celebrated farewell address, Eisenhower noted how the military establishment had changed in the years after World War II. While the U.S. had once had no

permanent armaments industry, the Cold War required “a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions.” “We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United State corporations.”⁶ Eisenhower was troubled by the implications of this spending, and he warned of the growing influence of a burgeoning “military-industrial complex.” He also cautioned that “public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.” “We must never let the weight of this combination,” he said, “endanger our liberties or democratic processes.”⁷

When the two men met on the day before Kennedy’s inauguration, Eisenhower and Kennedy focused particular attention on recent events in Southeast Asia.⁸ Eisenhower was still nettled by the fallacious missile gap charges, however. The departing president stressed the overall strength of the United States’ nuclear arsenal relative to that of the Soviet Union. In particular, Eisenhower pointed out that the Polaris, which had been deployed recently, gave Kennedy an impervious nuclear deterrent.⁹ The Republican even offered to support Kennedy’s nascent administration, in spite of the harsh criticism that had been leveled against him during the campaign, if Kennedy dropped his plans to spend more on defense.¹⁰

Kennedy did not back off from his pledge to boost military spending. The new president adopted a hard-line stance versus the Soviet Union in his inaugural address. Shaken by Nikita Khrushchev’s pledge to support wars of national liberation, Kennedy promised to “pay any price” and “bear any burden” in defense of freedom around the

globe.¹¹ To support such a strategy and to deliver on his campaign promises, Kennedy called for more military spending in his state of the union address on January 31, 1961.

Kennedy also remembered his promises to the poor, and to those living in the nation's depressed areas. His top legislative priorities – federal assistance for education, medical insurance for the elderly, federal housing legislation, and an increase in the minimum wage – addressed traditional liberal goals harkening back to the days of Franklin Roosevelt's administration.¹² Kennedy's economic advisers, including Walter Heller, named chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, and John Kenneth Galbraith, dispatched to India as U.S. ambassador, called for a number of programs to boost government spending. In one of his first official acts as president, Kennedy proposed a multi-faceted program to reinvigorate the nation's economy. Included within this program was yet another push for an area redevelopment program that had been twice vetoed by his predecessor.¹³

Beyond this, Kennedy's early efforts to tackle the problem of the sluggish economy are best characterized as "cautious." Kennedy rejected Heller's call for an immediate tax cut. He also turned aside Galbraith's various proposals to increase spending on public works. Amidst this chorus of liberal advice, Kennedy often turned to his secretary of the treasury, the Republican C. Douglas Dillon. The new president was also constrained by the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, William McChesney Martin. For all of his criticism during the presidential campaign of how the "hard money, tight money" policies

of the Eisenhower administration had stifled economic growth, Kennedy's approach to fiscal and monetary policy in these early months was neither "soft" nor "loose." As James Giglio observes, "the financial homilies of the Eisenhower era held sway during the early Kennedy presidency," prompting the liberal economist Seymour Harris to refer to the Kennedy administration as the "Third Eisenhower Administration."¹⁴

There was one important exception to this rule. While Kennedy normatively remained fiscally conservative, he exhibited no such tendencies when it came to spending for the nation's defenses. The new president's military spending increases in the spring and summer of 1961 pumped over \$7 billion into the economy. New spending for domestic programs, by contrast, totaled only \$2.3 billion.¹⁵

Several factors explain this apparent dichotomy in Kennedy's approach to government spending. First, although Kennedy spoke of traditional liberal themes throughout the election year, his personal beliefs toward government spending were more like those of his conservative, businessman father, Joseph P. Kennedy, than of liberal academics such as Galbraith, Heller, and Harris. Second, and more importantly, security concerns took precedence over Kennedy's concern for maintaining fiscal balance. Kennedy might have questioned the merits of public works projects and other liberal pump-priming measures centered on non-military spending, but he was convinced that American national security was threatened. He was mindful of the economic effects of his military spending

increases; still, he was motivated primarily by his conviction that more must be done to strengthen that nation's military.

There is no evidence that Kennedy had any doubts prior to his election about the true standing of the nation's military relative to that of the Soviets and the Chinese. Those who were convinced that the United States was lagging badly behind the Communist bloc advised the president-elect during the interregnum. For example, Kennedy appointed Paul Nitze, author of NSC 68 and the Gaither Report, to chair a transition team assigned to study the nation's defense needs.¹⁶ Nitze's influence during the Kennedy administration continued when he was named Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs under Robert McNamara. Nitze later served as Secretary of the Navy.

Others also hoped to influence the formulation of Kennedy's national security strategy. Henry Kissinger, a prominent critic of Eisenhower's New Look, stepped forward in early 1961. Kissinger's book *The Necessity for Choice* built upon criticisms evident in his earlier works, including *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, and the Rockefeller Brother's Report. The Harvard professor argued that the nation's "margin of survival" had "narrowed dangerously" under Eisenhower and he warned of a missile gap. He believed that the trends could be reversed "if we move boldly and with conviction."¹⁷

Meanwhile, Maxwell Taylor applauded Kennedy's determination to initiate "substantial changes" to the nation's strategy in the January 1961 issue of the journal *Foreign Affairs*. He also warned, however, that such changes must be made immediately

because “[t]he military trend is running against us and decisive measures are needed to reverse it.” The retired general worried that the new policy-makers, even if they were “imbued with the utmost sense of urgency,” would “find many cogent reasons for proceeding slowly” before making any important decisions.¹⁸

Taylor called for a rejection of the New Look and urged instead that the new administration adopt a “flexible military strategy designed to deter war, large or small, and to assist the West in winning the cold war.” He pointed to a number of specific plans on file in the Pentagon which had been shelved “largely for fiscal reasons” and which could be implemented immediately. These plans included the creation of an “invulnerable, long-range missile force with a second strike-capability,” and modernization and expansion of conventional forces.¹⁹

Stressing that “complete invulnerability [would] never be attained,” Taylor stepped back somewhat from the most inflated estimates of what would be needed to close the missile gap. Rather than calling for a massive buildup of thousands of missiles, he suggested instead that only a “few hundred” reliable long-range missiles, protected by defensive measures, would stand a “reasonable expectation” of surviving a surprise attack. Such a force, therefore, would constitute a sufficient second-strike force and would provide the nation with a measure of security. The “second strike” aspect of Taylor’s argument was crucial, and appeared to echo the arguments made by the outgoing president, Dwight Eisenhower. “While we are often inclined to stress numbers in our efforts to close the

missile gap,” he wrote, “we usually fail to recognize the importance of the defensive elements of a ‘second-strike’ missile system.”²⁰

Taylor also considered the economics of a new national security strategy. He urged that new military spending should be predicated on “verifiable military requirements” so as to “withstand hard scrutiny by the fiscal powers.” He predicted that the modernization of the Army’s forces alone would cost “about \$3 billion a year for five years.” Comparable plans existed for the Air Force, Navy and Marines. All told, Taylor estimated that the Department of Defense should “plan on receiving an annual sum approximating 10 percent of the Gross National Product.”²¹

Both Kissinger and Taylor advised the Kennedy administration during the early days, albeit in very different capacities. Kissinger had known Kennedy since 1958, and, as a member of the Harvard faculty, was on familiar terms with a number of Kennedy advisers, including Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Kissinger biographer Walter Isaacson argued that the *The Necessity for Choice* “read like a manifesto for the Democrats” and that it was “a job application in case the new president decided to seek some fresh thinking from Cambridge.”²² Fresh thinking was not in short supply, however, in the Kennedy administration. Although Kennedy had praised Kissinger’s new book in a meeting in February of 1961, it is not clear that the president had actually read the book. And while Kennedy had cited the professor’s writings on several occasions on the floor of the Senate, and during the presidential campaign, the new president already had a favorite former-

Harvard faculty member in McGeorge Bundy by February 1961. Although he was angling for a more influential role in the new administration, Kissinger accepted a job as a part-time consultant, working primarily through Bundy.²³ Although Bundy, as dean for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, had aided Kissinger in securing tenure at Harvard, the two later clashed. Bundy jealously guarded his turf in the Kennedy White House against, in Kissinger's words, professors "of comparable academic competence." In the end, Kissinger did not exert a great influence within the new administration.²⁴

Bundy was not nearly as successful, however, in guarding his turf against the encroachments of Kennedy's favorite former Army generals. Unlike Kissinger, Maxwell Taylor did not actively seek a position in the new administration. When Secretary of State Dean Rusk offered Taylor a job as ambassador of France, the retired general politely declined. He had recently accepted a position as head of the Lincoln Center in New York, and he was reluctant to offend the Center's main benefactor, John D. Rockefeller, III. The ambassadorship was then given to retired Army General James Gavin, who had advised Kennedy on occasion prior to the election.²⁵

Taylor did not remain on the outside for long, however, and he ultimately had far more influence over Kennedy's policy-making than did Gavin.²⁶ Although he had never met Kennedy before the inauguration, Taylor became an integral part of Kennedy's national security team. He developed a particularly close personal relationship with Kennedy's brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.²⁷ Following the failed invasion of Cuba at

the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, Taylor was invited to Washington to chair a panel to investigate the debacle. After serving in a number of unofficial advisory roles, he returned to active service and was later selected to serve as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. His friend the attorney general swore him in on October 1, 1962.²⁸

Taylor's influence was apparent even before he was summoned to Washington. Kennedy's supplemental defense appropriation for fiscal year 1961, submitted to Congress only weeks after his inauguration, called for a fifteen percent increase in military spending. Much of it was directed to the very forces that Taylor had called for in his "flexible response" strategy. As will be discussed later in this chapter, at least some of this increase was also specifically intended to boost the domestic economy: one pre-inauguration task force report had viewed military spending as the primary vehicle for reversing the deepening recession.²⁹

Kennedy, McNamara, and the End of the Missile Gap

Kennedy's defense spending increases might have boosted the flagging economy, but they were not designed to close the missile gap. There was no missile gap. When science adviser Jerome Wiesner, the former Eisenhower administration official who had advised Kennedy during the campaign, presented the new president with incontrovertible evidence that the missile gap was a fiction in early February 1961, Kennedy greeted the news with a single expletive "delivered more in anger than in relief."³⁰

What was the probable source of the president's anger? Kennedy knew that he could not keep the truth concealed indefinitely. By February 1961, this truth was emerging on many fronts. In early February, only days after the Wiesner briefing, the president telephoned Charles Hitch, an analyst formerly with the Rand Corporation, and conceded that there was no missile gap. Hitch himself had come to the same conclusion within days of arriving at the Pentagon in January 1961.³¹

The Eisenhower administration had said as much a year earlier, in January 1960. Kennedy and other critics had assumed, however, that the president had "cooked the books" for political reasons to show that the United States had a nuclear advantage over the Soviet Union. Now the shoe was on the other foot, and the circumstances were reversed. Having advocated a major increase in military expenditure as a candidate, Kennedy could not simply dismiss the missile gap by declaring that the United States deterrent was, in fact, superior to that of the Soviet Union. Kennedy appreciated the continued political value of the missile gap. The newly-elected president was committed to an expansion of limited war-fighting capabilities, believing that Eisenhower's all-or-nothing nuclear deterrent strategy was fundamentally flawed. Therefore, Kennedy needed to perpetuate the missile gap myth just a little while longer – long enough to push through a package of military spending that he still deemed crucial – with or without the gap. His plan to keep a lid on the truth, however, was almost foiled by a misstep on the part of his newly-appointed Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara.

Kennedy's Secretary of Defense has assumed a larger-than-life historical personae nearly comparable to that of his boss. Robert McNamara, the former president of Ford Motor Company, brought to Washington the same skills as an administrator that had earned him the respect of the business community – a critical mind, a perceptive intuition, and a work ethic that valued action over inaction. He wasted no time in taking charge of the nation's largest bureaucratic institution.³²

A registered Republican, McNamara cast his ballot for Kennedy in the November election.³³ Beyond this, however, the secretary professes to have had minimal exposure to politics prior to his arrival in Washington in January 1961. This lack of knowledge caused problems for the new administration when McNamara met for the first time with a group of Washington reporters in the late afternoon on February 6, 1961.³⁴

McNamara was accompanied by his deputy Roswell Gilpatric, a former undersecretary of the Air Force in the Truman administration, as well as Public Affairs chief Arthur Sylvester and Orville Splitt of the Pentagon newsroom. The group of journalists included veteran newsmen John Scali, then of the Associated Press; John Norris of *The Washington Post*; and Jack Raymond of *The New York Times*. The secretary's first assignment upon coming to Washington had been to study the missile gap. He set out on this task with typical zeal, assisted by Gilpatric and the head of Air Force intelligence.³⁵ Not surprisingly, one of the reporters' first questions concerned the missile gap. We should talk not about missile gaps, McNamara replied, "There's no missile gap."³⁶

The reporters, some of whom had disseminated the story of the gap for the past three years, were taken aback. One pointed out that the gap was understood to include future, as well as current missile strength. Another stressed that the gap referred to the Soviet Union's capability to produce missiles, not the relative strength or the destructive power of the nuclear force in being. McNamara did not budge. Instead he reiterated that there was no gap, regardless of the terminology used. When the reporters pointed out that this information contravened what "your party" and one of the president's best friends (understood to be Joe Alsop) had been saying for years, McNamara said with a chuckle, "I still manage to keep most people guessing whether I'm a Republican or Democrat so I can speak with ease on this subject." This elicited laughter from the group, and the discussion continued onto other subjects. McNamara left the meeting thinking his first encounter with the Washington press corps had been a success.³⁷

He was wrong. Judging from the uproar, McNamara would have been better advised to have avoided the group completely. Contrary to what McNamara himself asserted in later years, however, the reporters did not break "the damn door down" in their rush to file the story.³⁸ The meeting had taken place at the close of the business day, after the afternoon papers had already gone to press. Jack Raymond of *The New York Times* was reluctant to file the story. He urged his colleagues to hold their stories until the next day to enable McNamara to explain himself. The United Press correspondent agreed. He also

preferred to wait, but threatened, "If anyone files this tonight, I'll be on the wire . . . before they begin dictating."³⁹

The *Washington Post*'s John Norris refused to delay saying that he would not be upstaged the following day by the afternoon papers. Although Raymond argued that McNamara would never give another background briefing if he was confronted by the story in the morning papers, the assembled majority overruled him. It was only after this exchange that the veteran reporter made the decision to file the story on the evening of February 6.⁴⁰

Raymond's concerns about blind-siding the new secretary were well-founded. Kennedy first learned of McNamara's encounter with the newsmen when he read Raymond's story on the front page of *The New York Times*. Although Raymond had avoided citing "administration" sources in the first story he filed, *Times* editors had changed the lead in time for the late city edition after both the AP and UP wire-service reports had attributed the story to the Kennedy administration. It was the late edition of the *Times* that greeted Kennedy on the morning of February 7. Kennedy allegedly blasted McNamara over the phone, and McNamara asserted years later that he offered to resign in the wake of his gaffe. McNamara also stated that the *Washington Evening Star* was the first to break the story, but the meeting occurred after the evening papers had gone to press.⁴¹

McNamara's intentions have become the subject of considerable scholarly debate.⁴² At the time, the president attributed McNamara's ill-advised remarks to political naiveté,

and he quickly moved to put the mistake behind them. McGeorge Bundy and Adam Yarmolinsky both consider the incident to have been a mistake, a consequence of McNamara's political naiveté, and they claim that Kennedy was not seriously upset by the gaffe.⁴³ Roger Hilsman argued that the first "hard evidence" that the gap did not exist was not made available until June 1961. McNamara's dismissal of the missile gap, according to Hilsman, was based on no more than a "gut feeling."⁴⁴

McNamara's claim that he was ignorant of the political ramifications of his remarks seems odd, at best. Even casual observers of the 1960 presidential election would have known that the missile gap was a major element of John Kennedy's critique of the Eisenhower administration. Ford Motor Company, meanwhile, had been a major manufacturer of military hardware during World War II, and had some defense contracts at the time of McNamara's resignation from the company. This prompted the new secretary not to exercise options on 30,000 shares of Ford stock out of a concern for the appearance of a conflict of interest.⁴⁵

Notwithstanding these and other questions that have been sharpened by over forty years of hindsight, Jack Raymond made several observations about the meeting only days after it had occurred. First of all, he noted that Gilpatric, "a former Air Force Undersecretary and a known Air Force advocate," was present but offered no additional information to clarify what McNamara had said. Nor did the two other Department of Defense public relations people, Sylvester and Splitt, intervene. In fact, their only comment

– that the secretary’s remarks were “for background” and not “off the record” – essentially cleared the way for the information to be published, albeit on a “not for attribution” basis. Raymond concluded, therefore, that the missile gap had been closed as a result of McNamara’s interpretation of the most-up-to-date intelligence information, and not due to some misunderstanding or misstatement on his part.⁴⁶

The White House was determined to convince him otherwise. On February 7, 1961, less than 24 hours after the McNamara briefing, White House press secretary Pierre Salinger issued a statement saying that the reports about the “end” of the missile gap were “absolutely wrong.”⁴⁷ Kennedy, during his televised press conference the next day, also brushed aside a discussion of the end of the missile gap. According to the president, McNamara had told him “that no study had been [completed] . . . which would lead to any conclusion at this time as to whether there is a gap or not.” Kennedy asserted, therefore, that “it would be premature to reach a judgment as to whether there is a gap or not a gap.”⁴⁸

The White House’s antics troubled Raymond and some of his colleagues in the press.⁴⁹ Charles J. V. Murphy had a different view. A Time-Life publishing executive and journalist with close ties to members of the military, Murphy was more amused than troubled when he noted in a letter to Air Force General Lauris Norstad, then serving as commander of NATO forces in Europe, that “[p]oor McNamara [had] put his foot into it at his first off-the-record press conference.”⁵⁰

Kennedy himself may have once believed that a missile gap threatened the security of the United States, but Murphy called the “gap-no-gap issue...the product of political fakery.” He thought that McNamara had done the “country a service by disclosing his private judgment.” Yet Murphy appreciated the cost. What McNamara “did not realize at the time, of course,” he wrote:

was that he had exploded one of the major premises on which the Administration had campaigned; he had demolished the Gaither and Rockefeller reports, . . . and had left Symington, Scoop Jackson, Lyndon Johnson, not to mention Ros Gilpatric, Tom Lanphier [a prominent Symington adviser, and an executive with General Dynamics Corporation’s Convair Division], and quite a few scientists, in most awkward stances.⁵¹

Murphy saw an opportunity for effecting major change in the nation’s defenses, with or without the missile gap. Referring obliquely to Kennedy’s campaign promises to reinvigorate American defenses and to reassert American leadership abroad, Murphy hoped that Kennedy and McNamara would “have the wit and the resolution to reestablish confidence of Americans in their own capacity for world action.”⁵²

Joe Alsop, whom the reporters had singled out during the McNamara meeting as a central figure behind the missile gap, also registered his opinion on the McNamara briefing. The columnist had regular contact with Kennedy staffers during the interregnum, and he had maintained his friendship with John Kennedy – the newly-elected president had visited Alsop’s home in the early morning hours after his inauguration. But Alsop had little influence within the Pentagon. In his commentary which appeared on February 10th, the

columnist called the McNamara press briefing “the first bad bobble of the Kennedy Administration.” He suggested that McNamara had been fooled by the intelligence bureaucracy when he had declared that there was no missile gap.⁵³

Less than a week later, McNamara seemed to agree. In a letter to Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen on February 16th, the secretary of defense disavowed his earlier statements to the Pentagon reporters.⁵⁴ McNamara publicly repeated these denials in a convoluted way when he, according to John Norris of *The Washington Post*, “declared ...that he neither told the newsmen that the United States is behind Russia in missile power nor that it is ahead.”⁵⁵

McNamara’s sworn testimony before the House Appropriations Committee in April of 1961 clarified the administration’s position on the missile gap still further. In a carefully worded exchange with committee chairman George Mahon, McNamara explained that administration policy continued to be governed by the conviction that the United States lagged behind the Soviet Union in missile development and deployment. Noting that there had been “some confusion” about McNamara’s own views on the missile gap, Mahon deftly guided the secretary through his testimony.

With respect to intercontinental ballistic missiles, such as the Atlas, Titan, and Minuteman, and excluding intermediate range weapons such as the Polaris, Mahon asked, “is there presently ...a missile gap?”

McNamara's response was unequivocal: "Based on the intelligence estimates available to me, yes."

Mahon continued. "According to these estimates, was there a missile gap in existence or in anticipation last year?"

Again, McNamara replied in the affirmative. "Based on the estimates I understand were available last year," he testified, "there was indicated a probable missile gap then and for this period."⁵⁶

The congressman then asked if the missile gap was "estimated to exist up to and through 1963?" Here McNamara hedged his response somewhat, but his position did not differ appreciably from that which Kennedy had said on the campaign trail the year before. "Based on the intelligence estimates," McNamara explained, "there is evidence that a missile gap may exist up to and through 1963." He allowed, however, that the United States' "missile inventory at the end of the fiscal year 1963, or at the end of calendar year 1963, may exceed that of the Soviet Union."⁵⁷

The relative strategic significance of the presumed missile gap was not a matter of dispute. Mahon asked if the missile gap contributed to a "deterrent gap." McNamara said no; there was no deterrent gap at the present time. Further, the defense secretary continued, "[t]he recommendations which the President has made to Congress...are designed to assure that there will not be a deterrent gap in the future." This factor, the secretary affirmed, was more important "than the more restricted issue of a missile gap."⁵⁸

Mahon then turned to Army General Lyman Lemnitzer, who had accompanied McNamara for his testimony. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff replied that current intelligence estimates showed a small difference between the number of ICBMs in the United States arsenal and that held by the Soviet Union. He also agreed that there was no deterrent gap separating the two countries, and that there would be no deterrent gap during the next two to three years if the administration's "present programs are carried out in the future."⁵⁹

The language entered in the public record as a result of this exchange was intended to ensure that disgruntled Republicans would not charge that Kennedy had deliberately manufactured the missile gap to further his own political ends. The gambit worked, for a time. Such accusations would not resurface for nearly a year. When Kennedy pressed on with his promised defense buildup in the spring and early summer, the missile gap was not a major factor. In fact, Kennedy downplayed the significance of the missile gap in his push for more spending. In March 1961, for example, Bundy advised the president not to mention the missile gap in his special message to Congress on the defense budget.⁶⁰ This supplemental defense appropriation totaling \$3.7 billion represented a 10 percent increase over Eisenhower's final defense budget. Then, with tensions over Berlin rising in the summer of 1961, Kennedy requested, and Congress approved, over \$3 billion in emergency spending in July 1961. At year's end, Kennedy's defense budget exceeded that of his predecessor by over 15 percent. He continued this trend in the following fiscal year.

Whereas Eisenhower's F/Y 1962 budget had projected military spending at more than \$43.6 billion, Kennedy's budget for the same period totaled nearly \$50 billion.⁶¹

These increases reflected the new administration's view that Eisenhower's concern for controlling defense expenditures out of concern for the health of the domestic economy was neither warranted nor wise. Paul Samuelson's report on the economy, prepared during the interregnum, maintained that defense expenditures ought not "be kept below the optimal level needed for security because of the mistaken notion that the economy is unable to bear any extra burdens."⁶² Echoing these themes in his message to Congress on March 28, Kennedy proclaimed that the nation's "arms must be adequate to meet our commitments and insure [sic] our security, without being bound by arbitrary budget ceilings." Repeating a frequent refrain from his campaign, the president declared, "This nation can afford to be strong – it cannot afford to be weak."⁶³

The White House argued that these defense increases were predicated on their strategic merit. Samuelson stated, for example, that military expenditures ought not be "the football of economic stabilization." In this same report, however, the economist maintained that "any stepping up of [defense] programs that is deemed desirable for its own sake can only help rather than hinder" the health of the economy.⁶⁴ Charles Hitch, serving in the capacity of the comptroller of the Pentagon in 1961, agreed. The "requirements for higher military...expenditures," he observed, "were in harmony with the Administration's

economic policy, and in this case fiscal policy was accommodated to the needs of national security.⁶⁵

This was particularly true during the very first few months of the Kennedy administration. Hitch testified before Congress in April 1961 that the Defense Department had accelerated “the placement of contracts for programs already approved” in order to boost the sluggish economy. These actions were taken “wherever feasible and sensible.”⁶⁶ Although some questioned the wisdom and efficacy of using defense spending as a Keynesian stimulus, few could argue with the near-term effects of Kennedy’s military spending initiatives. The recession eased in February 1961, and the economy slowly rebounded for the remainder of the year. The view that defense expenditures had stimulated the economy persisted throughout the Kennedy administration.⁶⁷

These attitudes toward defense spending and the economy represented a philosophical shift from the previous administration; however, Kennedy’s decisions relating to specific weapons systems validated many of his predecessor’s actions. Although Kennedy pledged during his campaign to strengthen and protect the nation’s nuclear deterrent, he chose *not* to expand the existing Atlas ICBM force. Although he had campaigned in Warren, Michigan promising to “find jobs” for the men and women who had once built the Jupiter IRBM, Kennedy did not call for new funding for this project.⁶⁸ He also chose not to reverse Eisenhower’s earlier decisions to cancel both the B-58 and the B-70 bombers. Much of the new spending for defense that was initiated during the early

months of the Kennedy administration was not directly related to the missile gap, per se. Rather, Kennedy directed his attention to expanding the nation's conventional forces. Included within this new push for conventional arms was an increase in the size of the Active Army. By 1962, the Army had grown from 11 to 16 combat-ready divisions.⁶⁹

The Kennedy administration tacitly agreed with Eisenhower's earlier contention that a crash program to build first-generation, liquid-fueled ICBMs was neither warranted nor wise. In 1958, Joseph Alsop had criticized the Eisenhower administration for "gambling the American future" on the Minuteman missile given that that weapon, according to Alsop, could not "possibly be ready for operational use before the end of 1963 or early 1964." He was equally dismissive of the Polaris, arguing that a few more Polaris missile submarines would not appreciably alter the balance in the United States' favor.⁷⁰ Alsop's friend John Kennedy, however, had supported both programs, both on the floor of the Senate, and as a candidate for the presidency.⁷¹

In the spring of 1961, Kennedy, McNamara and others in the administration recognized that the Atlas, Jupiter, and Titan rockets were less reliable than solid-fueled missiles. Liquid-fueled ICBMs required advanced notice to fuel and launch. Early models were deployed in an upright position above ground, and were vulnerable to overpressures in the event of a nuclear attack. As such, these first-generation ICBMs were not acceptable "second strike" weapons because they would not be available in sufficient numbers following a surprise attack. In light of this, McNamara and Kennedy both seized upon the

successful test of a Minuteman rocket in early February 1961 to cancel the final two squadrons of Titan II missiles, and to replace these with additional Minuteman missiles. They approved no new monies for the Atlas.⁷² Even without these weapons, the Minuteman and Polaris missiles alone combined to make an effective second-strike force. Although Kennedy retained a first-strike option, he was the first U.S. president to disavow such a strategy in public. The administration focused on the second-strike aspects of the nuclear force in subsequent defense budgets.⁷³

The Long, Slow Demise of the Missile Gap

The president and the members of his administration held the line on the missile gap as they made these changes to the nation's force structure during the spring and summer of 1961. Kennedy made no explicit references to the missile gap in his press conferences and in his public pronouncements during this time. The administration bided its time, waiting for a more politically advantageous moment to issue an explicit public reversal of that which had been said on the campaign trail. That time came in the fall, after the issue had been given several more months to fade from memory. Following the tense Berlin Crisis, Kennedy determined to put the Soviets on notice that they did not possess superiority over the United States. New intelligence from reconnaissance satellites, and from the Soviet spy Oleg Penkovsky, was incorporated within a new national intelligence estimate in June 1961. Emboldened by this data, Kennedy authorized an official restatement on the missile gap.

After several weeks of intensive behind-the-scenes study and preparation, Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric delivered a speech on October 21, 1961, before a meeting of the Business Council at Hot Springs, Virginia.⁷⁴ Gilpatric stated explicitly that the United States now knew that the Soviets had neither a quantitative nor a qualitative superiority in nuclear missile technology. He delineated the diversity of U.S. nuclear forces, explaining that a “sneak attack could not effectively disarm” the United States. The United States’ second-strike force, Gilpatric said, “is at least as extensive as what the Soviets can deliver by striking first.”⁷⁵

The message from the administration for both foreign and domestic audiences was clear – there was no missile gap. This message was repeated by Secretary of State Dean Rusk during a television interview the following day. Robert McNamara in the same week asserted that the United States had “nuclear power several times that of the Soviet Union.” Then, during Kennedy’s press conference on November 8, 1961, the president further reinforced the administration’s new line on the missile gap when he declared that he would “not trade places with anyone in the world.”⁷⁶

Observers in the media took note. In the lead to an analytical piece in *The New York Times*, reporter Hanson W. Baldwin said that the missile gap had been “quietly, though unofficially, interred.” “Thus,” he went on, “an ‘issue,’ which played a major part in the last Presidential campaign, was finally declared – as many had long claimed – not to be an issue at all.”⁷⁷ Even the self-described inventor of the missile gap, Joe Alsop, had accepted

the “new” intelligence information as definitive. A few weeks before the Gilpatric speech Alsop acknowledged in his newspaper column that the Soviets had fewer than fifty intercontinental missiles where before he had asserted that they might have had as many as two hundred.⁷⁸

Most historical accounts cite Gilpatric’s public speech in October of 1961 as the official end of the missile gap.⁷⁹ The controversy, however, continued to simmer. While the issue was on the wane, not all partisans were willing to declare the gap closed. The trade journal *Missiles and Rockets* chastised the Kennedy Administration for abandoning its promised defense buildup. Gilpatric’s words, the editors wrote, might reassure “the casually informed American voter and the even more casually informed camel drivers of the world.” “But, when closely examined,” they continued, “the claims are found to be far less impressive and considerably misleading.”⁸⁰ Then in February 1962 Missouri Senator Stuart Symington, one of the most outspoken of the missile gap critics, urged restraint “before we take to dancing in the streets to celebrate the disappearance of the missile gap.”⁸¹

A minor storm erupted once again in March of 1962 when Republican Frank Osmers of New Jersey assailed Kennedy on the floor of the House of Representatives for manufacturing a “big lie” during the presidential campaign of 1960. Osmers thought that Kennedy’s charge “that the Eisenhower administration had been derelict in permitting a missile gap to develop between Russia and the United States... was probably the greatest single factor in his winning the election by a few thousand votes.”⁸² In that same month,

excerpts of Richard Nixon's memoir *Six Crises* began filtering out to reporters who highlighted Nixon's charge that Kennedy had been fully briefed by the CIA during the campaign.

Intending to quash accusations that Kennedy knew more about the true state of the nation's defenses than he had claimed during the campaign, the White House issued a statement denying that anything of substance had been discussed during the CIA briefings. Former CIA Director Allen Dulles, who had conducted two meetings with Kennedy prior to the election, further corroborated Kennedy's account of events from the campaign.⁸³ The missile gap faded again from public view.

Yet nearly a year later, long after the public and the media had lost interest in the missile gap, Kennedy still harbored doubts about his use of the issue during his campaign. His interest in nuclear weapons piqued by the recent Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy asked national security adviser McGeorge Bundy for a "history of the missile gap controversy." "I would like to know its genesis," he continued, including "what previous government officials put forth their views and how we came to the judgment that there was a missile gap."⁸⁴ Planning for his own re-election bid, Kennedy wanted to be prepared for any questions about the missile gap that might surface during the upcoming presidential election. With a formal missile gap study in hand, Kennedy would have ready answers for those who would charge that he had manufactured the missile gap issue solely for political gain.⁸⁵

The Pentagon stepped forward with the first attempt to answer Kennedy's questions. In a formal memorandum for the president, McNamara focused on "how we came to the judgment that there was a missile gap." The secretary asserted that there was "general agreement within the intelligence community on the [Soviet] ICBM test program . . . but disagreement on the scale and pace of deployment." He surmised, therefore, "that the missile gap was based on a comparison between U.S. ICBM strength as then programmed, and *reasonable, although erroneous, estimates* of prospective Soviet ICBM strength which were generally accepted by *responsible officials*."⁸⁶ While the earlier estimates of Soviet ICBM strength had "turned out to be wrong," McNamara hastened to add that these estimates were based on "the best intelligence information available." Ignoring Eisenhower's repeated denials, the secretary alleged that "the anticipated existence of a missile gap...was not even a matter of debate."⁸⁷

Further, McNamara believed that the "weaknesses of overall defense policy" were "equally important." Independent observers, including the Gaither and Rockefeller committees, all expressed the view that the nation's defensive posture was severely in need of strengthening. "The term 'missile gap,'" McNamara explained, "became the symbol of what critics felt to be fundamental flaws in the then-U.S. defense policy." Therefore, even if the missile gap in its "narrower senses" did not materialize, the "overall defense deficiencies...very definitely did exist" and were a concern for individuals "of all political views."⁸⁸ "Whatever may be said (in hindsight) of the reality of the 'missile gap,'"

McNamara continued, "there is no question about the reality of the 'defense gap' which required vigorous action by the incoming administration to correct."⁸⁹

Kennedy was dissatisfied with this first attempt, which focused too much on the period from 1957 to early 1960. The president specifically asked for more information, as Bundy recorded, on "the immediate period when we said there was no missile gap - Dec 60 - Feb 61."⁹⁰ Here Kennedy was referring to the three months between the election and the time of McNamara's press conference, *before* the administration had submitted its supplemental defense appropriations request. This time also coincided with the period when the president himself, along with his advisers Jerome Wiesner and Charles Hitch, had privately concluded that there was no gap. McNamara, with Roswell Gilpatric's implicit consent, had made public these findings in early February during the off-the-record press briefing, albeit before the White House was willing to disclose this information.

In response to the president's request for more information, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense Adam Yarmolinsky provided more detail surrounding the disputed gap. Yarmolinsky, who had worked on domestic issues for the Kennedy campaign and joined the Pentagon staff in early 1961, repeated several of McNamara's earlier arguments. He also attempted to shift attention away from the gap, *per se*.⁹¹ While acknowledging that both administrations had now denied the existence of the gap, Yarmolinsky argued that the more important issue was Eisenhower's fundamental faith in the adequacy of the United States' defense posture. By contrast, the Kennedy administration was publicly committed

to improving U.S. defenses. "Thus, although there was little difference in what Defense officials said about the missile gap before and after January 1961, there were major differences in what was done about the missile gap and the whole range of defense deficiencies which this term had come to symbolize."⁹²

Upon closer analysis, the more relevant question concerns the alleged "defense deficiencies" that had been overstated by the Kennedy administration, and that were partially attributable to a mistaken belief in the missile gap. This belief was seriously shaken long before the "defense deficiencies" were corrected. McNamara realized in February 1961, after only a few weeks of study, that there was no gap. Bundy had urged the president to downplay the missile gap in his request for supplemental defense appropriations in March 1961. Although McNamara had stated in April 1961 during his testimony before the House Appropriations Committee that there *was* a missile gap and that the administration's defense requests would close it, the administration knew well before that time that there was no gap. Kennedy's unwillingness to suffer the political embarrassment of having to reverse field on an issue on which he had campaigned led the president to push forward in the spring and summer of 1961 with several weapons programs that were no longer justified in the absence of the missile gap. Faced with an opportunity to rein in the nuclear "overkill" that had begun during Eisenhower's administration, Kennedy chose instead to spend more on nuclear weapons.⁹³

By pushing increases in weapon systems that his predecessor had resisted on economic grounds, Kennedy tacitly endorsed the views of those who argued that the economic effects of additional defense spending would not be deleterious (as Eisenhower and his advisers had feared), and might even be salutary (as Truman's advisers, including Leon Keyserling, and Paul Nitze, had hoped). And while Kennedy administration officials had denied that defense spending increases were intended as an economic stimulus in the spring and summer of 1961, Kennedy had explicitly endorsed this view during the presidential campaign when he said that the United States could use defense spending to strengthen the nation *and* provide jobs. Although these economic considerations were not the primary motivating factor behind Kennedy's defense policies, they were a consideration.

It can be argued that these decisions to increase military spending were made with undue haste; they were not made without debate.⁹⁴ Several within the administration questioned the need for more ICBMs in early 1961 after they, too, reviewed the intelligence data compiled during the Eisenhower administration that demonstrated that there was no gap.⁹⁵ This new data had been first presented to Congress in January 1960. Although some questioned the findings, the estimates reflected the majority opinion of those within the intelligence community. Therefore, the "reasonable, although erroneous, estimates" that had counted Soviet ICBMs in the hundreds and thousands had been *dismissed* by "responsible officials" a full year before McNamara's press briefing in February 1961. Apparently, the particular "responsible officials" to whom McNamara had alluded in his

memo were Air Force officers who had been forced to issue a dissenting opinion from that of the intelligence estimates panel because their interpretations were at odds with those of the other services and civilian intelligence. These dissenting opinions, as shown in Chapter Three, were then picked up by many journalists and politicians. They thereby became the *de facto public* estimates of Soviet missile strength.⁹⁶

In late March 1963, Kennedy returned to the matter of crafting a history of the missile gap. He was still not satisfied with the first few attempts to explain the phenomenon. If Kennedy intended for this study to be an *objective* “history of the missile gap controversy,” his repeated requests for more and more information suggest that he was actively searching for a particular interpretation that would have reflected most favorably on himself and his administration. He was also seeking ammunition for a looming political battle over the budget. Accordingly, on March 30, 1963, the president again asked about the “status” of the missile gap study as well as an “appraisal of the military and space deficiencies which existed in January 1961 . . . [to] provide justification for the budget increases required to overcome these deficiencies.”⁹⁷ Six weeks later, calling the previous report on the missile gap “too superficial,” Kennedy told Bundy that he wanted “to be able to demonstrate that there was a military and intelligence lag in the previous administration that started the missile gap.”⁹⁸

Paul Nitze’s office responded to these requests in late May 1963 in a report entitled “But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?” The lengthy memorandum authored by Nitze’s

assistant Lawrence McQuade judged the concern associated with the missile gap to have been justified, "a serious phenomena [sic] calling for significant shifts in our defense posture to decrease U.S. vulnerability."⁹⁹

McQuade, like McNamara and Yarmolinsky before him, focused on the competing intelligence estimates of the late 1950s and early 1960s, which consistently over-reported Soviet ICBM strength. In considerable detail, McQuade described how each estimate changed certain assumptions from those of the previous reports. In each of these revised estimates, McQuade noted, there was a growing appreciation that the Soviets had not engaged in a crash program to build first generation ICBMs, as originally feared.¹⁰⁰

He also pointed to the findings of Rand and the Gaither Committee, which concluded that the United States "would not change its then existing pattern of defense plans and expenditures so as to be better prepared to meet the potential threat." The pattern of military spending in the United States, however, was substantially altered, beginning during Eisenhower's second term, and then continuing under Kennedy. In particular, McQuade cited the acceleration of the deployment of Atlas missiles, and the successful test and early deployment of the Polaris missile submarines. The Kennedy administration had subsequently boosted the Minuteman program, effectively doubling Minuteman capacity beyond that programmed by the Eisenhower administration. "Clearly the pace of the U.S. missile programs had been moved forward substantially," McQuade explained, "but the impact in terms of ready operational missiles...only began to be significant in 1962." The

combination of these two factors – the overestimate of Soviet strength and the underestimate of U.S. forces – led to the mistaken belief in the missile gap.¹⁰¹

But McQuade could not answer Kennedy's more direct question about *when* the missile gap was known to be false, or in McQuade's words, "when the potentiality of the missile gap ceased to be meaningful."¹⁰² By failing to resolve this question, McQuade likewise failed to determine whether the changes to weapons programs initiated under Eisenhower would have been sufficient to ensure American security well into the 1960s. McQuade argued, nonetheless, that the alarm associated with the missile gap was "amply justified" in part because of the necessity to "allow for a wide range of possibilities when there is a dearth of evidence on which to base the required estimates."¹⁰³ In effect, McQuade held as Kennedy had for years, that it was preferable to err on the more pessimistic side of the competing estimates. Kennedy and others believed that it was better to risk spending too much money on defense than to risk national security by spending too little.¹⁰⁴ "The phenomenon of the missile gap and its disappearance," McQuade concluded, "were understandable and legitimate in the light of the facts as seen at the relevant time."¹⁰⁵

While McQuade researched and wrote his report, Kennedy grew impatient; on June 3 he again asked Bundy about the report on the missile gap.¹⁰⁶ Drafts continued to flow to Bundy's office. Paul Nitze offered his own interpretation on June 17. In a cover letter to Bundy, Nitze stressed that "Senator Kennedy's statements on defense and the missile gap in

the late 1950s were sensible and responsible.” Further, he argued that Kennedy’s “program for action made sense whether or not the intelligence on the Soviet ICBM program was accurate.”¹⁰⁷

Then, in a series of appendices, Nitze noted the many instances from the public record in which “responsible people” both inside and outside of the government had expressed “concern over the U.S. lag in long-range missiles.” In short, “there is a substantial public record during the late 1950s to support a legitimate concern about the lag in the U.S. ICBM program behind that of the Soviets and a concern for the implication of such a lag on our defense posture.”¹⁰⁸

Air Force Major William Y. Smith, an adviser to both General Maxwell Taylor and McGeorge Bundy, reinforced this view in a memorandum drafted independently of Nitze’s. Smith also argued that concern about the missile gap was reasonable and justified. “There is ample evidence on the public record,” he wrote in a June 20th memo, “to substantiate why many people believed that the US was, or would be, behind the USSR in the production and deployment of ICBMs.”¹⁰⁹

Smith cited three sources of information -- “two public and one classified – that would have persuaded a member of Congress in the late 1950s that a missile gap would exist.” First, public testimony and statements by government officials were often contradictory. Although the secretary of defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had both testified in January 1960 that there was no missile gap, CIA Director Allen

Dulles had said in February 1960 that “the Russians would have a two-to-one advantage in ICBMs in mid-1960.” This “was certainly enough to confirm the mounting suspicions of critics of the Administration’s defense policy.” Calling administration denials “suspect,” because they came from an “Executive Branch committed to hold defense expenditures to a minimum,” Smith concluded that “officials of the Eisenhower Administration themselves created the environment and made the case that there was a missile gap – and presented considerable evidence to back it up.”¹¹⁰

The second major source of public information about the missile gap came from “knowledgeable defense critics” including James Gavin, Maxwell Taylor, and Henry Kissinger. “These three critics were known to be conservative in their assessments of the importance of massive strategic nuclear power,” Smith wrote, “yet each of them saw the U.S. faced with considerable dangers during the early 1960s because of the missile gap.” Their case was bolstered, in Smith’s view, because of their presumed objectivity: “Their views . . . carried much more weight than would have the same call sounded (as it was) by Air Force advocates.”¹¹¹

Finally, in the area of classified information, Smith asserted that intelligence briefings before congressional committees also contributed to a belief in the missile gap. The CIA briefing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January 1959, for example, estimated that the Russians would have 100 ICBMs in mid-1961 and the capability to produce 500 by mid-1962. At that time military planners were projecting a much smaller

ICBM force for the United States. A second intelligence briefing in 1960 had estimated that the Russians would possess 250-350 ICBMs in mid-1962, and 350-450 in mid-1963.¹¹²

Smith's conclusions from the above evidence were unambiguous: "There were valid reasons which led individuals to accept the existence of a missile gap in the late 1950s." Because his research focused on the administration's *public* defense for its erroneous belief in the missile gap, he recommended a strategy for "developing a case to remind the public of the then available evidence."¹¹³ Concerning McNamara's statements of February and April 1961, Smith implied that the secretary had never intended to suggest in early February 1961 that the missile gap no longer existed. This unfortunate but mistaken belief, Smith wrote, developed "because the Secretary wanted to dispel any ideas that the U.S. would no longer be able to defend its vital interests." Kennedy, Smith reminded the president, had said at the time that "he would reserve judgment [on the missile gap] until a study then under way had been completed." McNamara's public statement in April 1961 before the House Appropriations Committee that the missile gap remained had provided the president with "some maneuver room on the issue about what the Secretary did or did not say in February."¹¹⁴

If the Kennedy White House was determined to bury the missile gap issue once and for all, the final nail in the coffin came on July 10, 1963. In his second memo in three weeks, Smith assembled an extensive collection of public materials to bolster the administration's contention that the missile gap was a legitimate concern in late 1960 and

early 1961. In addition to these public records, Smith also alluded to the possibility of declassifying the CIA briefings that were given before Congress in 1959 to 1960. He noted, however, that the hearings transcripts did “not list Senator Kennedy as being present.” Although Smith assumed that JFK would have heard of and read the briefings after the fact, he feared that Kennedy’s absence during these briefings could backfire; he advised that the White House rely on “published reports for this data” to make their case. Smith also advised against declassifying the Gaither Report because he was confident that the public record would “support the case that a missile gap generally was foreseen.” “In presenting the case from the public record,” Smith suggested that “adroit references could be made to the fact that classified briefings by CIA and DOD to the various committees of Congress and reports to the NSC during this period did nothing to remove doubts but rather served only to confirm them.”¹¹⁵

“In summary,” Smith wrote, “I think the case for believing in 1960 that there would be a missile gap can be developed from reliance on (1) the public record before Congress, (2) criticisms from knowledgeable defense critics, and (3) adroit references and innuendos to classified reports and CIA and other classified briefings and testimony before Congress.”¹¹⁶

The Air Force major then laid out a plan for developing the case and for releasing, albeit in a surreptitious fashion, classified information on the missile gap. “Rather than declassify any figures,” he advised, “it would seem preferable to have several ‘authoritative’

scholarly, articles, or even a Congressional report quietly floated over the next year which would add substance and perspective to the public record.” These articles, Smith predicted, “could confirm any figures deemed necessary to the case that now are available only in classified form.”¹¹⁷

Finally, Kennedy had what he wanted. His repeated requests for a history of the missile gap that demonstrated that there was “a military and intelligence lag in the previous administration that started the missile gap” had been met. The information assembled by McNamara, Yarmolinsky, McQuade, Nitze, and Smith would have provided the president with the ammunition necessary to defend his position during the upcoming presidential campaign. The missile gap had finally been closed.

Kennedy was never able to make the case, in Paul Nitze’s words, that his “statements on defense and the missile gap in the late 1950s were sensible and responsible.” His attention shifted during the summer of 1963 toward a limited nuclear test ban treaty.¹¹⁸ Then, during the late summer and early autumn of 1963, the president was preoccupied by events in Southeast Asia. Despite these distractions, Kennedy continued to look ahead to the upcoming presidential election. His campaign pledge to close the missile gap was on his agenda on the day that an assassin ended his life.

In Texas on November 22, 1963, to heal a rift within the Democratic Party, Kennedy planned to focus on how he had reinvigorated the nation’s defenses during a luncheon speech in Fort Worth – a city that was home to thousands of men and women

employed in defense industries. The text of the address provides a glimpse into Kennedy's final thoughts on the subject of the missile gap and on the defense build-up from his first years in office. The president was to have explained that his administration had increased the number of Polaris submarines by 50 percent, had boosted the number of Minuteman missiles by more than 75 percent, and had doubled "the total number of nuclear weapons available in our strategic alert forces." Kennedy's text celebrated these efforts:

The strategic nuclear power of the United States has been so greatly modernized and expanded in the last 1,000 days, by the rapid production and deployment of the most modern missile systems, that any and all potential aggressors are clearly confronted now with the impossibility of strategic victory – and the certainty of total destruction.¹¹⁹

Crafting the Historical Record on the Missile Gap

Although John F. Kennedy was never called upon to answer charges that he had manufactured the missile gap issue for political gain, his advisers set about to protect the legacy of the fallen president. In his influential memorandum on the missile gap, Major Smith had suggested that someone publish "authoritative" articles to substantiate Kennedy's version of events with respect to the missile gap. McGeorge Bundy stepped forward in the spring of 1964 with just such a piece published in the journal *Foreign Affairs*.

In the years after *Sputnik*, Bundy explained, the missile gap "was forecast and feared by responsible and well-informed men both in and out of the government between 1957 and 1961."¹²⁰ The Kennedy administration came to office recognizing the need "both for

further action and for a reestablishment of confidence.” “The new President himself had feared the missile gap and had pressed his concern in the campaign,” Bundy explained, and “[i]t was with honest surprise and relief that in 1961 he found the situation much less dangerous than the best evidence available to the Senate had indicated the year before.” Bundy professed that the Kennedy administration then “moved at once to correct the public impression, and thereafter...encouraged and supported policies...which aimed to ensure not merely that American strategic power was sufficient – but that its sufficiency was recognized.”¹²¹

William Kaufmann expressed another view in his book *The McNamara Strategy*, also published in 1964. Kaufmann, like Bundy, echoed the “official” version of events as crafted by Smith, Nitze, McQuade and others in explaining the origins of the missile gap. “Responsible officials in the Eisenhower Administration and other knowledgeable students of the problem,” he wrote, “were deeply concerned about the prospective state of the strategic nuclear balance.” The missile gap had not materialized largely because the Soviets “had not built as many ICBMs as they were thought to be capable of doing. Everyone had reason to be thankful.”¹²²

Lawrence McQuade’s study failed to establish the precise moment when the missile gap ceased to be meaningful, and this question dominates the historical debate. For example, whereas Bundy declared that the Kennedy administration had “moved at once” to correct the impression that there was a missile gap, Kaufmann allowed that “it was

apparent” that the missile gap “had evaporated” during the Berlin Crisis in June 1961, over four months before Gilpatric’s speech.¹²³

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and Theodore Sorensen also differed over the timing of the end of the missile gap in books published in 1965. Bundy had stated that the president had learned “in 1961” that there was no missile gap. Sorensen implicitly agreed, reporting that the truth about the missile gap “was clear” some time in the summer of 1961.¹²⁴ By contrast, Schlesinger’s account stressed how new intelligence data received in the winter of 1960-61, between the time of Kennedy’s election and his inauguration, were crucial to finally closing the gap. It was this new information, he argued, and not information available to Kennedy during the campaign, that had enabled McNamara to conclude in February 1961 that there was no gap.¹²⁵

In later years both Sorensen and Bundy altered their estimates of when Kennedy first learned that there was no missile gap. Sorensen suggested in 1972 that the new intelligence from aerial photography obtained in early 1960 showed that the Soviets had not initiated a crash program to build long-range missiles. He added, however, that while the information was available, it had not been provided to Kennedy and other Democrats who “were suspicious of Republican efforts to dampen the issue in a campaign year.” There was, therefore, nothing improper about the campaign’s use of the missile gap issue throughout the year.¹²⁶ Over fifteen years later, McGeorge Bundy implicitly retreated from his earlier claim that Kennedy had immediately revealed the truth about the missile gap when he wrote

in his book *Danger and Survival*, published in 1988, that “definitive” intelligence information was received in 1960-61. Bundy further hedged this observation in Kennedy’s favor when he argued that “the demonstration became conclusive in the summer of 1961.”¹²⁷

The historical debate over the missile gap has not been resolved by the competing accounts of Kennedy partisans. The record speaks for itself: Kennedy knew in early 1961 that there was no missile gap. He should have known in January 1960, when Eisenhower for the first time presented intelligence information to back up his repeated claims that there was no gap. Kennedy either ignored or rejected the president’s claims. He chose instead to listen to the counsel of those with a vested interest in perpetuating the missile gap myth. Kennedy spoke often of the missile gap in his presidential campaign. He belatedly realized that such a strategy entailed political risks when he learned in early 1961 that there was no gap.

When Robert McNamara prematurely disclosed the truth about the missile gap, the Kennedy administration scrambled to “correct” the impression that there was no gap. The administration then pushed forward with their promised defense build-up in the spring and summer of 1961. The missile gap was not a major factor, therefore, behind their push for more military spending, but the threat of a gap provided useful political cover for the administration against those who might oppose their spending increases.

The administration proceeded with this military build-up – originally designed to close the missile gap – in part because the president and many of his advisers believed that changes to the nation’s military were needed regardless of the missile gap, and in part because they believed in the salutary economic effects that defense spending might have on the stagnant economy. The president was primarily motivated, however, by his desire to avoid the political embarrassment of having to retreat from the promises that he made while on the campaign trail in 1960. The president knew that many of the communities that were dependent upon military spending were expecting a boost from the new administration. Although Kennedy increased military spending by nearly fifteen percent, these increases were not uniformly distributed, and several companies were disappointed by their gains under the new administration. The men and women employed by these companies feared for their livelihood while Kennedy found a new outlet for their creative and technical energies. This new outlet would prove to be the space program.

Part II – Employers and Employees in the Wake of the Missile Gap

Introduction: The Missile Gap and Flexible Response

As discussed in Part I of this chapter, John F. Kennedy and Robert McNamara effected a number of changes to the United States’ defense posture in the early 1960s. Several of these changes related to Kennedy’s promises on the campaign trail. Others reflected McNamara’s judgment of what weapon systems were necessary to ensure the

stability of the nation's nuclear deterrent and to guarantee the preeminence of American conventional forces. As often as not, the national security policies of the Kennedy administration developed from a combination of practical and political considerations.¹²⁸

Kennedy promised on several occasions during his campaign to expand the nation's military. He pledged to diversify the nation's nuclear arsenal with the manned bomber. He vowed to launch a "crash program" to expand the number of first-generation ICBMs in the American arsenal. He also pledged to improve the Army's airlift capabilities, and to modernize the nation's conventional forces. These promises were of particular importance to the men and women living in communities where these weapons were constructed and serviced. The aviation industry, as a whole, had experienced a particular decline in the late 1950s. Employment in aircraft and aviation parts manufacturing had more than tripled only a few years after World War II, growing from 238,000 workers in 1948 to 896,000 in 1957. More than a quarter of these jobs had been eliminated by 1960, driven largely to declining purchases of military aircraft.¹²⁹

This section studies three communities that were particularly dependent upon the aviation industry. In California, workers at the North American Aviation Corporation factory in Long Beach wondered about the prospects of their beloved B-70. Approximately 90 miles to the south, San Diegans at General Dynamics' Convair Division nervously contemplated the end of the Atlas ICBM program. Meanwhile, back in Buffalo, New York, which had once been home to both of these companies, workers at Bell Aircraft wondered

about the future of fixed wing aircraft, and they questioned whether their company would have a role in that future. In each instance, decisions made during Kennedy's tenure as president altered the employment landscape for hundreds of thousands of men and women who worked for these companies, and for millions more who worked in the surrounding communities.

North American Aviation, Los Angeles, California

In the fall of 1960, John F. Kennedy twice campaigned in greater Los Angeles, home to North American Aviation (NAA) and a number of other aviation and aeronautics firms. NAA emerged from the early 1960s as a new company, a company on the move, a company that had adjusted to the strategic realities of the day. It embraced John F. Kennedy's New Frontier, and was one of the leading suppliers of rockets to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The company's leaders, however, effected this transition only after one of the final airplanes ever to have been designed by the venerable company – the B-70 bomber – was dispatched by the Kennedy administration to the reject pile.

It was not to have been that way. Kennedy had pledged on numerous occasions to build the B-70, a weapon deemed unsuitable to the strategic realities of the day by Dwight Eisenhower. Yet, in the end, despite Kennedy's earlier promises and the considerable influence of the B-70's backers in Congress and in the military, the bomber was never built.

The story of North American's survival in the mid- to late-1960s is similar to that of several companies from that same era.

North American Aviation began as a holding company that included Buffalo, New York-based Curtiss Aeroplane in the late 1920s. Control of the business shifted to General Motors Corporation during the Depression and the company relocated to Baltimore. Then in 1934 a management team led by James H. "Dutch" Kindleberger moved NAA to Los Angeles, already a center of activity for the nascent aircraft industry. Rapid expansion boosted by military orders followed the move. Between 1939 and 1945, North American produced over 42,000 planes. By war's end, the company employed more than 100,000 men and women in Los Angeles, and in two branch plants in Kansas City, and Grand Prairie, Texas.¹³⁰ Wartime developer of the famous fighter plane the P-51 Mustang, North American's greatest Cold War success was the jet-powered fighter, the F-86, introduced in 1948.¹³¹

North American never diversified into commercial aviation, and its near-total dependence upon military orders hampered its long-term growth. By 1961 government orders accounted for 97 percent of total sales.¹³² NAA suffered several major setbacks in the late 1950s that brought it to such a critical stage. The greatest of these setbacks was the Eisenhower administration's decision to limit funding for the B-70 Valkyrie strategic bomber.¹³³

North American was awarded a contract to develop a new supersonic bomber to replace the B-52 in December 1957. Weighing over five hundred thousand pounds, powered by six advanced turbojet engines, and constructed with new composite materials, the XB-70 was, according to one industry historian, “the most advanced aircraft ever conceived.”¹³⁴ In spite of these technological advances, as discussed in Chapter Three, President Eisenhower became convinced of the futility of manned aircraft in the missile age. He preferred to cancel the program completely, but accepted a compromise with the Air Force. The president approved \$150 million for the B-70 for fiscal year 1961, and another \$75 million in F/Y 1962 – a reduction of nearly \$550 million from previous budgets.¹³⁵

The B-70, however, refused to die. Air Force generals, including Nathan Twining, Thomas D. White, Thomas Powers, and Curtis LeMay, all pushed for continued development of the B-70, directly contradicting Eisenhower’s wishes.¹³⁶ North American employees followed this debate over the B-70 with increasing urgency. They implored their elected officials to save their “beloved B-70.” *The Propeller*, a bi-weekly publication distributed to over 27,000 NAA workers who were members of Local 887 of the United Auto Workers (UAW), was particularly vocal during the campaign year of 1960, criticizing the Eisenhower-Nixon administration for its shortsightedness.¹³⁷

Meanwhile, the UAW celebrated John F. Kennedy’s candidacy.¹³⁸ Kennedy repeatedly called for continued funding for the manned bomber, particularly during his two campaign swings through California in 1960. Other presidential aspirants, including Stuart

Symington and Lyndon Johnson, also supported the B-70, and the Congress under the control of the Democratic Party authorized \$265 million for the program in F/Y 1960, \$190 million more than Eisenhower had requested. The president refused initially to spend the additional monies. As discussed in Chapter Four, however, Eisenhower himself was not immune to the political pressures: he reversed himself in November 1960 by releasing these additional funds for the B-70 in an apparent bid to boost Nixon's campaign in California.¹³⁹

Although Kennedy had pledged to build the bomber during his campaign, Robert McNamara quickly became convinced that "strategic bombers were obsolete."¹⁴⁰ Eisenhower had been right. Kennedy announced that only three experimental prototypes of the B-70 would be built, and that these aircraft would not be deployed as full-fledged weapons. Kennedy's budget request for F/Y 1962 reduced the amount that Eisenhower had earmarked for the bomber by nearly 40 per cent.¹⁴¹

North American workers reacted swiftly to Kennedy's change of heart. Editors in the union publication *The Propeller* noted that "Los Angeles is on the U.S. Dept. of Labor list of cities having severe unemployment problems." They went on to warn that "Any further unemployment could very well make this city a disaster area." Local 887 of the UAW, which had supported Kennedy in the November election, launched "Operation Save Our Jobs." It urged all NAA employees, both union and non-union, to write their congressmen.¹⁴²

These efforts failed to save the B-70. Congressional action delayed outright termination of the project, but the delays merely forestalled the inevitable. The Air Force emphasized the B-70's "reconnaissance strike" capabilities, and the plane was re-dubbed the RS-70. Initially projected to fly in 1962, the first prototype of the RS-70 did not take off until September 1964. A disastrous midair collision in June 1966 destroyed the second prototype, and the Air Force ended its flight research in 1969.¹⁴³

Fortunately for the thousands of workers employed by North American, the company had not put all of its eggs in the B-70 basket. NAA had branched out into missile and rocket development in the mid- to late-1950s. Early efforts met with mixed success. In just one instance, over 5,000 workers at the North American plant in Downey, California were laid off when the air-breathing Navaho ICBM was cancelled in 1957.

Other North American projects incorporated design elements of the Navaho, including its sophisticated inertial autonavigation system. The AGM-28 Hound Dog, an air-to-surface (ASM) cruise missile, was one of NAA's most successful projects in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The missile was deployed in large numbers beginning in 1960, and over 300 Hound Dogs remained in active service as late as 1976.¹⁴⁴

This experience with guided missiles and rocketry enabled North American to expand into production for the space program. NAA underbid Martin Marietta for the prime contract to build the Apollo moon-landing vehicle. North American employees also developed the Saturn V launch vehicle for the Apollo missions. Buoyed by these successes,

the company maintained respectable growth during the 1960s.¹⁴⁵ That North American survived and indeed thrived in the wake of the Kennedy administration's decision to terminate the B-70 program is both a testament to the resilience of NAA employees and an indication that even the most staid of companies can overcome political setbacks. There is no evidence that NAA employees harbored any lingering resentment against Kennedy and the Democrats for their retreat on the B-70. Any such resentment that might have existed was softened by the Kennedy administration's decision to spend billions of dollars on space exploration.

Convair (General Dynamics), San Diego, California

John F. Kennedy campaigned in San Diego, California on two separate occasions in 1960. San Diego came of age during World War II, and the city continued to grow during the New Look years. When Kennedy visited San Diego in the autumn of 1960, however, dark clouds loomed just over the horizon. Convair, one of the largest and most successful aerospace firms of the mid-20th century, and the city's largest employer, faced an uncertain future:

Convair started out as the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, formed by Reuben Hollis Fleet in 1923.¹⁴⁶ During the next ten years, workers at Consolidated facilities in Buffalo, New York designed and built a small number of commercial aircraft. Consolidated engineers also developed a flying boat for the Navy. After being outbid on a Navy contract

by competitor Glenn Martin, however, Fleet recognized the shortcomings of his company's geographic location. The climate in Buffalo, Fleet explained, "made it the most ungodly place you could possibly have from which to deliver flying boats." Faced with the prospect of abandoning his flying boat project altogether, Fleet began looking for a new location for his business. He settled on San Diego, California whose climate enabled year round flying, and whose location enabled easy access to the sea.¹⁴⁷ In 1935 Fleet moved Consolidated to a new facility adjacent to San Diego's then-tiny Lindbergh Field. Over 400 employees made the move from Buffalo to the West Coast. More than 450 new workers from the San Diego area joined them. Over the next fifty years, over 100,000 San Diegans would work for Consolidated and its successor companies, making Convair the city's largest civilian employer.¹⁴⁸

Fleet's early trials with seaplanes and flying boats delivered in a handsome way beginning in late 1935. Even as Consolidated was packing up its operations for the move to Southern California, the Navy ordered 60 of the planes that would become known as the Catalina PBVs (reflecting their dual-mission role as a Patrol and Bomber aircraft). Consolidated ultimately built 2,395 of these versatile craft that played a critical role during World War II.¹⁴⁹

Consolidated merged with AVCO, a company founded by Jerry Vultee, during World War II, and when the name of the newly-combined corporation – the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation – proved unwieldy, the company came to be known as

Convair.¹⁵⁰ At the beginning of 1940 Vultee had fewer than 2,500 workers at its facility in Downey, California, and Consolidated boasted 6,000 employees in San Diego. But the war changed all that. By the end of 1943, the combined companies employed more than 100,000 people in 13 different locations throughout the United States. 40 percent of these workers were women.¹⁵¹ The most important of the Convair satellite facilities, located in Fort Worth, Texas, produced over 3,000 B-24 Liberators during the war and employed over 30,000 men and women at its peak. All told, Convair was the fourth largest industrial contractor during World War II (behind General Motors, Curtiss-Wright, and Ford), and it built more aircraft than any other company.¹⁵²

Convair did not stop there. Less than a year after the end of World War II, the company successfully launched the largest bomber ever built – the B-36. Designed and deployed exclusively as a strategic bomber, the so-called Peacemaker flew until it was displaced by Boeing's B-52 in the late 1950s.¹⁵³ Convair employees in San Diego also designed and built more than 1,300 F-102 and F-106 delta-wing fighter aircraft in the 1950s.¹⁵⁴

By the mid-1950s, nonetheless, the strategic realities of the Cold War had begun to take their toll on Convair. The transition to strategic bombing dramatically increased the cost of individual planes; meanwhile, the need for smaller aircraft to support the Army and Navy had declined. Companies competed harder and harder for fewer contracts to build manned aircraft. Throughout this period, executives at Convair were mindful of the

changed competitive environment and they actively pursued consolidation. Merger talks with Lockheed in 1946 broke down, but in 1953 the newly-formed General Dynamics Corporation purchased a number of Convair shares. The two companies formally merged in 1954. Following the merger, General Dynamics' Convair Division employed over 45,000 men and women in three major production facilities in San Diego, California; Pomona, California; and Fort Worth, Texas. General Dynamics, meanwhile, catapulted to a leading position among defense contractors.¹⁵⁵

Convair flourished for a time following the merger. The firm was counted as one of the top five aircraft producers in the United States, with sales in 1956 exceeding \$1 billion.¹⁵⁶ These positive sales numbers could not conceal the fact that Convair's aviation business was disappearing, and so were aircraft manufacturing jobs. For example, the company designed a supersonic manned bomber to replace the Boeing B-47. The advanced delta-wing bomber, dubbed the B-58 Hustler, first flew in November of 1956, but the plane was short-lived.¹⁵⁷ Development and production was curtailed in the late 1950s following a reassessment of strategic needs. The Air Force continued to push for the B-58 in the early 1960s, but McNamara turned aside requests for additional B-58s out of concern for the planes' high operational and maintenance costs. Although the program was originally scheduled to include 244 aircraft, workers at Convair's Fort Worth facility produced only 116 B-58's. The last of these supersonic bombers was retired from active service in 1970.¹⁵⁸

Convair's Fort Worth plant faced closure in the early 1960's following the termination of the B-58 bomber program. The plant was kept open, however, following General Dynamics' surprising entry in the TFX program. General Dynamics teamed with Grumman in the development of a dual-use fighter that would operate on Navy carriers (Grumman's area of expertise) and Air Force landing strips. The controversy surrounding the TFX, later designated the F-111, has been developed elsewhere, and need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say, for Convair, the TFX was another example of a promising weapon system contract that ultimately failed to deliver on the company's, and the nation's, expectations.¹⁵⁹

The company's abortive effort to develop commercial aircraft in the early 1960s was another major disappointment. Hoping to compete with Boeing and Douglas, Convair designed and built two new passenger aircraft – the 880 and the 990 – but neither plane took hold. Orders from the major airlines were disappointing, and when Howard Hughes belatedly reneged on his promise to order the planes for his airline Trans World Airlines (TWA), the company was forced to cancel the project. Following the 880/990 debacle, aircraft production fell precipitously – by 1964, the San Diego aircraft division employed only 3,200 men and women. Then, after nearly 30 years in the industry, aircraft production in San Diego ended altogether. Future aircraft production would be focused in Fort Worth.¹⁶⁰

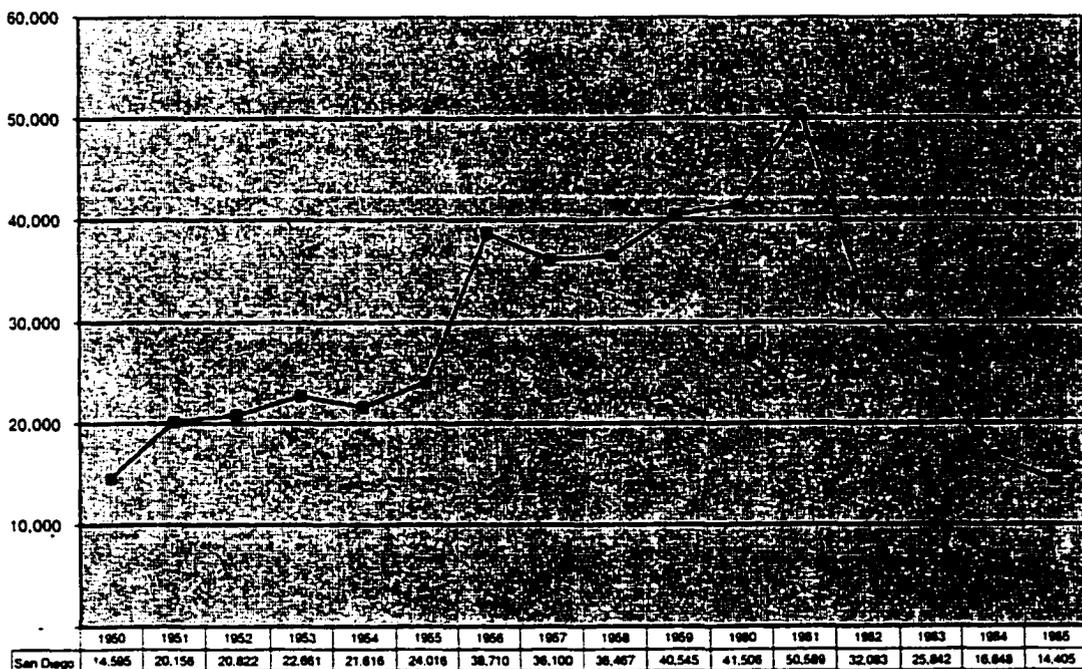
Despite these setbacks, the company did enjoy some successes in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Convair's greatest triumph in the 1950s came not from aircraft, but from missiles. Building upon their experience with small, solid-propellant missiles like the U.S. Navy's Terrier and Tartar, Convair employees developed the Atlas, a liquid-fueled ICBM. Convair began production of the Atlas at a new facility in Kearny Mesa, ten miles north of San Diego in 1958. By 1960 the Astronautics Division of General Dynamics – created in 1957 to support production of the Atlas – was the largest division in the entire General Dynamics portfolio.¹⁶¹

In the highly-competitive and strategically-dynamic environment of the late 1950s, the Atlas was nearly obsolete before it was ever built. Convair delivered over 140 of these missiles – the first operational ICBMs in the U.S. inventory – to the Strategic Air Command beginning in 1959. As discussed in Part I, John Kennedy had called for a crash program to build even more Atlas missiles, but he reversed himself following the successful test of the Minuteman missile in early 1961. The Kennedy administration shifted funds originally earmarked for the Atlas and the comparable Titan to the Minuteman. Beginning in 1964, the solid-fueled Minuteman replaced the Atlas in the nuclear arsenal. By 1965, all of the Atlas missiles had been retired.¹⁶²

The employment numbers tell the story. Convair employed over 50,000 men and women in San Diego in 1961; by 1964 fewer than 17,000 workers remained (see Figure 2 below). Convair thrived during Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidency. Total employment at

Convair's facilities in Southern California peaked in 1961. Kennedy's New Frontier held less promise for the company by comparison. The company survived during the Kennedy years and beyond by building missiles and rockets for the space program, but production of rockets and missiles never matched that associated with aircraft. And while the Atlas lived on as a space vehicle, the Atlas alone could not sustain Convair and its many thousands of employees past the early 1960s. The end of the Atlas ICBM program marked the beginning of a long decline for Convair in San Diego.

Figure 2 - Convair Employment, San Diego, 1950-1965 (Year end)*



*Source: Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 101.

Bell Aircraft, Buffalo, New York

Kennedy visited the Bell Aircraft factory in Niagara Falls during a campaign swing in upstate New York in late September 1960. The candidate's promise to boost defense spending was welcome news to these workers, anxious because a recent merger with Rhode Island-based Textron Corporation raised the prospect of further job losses. As president, Kennedy carried through on his commitment to expand the nation's conventional forces, and these efforts would boost other Bell operations, most notably the helicopter plant in Fort Worth, Texas. Meanwhile, workers in Buffalo survived, and later thrived, under Kennedy's New Frontier by leveraging their expertise in advanced technologies and rockets. But before Bell reached that point, the company also received some timely assistance from the new president.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the American aviation industry started in Buffalo, New York; it is no exaggeration to say that Buffalo was the hub of this industry for much of the first half of the twentieth century. Glenn Curtiss founded the first airplane company in upstate New York in Hammondsport, some 70 miles southeast of Buffalo, in 1909. Curtiss emerged from World War I as the largest aircraft manufacturer in the United States, a distinction that his company retained for over thirty years. Glenn Curtiss later

moved his operations to Buffalo, and his company assumed the name Curtiss-Wright Corporation following a merger with his former rival in 1929.¹⁶³

Lawrence D. “Larry” Bell thrived in the industrial milieu of upstate New York. Working for a number of aviation pioneers in the 1920s and 1930s, Bell moved to Buffalo in 1928 to join Reuben Fleet’s Consolidated. When Fleet moved his company to San Diego in 1935, Bell founded his own company with the encouragement of local leaders who were anxious about Consolidated’s departure.¹⁶⁴

The new company survived during the first few years by performing subcontracting work for Consolidated. Its fortunes turned in May 1936 when Bell secured an order from the Army Air Corps for a new fighter plane. In its first five years of operations, Bell Aircraft’s sales barely topped \$7 million – by the end of World War II, total sales had reached \$1 billion .¹⁶⁵

Employment rose commensurately. From a mere 56 employees in 1936, Bell was employing 36,000 men and women by 1943. The company added another 30,000 employees at a plant in Marietta, Georgia the following year, and over 2,500 in Burlington, Vermont.¹⁶⁶ The picture for the entire city of Buffalo was similar. In addition to existing Bell and Curtiss-Wright manufacturing facilities, a Chevrolet plant was converted to produce Pratt & Whitney engines during World War II. Between them, these three companies employed 87,000 workers in 1943. As one study of the region concluded: “Buffalo did more war business with the federal government than all but four cities in the

country, far more than its size would predict. With seven-tenths of 1 percent of the national population and labor force, it produced 2.5 percent of all war goods, which amounted to over \$5,300 for every man, woman, and child.”¹⁶⁷

This tremendous record for production could not mask an underlying weakness for one of the two leading aircraft manufacturers in Buffalo. Curtiss-Wright, which according to one study “showed a remarkable and constant proclivity for disastrously poor designs” throughout its history, lost ground to rivals Republic Aviation Company, North American, Lockheed, and others as the war progressed. Signs of decline were everywhere, but employment losses were most telling: from a high of 45,000 workers in 1942, Curtiss-Wright was employing only 5,500 by September 1945. In early 1946, after over 30 years in the region, Curtiss-Wright declared that it was closing almost all of its operations in Buffalo.¹⁶⁸

Bell Aircraft, Buffalo’s other leading employer, also lost ground to West Coast rivals during the war. The company emerged from the war with no production orders, and had only \$11.5 million in sales in 1946. Unlike the leaders of Curtiss-Wright, however, Larry Bell remained committed to his company and to his industry. Bell engineers continued their pioneering work in advanced aerodynamics. Building upon their experience in World War II designing and building the highly-secretive P-59, the United States’ first jet-powered aircraft, Bell engineers accepted the challenge to develop an aircraft that could break the sound barrier. The Bell X-1 was the first plane to accomplish this feat.¹⁶⁹

Larry Bell knew that experimental aircraft did not make for a long-term business model. After surviving a hostile-takeover bid in 1947 and an acrimonious strike in 1949, Bell re-focused his company's operations by turning his attention to still newer technologies. In the early 1940s, Bell had funded the research of Arthur Young, a brilliant mathematician and engineer, who had invented a working model for a helicopter in the 1930s. With Bell's backing, Young worked on his helicopter design throughout World War II and Young's group officially joined Bell Aircraft in June 1945.¹⁷⁰

Bell Aircraft's main production facility adjacent to the Niagara Falls Airport could not keep up with the growth of Bell's helicopter business.¹⁷¹ Frustrated by the bitter strike in 1949 and continuing labor strife with Local 501 of the United Auto Workers (UAW), Larry Bell pledged to move his company's manufacturing to a state with more liberal work rules. He made good on his promise in 1952 when he moved the company's helicopter operations to Fort Worth, Texas. Bell Helicopter, a wholly -owned subsidiary of Bell Aircraft, was formed in Texas in 1957. Although Larry Bell was partially motivated by a desire to reduce his company's high manufacturing costs, actual cost savings for his company were minimal: less than a year after the move, the UAW established a union for workers in Fort Worth. In successive labor negotiations, the two unions negotiated as a unit.¹⁷²

The helicopter division steadily outpaced those operations engaged in the manufacturing of fixed-wing aircraft. In 1955 Bell won the contract to develop an advanced

utility helicopter. The experimental XH-40 first flew in 1956 and entered production for the Army in 1958. Ultimately redesignated the UH-1, the famed "Huey" became the most widely used helicopter in the world; Bell employees produced over 5,000 of these versatile helicopters for delivery to U.S. forces in Vietnam.¹⁷³

Bell Aircraft employees in upstate New York built few fixed-wing aircraft during the 1950s, but the work of Bell engineers in the new field of missiles and rockets paid dividends for the company for many years into the future. The largest of these projects was the GAM-63 Rascal, the first air-to-ground missile. The Rascal was a standoff weapon that was capable of delivering a nuclear warhead over 500 miles from a launch point high in the air. Designed to be launched from either a B-47 or a B-52, the Rascal made use of a number of new technologies, including remote guidance. The first weapon was delivered to the Air Force in October 1957.¹⁷⁴

The Rascal, however, was plagued by operational difficulties. In the words of one long-time Bell employee, it was "a real beastly." The Rascal's liquid fuels made the 18,000-pound missile unstable in flight. Due, in part, to these operational problems, the Rascal was canceled in 1958, and was replaced by North American Aviation's Hound Dog missile. The company survived this setback, and the death in 1956 of Larry Bell, its founder. Bell engineers had developed yet another new technology to address the problem of liquid fuel dynamics within missiles, and this innovation would be applied to future weapon systems.¹⁷⁵

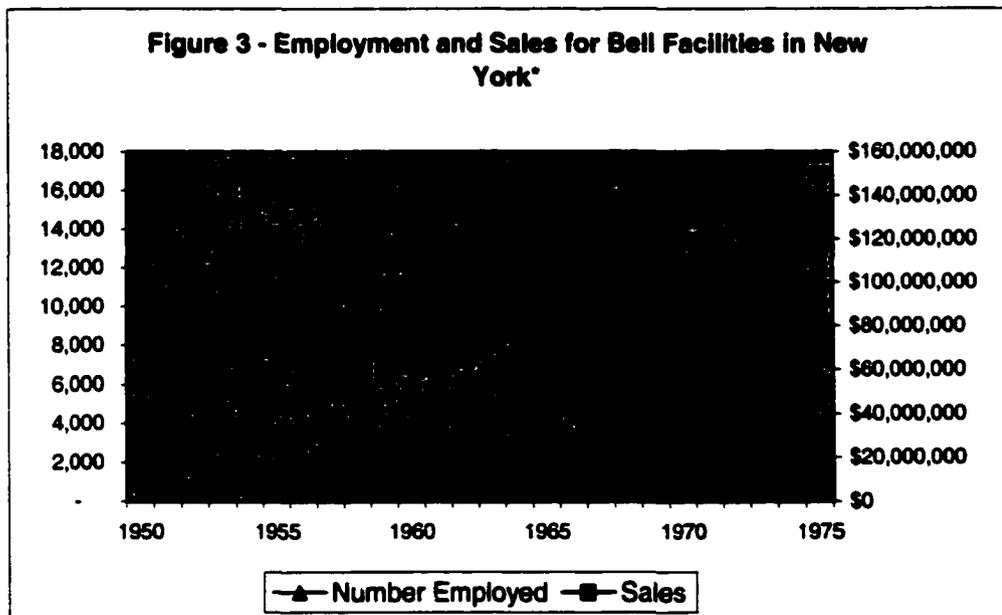
These innovations did not pay off immediately. Bell's business floundered in the late 1950s. By 1959 only 2,500 people were employed in Bell facilities in Buffalo and Niagara Falls. Textron Corporation's acquisition of Bell's aviation and defense businesses in July 1960 did nothing to slow these job losses.¹⁷⁶ When John Kennedy visited the Niagara Falls facility in late September 1960, fewer than 2,000 men and women were still working there.

On the surface, the candidate's pledge to help Bell Aircraft workers in upstate New York by shifting defense contracts back to the East might appear to have been a case of too little, too late. Still, John F. Kennedy delivered on his implicit promise. Buffalo, with a heavy concentration of Irish Catholic voters, had supported him handsomely in the election. Within a few months of his coming to office, Kennedy's administration awarded Bell Aircraft a small contract to build the X-22, a vertical/short take off and landing (V/STOL) aircraft. The contract, originally estimated to be worth \$15 million, generated over \$30 million in revenue for the venerable company and its employees, ensuring the company's survival into the mid-1960s and beyond.¹⁷⁷

Bell designers then leveraged their experience from the Rascal missile program. Bell Aircraft became a major sub-contractor for the Apollo space program, completing over \$300 million worth of work over the course of this project. Another of Kennedy's key defense policy decisions paid off even more handsomely for Bell employees. Named as a sub-contractor for the Minuteman II missile in 1964, Bell manufactured over \$1 billion

worth of parts and materials for that weapons system. The company thrived as a sub-contractor for many years.¹⁷⁸

The business community was skeptical when Roy Little, the famed consolidator at the head of Textron Corporation, acquired Bell for only \$26 million. His gamble paid off handsomely when the Vietnam War heated up in the mid-1960s. Although most of the company's revenues flowed from Bell's helicopter facility in Fort Worth, Bell workers in Buffalo gained as well when they were called on to assist with the manufacture of helicopter blades and firewall assemblies. And while employment would never again rise to its mid-1950s levels, sales volume climbed through most of the 1960s and 1970s as workers at Bell facilities in western New York continued to reap benefits from their engineering and technical expertise (see Figure 3).¹⁷⁹



Conclusions

This chapter, and this dissertation, focus on how John F. Kennedy's political goals were uniquely tied to the missile gap. The missile gap was a major factor in Kennedy's rise to political prominence. Concern over the missile gap influenced Kennedy's national security policies as president. Only after his own administration had put a new defense posture in motion would Kennedy argue that the gap had been closed.

This chapter has shown that John F. Kennedy tried, after the fact, to craft a particular version of the missile gap story that would reflect well on himself and his administration. The president asked his advisers to write a history of the missile gap. He wanted to know how the country – himself included – came to believe in a missile gap. After several abortive attempts to answer Kennedy's question, Air Force Major William Smith's memoranda from June and July of 1963 summarized what would become the Kennedy administration's official position on the missile gap. This official stance on the missile gap was then publicly repeated in 1964 and 1965 by McGeorge Bundy, William Kaufmann, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Theodore Sorensen.

That Kennedy and his staff were interested in developing a coherent case to explain their mistaken belief in the missile gap is clear; not only were Kennedy and his men still concerned about the missile gap as late as July 1963 – they were also still worried about people's perceptions of the administration's handling of the issue in the months after the 1960 election, and before the new administration had completed its work to reshape the

defense budget. Kennedy did not want the historical record to show that he had unnecessarily increased defense spending in 1961.

The relative success of Kennedy's attempt to frame the history of the missile gap is not clear. Although elements of the White House reports prepared in 1963 are evident in several historical accounts of the missile gap, many scholars doubt the central contention of the White House's version of the missile gap – that the gap was a legitimate national security concern calling for substantial changes in the nation's military structure.¹⁸⁰

The most inflated estimates of Soviet ICBM strength were known to be false in early 1961, well before Kennedy implemented his defense program. While Kennedy *should* have known before January 1961 that there was no missile gap, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that he did not know. Kennedy was then surprised, even angered, to learn in early February 1961 that there was no missile gap because his defense program was predicated on the need to close the gap. Kennedy suppressed the truth about the gap for ten months, long enough to push through defense appropriations that increased the military's total budget by more than fifteen percent. Although Kennedy was chiefly motivated by a desire to avoid the considerable political embarrassment of having to admit that he had been wrong about the missile gap, his zeal for increasing the military budget grew out of his genuine concern for the state of the nation's defenses. In the end, the gap did not make a major difference in Kennedy's defense policy decisions. The missile gap served to rationalize decisions Kennedy had already made.¹⁸¹ As Desmond Ball observes, "Had

[Kennedy] publicly accepted the optimistic reports [that there was no missile gap], it would have been politically more difficult for him to make the broad changes in U.S. defense posture that he felt were necessary."¹⁸²

This chapter has also considered the story of the missile gap as it related to the economic goals of hundreds of thousands of workers who built the weapons that would have closed the gap. As Part II of this chapter has shown, Kennedy followed through on some, but certainly not all, of his campaign promises to increase spending on particular weapon systems. He did so, in part, to make good on his promises, and in part to stimulate the flagging economy. The Kennedy administration canceled the B-70 bomber program and dumped both the Atlas and Titan ICBMs. Likewise, the administration chose not to revisit Eisenhower's decision to discontinue the liquid-fueled Jupiter IRBM, made in 1958, despite the pressures of the Chrysler Corporation and those men and women employed by the project.¹⁸³ By contrast, the Minuteman missile program was fully-funded and became the central weapons system within the land-based component of the nuclear triad for over thirty years. Most of these changes to the nation's nuclear deterrent force had already been initiated by the Eisenhower administration.¹⁸⁴ Kennedy did effect more substantive changes to the nation's non-nuclear forces that had been vigorously opposed by his predecessor. Most notably, the Army grew by nearly 50 per cent before most Americans had ever even heard of Vietnam. Then, when his military spending failed to live up to the expectations of workers employed in the aviation and aeronautics industries, the new president's bold space

program made up much of the difference. His decisions had a clear impact on thousands of workers employed in defense industries.

Kennedy's defense policy decisions might have been disastrous for two companies that Kennedy had once pledged to support were it not for the space program. North American Aviation employees succeeded in spite of the cancellation of the B-70 bomber program because they had moved into the development of rockets and space vehicles in the late 1950s. These men and women were prepared to accept Kennedy's challenge in 1961 to send a man to the moon. Convair also survived Kennedy's decision to terminate the Atlas ICBM program by branching into production for the space program. However, the long-term future for workers at Convair facilities in San Diego and Fort Worth was less clear in 1963 than it had been prior to Kennedy's inauguration.

Workers at Bell Aircraft in Niagara Falls, New York were helped by Kennedy's decision to expand Minuteman production, and by his acceleration of the space race with the Soviet Union. While Kennedy was sincere in his belief that defense spending should be more evenly distributed across the nation, the revival of the company's fortunes in the early 1960's cannot be attributed to Kennedy's pledge to "more equitably" distribute defense contracts. Rather, Bell designers and engineers had developed rockets in the mid-1950s; they were therefore poised to capitalize on the need for new rocket motors for the Apollo project, and for the Minuteman missile, in the mid- to late-1960s. Meanwhile, Larry Bell's prescient support for the helicopter in the early 1940s paid handsome dividends for the

company in the 1960s and beyond. Bell Helicopter's success benefited workers in Fort Worth, Texas and western New York.

Other companies in less favored areas were not so lucky. The practice of attempting to use defense contracts to boost the fortunes of workers in particular geographic regions was reflected in a long-standing government policy, also mentioned during the campaign. The history of this policy will be discussed next.

6. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MILITARY SPENDING IN THE NUCLEAR AGE: DEFENSE SPENDING, THE ECONOMY, AND DEFENSE MANPOWER POLICY NUMBER 4

I believe that defense manpower policy No. 4 . . . should be reinvoked [so that] we could use our defense contracts to put people to work as well as make weapons. – John F. Kennedy campaigning in Detroit, October, 1960.¹

It is the policy of the Federal Government to encourage the placing of contracts and facilities in areas of persistent or substantial labor surplus. – From Defense Manpower Policy 4.²

Part I – Defense Manpower Policy Number 4

Introduction

The relationship between defense spending and economic development has a long history.³ This linkage was less apparent within the United States, however, than within many other countries. The United States, with a tradition of maintaining limited armed forces except in times of war, devoted a relatively small share of its resources to the military throughout its history. This pattern changed during World War II. Even as American GIs were fighting and dying in the Pacific and Europe during World War II, economists focused on the future. Most looked ahead anxiously to the days when these veterans would return to their pre-war homes, with the intention of returning to their pre-war jobs. The lessons from the economic hardships that followed World War I, when hundreds of thousands of returning war veterans were slowly assimilated back into the civilian work force, and memories of the recent Great Depression, suggested hard times ahead for the American economy when government spending for defense was expected to return to pre-war levels.

The economic impact of defense cutbacks after the war was mitigated, however, by a combination of factors. Most manufacturers quickly converted to the production of

consumer goods, and a backlog of pent-up demand for these goods provided a quick boost to the economy. Meanwhile, millions of women who had entered the work force during the war voluntarily surrendered their jobs to returning veterans. Although defense spending did plummet, and employment in defense industries fell after the war, any long-term economic distress within these industries was alleviated by the dramatic defense buildup initially called for in NSC-68, and necessitated by the Korean War.⁴

Scholars have argued that defense industry served, in an indirect way, as a surrogate for a more extensive and comprehensive national industrial policy during the Cold War. Diane Kunz goes so far as to declare that “[t]he ongoing funding by the federal government of a significant defense industry...made the affluent America of the Cold War era possible.”⁵ Defense spending after World War II was, in other words, tied to *both* national security concerns and perceived domestic economic needs.

Other authors have taken these economic arguments a step further by analyzing the effects of Cold War military spending on American society. For example, Robert Higgs sees the Cold War military build-up as one of several critical episodes in the nation’s history that opened the door for a considerable expansion of the state. By contrast, Aaron Friedberg is struck less by the rise of statist institutions than by the enduring anti-statist nature of the United States’ system of government in the midst of the Cold War. Still others see a more pernicious influence at work. Robert Buzzanco argues that the combination of high defense

expenditures and the Red Scare "provided a dynamic one-two combination to American democracy, making any dissent against the military Keynesian state appear to be disloyal."⁶

This dissertation builds upon this research. Chapter Two examined Eisenhower's economic philosophy as it related to military spending. The career military officer was troubled by the rise of a permanent arms industry in the United States. Slowing the growth of this industry proved difficult, however, even after the immediate pressures of the Korean War receded. Eisenhower's New Look planned to restrain military spending, but real reductions were largely temporary. Conventional forces were slashed during the 1950s, but defense spending as a share of GNP remained relatively high as most of the New Look's spending priorities merely shifted resources from one weapon system to another. As was discussed in Chapter Five, many of the men and women who designed and built equipment for the military felt the pinch during the Eisenhower years. The communities that were home to these workers were squeezed as well.

When pressed by critics, including some members of his own administration, to spend more on defense, Eisenhower was unmoved. The president asked that his military chiefs and service secretaries consider how changes in technology had changed defense needs. He was not oblivious or insensitive to the hardships caused by employment losses in defense industries, but he presumed that comparable jobs would be created in other industries. He hoped that companies would return to the United States' historical pattern: producing consumer goods in times of peace, and weapons in times of war.

As has been discussed throughout this dissertation, most of the assessments of the Eisenhower administration's defense policies were grounded in a criticism of Eisenhower's contention that the economy could not support higher defense expenditures. Chapters Three and Four studied the political calculus behind John F. Kennedy's critique of the New Look in the context of this debate. Kennedy used the missile gap as a rhetorical vehicle for challenging Eisenhower's stance on the relationship between military spending and economic growth. If Ike's mantra was "we must not do too much," JFK's was consistently "we must do more."

At a more general level, Kennedy was committed to an expansion of the federal government's role in boosting regional employment. He was an early supporter of a series of Area Redevelopment Acts in the late 1950s. On the campaign trail, he occasionally combined these themes in an appeal for support from defense workers displaced by Eisenhower's New Look. The Democratic nominee spoke often of the nation's declining prestige, and he referred to the missile gap as a prime example of this alleged decline. He promised to spend more money on defense in order to close the missile gap.

Another explicit example of Kennedy's willingness to combine an activist economic policy within an expanded defense budget was his support for Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 (DMP-4), a Korean-War era procurement regulation which sought to award defense contracts in areas of high and persistent unemployment. Kennedy did not initially emphasize this policy while on the campaign trail. As was discussed in Chapter Four,

during a brief swing through central Pennsylvania in mid-September, local journalists criticized Kennedy for *not* promising to create jobs in depressed areas.⁷ Kennedy had taken these criticisms to heart by the time that he returned to the state six weeks later. In Pottsville, Pennsylvania on October 28, Kennedy explicitly proposed to channel defense contracts to areas of high unemployment by reinstating Defense Manpower Policy Number 4. He mentioned this policy in at least two other places: first, in Buffalo, New York, on September 28, and then a month later in Macomb County, Michigan on October 26.⁸

Kennedy's support for DMP-4 was used against him by the Nixon campaign in California. Nixon forces circulated literature at defense plants on the West Coast claiming that Kennedy intended to shift defense jobs to the East. These charges prompted an angry denial by the Democrat. Just five days after Kennedy had told voters in Pottsville, Pennsylvania that he planned to steer defense contracts to areas of high unemployment, Kennedy declared that the defense plants in California were going to stay in California.⁹

The evidence presented in Chapter Four suggests that Kennedy's support for DMP-4 might have cost him votes in California. Nonetheless, the candidate believed that Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 was a political winner. Having examined the political and economic factors behind Kennedy's support for DMP-4 in earlier chapters, this chapter examines a more philosophical question: was DMP-4 good policy? While the stated goal of, in Kennedy's words, using "defense contracts to put people to work as well as make weapons" may have been noble in principle, the concerns of workers in different regions –

New York workers complained of jobs being shipped to the West Coast, California workers were anxious about Kennedy sending their jobs to the East – point to a common political paradox: namely, preference to one group or area often means disadvantage to some other group or area.¹⁰

Politicians routinely vow to provide benefits to different political groups, even when those promises are plainly contradictory.¹¹ But in the case of DMP-4, specifically, how did administrators and bureaucrats charged with implementing this policy square the circle? How, in practice, did those charged with military procurement ensure that goods and services were purchased at a fair price, while also ensuring that firms in “disadvantaged” areas were given preferential treatment? This chapter examines these questions.

Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 – Origins and Implementation

Few scholars have examined the history of DMP-4.¹² Although federal procurement regulations are complex, and the implementation of these regulations may differ markedly from the published language, most sources show that the Office of Defense Mobilization, concerned about the inefficiencies associated with constructing new manufacturing facilities and relocating defense workers throughout the country, issued Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 (DMP-4) in February 1952. This action first implemented the idea of targeting federal defense procurement to so-called labor surplus areas, later defined as areas with an unemployment rate of six percent or more. The

classification process also considered seasonal factors, and estimated employment conditions over the succeeding two to three months.¹³

The policy had two components. First, the Labor Department would classify various labor areas within the United States into six different categories, A through F, with Group A reflecting the tightest labor supply and Group F the greatest labor surplus. The classifications remained in place, with very few modifications, for many years. They are reproduced below as they appeared in the September 1957 issue of the Labor Department periodical, *Area Labor Market Trends*.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
1. Current labor supply-demand situation					
Current critical labor shortage; expected to continue at least through next 4 months	Job opportunities for local workers slightly in excess of job seekers; this situation expected to continue over next 4 months.	Job seekers slightly in excess of job openings; this situation expected to continue over next 4 months.	Job seekers in excess of job openings; this situation expected to continue over next 4 months.	Job seekers considerably in excess of job openings; this situation expected to continue over next 4 months.	Job seekers substantially in excess of job openings; this situation expected to continue over next 4 months.
2. Ratio of unemployment to total labor force:					
Less than 1.5%	1.5-2.9%	3.0-5.9%	6.0-8.9%	9.0-11.9%	12.0% or more
3. Net agricultural labor requirements for 2 and 4 months hence indicate:					
Sizable employment gains.	Some increases in employment.	No significant increases in employment.	Declining employment levels or no significant increase	Declining employment levels or no significant labor requirements.	Declining employment levels or no significant labor requirements.
4. Effects of seasonal or temporary factors:					
The current and anticipated labor shortage not primarily due to seasonal or temporary factors.	Reflects significant seasonal fluctuations in employment and unemployment.	Reflects significant seasonal fluctuations in employment and unemployment.	The current or anticipated labor surplus not due primarily to seasonal or temporary factors.	The current or anticipated labor surplus not due primarily to seasonal or temporary factors.	The current or anticipated substantial labor surplus not due primarily to seasonal or temporary factors.

Based upon these classifications, areas in categories D, E, and F were designated as 'areas of substantial labor surplus,' or 'areas of substantial unemployment' for the purposes of Defense Manpower Policy Number 4. These same classifications were also used for several other policies including the 'Buy American Act' and later the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965.¹⁴ Firms wishing to be considered for preference under DMP-4 applied for certification to the appropriate government agency. This certification for preferential treatment, once granted, was typically valid for six months.

Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 was first implemented under a Democratic administration in the midst of the Korean War. Contrary to what Kennedy said during the campaign, however, Republicans had not discontinued the policy.¹⁵ The Labor Department during the Eisenhower years continued to classify labor areas for the purposes of federal aid and preference programs. This practice continued through the end of Eisenhower's presidency. For example, in July 1960 the Labor Department's *Area Trends* stated that firms located in areas of "'substantial and persistent labor surplus' [were] eligible for first preference in the award of Government procurement contracts placed under the provisions of Defense Manpower Policy No. 4."¹⁶

While DMP-4 may have remained on the books, however, Eisenhower and military procurement officers had not emphasized this policy in practice. Eisenhower generally resisted the urge to use defense dollars to compensate for regional economic distress, and he

chastised his subordinates for allowing political considerations to intrude into military procurement. Others who were philosophically opposed to the concept of using defense dollars to rectify regional economic imbalance, including a number of conservative Southern Democrats, joined Eisenhower. While politicians from the Northeast complained about the loss of defense jobs, their counterparts in the South and West welcomed the influx of new businesses that brought with them new employment opportunities, new citizens, and new political power.

As already shown, John F. Kennedy intended to slow, or even reverse, the trends of the previous ten to fifteen years that had seen an increasing number of defense-related jobs being created in the South and West. He explicitly promised to spend defense dollars in areas most in need of an influx of new employment. Once elected, Kennedy followed through on some of his campaign promises. In a special message to Congress issued less than two weeks after he had taken office, he outlined twelve initiatives for spurring an economic recovery. They included an acceleration of federal procurement and construction nationwide, and a renewed effort to place government contracts in labor surplus areas. These measures also included, as was discussed in Chapter Five, a distressed areas bill that had been vetoed on two separate occasions by his predecessor.¹⁷ Kennedy made no modifications to Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 as written during this period. He did, however, call upon the Department of Defense to improve the implementation of this policy.¹⁸ "Agencies of the Federal Government," Kennedy said in his message to Congress,

were “directed to give every reasonable preference to labor surplus areas” when locating new facilities, or when “deciding upon the use of existing facilities.” He had directed the secretaries of Labor and Defense, and the General Services Administration, his statement continued, to take “prompt steps to improve the machinery by which Federal contracts can be channeled to firms located in labor surplus areas.”¹⁹

The following year, Kennedy called on all Cabinet agencies to exert maximum effort “within existing programs to give assistance to” designated labor surplus areas. “The economic weight of the Federal government,” he declared, “should be brought to bear to help alleviate chronic unemployment wherever possible.” He further directed that all agencies cooperate with the Area Redevelopment Administration to accelerate the use of DMP-4, and to give greater attention to the placement of contracts, as well as federal facilities and public works projects, in labor surplus areas.²⁰

By the summer of 1962, however, the administration had become frustrated by its inability to aid certain areas that had not enjoyed the benefits of the recent economic recovery. Although a Labor Department press release issued in early June 1962 celebrated the decline in unemployment in more than nine-tenths of the 150 major labor market areas monitored by the department, pockets of unemployment and labor surplus persisted.²¹ This frustration was apparent in congressional testimony in August 1962. Testifying before the Senate Select Committee on Small Business, Seymour Wolfbein, a Kennedy administration official from the Department of Labor, conceded that the manufacturing geography of the

nation had changed dramatically during the preceding decade. New jobs had been created, but unemployment remained stubbornly fixed at five percent nationwide, and pockets of particular distress had not improved at all. The disparity in job growth was dramatically displayed by the revelation that, as of 1961, one out of every six new non-farm jobs in the country were concentrated in just three states – California, Texas and Florida.

Wolfbein conceded that many factors had contributed to this changing geography of employment, but he pointed to a “pretty close relationship between the overall changing geography of industry and the changing geography of defense expenditures.” Specifically, he noted how technological change had revolutionized the mix of weapons manufactured for the military. In 1953 tanks, weapons, and ammunition constituted 50 percent of all military hard goods ordered by the government. In fiscal year 1961, these same items accounted for only 12 percent of government military purchases. By contrast, missiles, which accounted for less than one-half of one percent of military expenditures in 1953, consumed 33 per cent of spending in 1961.²² Subsequent testimony elaborated on this point by explaining how the transition toward new defense technologies – especially missiles, rockets, and advanced electronics – had benefited California, and particularly Los Angeles, which “was 10 years ahead of the consumer and commercial producers of the Midwest” in the manufacture of such products.²³

Such information was very unwelcome news to the hearing organizer and subcommittee chairman, Senator Hubert Humphrey. The three-term senator from

Minnesota, first elected in 1948, had challenged Kennedy for the Democratic nomination in 1960. Sometimes referred to as “the Happy Warrior,” Humphrey was known for his eloquent speeches on the floor of the Senate. During the day-long hearing the flamboyant orator employed language similar to that used by his one-time opponent for the Democratic nomination when he declared his intention to determine how “the procurement dollar can be employed to relieve unemployment, and thereby to strengthen the general economic health of the Nation.” “After all,” he argued, “the greatest redevelopment program in the country is a defense program.”²⁴

Humphrey lamented what he believed was a lack of planning and foresight with respect to changing defense needs. Once the hub of manufacturing during World War II, and as late as the Korean War, Minnesota and other states in the Great Lakes area had been left behind during the 1950s. Humphrey wondered aloud why there had been no plan to take into account the changing patterns of industry, the dispersal of industry, and the displacement associated with these changes. “It seems to me,” he said, that “there was no one who sat down and said, ‘Is this a good thing?’ Because what happened was people had to uproot themselves by the hundreds of thousands and chase after” new employment opportunities.²⁵

Humphrey rejected the notion that these changes to the industrial landscape had resulted from “a predisposition on the part of anybody in the Government to benefit any particular area of the country.” Such changes had “just happened;” but the government, he

continued, should not have let things “just happen.” Although he recognized “that ‘planning’ [was] a dirty word around this country, particularly if Government has anything to do with it,” Humphrey believed that planning was essential. Only through a national effort, he argued, could the government ensure that pockets of unemployment would not be left behind amidst general prosperity. Accordingly, he advocated the establishment of an “economic coordination advisory group” that would ultimately contribute to better efforts to rectify these regional imbalances.²⁶

These efforts would be modeled on the programs of the New Deal. Humphrey waxed nostalgic about his days as an administrator with the war production training and reemployment program in 1940 and 1941. Dismissing those who questioned the merits of the Works Project Administration and other programs of the Depression era, Humphrey boasted that he had over 30,000 people in schools in Minnesota being trained for defense work in World War II. He hoped that the recently passed Manpower Training Act would similarly benefit those seeking employment during the Cold War. Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia echoed Humphrey’s sentiments. Arguing that the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had had the same effect as Humphrey’s beloved WPA, finding valuable work for young people during the depths of the Great Depression, Randolph hoped that new federal government initiatives would help to find work for men and women in the 1960s.

But 1962 was not 1942, or 1932. The Cold War opened the door for an expansion of the size and power of the state, particularly in the form of a dramatically expanded national security establishment. Private industry, however, had recovered spectacularly after World War II. Furthermore, private enterprises progressively gained greater and greater control over weapons manufacturing in the United States, often at the expense of state-run arsenals and shipyards.²⁷ The widespread unemployment that gave rise to federal government jobs programs such as the WPA and CCC during the Depression never reappeared after World War II.²⁸

Absent the widespread economic hardship and personal misery of the Depression, and lacking the personal sacrifices endured during World War II and later during the Korean War, the mood of the country never matched Humphrey's and Randolph's willingness to employ federal resources to resolve problems of regional unemployment. Humphrey may have bemoaned the lack of a comprehensive industrial policy, but a coalition of politicians and bureaucrats systematically impeded his visions for comprehensive reform and national planning. For example, Humphrey charged that the Defense Department had not done enough to implement Defense Manpower Policy Number 4, with fewer than three percent of contracts having been directed to distressed areas as a result of this policy. He castigated the Defense Department for focusing too-narrowly on obtaining "the best quality equipment at the lowest sound price." Arguing that "It is a whole lot better to get a defense dollar...with a job than it is to get a weekly check on unemployment compensation,"

Humphrey called on DOD to pay a premium in order to place contracts in distressed areas. "It might be cheaper to go to area A, where there is full employment, lots of plant, and such," he said, "And you go over here to area X and you might have to pay 2 percent more or 1 percent or 3 percent more for that same item." These additional expenditures, however, would be less than that paid out by other branches of government in payments to the unemployed. This apparent short-sightedness, Humphrey reasoned, occurred "because everybody is guarding his purse rather than somebody taking a look at the total picture."²⁹

New York Senator Jacob Javits agreed with Humphrey. He pointed in particular to the loss of defense contracts in his home state – in Elmira, Jamestown, Rome, Niagara, and Frontier – which had contributed to endemic high unemployment in these areas. Bell Aircraft, he argued, was "a classic example of what happened after World War II" and the Republican senator hoped that Humphrey's efforts would "help to resolve these very grave problems."³⁰

At least one Kennedy administration official agreed. Harold Williams, the acting administrator for the Area Redevelopment Administration, asserted his personal opinion that the cost of defense procurement price differentials and other preferential programs would be outweighed by the social benefits. Williams cautioned however that there was "a great deal of disagreement with that opinion, both in the Congress and within the administration."³¹ Humphrey, Javits and other senators hoping to correct these military spending imbalances subsequently learned in the course of the hearings that DOD

procurement officers, bureaucratic inertia, and compartmentalized decision-making were not to blame for the uneven distribution of defense contracts throughout the country. Rather, the General Accounting Office had explicitly prohibited the use of so-called price differentials to award defense contracts to labor surplus areas in 1953 – less than two years after DMP-4 was first implemented.

When Humphrey called James Welch, Deputy General Counsel for the General Accounting Office to testify, the resulting fireworks were predictable. Humphrey had repeatedly argued for the use of a price differential to aid Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs). The GAO had blocked such efforts. Welch, for his part, held fast to the GAO's position that the government could not establish total set-asides for defense contracts: such preferential treatment was explicitly prohibited by congressional action.

In fact, the GAO had from 1950 to 1953 *allowed* such preferential treatment, but was compelled to change their policy in 1953 when Congress prohibited the paying of price differentials. Senator Burnet Maybank of South Carolina, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, originally proposed the amendment, and the budget conferees subsequently inserted the language into the Defense Appropriation Act of 1953. Congress reasserted their intent in 1954 when identical language was placed in the Defense Appropriation Act of that year. Although Maybank died in 1954, language *prohibiting* the awarding of defense contracts to alleviate regional unemployment was inserted into defense

appropriations bills well into the 1980s. This language came to be known as the “Maybank Amendment.”³²

Humphrey’s repeated attempts to force Welch to reconsider the GAO’s ruling failed. In each instance, Welch simply stated that Congress would have to change the language. When Humphrey asserted that an executive order would satisfy the GAO, Welch did not budge; an executive order, he said, could not overturn an act of Congress. The GAO, Welch argued, believed that “the price differential prohibition is the crux of the problem here, and if Congress would eliminate it we would have no problem.”³³

Others charged with monitoring federal government procurement practices likewise insisted that the law explicitly prohibited the payment of price differentials. For example, Welch’s testimony was guided, in part, by the views of Comptroller General Joseph Campbell. In a letter to the secretary of defense dated March 3, 1961, Campbell discussed the legislative intent behind the relevant section of the Defense Appropriation Act of 1954, which had been repeated in all subsequent versions of the Defense Appropriations Acts. Campbell’s letter read, in part:

The language of [the Maybank amendment] leaves little room for doubt, and examination of the legislative history confirms, that the intent of the Congress was that the practice of negotiating contracts with labor surplus area firms which would meet the lowest price offered by any other bidder on a designated procurement might be continued, but that no such contract could be awarded at a price in excess of the lowest available. The prohibition . . . was apparently intended to prohibit the payment of appropriated funds on any contract negotiated for the purpose of correcting or preventing economic dislocations.³⁴

The Maybank Amendment had engendered considerable debate in Congress. “[A] strenuous effort was made” on the floor of the Senate to eliminate the proviso, but it was adopted in the form proposed by the committee. The House, meanwhile, rejected the Senate amendment, but the language survived in the final version approved by a House-Senate conference committee. The intent of the provision was further clarified by debate in both Houses when the conference report was approved. “On the record,” Campbell closed, “In the light of the clearly expressed intent of the Congress, which has been repeated without change in each annual appropriation act since 1954,” the GAO would not support the payment of price differentials to aid distressed areas.³⁵

Humphrey doggedly continued his personal campaign to revise and improve DMP-4. The committee issued a report a year later calling for over two-dozen specific recommendations to accelerate and expand the placing of defense contracts in distressed areas. Humphrey targeted most of his recommendations at government procurement officers who, according to the report, had “demonstrated an only half-hearted compliance with the policies of DMP No. 4.” These officials “found it more convenient to deal with old suppliers rather than investigate the possibility of finding new sources in distressed areas.” The committee report called for an “indoctrination of Defense, NASA, GSA, and other personnel engaged in procurement activities” in order to bring to their attention “the national policy implications and considerations,” and to afford “them sufficient guidance as to the relationship of procurement to such policies.”³⁶

These efforts proved ineffective, at best. The Maybank Amendment was the central impediment to the successful application of DMP-4. To repeat, the failure of governmental efforts to use defense procurement to correct regional economic imbalances, therefore, occurred not by oversight, and not by bureaucratic indifference. Rather, GAO implemented the procurement regulations in accordance with Congress's statutory guidelines. These guidelines virtually guaranteed that DMP-4 would apply to only a very small number of contracts issued during the entire course of the Cold War. Preferred status under DMP-4 might have been used as a tie-breaker when two companies were bidding for the same contract, and when their bids were equal. Such circumstances were rare, however. Absent a statutory directive to coordinate military spending and regional economic development, defense procurement proceeded on an ad hoc basis throughout the Cold War.

Defense contracts were most often awarded on the basis of technical factors; politics played a role, too. As discussed in Chapter Four, Eisenhower diverted funds to the B-70 bomber program late in 1960 to aid the presidential campaign of Vice President Richard Nixon. Even as late as 1962, nearly two years after having left office, Eisenhower reportedly phoned John F. Kennedy to urge him to award a defense contract to the Studebaker Company out of concern for the detrimental economic effects that the company's collapse might have on the community of South Bend, Indiana.³⁷ Kennedy also helped out his political friends and allies. As was discussed in Chapter Five, workers at Bell Aircraft in Buffalo believed that the award of a crucial defense contract in early 1961

was a reward for the city's strong support for Kennedy in the presidential campaign. Meanwhile, Convair's Fort Worth facility secured the TFX contract, in part, due to the assistance of Vice President Lyndon Johnson, Navy Secretary Fred Korth, and former Navy Secretary John B. Connally – all native Texans.³⁸

Politicians and policy makers did not abandon efforts to make DMP-4 more effective. The policy was revised on several occasions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Perhaps the most significant change enacted by Lyndon Johnson was an additional criterion for preferential treatment under DMP-4. Under the new rules, inserted into the regulation in October 1967, firms certified for preference were to have been located in or near areas of substantial or persistent unemployment, but such firms *also* had to agree to hire "disadvantaged persons."³⁹

A change to DMP-4 issued during Richard Nixon's presidency then further expanded the scope of the policy by establishing a three-tiered system for preferences. Under these revised rules, announced in April 1970, first preference was granted to companies in or near areas of high unemployment that agreed to hire "disadvantaged persons" – essentially the same rules as had existed under the Johnson administration. A second preference, however, was granted to firms *in any area* so long as "a substantial portion" of the contract was conducted by an establishment hiring "at least 15 percent of its new hires each month from among disadvantaged workers." Third level preference was granted to any firm performing work in economically disadvantaged areas, with no

requirement to employ disadvantaged workers.⁴⁰ The July 1970 issue of *Area Trends* further defined “disadvantaged” to include school dropouts, those under 22 years of age, those over 45 years of age, handicapped persons or members of a minority group.⁴¹

DMP-4 – A Critical Review

This chapter has examined the political roots of DMP-4, with an eye toward a better understanding of the political economy of military spending in the Cold War era. The core historical question is, simply put: conceding for the moment that the policy was well-intentioned, was the policy effective? Did the provision for diverting military contracts to disadvantaged areas help to alleviate regional unemployment?

The answer is no. There were few instances in which DMP-4 aided the men and women living in labor surplus areas. Although companies applied for and received preferential status for bidding on defense contracts, this process was only loosely tied to economic conditions. The economic benefits of DMP-4 were extremely limited because very few military contracts were awarded on the basis of preferential treatment under the policy. There is no evidence that this policy measurably improved the economic conditions of those men and women living in areas of “substantial” or “persistent” unemployment.

Beyond the statutory restrictions placed on the awarding of defense contracts by the Maybank Amendment and similar congressional action, other factors also limited the effectiveness of DMP-4. The Nixon revisions, for example, effectively eliminated the

original objectives of the program by affording preferential treatment to firms not on the basis of regional economic conditions but rather on the basis of social conditions. These revisions are notable because they point to the deeper problem associated with using procurement regulations to improve regional economic conditions. By opening federal procurement preferences to *any* company, including those *not* located in areas of economic distress (provided these companies agreed to hire disadvantaged workers), Nixon's revisions to DMP-4 so expanded the list of criteria whereby firms could qualify for preferential treatment that the small number of firms operating in distressed areas received no measurable benefit. Simply put, preference for all is preference for none. Although few quarrel with the intention of attempting to afford special consideration to individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity or age, such changes to DMP-4 guaranteed that areas and regions lagging behind the expanding American economy never benefited from the advantage allegedly afforded firms under the policy.

There were other fundamental flaws with DMP-4. Consider the ramifications of giving equal preference to all areas of substantial or persistent unemployment. There were, in fact, important differences between various distressed areas; for the purposes of DMP-4, however, firms from areas with 6 percent unemployment were given the same preferences as those areas with 10 or 12 percent unemployment. For example, in October 1971 all nine major labor areas from the state of California were eligible for preference, but Sacramento had an unemployment rate of only 4.5 percent, and no area in the state had unemployment

above 6.0 percent.⁴² By contrast, no fewer than eight areas in four different states (including Puerto Rico) had unemployment above 10 percent, and another 14 major areas registered a jobless rate of more than 7 percent.⁴³

Again, conceding for the moment the good intentions of this policy in principle, it would seem that policy makers would have wanted to give the greatest preference to those firms in the *most* distressed areas, with second and third preference going to firms in *less* distressed areas. The most likely result of the DMP-4 preference system, as designed, would be to allow firms in areas experiencing a temporary economic downturn to turn this to their advantage, while areas with a more persistent or enduring labor surplus enjoyed no special privileges. Conversely, consider the case of labor areas operating just below the “qualified” threshold. Such areas might experience a level of unemployment just below the 6 percent limit for many years and therefore never rise above the level necessary to secure preference.⁴⁴

The entire process of defense procurement preference as specified in DMP-4 resembles the amateur draft of many major professional sports, with one important exception. Under the rules in most sports, teams who suffer through two or three very bad years are eligible to choose the best athletes during the next year’s amateur draft. Unlike DMP-4, however, the worst teams get the best picks.⁴⁵ The draft order is inversely related to a team’s win-loss record. The fewer your wins in a particular season, the higher your draft order in the following year’s draft. Using this analogy, if DMP-4 as implemented was

likened to a draft, one can see that the "teams" (i.e., companies) with a few victories would have the same "draft pick" (i.e., preference) as those teams with no wins.

Now sports is not life, and first-round draft picks do not automatically make for a winning franchise. Still, the point should be clear. The system of preferences based upon area classification tended to perpetuate the condition for those areas existing just below the "labor surplus" distinction point, whereas areas with unemployment just above the cutoff for preferential treatment were most favored by such a system. Those areas with the highest unemployment levels, meanwhile, were the least favored of all because they would have received no special treatment vis-à-vis the many other areas with a jobless rate only slightly lower than their own.

This is all particularly problematic in the case of defense contracts. They are often negotiated on a long-term basis, but labor classifications changed from month to month. Therefore, it would have been entirely possible for a firm in a borderline eligibility area to qualify during a short down period, but to then secure a long-term defense contract under the preferences of DMP-4. The benefits of this contract would have been felt long after the area had moved out of the high labor surplus category.

There were still other flaws with the program as written. In retrospect, it is hard to conceive of a single company that was not at least remotely eligible for preference under DMP-4 in its final form. In fact, the list of companies certified at various times for preferential treatment under DMP-4 reads like the Fortune 500, and includes such titans of

industry as Uniroyal, Raytheon, Teledyne, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (aka 3M), Bethlehem Steel, Westinghouse, and Hewlett-Packard. Such companies certainly did not employ workers solely, or even primarily, in labor surplus areas. To cite other examples of how the preference rules worked in practice, consider that among the 107 companies certified for preference in June 1968, eight were located in or near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the unemployment rate was calculated at 3.4 percent. Among the 141 certified firms listed in December 1969, 25 were located in New York City, with an unemployment rate of 3.1 percent. Of the 147 firms certified in January 1972, six were located in Chicago, with an unemployment rate 4.3 percent.⁴⁶ From these examples alone, it is clear that not all companies given preferential status under DMP-4 were located in or near areas of high unemployment.

This apparent incongruity can be explained. Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 allowed companies to qualify for preference, even if they were not located in a labor surplus area, so long as these firms agreed to perform a substantial amount of the work within such areas. For most large corporations, such a distinction is not much more than an accounting gimmick. Meanwhile, the "disadvantaged worker" restrictions were hardly restrictive. In the 1970 census, there were over 30 million adults below the age of 22 and nearly 62 million adults over the age of 45. Meanwhile, among those between ages 22 and 45, over 15 million were either non-white, or not native-born. All of those individuals would have been counted as disadvantaged workers under the terms of DMP-4.⁴⁷

DMP-4 was most hindered by political factors. The outright opposition of members of Congress and the military, as expressed in the Maybank Amendment, muted the effectiveness of a federal policy intended to divert defense contracts to economically distressed regions. Beyond this hostility toward the policy, this chapter has shown that DMP-4 was also hamstrung by the language that it used to certify firms for preferential treatment. By fixing preferential status at an arbitrary level of unemployment, by affording equal treatment to firms operating in areas with vastly differing levels of economic hardship, and by extending preference to firms who agreed to hire disadvantaged persons, DMP-4 became less effective as a policy to aid economically distressed regions. It became, instead, another in a long line of government programs whose intentions were not matched by their results.

It would be foolish to presume that a single obscure policy tucked amongst the truly Byzantine morass of federal procurement regulations might have made a substantive difference in the lives of those men and women living in labor surplus areas. In fact, the complexity of federal procurement rules during the Cold War served merely to provide further advantages to the privileged and well-connected few who knew how to manipulate such regulations in the first place. And, as has been said before, in a world of obscure regulations, DMP-4 was more obscure than most.⁴⁸ Its obscurity was a function, in part, of its limited effectiveness. The many changes to DMP-4 enacted in the late 1960s and early 1970s are largely immaterial. Policies rarely trump politics; such was the case with DMP-4.

Nonetheless, despite this limited effectiveness, the intentions behind Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 demonstrate the strong relationship between defense spending and employment during the Cold War. In this respect, at least, Defense Manpower Policy Number 4, and John F. Kennedy's references to it during his campaign in 1960, serve as useful metaphors for understanding the political economy of military spending in the nuclear age. The practical political limitations of attempting to use defense spending to rectify regional economic imbalance have been discussed above. There were, however, theoretical and philosophical considerations, as well. These will be examined next.

Part II – Government Spending and the Economy - The Problem in Historical Perspective

The Economic Legacy of the Cold War

The philosophical debate between Eisenhower and Kennedy with respect to national security spending and economic development has been discussed throughout this dissertation. With the benefit of over 40 years of experience, what can be said, in hindsight, of the economic effects of defense spending during the Cold War?

First of all, Cold War defense spending contributed to a substantial restructuring of the nation's industrial geography. A team of scholars led by Ann Markusen argued in 1991 that defense spending during the Cold War contributed to the rise of the so-called "Gunbelt" – a string of states stretching from New England to Florida, across the South through Texas and finishing in Washington State. Left out of this picture was the industrial Midwest,

which suffered a disproportionate loss of jobs during the Cold War years. Commensurate with this decline were losses of population that altered the distribution of political and economic power.⁴⁹

Although certain aspects of the “Gunbelt” argument may be overdrawn,⁵⁰ the research presented in this dissertation reinforces and extends the Markusen thesis in several ways by demonstrating that policymakers were keenly aware of these changes to the distribution of industries throughout the United States as early as 1950. Political leaders recognized the regional disparity of military spending, and some designed programs and procedures to counteract these changes. The most striking aspect of the “Gunbelt” thesis, therefore, particularly as it relates to the broader theme of the long-term political and economic legacy of the Cold War, is that programs that were aimed at “fairly distributing” military spending throughout the nation failed to achieve their stated objectives. This was particularly true in the case of policies, such as DMP-4, that were designed to divert defense contracts to areas designated as “labor surplus areas.”

This failure of government policy gained political salience in the late 1950s when the character of defense spending – that is, the mix of weapons that were purchased – intensified the regional disparity of defense spending. As was discussed in Part II of Chapter Five, for example, there were clear economic winners and losers who emerged from the New Look of the mid-1950s, and from the Flexible Response strategy of the early 1960s. For example, John F. Kennedy campaigned in two places – Upstate New York and

Suburban Detroit – that are specifically mentioned within Markusen's *The Rise of the Gunbelt*. Both of these areas had lost ground during the years of the New Look; Kennedy pledged to use defense dollars to reverse these trends. In Los Angeles and San Diego, however, two other places studied by Markusen et al., Kennedy attempted to turn this situation around. Rather than argue that he intended to "fairly distribute" defense monies – implicitly back to the industrial Midwest and the East Coast – Kennedy instead promised to spend more on defense. He was particularly supportive of those weapons systems – Convair's Atlas ICBM in San Diego, and North American Aviation's B -70 bomber in the Los Angeles/Long Beach area – built by the men and women who came to hear his campaign speeches. When Kennedy failed to follow through on some of his promises to buy more weapon systems built in Southern California, spending on the space program made up some of the difference.

A second aspect of Cold War military spending that has been discussed at length in this dissertation revolves around the detrimental or beneficial effects of defense spending on economic growth. John F. Kennedy was at the center of this debate. Economists and policymakers have asserted for years that governmental action can soften the effects of economic downturns. There has been little consensus, however, on which fiscal vehicle best stimulates economic activity. Some economists have recommended using military spending to boost economic output. Others have countered that this so-called "military Keynesianism" has had deleterious effects upon the economy.⁵¹ Still others have disputed

the motivations of those who seek to soften the hard edges of capitalism in the first place. Some of these critics assert that military spending is a *necessary* feature of inherently unstable capitalist economies that are prone to overproduction, surpluses, and economic hardship for the laboring class.⁵²

The parameters of the debate over the potentially harmful economic effects of military spending were formed in the late 1940s. Although the Korean War opened the door for a defense budget in excess of 10 percent of the nation's output, the debate over what constituted an acceptable level of military spending continued throughout the Cold War years. Elected in 1952 on a promise of ending the war in Korea, Dwight Eisenhower was opposed to using military monies to boost the economy. Assailed even by those within his party, the former-general consistently argued that military spending was inefficient and unproductive. His military budgets reflected his conservative economic philosophy, and his public statements stressed the need for striking a balance between domestic needs and national security requirements.

Eisenhower's successor, John Kennedy, disagreed with Ike's formula for maintaining a balance between domestic and military spending. Kennedy and his economic advisers were harsh critics of Eisenhower's fiscal restraint – particularly as it related to defense spending – throughout the late 1950s.⁵³ As president, Kennedy resisted calls to dramatically increase spending on domestic programs, but he appointed several prominent

economists who believed that the government could spend more on defense without harming the economy.

As was discussed in Chapter Five, Kennedy was also sensitive to the concerns of business leaders who feared that deficit spending would feed inflation, and he was initially reluctant to embrace deficit spending. JFK remained committed to expanding the military budget, however, even after he learned that there was no missile gap. Hoping to avoid the embarrassment of having to admit that he had been wrong about the gap, Kennedy pushed forward with his plan to spend more on defense, in part, because he believed in the potential domestic economic benefits of these spending increases, and, in part, because he was genuinely convinced of the need to diversify the nation's military forces, with or without a missile gap.⁵⁴

Finally, as was discussed in Part I of this chapter, Kennedy's faith in the wisdom of using defense dollars to boost the economy extended to individual regions, and even individual companies, and was expressed in his support for Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 (DMP-4). The policy, which was designed to spend defense dollars in areas of high unemployment, remained on the books well into the early 1980s. Congressional opposition impeded the effectiveness of this program, however, and very few military contracts were awarded on the basis of this policy.

Historians have addressed the above subjects only in passing. The most frequently cited historical study of the relationship between defense spending and economic

development, Paul A. C. Koistinen's *The Military-Industrial Complex: A Historical Perspective*, makes no references to Defense Manpower Policy Number 4, nor to any of John Kennedy's specific programs for using military spending to boost the economy. Koistinen likewise ignores the spirited debate of the 1950s and early 1960s over questions of how military spending related to domestic economic concerns. Nonetheless, Koistinen challenged scholars to consider the M-I-C as an historical, and not a contemporary, phenomenon. Rather than examining the "complex" as a unique and shifting coalition of political pressure groups, Koistinen argued that the M-I-C was a natural outgrowth of the corporate-capitalist state that had developed during the 20th century. His analysis, however, provides little empirical evidence to support his contention that the M-I-C was the dominant force in American politics.⁵⁵

Other scholars have depended primarily upon a theoretical and ideological framework, with little attention to the specific historical events discussed throughout this dissertation, to construct empirical models testing theories of the nature and extent of so-called military Keynesianism in the Cold War.⁵⁶ Building upon Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy's pioneering work *Monopoly Capital*, a group of scholars writing in the Marxist tradition asserted that military spending is used to stimulate capitalist economies during slack periods.⁵⁷

Proceeding from this assumption, a trio of sociologists developed an empirical model to show that increases in unemployment – independent of military threats or national

security concerns – would positively affect defense spending.⁵⁸ Larry J. Griffin, Joel A. Divine, and Michael Wallace set out to demonstrate this relationship with defense spending presumed to be endogenous, determined by a number of external variables, the most crucial of which was unemployment within the unionized sector.⁵⁹ Based upon evidence derived from their model, the authors concluded that the United States adopted the policy of military Keynesianism around 1949. Military expenditures, they wrote, were used as a counter-cyclical fiscal tool to control unemployment within organized labor and to regulate the rate of growth of monopoly profits. This military spending was not intended to offset aggregate economic stagnation. The authors also determined that government officials and bureaucrats used the defense budget in order to maintain themselves in positions of power.⁶⁰

In 1984, Alex Mintz and Alexander Hicks revised the findings from the Griffin et al. model. Focusing their critique on the previous scholars' use of aggregate data, Mintz and Hicks examined four distinct aspects of military spending: 1) military procurement, 2) military personnel, 3) expenditures for operations and maintenance, and 4) research and development.⁶¹ Seeking further evidence that politicians had used military spending as a campaign device, the authors' disaggregated approach found "[s]ignificant pre-election year increases in military spending" in only two of four areas: spending for personnel, and for operations and maintenance. Mintz and Hicks therefore refined the earlier Griffin et al thesis by arguing that only those expenditures for the

procurement of equipment and for military pay were used as counter-cyclical fiscal tools.⁶²

The authors argued that the use of “defense expenditures to influence the votes of DOD personnel rather than those of the larger electorate” was “an efficient targeting of funds.”⁶³ Common sense suggests otherwise, however. Given that Department of Defense employees represent a very small percentage of the total eligible voting population, it would seem to be far *more* efficient to spend money on a larger pool of workers (and voters) who were not all in uniform.

Other scholars were not convinced by these findings. For example, Christopher Jencks thought it “absurd” to construct a model that did not take into account legitimate national security concerns. He refused to accept that military spending derived solely, or even primarily, from unemployment and not at all from international factors. In the Griffin et al. model, Jencks noted, “the decline in civilian spending and the higher tax rate ‘explain’ the rise in military spending. As a result, the Korean War does not appear to have affected military spending.” Jencks rejected this view. “Taxes rose and civilian spending fell during this period,” he countered, “*because* the United States entered the Korean War.”⁶⁴

The Marxist model for explaining the relationship between military spending and capitalist economies has its supporters and its detractors. An alternative philosophical and theoretical foundation undergirds the works of one of the most

persistent critics of military Keynesianism in the Cold War era. Seymour Melman, a professor of industrial engineering at Columbia University, authored a series of monographs in the late 1960's to protest the supposed excesses of the so-called military-industrial state. In *The Permanent War Economy*, Melman argued that the military economy, while ostensibly grounded within a capitalist system, operated under decidedly different rules than those of other enterprises not dependent upon the government and the military for their business. This permanent war economy, he argued, had fundamentally weakened American capitalism.⁶⁵

Melman believed that political forces had been mobilized for the purpose of perpetuating the permanent war economy. His works are replete with references to how specific weapons platforms and military spending programs had been sold as jobs programs during the Cold War. In this regard, Melman's focus on specific personalities, corporations, and political events creates a more satisfying historical treatise than studies built primarily on empirical models. He noted that one of John F. Kennedy's preferred instruments for getting "the economy moving again" was an expansion of the military budget.⁶⁶

Melman categorically rejected the Marxist contention that the military economy was an inevitable or natural outgrowth of capitalism. "Other major capitalist states," he noted, "did not follow the American pattern." "Rather than an historically inevitable outcome of capitalist dynamics," Melman wrote, "the American war economy [developed from] the combined result of economic and political factors."⁶⁷

Although Melman was a prolific author who presented a decidedly non-Marxist critique of military Keynesianism, he failed to develop a convincing empirical case that the permanent military economy had had long-term deleterious consequences for the nation's industrial productivity. First writing in the mid-1970s, he boldly asserted that \$1,500 billion in military spending since World War II had produced no economically useful products for the society. He presented no hard evidence to support this claim, however. He further alleged that the war economy had had destructive effects on the American economy by discouraging research and development in non-military industries. This misallocation of resources had led to lower productivity, as well as uninvestable capital, unemployable labor, and industrial inefficiency. Overall Melman's support for these arguments was largely anecdotal.⁶⁸

In the wake of a renewed emphasis upon military spending following the collapse of detente in the late 1970s, researchers again sought to establish an empirical model for measuring the long-term effects of military spending on the economy. These efforts also failed to reach a clear consensus. For example, in 1988 economist Robert Ayanian hypothesized that an increase in military expenditures should increase the demand for dollar assets (the so-called safe-haven argument), and he found that the real exchange rate was positively related to defense expenditure as a percentage of GNP during the period 1973 to 1985.⁶⁹ In 1989, Vittorio Grilli and Andrea Beltratti provided further support for Ayanian's claims by arguing that the real exchange rate, real military spending and real GNP were all

related.⁷⁰ More recently, however, James E. Payne, Kevin L. Ross, and Edward A. Olszewski came to a different conclusion. They found that “both defense and non-defense spending have no significant impact upon real output, interest rates, inflation, and the money supply.”⁷¹

Melman’s case that defense spending had “crowded out” more productive avenues of research, resulting in declining American productivity during the Cold War, was further tested in the early 1990s. In this particular case, however, Lawrence H. Meyer and Fredric Q. Raines found “little direct evidence that defense purchases in general or defense R&D flows crowds out either public infrastructure spending, or civilian or federal non-defense R&D flows.” Nevertheless, they concluded “that reducing resources flowing into defense spending would free resources which policy could then redirect into either public infrastructure or non-defense R&D.”⁷²

Although the use of complex econometric analysis is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the author re-examined the findings of Grilli and Beltratti and Payne, Ross and Olszewski in 1996. The Appendix to this dissertation shows the major findings from this research. By separating government spending into two components – defense and non-defense spending – this research provides evidence that changes in non-defense spending (measured either as a percentage of GDP, or in real dollars) exert a modest but deleterious effect on the macroeconomy as measured by long-range GDP growth. By contrast, the effects of defense spending are more ambiguous. In most instances, defense spending

appears to have no measurable effect on the economy. However, in the few models where defense spending is found to be statistically significant, the effects are actually positive, not negative. These findings run counter to Melman's contention that military spending was inherently harmful to the United States' long-term economic growth and productivity during the Cold War. These findings also run counter to Eisenhower's belief that military spending was inherently wasteful and unproductive. They appear to support the views of John F. Kennedy and many of his advisers who viewed military spending as an appropriate, and even efficacious, vehicle for stimulating short-term economic growth. Although these simple models are far too under-specified to yield conclusive results, they do present promising avenues for future research.⁷³

Conclusions: The Political Economy of Defense Spending

Defense spending was used throughout the Cold War as a vehicle for stimulating economic activity. This chapter has examined the practical and theoretical limitations of this strategy. Part I of this chapter examined Defense Manpower Policy Number 4 – a government regulation that explicitly directed procurement officers to award defense contracts to firms and workers located in labor surplus areas. Part II examined the theoretical and philosophical arguments that challenged the wisdom and efficacy of military Keynesianism.

As shown, DMP-4 was hindered primarily by political dynamics. Although many argued that defense contracts should be awarded solely on the merits of a competitive bid, government contracting within a representative democracy is not an exact science. Politics are always a factor. Politicians who are adept at directing defense contracts to their states or districts do not wish to be superseded by a nameless, faceless bureaucrat. This proved to have been the case in the 1950s and 1960s when congressional leaders effectively prohibited the Executive Branch from implementing DMP-4.

These political leaders might have been doing the country a great service given the important theoretical and philosophical reservations to military Keynesianism discussed in Part II. But alas, the ad hoc system of military procurement that emerged during the Cold War was no model of efficiency. Further, the U.S. economy's growing dependence upon military spending during the 1960s may have weakened the nation's longer term economic growth and development.

With the benefit of hindsight, scholars might now question the wisdom of trying to use defense spending to boost national or regional economic output. As this dissertation has shown, there were dissenting voices over fifty years ago, when Leon Keyserling and Paul Nitze first sought to use military spending to boost the economy. Dwight Eisenhower warned of the crowding-out effects of defense spending in his "Chance for Peace" speech in 1953. He repeated these warnings in his farewell address in January of 1961. By early 1964, John Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, said that the nation's "nuclear defense

expenditures [could] never be justified as a W.P.A. for selected towns and states.”⁷⁴

Nonetheless, despite these concerns, the technique of exploiting defense spending in political ways persisted throughout the Cold War.

At a broader level, the findings in this dissertation suggest that workers can give important impetus to the development of particular military industries within particular geographic regions. The so-called military-industrial complex was not created by sinister men in smoke-filled rooms conspiring to thwart the will of the people; rather, the M-I-C was the will of the people, and politicians throughout the Cold War attempted to bend this will to their advantage. It didn't always work. For example, Kennedy was likely miffed when President Eisenhower released over \$150 million for a major arms program in the closing weeks of the 1960 presidential campaign. He was likely frustrated when the particular program boosted – the B-70 bomber – had been blocked twice before by the outgoing president. Kennedy was likely angered that this decision subverted his campaign in a state, California, where he had had high hopes for victory, and where he and his campaign had devoted valuable time and energy. Kennedy should not, however, have been surprised. He was not above promising to use defense dollars to reduce unemployment and aid workers in certain areas. In this context, Kennedy's indignant protestations that Eisenhower's objective was “not to increase national defense [but rather] to increase Republican votes” seem less than genuine.⁷⁵

Scholars, meanwhile, especially those who have praised Eisenhower for resisting and restraining the military-industrial complex, might be troubled by the former general's belated decision to fund a program that he and his advisers knew was flawed, apparently for purely political reasons.⁷⁶ They should be troubled, but they should not be surprised. Military procurement is subject to the same pork-barrel practices that influence all other government spending programs. As such, the unequal distribution of military industry throughout the United States during the Cold War resulted from political and economic factors. These same factors placed pressures on politicians and policymakers to sustain a near-constant level of military expenditures rarely seen in the history of the United States. Such was the nature of the political economy of the missile gap of the late 1950s. Such was the nature of John F. Kennedy's use of the missile gap in the presidential campaign of 1960. And such was the nature of the missile gap in the context of the Kennedy administration's defense policies of the early 1960s.

EPILOGUE: THE LEGACY OF THE MISSILE GAP IN THE WAKE OF THE COLD WAR

I thought I was supposed to retire from this company. My grandfather did. My dad is getting ready to. I thought it was my legacy to retire from here, like everybody else. Now it's gone. Now I have to start all over again somewhere else. – Chip Hogue, former employee of Convair, San Diego, ca 1995.¹

San Diego's version of the peace dividend arrived due to the defense engineers and managers diverted, by the loss of their jobs, into entrepreneurial pursuits....These [individuals] helped the region emerge from the severe economic challenge posed by defense cutbacks at the beginning of the 1990s. Today, San Diego's economy is growing and contains a more diverse set of industries.² – From a report of the San Diego economy, May 2001.

In the early summer of 1997, I witnessed a dying company breathing its last.

During a visit to Southern California in June 1997, on a whim I called the phone number in the telephone directory for General Dynamics' Convair Division. The voice on the other end of the line gave me directions to 3302 Pacific Highway, the location of the Lindbergh Field Plant. Nothing could have prepared me for what I saw when my rental car pulled up to the paneled construction trailer parked at that address. Inside that trailer, on the tarmac of San Diego's airport, sat Convair's final two employees. Roy Gilmore was one of them.

I knew very little about Convair at that time, so I had a lot of questions. Roy was accommodating. I began by explaining the nature of my project. I explained how John F. Kennedy had used the missile gap during the presidential campaign of 1960. I explained that Kennedy had promised to build more missiles in order close the missile gap. Gilmore, who had joined Convair in 1959, was puzzled. He remembered that missiles were being

produced in large quantities in San Diego in 1960; employment had more than doubled from 1954 to 1961, and was at its highest level since World War II in the early 1960s. The policy decisions that prompted these employment increases had already been made before Kennedy's campaign visits in late 1960, and well before Kennedy's supplemental defense appropriations in 1961. Thus began a new line of inquiry into the story of John F. Kennedy and the missile gap.

In the course of my research, I found that Roy Gilmore's recollections were accurate. Convair was booming *before* John F. Kennedy came into office. Employment fell from over 50,000 in 1961 to less than 13,000 in 1966. And although Convair survived for another 30 years, it is clear in retrospect that the end of the Atlas ballistic missile program portended the end of Convair. Employment at the San Diego company that was once the city's largest private employer never rose above 13,000, and averaged less than 10,000, in the period from 1970 to 1995.

I also learned that the end was a long time coming. It was a long time coming for most of the firms who had built aircraft for America's military throughout the 20th century. Aerospace at its peak accounted for 9.4 per cent of U.S. exports in 1962.³ Continued robust spending on defense, in part to support the United States' growing involvement in Vietnam, continued to pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the pockets of the men and women employed in the industry. Spending on space exploration contributed hundreds of millions more. Aerospace was the nation's leading industrial employer in 1967, with over

1.4 million men and women employed in the design, development, and manufacture of aircraft, missiles, rockets, and related equipment. This apparent strength, however, could not mask an underlying weakness. Of the industry's total sales of \$27 billion in 1967, \$15 billion of that amount – over 55 per cent – was generated from sales to the government.⁴

The industry's attempts to heal itself met with mixed success. Consolidation, considered overdue in the late-1940's, proceeded slowly. General Dynamics' acquisition of Convair in 1954 constituted the only significant merger of the 1950s. Then, from 1960 to 1970, the number of firms actively engaged in developing and producing aircraft and missiles shrunk substantially. There was the McDonnell-Douglas merger of 1967. Later that year Rockwell-Standard acquired North American Aviation. Lesser manufacturers were also subject to takeovers, including San Diego-based Ryan, purchased by Teledyne in 1968, and Republic, acquired by Fairchild-Hiller in 1965.

In the midst of these changes, management and labor pressed for special government protection. At the same time the military-industrial complex became the focus of greater and greater scrutiny during the 1960s. Some complained of contracts being awarded to those companies most in need rather than on merit.⁵ Competition for major contracts – indeed the entire weapons acquisition process – became increasingly politicized.

According to industry historian Donald Pattillo, and in keeping with a persistent theme within this dissertation, “[p]olitically aware bidders for contracts focused increasingly on the selection of subcontractors, or location of production facilities, in economically

depressed or labor surplus areas, enabling them to point to the salutary effects of...a contract on the local economy.” “Defense procurement programs,” Pattillo concludes, “became de facto social programs.”⁶

Since my meeting with Roy Gilmore in June 1997, I have met and spoken with a number of other men who, like him, look back on their years in the aviation and aerospace industry with a mixture of pride and satisfaction. They have few regrets. In their own way, each of these men explained what had happened during the industry’s long history. Some of their stories have been retold within this dissertation. One of these men is Bill Chana. Chana left Purdue University to join Consolidated Aircraft in the summer of 1941. He worked for Consolidated and its successor companies for 32 years. His career tracked with the company’s rise and fall. Beginning before World War II, Bill was a flight test engineer, flying in everything the company built, including the famed PBV Catalina, and the B-24 Liberator. When manned aircraft declined, Consolidated, now-Convair, moved into missile development and production; Chana moved as well. He worked on several missile programs, and later became base manager at Fairchild Air Force base in Washington State. He oversaw the deployment of one of the United States’ first operational Atlas squadrons. Bill stayed with Convair until 1973, and then worked in various consulting roles in the San Diego area within the aerospace industry. One of the founders of the San Diego Aerospace Museum, Chana has remained active in the industry. He was awarded a Verville

Fellowship by the National Air and Space Museum in 1998 where he completed a manuscript detailing his career.⁷

Looking back on the Eisenhower and Kennedy years, Chana remembered the late 1950s as good times for Convair. The company performed “fairly well,” Chana thought, from 1958 to about 1964. With the completion of the Atlas installations, however, Convair’s fortunes never recovered. Chana’s employment history reflected the broader trends within the company. “When I was in Spokane, Washington,” he explained, “I had 1,200 Convair people, and 1,200 sub-contractors working for me. And then I came to Sycamore Test Site [near San Diego, circa mid-1960s], and I had about 400 people working for me.” But with the end of the Atlas and other space-related projects in the mid-1960s, Chana remembered, “times started going downhill.” When he moved to proposal development, he explained, “I had ten people working for me, and when that was over with, I was working for me.”⁸

The company continued to build weapons after Chana’s departure. John Lull witnessed the final chapter of General Dynamics’ Convair Division at closer range. Lull, an engineer who started working at Convair in 1953, had always been attracted to the mysteries of flight. He built model airplanes as a boy growing up in Yonkers, New York. He served as a mechanic during World War II in the Army Air Corps. When the war ended, Lull returned to New York, earning a degree in aeronautical engineering from New York University in 1951. He was lured to the West Coast during the height of the Cold War by

the desire to contribute to the nation's defense effort, to do good work at a good wage – and to escape the cold winters in Upstate New York. "I was sitting there in my apartment one wintry day," Lull remembered, "and I said to myself 'We're moving to the West Coast.'" "I had *Aviation Week* there," he explained, "and I wrote letters to all of the companies on the West Coast," including Convair, Douglas, Lockheed, Boeing. Lull mailed identical letters with a résumé. In the heady days of the early Cold War, business was booming. All of Lull's entreaties generated offers. For Lull, the choice was an easy one: Convair's offer, he explained, "was ten dollars a month higher, and that's why I came here." Although he had "no idea what the West Coast was like, no idea at all," Lull moved his wife and two children to California in 1953. He never looked back. "We just lucked out," he said. When I asked if he had any regrets, Lull did not hesitate. "No," he said, "it was great." John Lull retired from Convair in 1993 after forty years with the company. He was most proud of his work on the Tomahawk missile, one of the company's last great successes.⁹

John Lull and Roy Gilmore were both nearing retirement when the end finally came. Other Convair workers were just beginning their careers, many following in the footsteps of their parents, and for some, their grandparents. A Public Broadcasting System (PBS) television documentary featured one family affected by the changes at Convair. The Hogue family included three generations of men who had worked for the company. The youngest of the three, Chip Hogue, told series producer Hedrick Smith what he remembered of the end. "The very last [job] that came through - when it would get done at one section, they

would - move it to the next section....Next day, you'd come in. That fixture'd be gone. All the people working in it would be gone. And you could watch it coming down the building like this, getting closer and closer to you, to - to me and me getting laid off and the place closing." Chip's wife, Martha, witnessed the end as well while working in the Human Resources Department. She told television viewers of the day that she fired her own husband.¹⁰

There was bitterness when the doors were closed for the last time. In the midst of one of the first rounds of layoffs, forty-four year old Robert Mack, recently dismissed by General Dynamics, walked into the corporate offices and opened fire. One labor union official was killed, and Mack's former manager was critically wounded. When Mack was first brought to trial, a jury of his fellow San Diegans refused to convict him. Mack's lawyer argued that his client's rampage resulted from the company's callous treatment of Mack and his fellow employees – and the members of the jury seemed to agree. The judge declared a mistrial when the twelve men and women deadlocked six to six on the charge of first-degree murder, and eight to four in favor of guilt on the related charge of attempted murder. Mack was later sentenced to lengthy prison time in a plea-bargain agreement with prosecutors.¹¹

Men and women who depend upon a company for their livelihood often approach layoffs from a limited historical perspective. General Dynamics' Convair Division developed and produced missiles and some aircraft into the 1970s and 1980s, employing

over 6,000 people in various divisions. Still, the long decline in employment, which began in 1962 with the end of the Atlas ICBM program, never reversed itself. The job cuts accelerated when former Apollo astronaut and native San Diegan William Anders became CEO of General Dynamics in 1991. Anders engineered a massive restructuring that eliminated or shifted nearly 6,000 jobs in less than one year. While shedding these jobs, General Dynamics began closing down Convair's San Diego facilities, selling off old Convair businesses to former rivals. The Air Systems Division was sold to Hughes Aircraft in 1992. In the following year, Lockheed acquired Convair's Fort Worth division. Then, in 1994, General Dynamics sold the aircraft structures business to McDonnell Douglas and the space systems division to Martin-Marietta. Despite the warning signs that had been building ever since the end of the Atlas missile program, critics charged that General Dynamics needlessly slashed jobs in the early 1990s even though several systems continued to have value. The Atlas rocket survives to this day as a delivery vehicle for the space program. The Tomahawk missile is one of the most versatile cruise missiles in the U.S. arsenal, and has been used in countless actions since the end of the Cold War.

Still, these projects could not sustain the company once known as Convair. Reuben Hollis Fleet's vision of a massive new facility built in the shadow of Pacific Highway on the grounds of the then-tiny Lindbergh Field was a city within a city for nearly 60 years. San Diego's largest private employer, and developer to some of the most important weapons in U.S. history, closed its doors for good in the summer of 1997. Roy Gilmore watched it all

happen from the window of the construction trailer that served as his office. The wrecking balls came a while later, and removed the last vestiges of Convair's physical presence in San Diego. The city made plans to expand the airport on land that once housed the old Convair plant.

Gilmore seemed to take all of this in stride. Perhaps he had already come to terms with the fact that the job that he had held for over 38 years would finally come to an end in the next few months. Perhaps he had had time to reflect on the work that he had done at Convair. Perhaps he was grateful to still have a job when over 6,000 of his fellow Convair employees had been dismissed months, or even years, earlier. Roy's perspective on what had happened to Convair struck me as philosophical, perhaps even detached. He explained that there had been dozens of companies building airplanes in the very early days of aviation. Some survived, others thrived, in World War II. One by one, however, the names of the early aircraft manufacturers had disappeared. Such was the nature of the business, Roy Gilmore seemed to be saying.¹²

The effects of defense cutbacks in the wake of the Cold War were felt in Los Angeles as well. Greater Los Angeles, home to dozens of aerospace firms, including the remnants of North American Aviation in Long Beach, staggered under the combined weight of economic and societal shocks in the early 1990s. Racial tensions, earthquakes, and other environmental disasters, combined with rising unemployment to cast a shadow over California's once bright future. The Golden State seemed to have lost its luster. In late

1994, two University of California researchers began an article discussing “California’s Missile Gap,” in stark terms: “Suddenly,” wrote Stephen S. Cohen and Clara Eugenia Garcia, “something has gone very wrong with the California economy.”¹³

These troubles were focused in Southern California, where high-tech, high-wage jobs within the aerospace industry had been the engine of a long-running economic boom. Cohen and Garcia found that California lost ground later than the U.S. economy as a whole; however, when the rest of the nation emerged from the mild recession of 1991 and 1992, California employment regained momentum at a much slower rate than the U.S. economy as a whole in the early- to mid-1990s. The authors reported that total defense spending in the state, measured in constant 1992 dollars, had declined from \$60 billion in 1988 to \$51 billion in 1992. Whereas other studies had estimated that these cuts in defense spending accounted for 22 percent of all job losses in California, Cohen and Garcia estimated that these spending reductions were responsible for the loss over 200,000 jobs in the state – one-third of all job losses in the period from 1990 to 1993.¹⁴

Cohen and Garcia’s observations were astute, and their prescriptions for reform were insightful.¹⁵ And while they could not have foreseen that defense spending nationwide would decline another 25 percent from 1992 to 1998, their prediction that “a modest recovery in the United States economy” would “not translate into a comparable recovery (or perhaps any recovery) in California” proved reasonably prophetic, for a time: a cursory review of employment statistics in Los Angeles for the period 1995 to 2000 shows

that LA has not yet returned to the employment levels of the Cold War era. Employment statistics and other studies completed within the past three years paint an ambiguous, but slightly more optimistic, picture for San Diego. For a region that had become more dependent upon military spending than any other area in the United States, the transition to a peacetime economy proceeded slowly in Southern California.¹⁶

Similar scenes were played out in dozens of communities throughout the United States in the early- to mid-1990s. Contraction within the aviation and aerospace industry was apparent throughout the latter half of the 20th century, but the process accelerated after the end of the Cold War. Long Island-based Fairchild Republic closed its doors in Farmingdale in 1987 after 56 years in business, and was acquired by Grumman, headquartered in neighboring Bethpage. California-based Northrup acquired Grumman, Long Island's largest private employer, in 1994. An entire industry that in 1986 employed as many as 80,000 men and women on Long Island collapsed. The ripple effect from defense-related job cuts initiated a three-year long recession that resulted in the loss of over 100,000 jobs in the region.¹⁷ There was still more consolidation in the latter half of the 1990s. Lockheed Corporation merged with Martin-Marietta in 1995. The newly-formed Lockheed-Martin then acquired Loral in 1996. This first round of mergers generated relatively little protest from federal anti-trust auditors, but when Lockheed-Martin announced its intention to merge with Northrup-Grumman in 1997, the Justice Department

and the Defense Department both raised concerns. The two companies dropped their merger plans in 1998.

Industry consolidation affected the men and women in western New York. The region had suffered these shocks before when Curtiss-Wright faded in the late 1940s, or when Reuben Hollis Fleet decided to move Consolidated Aviation from Buffalo to San Diego in 1935. Some of the people that Fleet left behind, engineers and designers from the old Consolidated who did not wish to relocate, or who sensed an opportunity to continue the work that Fleet had started, founded a new business in Buffalo. The leader of this group was Larry Bell.

In western New York - an area targeted by John F. Kennedy's campaign in 1960 - the men and women employed by the company once owned by Larry Bell were involved in three different mergers in less than two years. Although employment at the company had stabilized in the 1960s and 1970s, the end for many of the Bell employees in Buffalo came in the late 1990s.

Hugh Neeson witnessed the ups and downs at Bell from close range. Neeson had joined Bell in June 1955, only a few weeks after he graduated from Canisius College in Buffalo with a degree in Physics. It was his first job out of college. He started out working on the GAM-63 Rascal missile project. He later worked on Bell's various Vertical Take-off and Landing (VTOL) enterprises. He shifted to the marketing department in the late 1950s, but after a short time was recruited to be the assistant to the Executive Vice President of

Bell, Dr. Richard Hearst. This position gave him a “catbird’s seat on the work at Bell,” Neeson explained; he attended and drafted the agenda for weekly staff meetings.¹⁸

In the early 1970s, former RCA executive Robert Ames, who later became a senior vice president of Textron, recruited Neeson into a manufacturing position at Bell. “It was a blessing, in a way,” Neeson reflected, “It got you to the other side of the world. So I went to work in manufacturing program management.” By 1974, he took over as program manager of what was then called the avionics department, but which later became known as electronics. He spent the rest of his career in this division, first in program management, and finally as division manager.

From Hugh Neeson’s vantage point, Bell Buffalo experienced a re-birth as a subcontractor following the Textron acquisition in 1960. Leveraging the company’s expertise in engineering and development, the employees thrived by doing difficult technical work, and by solving complex engineering problems. Dick Passman, another ex-Bell employee who had left the company in 1956, remembered that the company continued to attract top engineers and designers long after the Textron deal. “It was a delight to work at Bell,” Passman said.¹⁹

Over time, however, Textron tired of the ups and downs of the defense business. The liquidation of Bell assets by Textron had been going on for several years. Bell’s profitable rockets division was sold to Atlantic Research in 1985. Then, in a flurry of activity, ownership of the company changed hands three times. Sperry-Unisys bought the

Bell Buffalo business from Textron in the fall of 1995. Then, less than three months later, Loral bought Sperry-Unisys. The names on Neeson's paycheck changed for the third time in less than one year when Lockheed-Martin acquired Loral in April 1996.

Hugh Neeson retired from what remained of Bell in 1999. He remembers his last days this way: "Lockheed, came up with an offer," he explained. He continued:

I was only a couple months away from my normal retirement date, but they offered us a year's severance package. So six of us with over 200 years of Bell experience retired together. And we had a joint party, which I was part master of ceremonies, part receiver, and there were over 400 [people] there.²⁰

When I asked him what was left of the old company, he told me that only about 30 people remained. The enormous plant that had accommodated the work of Bell employees for nearly 60 years was now home to a handful of sub-contractors and other small businesses. But most of the space was left empty.

Despite the ultimate demise of Bell manufacturing in Buffalo, Hugh Neeson looks back proudly on his work, and that of other companies in western New York. The area was home to some of the founding companies of the aviation industry and produced over 45,000 aircraft in World War II. The industry employed thousands and thousands of people in western New York. The region, Hugh asserted, with Bell and Curtiss, "enjoyed a wonderful first half of the century." Neeson characterized Bell's work from the late '50s to the '90s as a "vestige of terribly interesting technical work, and a lot of it very significant," that was made possible "because the company valued very smart people." He added, "I would say

the only unfortunate thing was that the dedication, risk-taking of the management, the style of Larry Bell, died with him.”

When the dust settled in late 1999, there was almost nothing left of the company that had employed over 47,000 men and women in World War II, and over 15,000 people as late as 1956. These job losses coincided with an overall weakness within the regional economy. One study found that the major metropolitan areas in Upstate New York, including Rochester, Syracuse and Albany, registered roughly 5 per cent employment growth over the period from 1995 to 1999 period, while Buffalo saw only a 2.8 per cent increase.²¹ A second study determined that Buffalo faced the worst economic problems of any New York metro area. The city’s population dropped 4 percent from 1990 to 1999. Its number of small businesses fell 2.3 percent in five years, and its unemployment rate was above the national average for nearly all months from 1991 to 2001.²²

Among the three companies examined in this dissertation – Convair (Consolidated-Vultee), North American Aviation, and Bell – only Larry Bell’s name remains on the front pages of the industry trade publications. Bell Helicopter, still a division of Textron, continues to build weapons for a now much-smaller military. The company left behind in Buffalo, however, is no more. Said Hugh Neeson, the steward for this great company during its final days, “It was a great and interesting place to work for and it’s now joined the memory banks.”²³

This point of view reflects the perspective of those who took pride in the work that they had done, but who now have few regrets that the nation seems to have turned away from the massive military spending that gave them their livelihood. Their philosophical attitude toward the rise and decline of the aerospace industry in the United States reflects the opinion of Dwight David Eisenhower who, nearly 50 years ago, looked ahead to the days when the world could stop "spending the sweat of its laborers, [and] the genius of its scientists," on the development and manufacture of arms.²⁴

Although some lamented the loss of defense jobs in the early 1990s, the "creative destruction" of the free-market process, a concept popularized by the legendary economist and philosopher Joseph Schumpeter, paid handsome dividends for the nation's economy in the second half of the 1990s.²⁵ New companies in new industries were built and populated by ambitious engineers and computer technicians who might once have migrated to defense firms. The Bill Chanas, and John Lulls, and Hugh Neesons of today ply their skills in telecommunications or biotechnology. Other top men and women graduating from technical and business schools have created entirely new businesses on the backbone of a once-obscure computer network known as the Internet. Hundreds of thousands of new businesses have been created in the wake of the Cold War. The American economy may have become dependent upon military spending during the Cold War, but that is no longer the case. San Diego, a city that had been built around defense industries, now feels few ill-effects from the defense drawdown of the past decade. San Diego County boasted an

unemployment rate of only 3.3 percent in July 2001, the lowest July rate in the city in nearly twenty years, and well below the national average.²⁶ As one study of the region concluded, the city's rebirth was aided by a "peace dividend" of hundreds of skilled engineers and managers moving into entrepreneurial pursuits. These men and women created scores of companies that employ thousands of San Diegans.²⁷

The Legacy of John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap

Aaron Friedberg has marveled at the "remarkable degree" to which "the American system has proven itself to be highly resistant to centralized industrial planning," even when faced with a powerful enemy.²⁸ Friedberg is correct to focus on the influence of an enduring anti-statist tradition within the United States that shaped U.S. military spending during the Cold War. Assuming that a large defense establishment was needed during the Cold War, it is certainly true that the character of this military machine, and the means whereby this national security apparatus was maintained, might have been far different under a political system with different political traditions. According to Friedberg, these anti-statist tendencies, "By preventing some of the worst, most stifling excesses of statism, . . . made it easier for the United States to preserve its economic vitality and technological dynamism."²⁹

This dissertation has focused on a related question: how much defense spending is enough? Or, put another way, presuming that some level of military expenditures are

necessary to maintain national security, how much is too much? Although critics assailed Dwight Eisenhower in the late 1950s for his fiscal restraint with respect to military spending, this study has been predicated on a “new” view of the political economy of the New Look, specifically, and of the Cold War, generally. This new view includes a more mature view of the inflationary pressures that government spending imposes on the nation’s economy, a concept first postulated in the late 1960s by Milton Friedman and Edmund Phelps.³⁰ This view inherently challenges the contention made by Eisenhower’s critics – including John F. Kennedy – that a defense budget that consumed more than 10 per cent of the gross national product would impose no serious burden on the nation’s economy. That is because the very deleterious effects of this spending, which were dismissed as highly unlikely in the late 1950s, were evident less than a decade later when spending for a conventional army waging a non-nuclear war in Southeast Asia fueled rapid inflation, impinged upon domestic spending, *and* forced higher taxes.³¹

This “new” perspective on the national security debates of the late 1950s is often associated with the spate of scholarship known as “Eisenhower Revisionism.”³² Within these revisionist works, many scholars praise Eisenhower for restraining military spending at a time when many politicians, including John Kennedy, were demanding that the United States spend more on defense. In 1991, when a balanced federal budget was routinely derided as impossible, Richard Immerman observed that Eisenhower could “hardly be derided for his penny-pinching ways and fiscal orthodoxy.” He continued, “Contemporary

concerns are normally poor barometers for assessing a past president's policies and performance. Because he based his [performance] on the long haul, however, Eisenhower would have wanted us to use them anyway. Most historians have, and their collective judgement is clear: They like Ike."³³

This assessment seems even more accurate today than it did when it was first penned ten years ago. In the wake of the Cold War, with politicians fighting over what to do with a federal budget *surplus* for the first time in a generation, scholars with an eye to the economics of defense spending may eventually conclude that the end of the Cold War, and the end of persistent fiscal imbalance, are inextricably linked. If so they might also be forced to conclude, as Immerman and others have, that Eisenhower's New Look was precisely the long look that was needed during the height of the Cold War.

Major industries and entire geographic regions within the United States grew dependent upon defense spending during the Cold War. The nation, by extension, grew dependent as well. It need not have been that way, however. Eisenhower, ever mindful of the harmful economic effects of defense spending, attempted to push, prod, and persuade his fellow Americans – including members of his own administration – that the wisest course was that of moderation. Believing that the nation's limited resources were best employed by private enterprises, Ike argued that it was better to control government spending in order to secure the nation's economic strength. This economic might, Eisenhower reasoned, was the true source of American power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.

In 1960, however, the nation chose another path. John F. Kennedy pledged to close the missile gap by spending more on defense. The nation's resources were limited only by the imagination of its political leaders. The nation, Kennedy said, could not afford to gamble its survival on the assumption that excessive defense spending would do long-term damage to the U.S. economy. It was better, he said, to gamble with dollars than with lives. The voters agreed. They made John Kennedy the youngest man to have ever been elected president of the United States.

In a footnote to his biography of the slain president, Arthur Schlesinger dismissed as a "fake issue" the Democrats' charge that Eisenhower's budget determined defense needs.

"The Kennedy Administration," he wrote:

proved to be as concerned as the Eisenhower Administration with the balancing of the defense effort against the other demands of the economy, but it believed – correctly – that the balance could be achieved at a much higher level. The two administrations differed, not in their basic attitude toward the idea of budgetary limits on defense spending, but in their estimates as to how much defense spending the economy could stand. As a party used to spending, the Democrats had fewer inhibitions.³⁴

Theodore Sorensen expanded on this theme. He insisted that Kennedy "did not believe that the economic health of either the country or any community had to depend on excessive or inefficient armaments." Sorensen praised Kennedy for spending money on "solid and dependable" deterrent forces, and for building a military that was "lean and fit."³⁵

This dissertation comes to a different conclusion.

This study shows that John F. Kennedy likely believed in the existence of a missile gap in 1960. He was embarrassed to learn in early 1961 that he had been badly mistaken. The missile gap, on which he had campaigned only a few months earlier, was a fiction. Over two years after he had learned the truth about the missile gap, Kennedy harbored doubts about his use of the issue. His attempt to write the history of the missile gap ultimately failed to resolve a number of vexing questions. It is not clear, as Kennedy apparently wished to show, that the defense decisions made by his administration in 1961 were justified in the light of the known and suspected strategic balance; nor is it clear that a "military and intelligence lag in the previous administration" had started the missile gap. On the contrary, the Eisenhower administration knew by late 1959 that there was no missile gap. This information was available to Kennedy before the presidential campaign of 1960, but he refused to believe it. Then, when Kennedy learned in early 1961 that there was no gap, he suppressed this information and pressed forward with his promised defense build-up. Kennedy was motivated by a genuine desire to rebuild the nation's military. He believed that International crises, including a particularly tense confrontation over Berlin, demanded a stronger military posture for the United States. These concerns alone, however, cannot explain his actions in the spring and summer of 1961.

The broader missile gap critique, and John F. Kennedy's use of the issue, as this dissertation has shown, was about more than just missiles. The missile gap idea was a critique of the entire defense establishment of the Eisenhower years. This defense

establishment had been shaped, in part, by economic considerations and by Eisenhower's personal determination to hold down defense spending. Kennedy campaigned, and later governed, from a different perspective, publicly committing himself to a program of expanded government spending, including greater spending on defense. Further, where Eisenhower had resisted the urge to use defense dollars to compensate for regional economic dislocation, Kennedy, by contrast, promised to spend defense dollars in areas most in need of an influx of new jobs and money. He was not the first politician to promise to spend more money on defense, and he was hardly the last. Military spending likely would have increased under a Nixon administration had the vice president defeated Kennedy in November 1960. Although Nixon muted his criticisms of Eisenhower's defense programs, the evidence suggests that he was also committed to expanding U.S. military spending, and he was less concerned than was Eisenhower of the possible detrimental economic effects of this spending. Nonetheless, Kennedy was the president when he learned that there was no missile gap. He did little to slow the Cold War arms race during his thousand days in office. The permanent war economy that Eisenhower feared seemed all the more permanent in 1963 than it had in 1961.

Today, in September 2001, with military spending consuming the lowest share of U.S. output since before World War II, perhaps we have finally reached that point in time that Eisenhower was seeking. Perhaps now, finally, after 50 years of hot and cold war, we have settled into a peacetime economy. There are new threats – as the events of September

11, 2001 dramatically displayed – but they are threats of different kind. It is not clear that the nation need return to the permanent war economy of the Cold War years in order to protect national security in the face of international terrorism. However, given the benefits of relative peace and prosperity of the last ten years, let us hope that we never do.

NOTES

Notes to Preface

1. John F. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, Allan Nevins, ed., (New York: Popular Press, 1960), 34.

2. "An Investment for Peace," Speech by John F. Kennedy excerpted from Congressional Record, in "Speeches - Misc. JFK 6/7/58-3/18/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA (hereafter JFKL), 2-3.

3. Quoted in Maxwell Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: Norton, 1972), 205.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares*, 205.

2. On the missile gap, see Peter Roman, *Eisenhower and The Missile Gap* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Edgar M. Bortome, *The Missile Gap: A Study of the Formulation of Military and Political Policy* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1971); Roy E. Licklider, "The Missile Gap Controversy," *Political Science Quarterly* 85:4 (December 1970): 600-615; James C. Dick, "The Strategic Arms Race, 1957-61: Who Opened a Missile Gap?" *Journal of Politics* 34:4 (November 1972): 1062-1110.

3. Walter Lippmann argued that there were only three themes in Kennedy's successful campaign, the missile gap, economic stagnation, and American decline vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Lippmann cited in Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 17. Eisenhower deemed the missile gap a "useful piece of political demagoguery." Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1956-1961* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 390.

4. Harry Truman had initially resisted efforts to increase the size of the defense budget in the late 1940s, but the combined shock of the Korean War, the ascendancy of the Chinese Communists in 1949, and the Soviet nuclear test, had convinced him of the need to dramatically increase the defense budget. A radical rethinking of the nature of government spending eased this transition. The single document that embodied this philosophy of an expanded, and semi-permanent, defense establishment was a National Security Council

paper known as NSC 68. See Ernest R. May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1993).

5. For a thorough analysis of Eisenhower's national security strategy see Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

6. Figures from John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 359.

7. See, for example, William W. Kaufmann, ed., with Gordon A. Craig, Roger Hilsman, and Klaus Knorr, *Military Policy and National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); and Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1957).

8. See, respectively, Matthew B. Ridgway, as told to Harold H. Martin, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956); James M. Gavin, *War and Peace in the Space Age* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958); and Maxwell Taylor, *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959).

9. David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999); *Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age (The "Gaither Report" of 1957)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1976). The first comprehensive account of the Gaither Report was Morton Halperin's "The Gaither Committee and the Policy Process," *World Politics* 13:3 (April 1961): 360-384. See also Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 125-154; Gregg Herken, *Counsels of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 112-121; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 184-186; Strobe Talbott, *The Master of the Game: Paul Nitze and the Nuclear Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 67-70; and David L. Snead, "Eisenhower, The Gaither Committee, and Intelligence Assessment: The Problem of Equating Capabilities and Intentions," Paper presented at the Society of Military History Annual Meeting, 19 April 1996, Washington, DC.

10. Drew Pearson, "Gaither Report Release Sought," *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 18 December 1957, D11; Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: A Clue to the Top Secret N.S.C. Report," *New York Times*, 20 December 1957, 26.

11. Colin S. Gray, "'Gap' Prediction and America's Defense: Arms Race Behavior in the Eisenhower Years," *Orbis*, 16 (Spring 1972), 258-263; Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 145; Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower's Response to the Soviet Satellite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 183; Robert Watson, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Missile Gap, 1958-1960," Paper presented at the Society of Military History Annual Meeting, 19 April 1996, Washington, DC., passim; Snead, "Eisenhower, The Gaither Committee, and Intelligence Assessment," passim.

12. In fact, Eisenhower presided over a significant expansion of the nation's nuclear weapons program, but this was not prompted by the Gaither Report. See Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, passim; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, passim.; McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Vintage, 1988), 327-328; and Watson, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Missile Gap, 1958-1960."

13. See Albert Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 37 (January 1959): 211-234; Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*; Oskar Morgenstern, *The Question of National Defense* (New York: Random House, 1959); and Robert E. Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

14. See Jeffrey G. Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945-1950* (Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1994).

15. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 121, 140, 197.

16. John F. Kennedy to Abraham Ribicoff, letter, 30 August 1958, in Correspondence, "Kennedy, John F., Speeches - Remarks, Biography 1958-1959-1960" File, Box 11, Abraham Ribicoff Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division (hereafter cited as AR Papers, LOC).

17. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913-1962* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 503. Eisenhower confided in his memoirs that he was personally discouraged by the results, and that he bore at least some share of responsibility for the GOP's poor showing, Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1957-1961*, 374-382.

18. Statement of Senator John F. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.), 2 January 1960, in Correspondence, "Kennedy, John F., Speeches - Remarks, Biography 1958-1959-1960" File, Box 11, AR Papers, LOC; Herbert S. Parmet, *Jack: The Struggles of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Dial, 1980), 414-16, 418, 426.

19. Chalmers Roberts, "Kennedy Puts Name Into Race: Would Not Accept Nomination for No. 2 Spot, He Says," *Washington Post*, 3 January 1960, A1, A12.

20. "An Investment for Peace," Speech by John F. Kennedy excerpted from Congressional Record, in "Speeches - Misc. JFK 6/7/58-3/18/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL, pp. 2-3.

21. Kennedy's foreign policy speeches were widely disseminated in a collection edited by historian Allan Nevins, see Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*.

22. "Senator John F. Kennedy's Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech," Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, California, 15 July 1960, *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Web Site*, 1 July 2001, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, National Archives and Records Administration (Hereafter cited as JFKL Web Site), <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/j071560.htm>>.

23. Other works that have addressed the missile gap include Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy In The White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 498-500; Bottome, *The Missile Gap*, 202-205; Desmond Ball, *Politics and Force Levels: The Strategic Missile Program of the Kennedy Administration* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), 22, 93; Michael R. Beschloss, *MAYDAY: Eisenhower, Khrushchev and the U-2 Affair* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 340; Tom Wicker, *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (New York: Random House, 1991), 232, 255; Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 58-9; Victor Lasky, *JFK: The Man and the Myth* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 510-513; Thomas C. Reeves, *A Question of*

Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 212, 249, 365; Robert A. Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, Volume 2, 1952-1960* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 185, 188, 189, 191-192, 195, 216.

24. Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 17.

25. Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy by Adam Yarmolinsky, 4 March 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, National Security Files (NSF), Departments and Agencies (D&A), Box 298, JFKL.

26. Adam Yarmolinsky, Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, 15 March 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

27. Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 30 May 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL; Lawrence C. McQuade to Nitze, "But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?", 31 May 1960, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, JFKL.

28. See especially Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*; see also Meena Bose, *Shaping and Signaling Presidential Policy: The National Security Decision Making of Eisenhower and Kennedy* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1998).

29. See The Committee for Economic Development (CED), *The Problem of National Security: Some Economic and Administrative Aspects* (Washington, DC: Committee for Economic Development, 1958); and James Tobin, "Dollars, Defense and Doctrines," *The Yale Review* 47:3 (Spring 1958): 324, in "Speech Writings - General 1/2/58-6/5/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

30. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 116-117; and Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 190.

31. See Aaron Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State," *International Security* 16:4 (Spring 1992): 109-139.

32. For an excellent discussion of interests see Lynn Rachele Eden, *The Diplomacy of Force: Interests, the State, and the Making of American Foreign Policy in 1948* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1985): 6-13.

33. Absent a memorandum written in Kennedy's own hand stating "I knew that there was no missile gap in 1960, and I lied about it in order to win the election," this question is impossible to answer with absolute certainty.

34. For example, a handful of B-52s built in the early 1960's remain in service and saw action during Operation Desert Storm. See John Pike, "B-52 Stratofortress," *Federation of American Scientists Web Site*, 23 April 2000, Federation of American Scientists (Hereafter cited as FAS Web Site), <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/bomber/b-52.htm>. Minuteman missile facilities constructed in the early 1960s continue to house ICBMs, even though the Minuteman missiles within those silos were built in the early 1970s. See John Pike, "LGM-30 Minuteman III ICBM," FAS Web Site, 7 May 2001, http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/icbm/lgm-30_3.htm.

35. Bottome, *The Missile Gap*.

36. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*.

37. John Prados, *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength* (New York: Dial Press, 1982).

38. See, especially, David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960," *International Security*, 4:4 (Spring 1983): 3-71; and idem, "Reality and Responsibility: Power and Process in the Making of United States Nuclear Strategy, 1945-1968," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 9:1 (1986): 35-52. See also idem, "Nuclear War Planning," in *The Laws of War: Constraints on Warfare in the Western World*, ed. Michael Howard, George Andreopoulos, and Mark Russell Shulman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 160-190.

39. Divine, *The Spumik Challenge*.

40. Roman, *Eisenhower and The Missile Gap*. See also Christopher Preble, "Book Review, Peter Roman, Eisenhower and the Missile Gap," *Political Science Quarterly* 112:4 (Winter 1997-98): 720-722.

41. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*.

42. Iwan W. Morgan, *Eisenhower Versus "The Spenders": The Eisenhower Administration, the Democrats, and the Budget, 1953-1960* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

43. See, for example, John W. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991).

44. Ethan Kapstein, *The Political Economy of National Security: A Global Perspective*. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1992). See also James Schlesinger, *The Political Economy of National Security* (New York: Praeger, 1960); and Charles Hitch and Ronald McKean, *The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).

45. See Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill."

46. On Eisenhower's presumed unwillingness to resort to military Keynesianism see Ann Mari May, "President Eisenhower, Economic Policy, and the 1960 Presidential Election" *The Journal of Economic History* 50:2 (1990): 417-427; and Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913-1962*, 535-536.

47. Numerous previous studies have analyzed this apparatus in considerable detail. For a recent comparison of national security policy making within the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations see Bose, *Shaping and Signaling Presidential Policy*. For the Eisenhower Administration see Roman, *Eisenhower and The Missile Gap*; and Douglas Kinnard, *President Eisenhower and Strategy Management: A Study in Defense Politics* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1977). For the Kennedy Administration see Rosenberg, "Reality and Responsibility"; and Graham T. Allison, with Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd Edition (New York: Longman, 1999). For a comparison of presidential leadership and management see Phillip

G. Henderson, *Managing the Presidency: The Eisenhower Legacy – From Kennedy to Reagan* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988).

48. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace: 1956-1961*, 390.

49. Although increases in limited war-fighting capability might have been warranted on strictly military grounds, the unwillingness to confront the question of nuclear “overkill” led the Kennedy administration to push forward with several weapons programs that were no longer justified in the absence of the missile gap. See Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 499-500; Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 174-78; Raymond Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking: A Decision Point in the Kennedy Administration* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1984), 17-18. On nuclear weapons overkill within the Eisenhower Administration see Rosenberg, “The Origins of Overkill.”

50. For a discussion of the sociological, psychological and cultural effects of living under the threat of impending nuclear annihilation see, Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); and Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930's* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). On the political effects of the Cold War see John Kenneth White, *Still Seeing Red: How the Cold War Shapes the New American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

Notes to Chapter 2

1. From “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security (April 14, 1950),” as reprinted in Ernest May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1993), 73.

2. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 75. State of the Union speech reprinted from *New York Times*, 8 January 1954.

3. Tobin, “Dollars, Defense and Doctrines.”

4. See Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much is Enough? Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); and Richard A. Aliano, *American Defense Policy from Eisenhower to Kennedy: The Politics of Changing Military Requirements* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1975).

5. See, for example, Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, The Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 23-24, 202, 496-497.

6. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 105.

7. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 270-271. See also Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals*.

8. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 309.

9. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 106.

10. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 93. Keyserling rejected the Keynesian label, believing it to be "static" and developed within an atmosphere of worldwide depression. By contrast, Keyserling believed primarily in the dynamics of economic growth. Leon Keyserling, Oral History Interview with Jerry N. Ness, 10 May 1971, Washington, DC, *Harry S. Truman Presidential Library Web Site*, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, National Archives and Records Administration (Hereafter cited as HSTL Web Site), <<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/keyser12.htm>>.

11. Leon Keyserling and John Clark to Truman, 26 August 1949, Leon H. Keyserling Papers, Box 2, Report File, 1946-1953, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, Missouri (Hereafter HSTL), cited in Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 107.

12. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 88-93. On growthmanship, see Robert M. Collins, "The Emergence of Economic Growthmanship in the United States:

Federal Policy and Economic Knowledge in the Truman Years,” in Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple, eds., *The State and Economic Knowledge: The British and American Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 138-70, cited in Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 88-89.

13. [Leon Keyserling,] “Biographical Sketch,” HSTL Web Site, <<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/keyserli.htm#bio>>; idem., Oral History Interview with Jerry N. Ness, 3 May 1971, HSTL Web Site <<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/keyserl1.htm>>.

14. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 94.

15. Ibid., 93-94.

16. Edward S. Flash, *Economic Advice and Presidential Leadership: The Council of Economic Advisers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 38; Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 110.

17. David Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities: Paul Nitze and the Cold War* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 94.

18. Ibid., 12-15, 29-32; Talbott, *The Master of the Game*, 23-32.

19. Alonzo Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 527-529; and David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 771-773.

20. At this same time, Truman moved ahead with plans to develop the hydrogen bomb, see David Alan Rosenberg, “American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision,” *Journal of American History* 66:2 (June 1979): 62-87.

21. Nitze argues otherwise, saying that NSC 68 reaffirmed the policies of NSC 20/4 drafted in 1948 by George Kennan, see Paul H. Nitze, with Ann M. Smith and Steven L. Rearden, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision – A Memoir* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 97. Most scholars disagree, however, arguing that Nitze’s view was a sharp departure from that of his predecessor, Kennan. See, for example, Richard

Melanson, "The Foundations of Eisenhower's Foreign Policy: Continuity, Community and Consensus." in *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the Fifties*, Richard A. Melanson and David Mayers, eds. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 37.

22. May, *American Cold War Strategy*, 73.

23. *Ibid.*, 45, 46.

24. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 110.

25. *Ibid.*, 107-8. See also Paul Y. Hammond, "NSC 68: Prologue to Rearmament," in Schilling, Hammond, and Snyder, eds., *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*; and Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," *International Security*, IV (Fall, 1979), 116-138.

26. See, on the range of policy choices relative to NSC 68, Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 355-60; Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, 120-23; and Ernest May, "NSC 68", in May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy*, 15.

27. Years later Paul Nitze conceded that Keyserling was pushing for expenditures in excess of \$40 billion, but Nitze argued that "those of us who worked on NSC 68 were more conservative. We believed that increases in defense spending should be coupled with increases in taxes rather than relying on deficit spending..." Paul Nitze, "Nitze's Commentary," in May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy*, 106.

28. Paul G. Pierpaoli, Jr., *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 8-10.

29. "Oral History Interview with Leon Keyserling," 10 May 1971.

30. Leon H. Keyserling, "Defense Output and a \$350-Billion Economy," *The Washington Post*, 18 December 1950, 9.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

33. Pierpaoli, *Truman and Korea*, 136; Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 27.
34. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 111-12.
35. *Ibid.*, 115. This is a persistent theme throughout Friedberg's work. Paul Pierpaoli makes a similar argument, see Pierpaoli, *Truman and Korea*, 132-133.
36. "Stability vs. Defense Spending," Letter to the Editor of *Business Week Magazine* by Leon H. Keyserling, February 23, 1952, 72, 74, 76.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 27, 28.
39. *Ibid.*, 29-30.
40. *Ibid.*, 33-34; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 124-125.
41. *Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry S Truman, 1952-53* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1966), 1197-1202, cited in Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 492.
42. Eisenhower attributes the term to Admiral Arthur Radford's use of it in a speech before the National Press Club on 14 December 1953, see Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change, 1953-1956* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963), 449. In discussions within the National Security Council, Army Chief of Staff Matthew Ridgway referred to the "new concept," Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 186. The term was popularized in a widely-circulated series of articles by Charles J. V. Murphy, "The Eisenhower Shift: Part I," *Fortune*, January 1956, 83-87, 206, 208; *idem*, "The Eisenhower Shift: Part II," *ibid.* February 1956, 110-13, 226-28, 230-32, 235; *idem*, "The Eisenhower Shift: Part III," *ibid.* March 1956, 110-12, 230-31, 234, 237-38; and *idem*, "Eisenhower's Most Critical Defense Budget," *ibid.* December 1956, 112-14, 246, 248, 251-52, 254, cited in Richard Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist: An Agonizing Reappraisal," *Diplomatic History* 14 (Summer 1990): 319-24. In 1961, political

scientist Samuel Huntington recognized the far-reaching differences between Eisenhower's New Look and Truman's NSC 68; see Huntington, *The Common Defense*, 64-65.

43. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 132-133.

44. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 44.

45. From Congress, Senate, *Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services on S. Con. Res. 8, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess.* (Washington, 1951), 2, cited in Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 96.

46. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 75. State of the Union speech reprinted from *New York Times*, 8 January 1954.

47. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 133.

48. Yale sociologist Harold Lasswell coined the term, see Friedberg, "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State?"; and idem, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 57-58. On Eisenhower and the "garrison state," see Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 133. Members of the Truman administration had similar concerns, especially in the years prior to NSC-68, see Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 21-24. The Committee for Economic Development (CED), one of Eisenhower's most vociferous critics in the late 1950s, had also warned against the dangers of the garrison state in 1949, see Committee for Economic Defense (CED), *National Security and Our Individual Freedom* (New York: CED, 1949), cited in Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 113, ff 10.

49. Eisenhower to Lucius Du Bignon Clay, 9 February 1952, *The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, ed. Louis Galambos, 13:963, cited in Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist," 328. On the Great Equation, see Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 76-77; and Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 44, 47.

50. Quoted in Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill," in Steven E. Miller, ed., *Strategy and Nuclear Deterrence: An International Security Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 137. Ambiguity about the centrality of nuclear weapons in the defense of Europe, and concern that a shift in policy would frighten and discourage wary

allies, mitigated against a wholesale restructuring of U.S. armed forces. See Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 193.

51. Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*, 174-5.

52. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 15.

53. Ibid. On Eisenhower and the federal budget generally see, Morgan, *Eisenhower Versus "The Spenders"*.

54. A review of NSC discussions finds Eisenhower staking out a middle ground between budget hawks such as Humphrey and Budget Director Dodge who argued for more cuts, and military leaders who argued for more money. See, for example, Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 108, 192.

55. In his own memoirs, Eisenhower counted the Interstate Highway System and the Saint Lawrence Seaway as among the greatest successes of his first term. See Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change, 1953-1956*, 574.

56. Herbert Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America, Revised Edition* (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 1990), 283.

57. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 108, 192.

58. Ibid., 20-22. On Eisenhower's friendship with Humphrey, see Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President, Vol. 2* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 23. On Eisenhower's suggestion that Humphrey should run for president, see Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *The Diary of James C. Hagerty* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983), entry for 14 December 1955, 243, cited in Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 21-22.

59. United States, Department of the Treasury, "Fact Sheet OPC-54 – Biographical Sketch of George M. Humphrey," *The Learning Vault*, <<http://www.treas.gov/opc/opc0054.html>>.

60. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 23-24.

61. Humphrey letter to DDE, 8 January 1947, Ann Whitman Administrative Series (AWAS), Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas, (Hereafter cited as DDEL), quoted in Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 100.

62. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 24.

63. *Ibid.*, 44. Keyserling disputes the claim that the Council's funding was reduced because the Council had lost favor on Capitol Hill. See "Oral History Interview with Leon Keyserling," 10 May 1971.

64. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 35; Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America*, 294.

65. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 25-26.

66. *Ibid.*, 26. Eisenhower's letter to Hazlett is quoted from Robert Griffith, ed., *Ike's Letters to a Friend: 1941-1958* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 138.

67. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 25-27.

68. *Ibid.*, 40-41.

69. *Ibid.*, 41. Sloan explains that Saulnier's advice was less significant within an administration that had become set in its ways by the second term.

70. *Ibid.*, 28-32. Sloan records that some within the BOB resented the singular focus on balancing the budget, believing that this would relegate the Bureau to an exclusively negative role within policy making. See Larry Berman, *The Office of Management and Budget and the Presidency, 1921-1979* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 56.

71. *Ibid.*, 154.

72. *Ibid.*

73. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 77, 144.

74. On Eisenhower's presumed unwillingness to resort to military Keynesianism see Ann Mari May, "President Eisenhower, Economic Policy, and the 1960 Presidential Election," *The Journal of Economic History* 50:2 (1990), 417-427; and Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-62* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 535-536.

75. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 134.

76. On the Lubbell proposal see Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 113.

77. Dwight D. Eisenhower, "A Chance for Peace," Eisenhower speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, 16 April 1953, *Public Papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1960), 182.

78. For example, total national security expenditures, excluding veterans' benefits, fell to \$40.2 billion in 1955 from a high of \$50.4 billion in 1953, but rose again to \$46.6 billion in 1959. Figures from Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 359.

79. On Douhet, see Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 226-227, 334-335; and Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), Chapter 3.

80. Others at the USSBS included John Kenneth Galbraith and George Ball, see Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, 25-26; Talbott, *Master of the Game*, 83; Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, 40.

81. See, for example, Bernard Brodie, ed., *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1946).

82. Although a knowledgeable group of military theorists believed that a "preventive" attack would be capable of striking a major blow against the Soviet nuclear force, civilian leaders ultimately rejected the concept of preventive war. Marc Trachtenberg, "A 'Wasting Asset': American Strategy and the Shifting Nuclear Balance,

1949-1954," in *History and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 100-152.

83. Marc Trachtenberg, "Strategic Thought in America, 1952-1966," in *History and Strategy*, 3-46. See also Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*, *passim*.

84. Kaufmann, et. al., *Military Policy and National Security*. See also Kaplan, *Wizards of Armageddon*, 185-200.

85. Henry A. Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 10.

86. *Ibid.*, 11-12, 16.

87. *Ibid.*, 19. On French military planning in the interwar years see Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); on the failures of this policy see Eliot Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), Chapter 8, "Catastrophic Failure: The French Army and Air Force, May-June 1940," 197-230.

88. Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, 34-59.

89. *Ibid.*, 59-60.

90. *Ibid.*, 134, 155.

91. *Ibid.*, 93, 98.

92. *Ibid.*, 110, 125 (emphasis in original).

93. *Ibid.*, 129.

94. Robert E. Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

95. From *New York Times*, 13 February 1956, cited in Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, 161.

96. On Eisenhower's reaction see "Memorandum of Discussion at the 280th Meeting of the National Security Council, March 22, 1956," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Volume XIX: National Security Policy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990) (hereafter *FRUS*, followed by year and volume), 271.

97. On the Great Equation see Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 97-101.

98. Robert Merry, *Taking on the World: Joseph and Stewart Alsop--Guardians of the American Century* (New York: Viking, 1996), 315-16.

99. Stephen J. Zaloga, *Target America: The Soviet Union and the Strategic Arms Race, 1945-1964* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993), 145. According to Zaloga, earlier launches of the Soviet R-7 had failed, but when an R-7 was launched on 21 August 1957, and flew over 6,000 km, it marked the first ever successful launch of an ICBM. Nikita Khrushchev reportedly stood beside Sergey Korolev, the father of the Soviet missile program, to witness the second successful launch of the R-7 on 7 September 1957.

100. The psychological and cultural impact of the *Sputnik* launches has been dealt with in great detail elsewhere, and will not be repeated here. For reference see Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, xiii-xiv, 43, 71, and *passim*; Rip Bulkeley, *The Sputniks Crisis and Early United States Space Policy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 3-8; Walter A. MacDougall, *...The Heavens and the Earth* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 142-151; Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 118; Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 169, 229.

101. Quoted from *Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age (The "Gaither Report" of 1957)* (Hereafter cited as The "Gaither Report" (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1976). For a thorough analysis of the Gaither Committee see David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999). The first comprehensive account of the Gaither Report was Morton Halperin "The Gaither Committee and the Policy Process," *World Politics* 13:3 (April 1961): 360-384. See also Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*, 125-154; Gregg

Herken, *Counsels of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 112-121; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 184-186; Talbott, *Master of the Game*, 67-70.

102. David Callahan characterizes Nitze's good fortune at having been tapped to write the report as "a prayer answered." For the man who "had been an exiled prophet in the wilderness, decrying the strategic heresies of Eisenhower and Dulles," Callahan write, Nitze now "had a pulpit...[a]nd from it he would denounce massive retaliation." Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, 169. See also Talbott, *Master of the Game*, 67-69, and Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, 166-169.

103. May, *American Cold War Strategy*, 101.

104. The "Gaither Report," 23.

105. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War*, 129-130.

106. Drew Pearson, "Gaither Report Release Sought," *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 18 December 1957, D11; Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: A Clue to the Top Secret N.S.C. Report," *New York Times*, 20 December 1957, 26. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Arleigh Burke complained bitterly of this security breach, see CNO to the JCS, memorandum, December 20, 1957, "Leak of Gaither Report to Press," JCS, 1810/70, *Declassified Documents Quarterly Catalog (DDQC)*, 1983/207; see also Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War*, 138-141.

107. "International Security: The Military Aspect," published as Report 2 in Rockefeller Panel, *Prospect for America* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), 93; Quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 30. On Kissinger's role, see Marvin Kalb, and Bernard Kalb, *Kissinger* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), 55-56.

108. "International Security: The Military Aspect," Rockefeller Panel, *Prospect for America*, 93.

109. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

110. *Ibid.*, 151-152. The second report alluded to was published on 21 April 1958 as "The Challenge to America: Its Economic and Social Aspects," reprinted in *Prospect for*

America as Report 4. This report made no specific recommendations with respect to military spending and the budget, but did assert that necessary spending needs could be met within the context of a high-growth economy. See Rockefeller Panel, *Prospect for America*, 252.

111. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 31.

112. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 22.

113. Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill," 176, and passim; Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 177.

114. On the Killian Committee see, for example, Richard V. Damms, "James Killian, the Technological Capabilities Panel, and the Emergence of President Eisenhower's 'Scientific-Technological Elite,'" *Diplomatic History* 24:1 (Winter 2000), 57-78; Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill," 148; Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 25; MacDougall, ...*The Heavens and the Earth*, 116-118; Bulkeley, *The Sputniks Crisis and Early United States Space Policy*, 147-148; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, 24; Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War*, 35-39.

115. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 248.

116. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 121-22, 192; Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 248; Watson, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Missile Gap, 1958-1960"; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, passim.; Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 327-328.

117. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 67.

118. In testimony before Congress in 1955 Heller said "Although the administration had incurred continual deficits, they have done so with evident distaste," Congress, Joint Committee on the Economic Report, *January 1955 Economic Report of the President, Hearings*, 84th Congress, 1st Session, 1955, 329, cited in Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America*, 499; and then, in June 1957, just two months before the start of the next recession, Heller advised *against* a tax cut arguing that there were "no problems of consumption and investment that take priority over a balanced cash budget," Congress, Joint Economic

Committee, Subcommittee on Fiscal Policy, *Fiscal Policy Implications of the Economic Outlook and Budget Developments: Hearings*, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, 136, cited in Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America*, 310.

119. Walter Heller, *New Dimensions of Political Economy* (New York: Norton, 1966), 28, 29.

120. Seymour E. Harris, "Taxes and the Economy," *Current History* (October 1956), 207.

121. *Ibid.*, 206-207.

122. *Ibid.*, 208.

123. *Ibid.*, 208.

124. *Ibid.*, 208-209.

125. *Ibid.*, 209-210.

126. *Ibid.*, 210-211.

127. Eisenhower won 457 electoral votes to Stevenson's 73 with over 57 percent of the popular vote, from Harold W. Stanley and Richard G. Niemi, *Vital Statistics on American Politics, 1999-2000* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2000), 28.

128. Leon Keyserling, "The Economy in '58," *The New Republic*, 13 January 1958, 13-14.

129. *Ibid.*, 15.

130. Leon Keyserling, "Danger Signs in the Economy," *The Washington Post*, 6 February 1958, A12.

131. Leon Keyserling, "The Nonsense About Recession and Inflation," *The New Republic*, 10 March 1958, 11.

132. Ibid., 12.

133. James Tobin, "Autobiography of James Tobin," *Nobel Lectures, Economic Sciences 1969-1980*, 21 June 2000, The Nobel Foundation, <<http://www.nobel.se/economics/laureates/1981/tobin-autobio.html>>.

134. Ibid.

135. Tobin, "Dollars, Defense and Doctrines," 324.

136. Ibid., 328.

137. Ibid., 325.

138. Ibid., 327, 330.

139. Ibid., 328.

140. Ibid., 328-9.

141. Ibid., 325.

142. Ibid., 329.

143. Ibid., 333.

144. Ibid., 325.

145. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 66.

146. [John Kenneth Galbraith], "Emeritus Professor John Kenneth Galbraith's Biography," (hereafter cited as "Galbraith Biography"), Department of Economics, Harvard University, <<http://www.economics.harvard.edu/emeritus/galbraith/cv.html>>.

147. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 66-7. Galbraith had campaigned with Stevenson in 1952 and 1956, see "Galbraith Biography."

148. John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1958), 21-33.

149. *Ibid.*, 2-3.

150. *Ibid.*, 20.

151. *Ibid.*, 18.

152. *Ibid.*, 85-6.

153. *Ibid.*, 105-6.

154. *Ibid.*, 77.

155. *Ibid.*, 166.

156. *Ibid.*, 178, 180.

157. *Ibid.*, 175.

158. *Ibid.*, 176.

159. *Ibid.*

160. *Ibid.*, 266, 267, 268.

161. *Ibid.*, 309.

162. *Ibid.*, 333.

163. *Ibid.*, 351.

164. *Ibid.*, 352.

165. *Ibid.*

166. *Ibid.*, 355.

167. Joint Committee on the Economic Report, *January 1955 Economic Report of the President, Hearings*, 326, cited in Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America*, 284.

168. [Paul A. Samuelson], "Autobiography of Paul A. Samuelson," *Nobel Lectures, Economic Sciences 1969-1980*, 17 April 2001, The Nobel Foundation, <<http://www.nobel.se/economics/laureates/1970/samuelson-bio.html>>.

169. See, for example, The Committee for Economic Development (CED), *The Problem of National Security*; Dale J. Hekhuis, "The Economics of US – USSR National Security Expenditures," RM 58TMP-1, January, 1958, report prepared for the General Election Company, Technical Military Planning Operation, Santa Barbara, California; and Klaus Knorr, *Is the American Defense Effort Enough?* (Princeton: Center for International Studies, Princeton University, 23 December 1957).

170. See, for example, Trachtenberg, "Strategic Thought in America, 1952-1966" in *History and Strategy*, 3-46; Russell Weigley, "Strategies of Deterrence and of Action: The Strategy Intellectuals," in *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1977), 399-440; and Lawrence Freedman, "The First Two Generations of Nuclear Strategists," in Peter Paret, ed. *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 735-778.

171. Richard Immerman, "Book Reviews," *Political Science Quarterly* 106:1 (Spring 1991), 146; Morgan, *Eisenhower Versus "The Spenders,"* 178.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, 34.

2. Tobin, "Dollars, Defense and Doctrines," 334.

3. Tobin's article provided a tidy summary of the major criticisms of the day and his views made their way into Kennedy's stump speeches – a copy of the article was included in speechwriter Richard Goodwin's campaign files, see "Speech Writings - General 1/2/58-6/5/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL. Tobin would later become the youngest member of Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers, Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 452.

4. Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 418, 426.

5. Kennedy's father, Joseph P. Kennedy, played an active role in the publication of *Why England Slept* and reportedly purchased thousands of copies himself, see Ronald Kessler, *The Sins of the Father: Joseph P. Kennedy and the Dynasty He Founded* (New York: Time Warner, 1996), 218-220; and Nigel Hamilton, *JFK: Reckless Youth* (New York: Random House, 1992), 380.

6. Michael R. Meagher, "'In an Atmosphere of National Peril': The Development of John F. Kennedy's World View," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 27:3 (Summer 1997), 467-481.

7. David Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, ed. Oscar Handlin (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 30.

8. One of these was his vote requiring jury trials for accused violators of the 1957 Civil Rights Act, at a time when very few white southerners respected the legal rights of Black Americans. Vice President Nixon denounced this amendment to the Civil Rights Act as a "vote against the right to vote." Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 31.

9. Kennedy considered Sorensen to be a "practical liberal," even though Sorensen was not above taking a stand on principle. He supported civil rights and was a founding member of a chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality in his home state of Nebraska. He was also a conscientious objector in World War II. Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 32.

10. Meagher, "'In an Atmosphere of National Peril'."

11. Ridgway, *Soldier*, 19-29; 34-44.
12. *Ibid.*, 47-50.
13. *Ibid.*, 323-332.
14. *Ibid.*, 324, 328.
15. J. H. Thompson, *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 15 April 1956, 5; J. L. Cross, *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 April 1956, 9.
16. "Three Stars and Out," *New York Times*, 9 January 1958, p. 17; Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants: The Campaigns of France and Germany, 1944-1945* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 291.
17. James M. Gavin, "Why Missiles," *Army*, November 1957, 25.
18. Alvin Schuster, "Gen. Gavin, Missile Aide, to Quit; Criticized Joint Chiefs System," *New York Times*, 5 January 1958, 1; "Brucker Promises Gavin 4-Star Rank," *New York Times*, 8 January 1958. For more on Gavin see T. Michael Booth and Duncan Spencer, *Paratrooper: The Life of Gen. James M. Gavin* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).
19. "Gavin Retires, Backs Atomic Tests," *New York Times*, 1 April 1958, 5.
20. Gavin, *War and Peace in the Space Age*.
21. *Ibid.*, 4.
22. Mark S. Watson, "Lest We Be Nibbled to Death: A Brilliant Retired General Considers Ways to Meet the Nation's Grave Peril," *New York Times*, 10 August 1958, sec. 7, p. 1; Orville Prescott, "Books of the Times," *New York Times*, 11 August 1958, p. 11; J.H. Thompson, *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 10 August 1958, p. 1.

23. James E. King, Jr., "Arms and Man in the Nuclear-Rocket Era," the *New Republic*, 139:9 (1 September 1958), 16-17. The notion that nuclear parity would lead to more conventional wars, and therefore increase the likelihood of international conflict, is sometimes referred to as the stability/instability paradox. Glenn Snyder first developed this theory in his essay "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," in Paul Seabury, ed., *Balance of Power* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965), 184-201. Robert Jervis discusses the instability/instability paradox in detail, and concludes that the implications drawn from the paradox are often incorrect, Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), especially 38-45, and Chapter 3.

24. James A. Smith, *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy State* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 104-106.

25. The Subcommittee on Economic Policies and National Security, responsible for drafting *The Problem of National Security*, included William C. Foster of the Gaither Report, and other key advisers within the administration, including Richard Bissell of the Central Intelligence Agency. Other prominent members of the committee included Charles Hitch, head of the economics division at the Rand Corporation, and Klaus Knorr of Princeton University, and a contributor to William W. Kaufmann's earlier critique of the New Look. The research director for the CED was Herbert Stein, later an economic advisor to Richard Nixon.

26. Committee for Economic Development (CED), *The Problem of National Security*, 2.

27. *Ibid.*, 4, 6.

28. As evidence of this, the authors pointed out that "[i]n a typical month of 1957...the United States produced over 500,000 automobiles and 15 B-52's. We can be sure," the authors continued, "that the ratio was vastly different in the Soviet Union." *Ibid.*, 8-9.

29. *Ibid.*, 10.

30. Aaron Friedberg comes to a similar conclusion in his book, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, stressing how persistent anti-statism in the United States restrained what otherwise would have been excessive spending on national defense, and enabled the United States to ultimately survive the Cold War without causing untold damage to its institutions. See Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 3-4.

31. Committee for Economic Development (CED), *The Problem of National Security*, 11.

32. *Ibid.*, 15, 16.

33. *Ibid.*, 19.

34. *Ibid.*, 20.

35. *Ibid.*, 21.

36. *Ibid.*, 23.

37. *Ibid.*, 24.

38. *Ibid.*, 26.

39. *Ibid.*, 51.

40. *Ibid.*, 27.

41. *Ibid.*, 52. Emphasis in the original.

42. Seymour Harris, *The Economics of the Political Parties* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 175, 177.

43. "Secretary McElroy Reports No Evidence of Soviet Lead on ICBM," *New York Times*, 4 April 1958; "U.S. Missile Lead Seen by Deputy Secretary of Defense Quarles," *New York Herald Tribune*, 14 April 1958, both cited in Memorandum, Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 17 June 1963, Appendix B, "Statements on the Missile Gap by

Senator John F. Kennedy, 1957-1960," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

44. See Brian R. Duchin, "'The Most Spectacular Legislative Battle of that Year': President Eisenhower and the 1958 Reorganization of the Department of Defense," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24:2 (Spring 1994), 243-262.

45. Merry, *Taking on the World*, 35-37.

46. *Ibid.*, 93-104, *passim*.

47. *Ibid.*, 466-467.

48. Edwin M. Yoder, Jr., *Joe Alsop's Cold War: A Study of Journalistic Influence and Intrigue* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 164.

49. Joseph W. Alsop (JWA), "The New Balance of Power," *Encounter* (May 1958): 3-10.

50. JWA, "Our Government Untruths," *New York Herald Tribune*, 1 August 1958, 10.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Merry, *Taking on the World*, 342.

53. *New York Times*, 7 November 1957, 16, cited in S. Nelson Drew, "Expecting the Approach of Danger: The 'Missile Gap' as a Study of Executive-Congressional Competition in Building Consensus on National Security Issues," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19:2 (Spring 1989), 326.

54. Nitze to Bundy, 17 June 1963, Appendix B, "Statements on the Missile Gap by Senator John F. Kennedy, 1957-1960."

55. Watson, "Lest We Be Nibbled to Death"; Prescott, "Books of the Times."

56. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, 60.

57. *Ibid.*, 70, 66.

58. *Ibid.*, 68-69.

59. *Ibid.*, 69.

60. *Ibid.*, 69-70.

61. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record* (14 August 1958), 17574; Parmet, *Jack: The Struggles of John F. Kennedy*, 446-448. Allan Nevins, who edited a book of Kennedy speeches prior to the 1960 presidential campaign, explained that "Kennedy's plea for realism in facing an imminent period of national peril caused a sensation in Congress" when Senator Homer Capehart of Indiana "threatened to have the galleries cleared on the ground that the speech was disclosing information inimical to the national interest." But Nevins defended Kennedy by observing that Kennedy's statements "as to the coming disparity between American and Russian strengths in long-range missiles were familiar to experts," and he further noted that Gavin had resigned from the army to present such views in his book. Nevins also cited George Kennan and Raymond Garthoff in support of Kennedy's argument that the "deterrent ratio" had shifted against the United States, see Nevin's footnote in Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, 60-61.

62. *Congressional Record*, 14 August 1958, 17574.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*, 17575.

65. *Ibid.*, 17576.

66. JWA, "An Authentic Voice," *New York Herald Tribune*, 17 August 1958, sec. 2, 1.

67. JWA, "A Very Big Issue: ICBM," *New York Herald Tribune*, 18 August 1958, 12.

68. JWA to Richard Rovere at the *New Yorker*, 15 August 1958; JWA to Henry Luce at *Time*, 3 September 1958, Luce to JWA (reply to preceding), 23 September 1958; and JWA to Luce, 3 October 1958. JWA & Stewart Alsop (SA) Papers, Box 14, "General correspondence, Aug-Sept 1958," Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Washington, DC (Hereafter cited as JWA & SA Papers).

69. John F. Kennedy letter to JWA, 23 August 1958, Box 14, "General correspondence, Aug-Sept 1958," JWA & SA Papers; Merry, *Taking on the World*, 342; JWA, "I've Seen the Best of It," with Adam Plat (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 411.

70. John F. Kennedy to Abraham Ribicoff, letter, 30 August 1958, in Correspondence, "Kennedy, John F., Speeches - Remarks, Biography 1958-1959-1960" File, Box 11, AR Papers, LOC.

71. Ibid.

72. John F. Kennedy, "When the Executive Fails to Lead," *The Reporter* 19:4 (18 September 1958): 14-17.

73. "Missile Lag Danger Seen by Kennedy: Senator Calls for Step-Up To Meet Russian Capabilities," *Baltimore Sun*, 25 September 1958, p. 5, cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

74. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity*, 144.

75. Ibid.

76. The total number of senators increased in the 86th Congress from 96 to 100 with the addition of members from the newly-admitted states of Alaska and Hawaii. Prior to the change in composition in the Senate, in the 85th Congress, the Democrats held an advantage of 49 to 47 seats for the Republican Party. United States, Congress, Senate, *U.S. Senate Statistics: Majority and Minority Parties*, <http://www.senate.gov/learning/stat_13.html>.

77. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-62*, 485.

78. Ibid., 503-504. White House aides claimed that Eisenhower had saved the Republicans from losing an additional 20 seats in the House of Representatives, Morgan, *Eisenhower Versus "The Spenders,"* 126.

79. Eisenhower confided in his memoirs that he was personally discouraged by the results, and that he bore at least some share of responsibility for the Party's poor showing, Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1957-1961*, 374-382. See also Thomas M. Gaskin, "Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, the Eisenhower Administration and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1957-1960," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24:2 (Spring 1994), 349.

80. Rowland Evans, Jr., "Rep. Mahon Warns U.S. Against Cuts in Defense," *New York Herald Tribune*, Sunday, 23 November 1958, 7.

81. Rowland Evans, Jr., "The New Budget," *New York Herald Tribune*, Sunday, 23 November 1958, 2:1.

82. Morgan, *Eisenhower Versus "The Spenders,"* 127.

83. Ibid., 127-128.

84. Years later, Joseph Alsop said of Sherman Adams that he was "much more of a crook than anyone knows." Alsop told interviewer John Luter that Robert and John Kennedy had "the dirt" on Adams and had threatened to prosecute. JWA interview, conducted 6/14/72 by John Luter at Columbia University, originally part of the Dwight David Eisenhower Library, Oral History (DDEL-OH, DDE Administration Project), page 8, located in Box 268, "Subject Files - Oral History Interviews," JWA & SA Papers. Many have speculated that Adams was a very important member of Eisenhower's team, but Fred Greenstein and Stephen Ambrose have both argued that Adams's successor, Wilton Persons, was a stronger Chief of Staff. The evidence, nonetheless, suggests that Eisenhower did suffer the loss of Adams's political savvy; Persons may have been a trusted adviser, but he was less capable of taking the lead, or negotiating behind the scenes, than the former governor of New Hampshire who had led Eisenhower's forces on the floor of the 1952 GOP convention. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 472; Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 146.

85. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 361-2. The definitive survey of Dulles's career is Richard H. Immerman's, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999). See also Immerman's edited volume, *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Townshend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973).

86. See Campbell Craig, *Destroying the Village: Eisenhower and Themonuclear War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), especially 49-50, 64-65.

87. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, 9.

88. "Memo of meeting with several others on 7/28/59," In "Eisenhower, Dwight D." File, Box 25, Arthur Krock Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ (hereafter cited as Krock Papers).

89. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 407.

90. "The Growing Missile Gap – long feature story by Brig. Gen. Thomas R. Phillips (USA Ret.), in the *Reporter* magazine," 8 January 1959, Bundy's memo to Nitze explained that the Phillips' story quoted intelligence reports as saying the USSR had manufactured about 20,000 ballistic missiles and fired more than a thousand of them, cited in Nitze to Bundy, 17 June 1963.

91. Brig. Gen. Thomas R. Phillips (USA Ret.), "McElroy's Claim on Missiles Distorts Intelligence Reports: Secretary Uses Expression 'Positive Evidence' – No Such Thing in Intelligence Estimates," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 23 January 1959, 1C, 8C; see also Senator Symington Denies Accuracy of Statement by Vice President Nixon that U.S. is leading Russia in Developing Military Missiles – *Baltimore Sun*, 13 January 1959; In Press Conference at Pentagon Secretary McElroy stated: "As of now we have no evidence that – no positive evidence – that Russia is ahead of us in ICBMs, operational, at all.," 22 January 1959; Mark Watson, "McElroy Denies U.S. Lags on ICBM," *Baltimore Sun*, 23 January 1959 (News report on press conference listed above.); U.S. Lags Seriously in Missiles – Robert S. Allen in *Virginia Sun*, Quotes McElroy and General Twining (as Chairman of the

JCS) as saying in 1962 U.S. will have 300 ICBMs and USSR 1,000, 23 January 1959, all cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

92. Philip Potter, "Symington Firm in Missile View – Hears CIA – Still Predicts 4-1 U.S. Lag by 1961," *Baltimore Sun*, 5 February 1959; "Eisenhower Doubts Reds on Missiles – Tells Nation to Quit Worrying," *N.Y. Herald Tribune*, 5 February 1959 both cited in Nitze to Bundy, 17 June 1963.

93. Senate, Joint Hearings, Missile & Space Activities, 30 January 1959, 261, cited in Memorandum, William Y. Smith to McGeorge Bundy, 10 July 1963, Missile Gap 6/63-7/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL (Hereafter cited as Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963); see also "Von Braun Puts Lag at Five Years," *Washington Star*, 8 April 1959.

94. General Schriever Says U.S. Gains on Russians in Missiles – May Wind up About Same Time With Operational ICBMs – *N.Y. Herald Tribune* 23 November 1958, cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963. For more on Schriever and Atlas see John Clayton Lonnquest, *The Face of Atlas: General Bernard Schriever and the Development of the Atlas Missile, 1953-1960* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University, 1996).

95. "NIE 11-5-58, "Soviet Capabilities in Guided Missiles and Space Vehicles," in Donald P. Steury, ed., *Intentions and Capabilities: Estimates on Soviet Strategic Forces, 1950-1983* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1996), 67.

96. *Ibid.*, 68, emphasis in original. See also Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 89.

97. Senate, Joint Hearings, Missile & Space Activities, 29 January 1959, 52f, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

98. Emphasis added. Hearings, House Appropriations Subcommittee, *DOD Appropriations for 1960*, 23 January 1959, Part 1, page 42, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

99. Hearings, House Committee on Armed Forces 1959, *Military Posture Briefings*, 4 February 1959, page 851, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

100. Hearings, House Committee on Armed Forces 1959, *Military Posture Briefings*, 6 February 1959, page 909f, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

101. Emphasis added. Hearings, House Committee on Armed Forces 1959, *Military Posture Briefings*, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

102. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 130-131.

103. Surrender on Missiles – Editorial in *Boston Herald*, saying we must counter USSR missiles with missiles of our own, 6 February 1959, cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

104. Hearings, House Committee on Armed Forces 1959, *Military Posture Briefings*, 3 February 1959, page 820, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

105. Symington Scores McElroy on ICBM – Sees U.S. Lagging – Jack Raymond in *N.Y. Times*, 24 January 1959; McElroy told Rep. Mahon in defense hearings that in “my own judgment we are about even with the Soviet Union in our ability to produce ICBMs,” 26 January 1959, both cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

106. Hearings, House Appropriations Subcommittee, *DOD Appropriations for 1960*, 17 February 1959, 850, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

107. Hearings, House Appropriations Subcommittee, *DOD Appropriations for 1960*, 19 February 1959, Part 1, pages 983-4, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

108. Widening The Missile Gap – It Still Exists – Senator Symington in a signed article in *Space Age News*, 9 March 1959; U.S. Risking Missile Gap – Ray Cromley in *N.Y. World Telegram*, 24 April 1959; Lyndon Johnson Raps McElroy View – *Washington Star*, 27 July 1959; all cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

109. U.S. Ready If Reds Strike, McElroy Says – *N.Y. Herald Tribune*, 9 March 1959; B/General A. W. Betts Sees No Gap; Scores Defense Critics – *Armed Forces Management*, 10 April 1959; Soviet Strength Put at 10 ICBMs by McElroy – *Baltimore Sun*, 27 July 1959; U.S. Missiles Best, View of McElroy – Doubts Red Lead – *N.Y. Herald*

Tribune, 27 July 1959; Eisenhower Cites Gains in Missiles – Jack Raymond in *N.Y. Times*, 30 July 1959 all cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

110. Leaders Give Their Views on Defenses – ICBM Lag Hit by Symington – McElroy Cites Rise in Power – *New York Journal-American*, 3 February 1959; Big Fuss About Missiles – These Are the Facts – *U.S. News & World Report* survey, rehashing recent quotes of McElroy, Symington, et al., 6 February both cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

111. See, for example, James R. Shepley, “Life and Death Debate Over Missile Program: President Sticks to Defense Budget but New Military Generation Wants More Hardware to Combat Blackmail,” *Life* March 9, 1959, 116-124.

112. Neal Stanford, “Two Sides of the Missile Debate – One Group Stresses Missile ‘Gap,’ Other Emphasizes Total Defense Power,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 24 March 1959.

113. “U.S. Missiles vs. Russia’s – How the Race Stands Today,” Interview with Dr. Herbert F. York, Director, Defense Research and Engineering, *U.S. News & World Report*, 7 September 1959, 76-79, cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

114. John Finney, “York Sees No Lag by U.S. in ICBMs,” *New York Times*, 6 October 1959, 1, 4, cited in Nitze to Bundy memo, 17 June 1963.

115. JWA, “After Ike, The Deluge,” *Washington Post*, 7 October 1959, A17.

116. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 140.

117. Brodie’s first book on the subject was the edited volume *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order*. Eisenhower did read, and distributed to his staff, Brodie’s book, Immerman “Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist,” 325.

118 Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*, 156.

119 Ibid., 333, 369.

120 Wohlstetter, “The Delicate Balance of Terror.”

121 Talbott, *The Master of the Game*, 396, footnote 12.

- 122 Douglas Kinnard, *The Certain Trumpet: Maxwell Taylor & The American Experience in Vietnam* (New York: Brassey's, 1991), 51; John M. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor: The Sword and the Pen* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 224-227.
- 123 Taylor, *The Uncertain Trumpet*, 105.
- 124 Ibid., 121, 128.
- 125 Ibid., 178.
- 126 Courtney Sheldon, "The Nation Will Face a Serious Crisis....," *Christian Science Monitor*, 7 January 1960, 13.
- 127 Walter Millis, "Men in Politics: Arsenal for National Security," *Saturday Review*, 43:2 9 January 1960, 13, 14.
- 128 Max Beloff, "Former Weapons," *The Spectator*, 205:6890 (15 July 1960), 106-107.
- 129 Kinnard, *The Certain Trumpet*, 51.
- 130 Andrew Goodpaster, MCP, 18 November 1959 – Augusta [Georgia], dated 21 January 1960, in White House Office, Staff Secretary, Subject Series, Defense Department Subjects, Box 4, Folder JCS-8, Sept 59-May 60, DDEL.
- 131 Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 295n.
- 132 Gordon Gray, "Memo of Mtg with President, February 3, 1960," dated 8 February 1960, from 1960 meetings with the President, Vol I (7), Box 4, OSANSA, Special Assistant Series, Presidential Subseries, DDEL.
- 133 Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 140.
- 134 According to Special Assistant to the President Gordon Gray, McElroy had "dumped many important problems" on his successor's desk. "Memorandum, Confidential, Washington, Dec. 7, 1959," in Black Notebooks File, Book 2, Box 1, Krock Papers.
- 135 Andrew J. Goodpaster, Memorandum of Conference with the President (hereafter cited as MCP), 3 November 1959, dated 6 November 1959, in Nuclear History Series (NHS), November 1959 Folder, National Security Archive (NSA), George Washington University, Washington, DC.
- 136 Craig, *Destroying the Village*, 69.
- 137 Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 179.
- 138 430th Meeting of the NSC, 7 January 1960, DDRS (1991), 3345.
- 139 Goodpaster, MCP, 3 November 1959, dated 6 November 1959.
- 140 Goodpaster, MCP, 18 November 1959 – Augusta [Georgia], dated 21 January 1960, in White House Office, Staff Secretary, Subject Series, Defense Department Subjects, Box 4, Folder JCS-8, Sept 59-May 60, DDEL.
141. Ibid. See also Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 166-167.

142. Goodpaster, MCP, 18 November 1959. On the Air Force's institutional resistance to missiles in favor of the manned bomber see especially Edmund Beard, *Developing the ICBM: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); on the B-70 see Michael Brown, *Flying Blind* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. 201-213.

143. Goodpaster, MCP, 21 November 1959 - Augusta, 2 January 1960, White-House Office, Staff Secretary, Subject Series, DOD Subjects, Box 2, DOD Vol IV-1, January 1960, DDEL.

144. Ibid.

145. Briefing Note for NSC Meeting of 6 January 1960, "Atlas, Titan and Polaris Research," DDRS (1991) 3340.

146. Memorandum, 13 January 1960, "Discussion at the 430th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, January 7, 1960," DDRS (1991) 3345.

147. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 145; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, 183; see also Watson, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Missile Gap, 1958-1960," passim; and Snead, "Eisenhower, The Gaither Committee, and Intelligence Assessment: The Problem of Equating Capabilities and Intentions," passim.

148. Geoffrey Perret, *Eisenhower* (New York: Random House, 1999), 578.

149. Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 86-95; and Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 260. That U-2 data was available to the United States Intelligence Board (USIB) was confirmed by Raymond Garthoff, a member of the panel in 1959, at the Society of Military History meeting, Washington, DC, 20 April 1996.

150. McElroy had based his testimony on NIE 11-4-58, issued in December 1958. Figures from Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 89.

151. 430th Meeting of the NSC, 7 January 1960, DDRS (1991) 3345.

152. *Ibid.* Outside observers doubted the revised claims, even before the numbers were officially presented to Congress. For example, on 19 November 1959, retired Army General Thomas R. Phillips of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* claimed that, in spite of official doubts, U.S. intelligence agencies were giving full credence to Soviet missile claims. See General Phillips in *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "U.S. Intelligence Agencies Give Full Credence to Soviet Missile Claims Which Officials Doubt," 19 November 1959, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

153. NIE 11-8-59, "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack Through Mid-1964," in Steury, ed., *Intentions and Capabilities*, 75.

154. John Prados writes "In the period from 1957 to 1960 [Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence] was almost weekly presenting its view to the intelligence community that the Soviets were deploying hundreds of ICBMs." Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 82.

155. NIE 11-8-59, "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack Through Mid-1964," 73-4.

156. *Ibid.*, 74, footnote 5.

157. H. J. Watters, Office Memorandum to G. B. Kistiakowsky, "Subject: Nike-Zeus," 7 January 1960, January 1960 Folder, NHS, NSA.

158. *Ibid.*

159. For example, when McElroy had met with Ike in November 1959 to discuss his resignation, the President suggested that he do so sooner, rather than later, before "speculation got too far." Goodpaster, MCP, 6 November 1959, November 1959 folder, NHS, NSA.

160. George B. Kistiakowsky, Notes for Meeting with the President, 14 January 1960, January 1960 folder, NHS, NSA.

161. John G. Norris, "U.S. to Expand Missile Program: Ike Backs Polaris and ICBM Plan; \$1 Billion Project To Widen Work By One Third," *Washington Post*, 13 January 1960, A1, A10; NIE 11-8-59, in Steury, ed., 75.

162. Norris, p. A10; "Navy Drops Construction of Five Ships," *Washington Post*, 13 January 1960, A10.

163. Gordon Gray, MCP, 13 January 1960, dated 15 January 1960, in January 1960 folder, NHS, NSA.

164. James Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 15.

165. Statement of Senator John F. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.), 2 January 1960, in Correspondence, "Kennedy, John F., Speeches - Remarks, Biography 1958-1959-1960" File, Box 11, AR Papers, LOC.

166. Harris Wofford, who joined the Kennedy campaign in 1960, conceded that Kennedy's record on civil rights was "undistinguished," see Harris Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980, rev. 1992), 37. See also Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 32.

167. Roberts himself had been critical of the Eisenhower administration's defense policies and had played a leading role in the release of the contents of the damaging Gaither Report in late 1957 that had been so crucial in the origins of the missile gap controversy. See Halperin, "The Gaither Committee and the Policy Process," *passim*; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, 77-8; and Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 121.

168. Chalmers Roberts, "Kennedy Puts Name Into Race: Would Not Accept Nomination for No. 2 Spot, He Says," *Washington Post*, 3 January 1960, A1, A12.

169. Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 17 June 1963, Appendix B, "Statements on the Missile Gap by Senator John F. Kennedy, 1957-1960," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

170. At least one of JFK's campaign advisers had urged him to conduct an aggressive campaign based on foreign policy and national security, see William Atwood, "Memo on the 1960 Campaign," June 1960, in "U.S.-Soviet Military Comparisons 10/59-

11/1/60 and Undated" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

171. John A. Goldsmith, "Red Power to Attack Discounted: Gates Tells Senate Group of New Data on Soviet Strength," *Washington Post*, 20 January 1960, A1.

172. Ibid.

173. General Thomas S. Power, USAF, "Military Problems and Prospects of Deterrence: Protecting Our Heritage Until a Truly Lasting Peace Can Be Assured," *Vital Speeches* 26:9 (15 February 1960): 286.

174. "Gates Sees Narrower 'Gap,'" *Missiles and Rockets* 6:4 (25 January 1960): 24.

175. When Air Force Chief of Staff White asked for an explanation to assist him in replying to questions about Power's speech, the Chief of Staff learned that as few as 100, or as many as 430, enemy missiles might be capable of delivering a knock-out blow to the nation's retaliatory capability. M. C. Donnelly, to Chief of Staff, USAF, "Reply to Questions on General Power's Speech," 25 January 1960, January 1960 folder, NHS, NSA.

176. John G. Norris, "U.S. Estimating Power Of Soviet on Basis of 'Intent,' Gates Says," *Washington Post*, 21 January 1960, A1, 14.

177. John G. Norris, "House Unit Reassured by Gates," *Washington Post*, 23 January 1960, A1.

178. "Johnson Sees Peril in 'Guess' on Reds," *Washington Post*, 24 January 1960, A1, A13; "Secretary of Air Force Discounts 'Missile Gap,'" *Washington Post*, 24 January 1960, A1; Jack Raymond, "Democrats Assail Defense Estimate," *New York Times*, 24 January 1960, 1, 24. Army Secretary Brucker was looking forward to Taylor's testimony, believing that the Congressional wind was "blowing" with the Army, Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor*, 224-225.

179. Goodpaster, MCP, 25 January 1960, dated 26 January 1960, in Whitman File, DDE Diary, Box 47, Staff Notes, Jan 1960-1, DDEL.

180. "Twining Testimony Critical of Those Who 'Degrade' U.S.," *Washington Post*, 24 January 1960, A13.

181. *Ibid.*

182. JWA, "Conflicts on 'Missile Gap,'" *New York Herald Tribune*, 25 January 1960, 1, 12.

183. Victor Wilson, "A.F. Secretary Denies Gap in Deterrent Power: Says U.S. Defense Bars Attack Even if Soviets Lead in Missiles," *New York Herald Tribune*, 25 January 1960, 1, 8.

184. JWA, "The Soviet Missile Arsenal," *New York Herald Tribune*, 26 January 1960, 1, 19.

185. JWA, "The Missile Gap and Survival," *New York Herald Tribune*, 27 January 1960, 1, 16. Alsop relentlessly adhered to the belief that national security planning should be based upon an enemy's capabilities – not intentions. Yoder, *Joe Alsop's Cold War*, 168-170, 205-206, ff8.

186. Warren Rogers, "Eisenhower Backs U.S. Arms Pace," *New York Herald Tribune*, 27 January 1960, 1, 11.

187. Gerald Griffin, "Intelligence on Russia Improves, President Says," *Baltimore Sun*, 27 January 1960, 1, 9; Howard Norton, "U.S.-Soviet Missile 'Gap' Seen Likely to Get Worse," *Baltimore Sun*, 27 January 1960, 1, 9; Mark Watson "Intelligence Uproar Blamed on Inept Pentagon Handling," *Baltimore Sun*, 27 January 1960, 1, 9.

188. Jack Raymond, "Juggling of Missile Data is Charged by Symington," *New York Times*, 28 January 1960, 1.

189. Gordon Gray, "Memo of Mtg with President, February 3, 1960," dated 8 February 1960, from 1960 meetings with the President, Vol I (7), Box 4, OSANSA, Special Assistant Series, Presidential Subseries, DDEL.

190. "Gates Sees Missile Lag Ending in 1962," *Baltimore Sun*, 1 February 1960, 1, 5.
191. Howard Norton, "Gates Rejects General Power's Red Estimate of 300 Missiles to Wipe Out U.S. Ability to Retaliate," *Baltimore Sun*, 2 February 1960, 1, 6.
192. Thomas S. Power, Memorandum for General White, 11 January 1960, "Subject: B-70 Flexibility," January 1960 Folder, NHS, NSA.
193. "Gates Sees Missile Lag Ending in 1962," *Baltimore Sun*, 1 February 1960, 5.
194. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor*, 225.
195. JWA, "Matter of Fact: This Very Reason," *Washington Post*, 8 February 1960, A15.
196. George Dixon, "Washington Scene: Generals Might Take the Fifth," *Washington Post*, 8 February 1960, A15. In fact, there is no evidence that Eisenhower contemplated any actions against Power, in spite of the trouble that he had caused. This seems doubly ironic given the president's already-stated willingness to take actions against *retired* military officers such as Taylor.
197. For example, when General Twining presented the President with a summary of the new nuclear targeting plan, Eisenhower was chiefly concerned with keeping the information "away from the Congress because of their carelessness about secrecy and security." Goodpaster, MCP, 12 February 1960, dtd 2/18/60. From White House Office, Staff Secretary, Subject Series, DOD Subseries, Box 4, JCS-8, Sept 1959-May 1960, DDEL.
198. *Ibid.*
199. W. W. Kaufmann to G. K. Tanham, Memorandum, "The Puzzle of Polaris," 1 February 1960; Roscoe Wilson to White, "'The Puzzle of Polaris' - an Informal Memorandum by Mr. W. W. Kaufmann," 17 February 1960; William Kaufmann to White, letter, 18 February 1960, and White to Kaufmann, letter, "Comments on Polaris Weapon System," (plus attachments) 4 March 1960, all in Box 36 - File 4-5, "Missiles/Space/

Nuclear,” Thomas Dresser White Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division (Hereafter cited as White Papers – LOC).

200. “Air Chief Warns of Russian Gains,” *New York Times*, 15 February 1960, 3.

201. John Kennedy to Joseph Alsop, 27 February 1960, Box 157, “Subject Files, ‘Missile Gap’ Pamphlet File,” JWA & SA Papers.

202. “An Investment for Peace,” Speech by John F. Kennedy excerpted from Congressional Record, in “Speeches - Misc. JFK 6/7/58-3/18/60” Folder, ‘60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL, p. 1.

203. Ibid.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid., 1-2.

206. Ibid.

207. Ibid., 2-3.

208. Ibid., 3.

209. Ibid., 4.

210. Ibid., 4-5.

211. Ibid., see also Meagher, “In an Atmosphere of National Peril,” passim.

212. Kennedy, “An Investment for Peace,” 6.

213. A series of Kennedy foreign policy speeches were widely disseminated in a collection edited by historian Allan Nevins, and they included Kennedy’s first “missile gap” speech from August 1958. The address from February 1958, however, was not included,

Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, passim. See also Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, Volume 1*, 192.

214. S. Nelson Drew found “no fewer than 50 instances” in which Eisenhower either played down or publicly refuted the existence of a missile gap between the United States and the Soviet Union, Drew, “Expecting the Approach of Danger,” 321, 335.

215. Fred Greenstein and Richard Immerman, “What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy about Indochina? The Politics of Misperception,” *Journal of American History* 79 (September 1992): 581-2.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. “Poll #826, The Presidential Election in Michigan, II, 10/13/60 (Harris),” Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Papers, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, 6, JFKL.

2. The most widely-read account, Theodore H. White’s *The Making of the President, 1960*, makes very few specific references to the issues of the campaign, see Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1960* (New York: Atheneum, 1961). See also Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 51-52.

3. Elmo Roper asserted that Kennedy “gained more than he lost from the religion issue,” Elmo Roper, “Polling Post-Mortem,” *Saturday Review*, 26 November 1960, 11. White provides a more ambiguous analysis, but he also thinks the concentration of Catholics in the vote-rich Northeast worked to Kennedy’s advantage, White, *The Making of the President, 1960*, 397-401. Statisticians at the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan offered a different interpretation, focusing on party affiliation and vote-shifting to argue that religion may have hurt Kennedy overall, but that it might also have helped him to attract other minority voters. See Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *Elections and the Political Order*, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan (New York: Wiley, 1966), especially Chapter 5, “Stability and Change in 1960: A Reinstating Election,” Campbell, et al, which originally appeared in the *American Political Science Review* 55 (June 1961): 269-80. A similar interpretation is reached in V.O. Key, Jr. and Milton C. Cummings, Jr.’s,

The Responsible Electorate: Rationality in Presidential Voting, 1936-1960 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966). See also Ithiel de Sola Pool, et al., *Candidates, Issues, and Strategies: A Computer Simulation of the 1960 Presidential Election* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1964), 118; Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-62*, 565; Patricia Barrett, *Religious Liberty and the American Presidency: A Study in Church-State Relations* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1963) and Paul Lopatto, *Religion and the Presidential Election* (New York: Praeger, 1985), 52-59. Partisans differ. Nixon determined early on that "Kennedy's religion would hurt him in states he could afford to lose anyway, and that it would help him in states he needed to win" an assessment similar to White's. Richard M. Nixon, *Six Crises* (New York: Doubleday, 1962; reprint, New York: Touchstone, 1990), 307 (page references are to reprint edition). Nixon also refers to the convention report by Kennedy in 1956, which was later reprinted in *U.S. News and World Report*. See "The 'Catholic Vote' – A Kennedy Staff Analysis," *U.S. News and World Report*, 1 August 1960, 68-72. On the other hand, among the eight issues which he cites as "decisive," Theodore Sorensen concludes that religion was the largest factor in the campaign working against Kennedy, Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 218-219.

4. Pierre Salinger, *With Kennedy* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), esp. 29-48.

5. Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, Volume 2, 1952-1960*, 191-192, 285-287. See also Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties*, 36.

6. The other leading candidates for the nomination, Lyndon Johnson and Stuart Symington, chose to avoid the primaries, hoping to secure the necessary votes for the nomination by other means.

7. On the West Virginia primary, see Dan B. Fleming, Jr., *Kennedy vs. Humphrey, West Virginia, 1960: The Pivotal Battle for the Democratic Presidential Nomination*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992).

8. Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 47-48.

9. From *Ground Support Equipment* (April-May 1960), cited in Nitze to Bundy, 17 June 1963, Appendix B, "Statements on the Missile Gap by Senator John F. Kennedy, 1957-1960."

10. Some Kennedy Advisers feared a groundswell of liberal support for Adlai Stevenson in Oregon, characterized by speechwriter Richard Goodwin as one giant suburb, but Stevenson declined to challenge Kennedy here, see Richard N. Goodwin, *Remembering America: A Voice from The Sixties* (Philadelphia: Harper and Row, 1988), 89-90.

11. "Here's Kennedy's Foreign Policy," *U.S. News & World Report*, 27 June 1960, 64. Reprinted from *Congressional Record*, 14 June 1960, 11630. Also cited in Nitze to Bundy, 17 June 1963, Appendix B, "Statements on the Missile Gap by Senator John F. Kennedy, 1957-1960."

12. "Here's Kennedy's Foreign Policy," 64-65.

13. *Ibid.*, 65.

14. According to Igor Mentyukov, a Soviet pilot, the U-2 was not actually shot down, but was instead rammed by a Soviet aircraft. Had the U-2 been hit by a missile, the Soviet pilot said, Powers would almost certainly have been killed. See Stephen I. Schwartz, "Different Fate for the U-2?" 22 December 1997, The Brookings Institution, <<http://www.brook.edu/views/op-ed/schwartz/19971222.htm>>.

15. Raymond Garthoff, *Assessing the Adversary: Estimates by the Eisenhower Administration of Soviet Intentions and Capabilities* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1991), 41-42.

16. On the U-2 incident see Beschloss, *MAYDAY*, *passim*.

17. "The Democrats Care," from "Program for 1960 Democratic Convention," in File "Democratic National Committee, Prepared by the," Box 12, Democratic Party, California Democratic State Central Committee (CDSCC) Papers, Urban Archives Center, University Library, California State University – Northridge (Hereafter Urban Archives, Cal State – Northridge).

18. *Ibid.*

19. "Abram Chayes," 16 April 2000, Harvard Law School, <http://www.law.harvard.edu/news/chayesleaves.html>; "Oral History Interviews," JFKL Web Site, 19 June 2001, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/oralhist.htm>.

20. Democratic Platform, in File "Democratic National Committee, Prepared by the," Box 12, Democratic Party, CDSCC Papers, Urban Archives, Cal State - Northridge.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. "Senator John F. Kennedy's Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech."

24. Extract, Statement by Governor Rockefeller, New York, 23 July 1960, cited in Smith to Bundy memo, 10 July 1963.

25. Ibid.

26. JWA interview, conducted 6/14/72 by John Luter at Columbia University, originally part of the Dwight David Eisenhower Library, Oral History (DDEL-OH, DDE Administration Project), pages 12-13, located in Box 268, Subject Files - Oral History Interviews, File: DDEL-OH, DDE Administration Project, Box 14, "General correspondence, Aug-Sept 1958," JWA & SA Papers.

27. Ibid., 14.

28. Allen Dulles recorded the dates and locations of the intelligence briefings, including four for Kennedy and one for Johnson, as 23 July with JFK, in Hyannis Port, MA; 27 July with LBJ at his residence in TX; 19 September with JFK at his Washington residence; and 3 November with Kennedy (by General Charles P. Cabell, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency) on the West Coast. Another meeting was held after the election, on 18 November, with JFK in Palm Beach, (Richard Bissell was attending), from Notes, "Dates of Briefings: Presidential Campaign - 1960," Box 89, Re: John F. Kennedy, 1960, Allen W. Dulles Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ. (Hereafter cited as AWD Papers); the Defense Department intelligence briefing was given by General Earle Wheeler. Wheeler allegedly told Kennedy that there was no missile

gap, and that the source of the inflated estimates of Soviet missile production came from the CIA, not the Pentagon, see Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 58-59.

29. This debate has not been resolved in spite of the publication in 1996 of a book that specifically discussed the CIA's presidential briefings of the presidential candidates, see John L. Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President: CIA Briefings of Presidential Candidates, 1952-1992* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1996), 22 May 1996 <<http://www.cia.gov/csi/books/briefing/>>. Chapter Three specifically discusses the 1960 presidential campaign. <<http://www.cia.gov/csi/books/briefing/cia-6.htm>>.

30. Nixon, *Six Crises*, 354. Allen Dulles, who was reappointed by Kennedy as CIA director, but who resigned following the Bay of Pigs fiasco, informed his successor John McCone in May 1962 that his briefings with the candidate "did not cover our own Government's plans or programs for action - overt or covert," from Memo to John McCone, director of CIA, 5/20/62, Box 104, JFK, 1960, AWD Papers.

31. See, for example, Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 58-59; and Seymour M. Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1997), 155-156. According to a confidential report by Allen Dulles, both Kennedy and Johnson had a particular interest in Soviet missile developments during their first briefings, conducted in late July. At that time, Dulles allegedly informed Kennedy that "the Defense Department was the competent authority on this question," "Memorandum for the President, 8/3/60," Box 89, Re: John F. Kennedy, 1960, AWD Papers.

32. On Robert Kennedy's role in the campaign, see James W. Hilty, *Robert Kennedy: Brother Protector* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997); and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978).

33. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 16; Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 32.

34. Goodwin, *Remembering America*, 63-64.

35. Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings*, 39-40.

36. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 119. Kathleen Hall Jamieson contends that Harris was one of Kennedy's most influential advisers. Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Packaging the*

Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 397.

37. Kennedy's staff had postulated in 1956, when they attempted to get Kennedy nominated as Vice President, that his Catholicism might work to the Democrats' advantage, see "The 'Catholic Vote' – A Kennedy Staff Analysis," *U.S. News and World Report*, 1 August 1960, 68-72.

38. See Counterattack Sourcebook, from JFKL. See also Nancy Carol Arnett, "John F. Kennedy's 1960 Presidential Campaign: Rhetorical Strategies and Image Projection," Unpublished PhD. diss., Florida State University, 1983.

39. Divine asserts that Kennedy was hurt by the U-2 affair in his run-up to the Democratic convention. See Divine, *Foreign Policy and Presidential Elections, Volume 2*, 209-210. Kennedy told Allen Dulles later in the campaign that his demand that the U.S. apologize for the U-2 incident "had been rather misconstrued," from "Memorandum for the Record," 9/21/60, AWD Papers, 2.

40. Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings*, 36-37.

41. William Atwood, "Memo on the 1960 Campaign," June 1960, in "U.S.-Soviet Military Comparisons 10/59-11/1/60 and Undated" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

42. See Tris Coffin, undated, "Speech Materials Undated" Folder; Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "The Big Decision: Private Indulgence or National Strength," in "Speech Writings - General 1/2/58-6/5/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues; and Ken Galbraith to Sorensen, "Memorandum: Campaign Strategy, 1960," undated, in "U.S.-Soviet Military Comparisons 10/59-11/1/60 and Undated" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, all in Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

43. "Planning for Peace - The Place of Defense Workers and Defense Industry in a Peacetime World," in "Speech Materials Undated" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

44. Once in office Kennedy would begin the process of opening up defense contracts for minority firms – the early origins of affirmative action – but he made no references to this during the campaign.

45. Unclassified public opinion polls available to the campaign from the British Gallup clearly demonstrated how the United States' standing vis-à-vis the Soviet bloc had sagged in the minds of many Europeans. The nominee was also told of "several classified studies done by the USIA staff on the subject of U.S. prestige abroad" that demonstrated the extent to which America's standing had declined. Emphasis in original. Elizabeth Farmer to Mike Feldman, Memorandum, 4 October 1960, "Subject: Documentation of Decline of U.S. Prestige Abroad," in Briefing Papers, "Crime-Foreign Service" Folder, 60 Campaign Issues, Position and Briefing Papers, Briefing Book, Box 993A, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

46. Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation*, 37.

47. Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. 2nd Edition. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 2.

48. "Rostow, Walt W(hitman): CA Interview," *Contemporary Authors*, New Revision Series, Volume 8, 429-430.

49. Meagher, "'In an Atmosphere of National Peril,'" 3, 7.

50. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*. Ted Sorensen called the mass mailing of the book the "largest single effort to woo intellectuals" in the campaign, see Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 118. See also Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, Volume 2, 1952-1960*, 192.

51. Harris Wofford had a hand in editing this work. Wofford suggested that Chester Bowles had also influenced Kennedy's worldview, but Bowles had no formal role within the campaign, Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings*, 40.

52. See Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 10.

53. 3 September 1960, Book Review of "Deterrent or Defense" by B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, in Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee of the Subcommittee [sic] on Communications, *Freedom of Communications, Part I: The Speeches, Remarks, Press Conferences, and Statements of Senator John F. Kennedy, August 1 Through November 7, 1960, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., 1961* (Hereafter cited as FOC, Part I), 979.

54. Ibid.

55. "Memorandum for the Record," 9/21/60, AWD Papers.

56. John B. Medaris, *Countdown for Decision* (New York: Putnam, 1960). All quotes excerpted from "Defense: Shots from the Hip," *Time*, 17 October 1960, 26.

57. An earlier speech before the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) convention in Detroit, Michigan in late August was also widely covered, and will be discussed in the context of Kennedy's campaign in Michigan (see below).

58. 18 October 1960, Speech, Miami Beach, FL, American Legion Convention, FOC, Part I, 649-650.

59. Ibid., 650.

60. Ibid., 652.

61. Ibid., 654.

62. Russell Baker, "Kennedy Assails 'Retreat' Charge," and Leo Egan, "Nixon Proposes Cuba Quarantine," *New York Times*, 19 October 1960, 1.

63. Theodore Sorensen declared the four debates to have been decisive, Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 213; Kennedy partisan Lawrence O'Brien called it "a turning point – perhaps the turning point in the campaign," Lawrence O'Brien, *No Final Victories: A Life in Politics from John F. Kennedy to Watergate* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 93, emphasis in original; compatriots Kenneth O'Donnell and David Powers agreed, see Kenneth P. O'Donnell, and David F. Powers, with Joseph McCarthy, "*Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye*":

Memories of John Fitzgerald Kennedy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 211. Other observers concede the importance of the debates without assigning singular significance to them. See, for example, Tom Wicker, *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (New York: Random House, 1991), 230; Stephen Ambrose wrote "The best that could be said from Nixon's perspective was that the debates did not hurt him. But insofar as he...believed that he would slaughter Kennedy in a face-to-face confrontation, Nixon was the clear loser." Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-62*, 594.

64. "First Kennedy-Nixon Debate: [September 26, 1960]," JFKL Web Site, 10 September 2001, <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/60-1st.htm>>. Original text from Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee of the Subcommittee [sic] on Communications, *Freedom of Communications, Part III: The Joint Appearances of Senator John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Other 1960 Campaign Presentations*, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., 1961 (Hereafter cited as FOC, Part III), 73-92.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Nixon's running mate Henry Cabot Lodge allegedly declared at the end of the first debate that Nixon had lost the election by being too soft on Kennedy. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913-1962*, 575.

71. "First Kennedy-Nixon Debate."

72. Ibid.

73. "Second Kennedy-Nixon Debate: October 7, 1960," JFKL Web Site, 17 June 2001, <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/60-2nd.htm>>. Original text from FOC, Part III.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid. Kennedy had at various times in his legislative career adopted a hard-line on questions of deficit spending, Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 7-8.

81. "Second Kennedy-Nixon Debate: October 7, 1960."

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.

84 "Third Kennedy-Nixon Debate: October 13, 1960," JFKL Web Site, 17 June 2001, <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/60-3rd.htm>>. Original text from FOC, Part III.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. See Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 49-50; Goodwin, *Remembering America*, 124-126; and Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-62*, 592-593.

92. "Fourth Kennedy-Nixon Debate: October 21, 1960," JFKL Web Site, 17 June 2001, <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/60-4th.htm>>. Original text from FOC, Part III.

93. Ibid.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. "Poll #802: The Presidential Election in Pennsylvania 9/13/60 (Harris)," Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Papers, Box 45, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL.

102. Ibid., 12.

103. 15 September 1960, Statewide TV Speech, Zembo Mosque Temple, Harrisburg, PA, FOC, Part I, 250-251.

104. Ibid., 251.

105. 16 September 1960, Remarks, Lebanon, PA, FOC, Part I, 253.

106. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 September 1960, 1, 7.

107. "Poll #807: The Presidential Election in Pennsylvania, II, 10/12/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Box 45, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL.

108. Ibid., 8.

109. 29 October 1960, Remarks, Philadelphia, PA, Lord and Taylor Shopping Center, FOC, Part I, 810.

110. Ibid., 811. Nixon's statement had said, "We entered the space competition some paces behind. . . . Not until President Eisenhower took office in 1953 did the United States begin serious work on the intercontinental ballistic missiles."; and "The Eisenhower administration has just about closed an inherited missile gap. We have been hard at work on the related problem--the so-called missile gap--likewise inherited--and we have achieved great success." From 25 October 1960, Statement on Space Exploration, Cincinnati, OH, in Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee of the Subcommittee [sic] on Communications, *Freedom of Communications, Part II: The Speeches, Remarks, Press Conferences, and Statements of Vice President Richard M. Nixon, August 1 Through November 7, 1960*, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., 1961 (Hereafter cited as FOC, Part II), 761.

111. John S. McCullough, "Throngs Halt Motorcade of Candidate," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, October 29, from "Kennedy, John F. - Phila. Visits - 1960 - October - Presidential Collection" file, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* Clippings Collection, Urban Archives, Samuel Paley Library, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA (Hereafter cited as Urban Archives, Temple University).

112. 28 October 1960, Remarks, Pottsville, PA, FOC, Part I, 790.

113. "Poll #812: The Presidential Election in Pennsylvania, III, 11/3/60 (Harris)," Box 45, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, RFK Papers, JFKL.

114. The final official count gave Kennedy 622,544 votes to Nixon's 291,000, the largest plurality in city history. Kennedy's plurality statewide was only 116,326 votes. James M. Perry, "Kennedy Wins in Philadelphia by 326,407," *Philadelphia Evening*

Bulletin, November 9; and *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, November 25, from "Kennedy, John F. - Phila. Visits - 1960 - October - Presidential Collection" file, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* Clippings Collection, Urban Archives, Temple University.

115. An early poll taken before Kennedy secured the Democratic nomination found that New York state voters preferred Adlai Stevenson to Kennedy by a margin of 44 to 38 percent. "Poll: Attitude of New York State Voters (Kraft)," RFK Papers, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL.

116. 14 September 1960, Speech, New York, NY, Citizens for Kennedy Rally, FOC, Part I, 235, 237.

117. Speech, New York, NY, Acceptance of Liberal Party Nomination, FOC, Part I, 238, 241.

118. "Poll #800: The Presidential Election in New York State 9/19/60 (Harris)," pages 12, 13, RFK Papers, Box 44, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL.

119. *Ibid.*, 12, 13.

120. *Ibid.*, 13.

121. 28 September 1960, Remarks, "Breakfast with Kennedy," Lawrence Hotel, Erie, Pennsylvania, FOC, Part I, 379-380.

122. 28 September 1960, Remarks, Niagara Falls, NY, Bell Aircraft Co., FOC, Part I, 383.

123. *Ibid.*

124. *Ibid.*, 384.

125. *Ibid.*

126. Leo Egan, "Upstate Crowds Cheer Kennedy," *New York Times*, 29 September 1960, 1, 26.
127. 12 October 1960, Speech, Prepared for a Dinner Held by the Democratic National and State Committees, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, NY, FOC, Part I, 574.
128. 19 October 1960, Remarks, City Hall Steps, New York, NY, FOC, Part I, 664.
129. 19 October 1960, Remarks, Auditorium, Union Hall, New York, NY, FOC, Part I, 666.
130. Peter Kihss, "Big Crowds Here Acclaim Kennedy and Mob His Car," *New York Times*, 20 October 1960, 1.
131. Peter Braestrup, "Kennedy Details Housing Program," *New York Times*, 20 October 1960, 26.
132. "Poll #805: The Presidential Election in New York State II, 10/25/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Box 44, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL, 3, 9.
133. 27 October 1960, Remarks, New York, NY, Trade Union Council of Liberal Party, FOC, Part I, 773.
134. 27 October 1960, Speech, Queens, NY, Sunnyside Gardens, FOC, Part I, 782.
135. "Poll #810: The Presidential Election in New York State III, 11/4/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Box 44, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL, 7.
136. White, *The Making of the President, 1960*, 161-162.
137. 26 August 1960, Speech, Detroit, Michigan, VFW Convention, FOC, Part I, 50, 51.

138. Italics added. 26 August 1960, Speech, Detroit, Michigan, VFW Convention (verbatim text), FOC, Part I, 971. Unlike most Kennedy speeches, this was a departure from the advance release text given to reporters before the speech. In the advance version Kennedy was to have said "The facts of the matter are that we are falling behind--behind in our schedules, behind in our needs, behind the Russians in our rate of progress. *The missile lag looms larger and larger ahead.*" Italics added. 26 August 1960, Speech, Detroit, Michigan, VFW Convention (advance release text), FOC, Part I, 52.

139. Ibid., 52-3.

140. Ibid., 53.

141. "Kennedy Gets Big Greeting in Detroit," *Detroit Free Press*, 26 August 1960, 1; "AFL-CIO Endorses Kennedy," *Detroit Free Press*, 27 August 1960, 1; and Ray Courage, "Nominee Urges Arms Hike: He Slaps at Nixon in Speech," *Detroit Free Press*, 27 August 1960, 1, a4.

142. "Indeed Yes, There are--20th Century Armor Chinks," *Detroit Free Press*, 27 August 1960, 6.

143. Emphasis in original. Sen. Philip Hart to Frank Sieverts, 29 August 1960, Memorandum "Kennedy Briefing on Michigan," 1, in "State Briefing Papers, Louisiana-Missouri" File, Box 991, Position and Briefing Papers, 1960, Pre-Presidential Files, JFKL.

144. Ibid., 4.

145. *Impact of Defense Spending in Labor Surplus Areas*, Report of the Subcommittee on Retailing, Distribution, and Marketing Practices to the Select Committee on Small Business, United States Senate on Government Programs and Policies as They Relate to the Use of Procurement in Redeveloping Distressed Areas and a Compilation of Policy Directives, Statutes, and Regulations Relating to Procurement in Distressed Areas, 19 August 1963 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1963), 5.

146. 5 September 1960, Statement, Labor Day message, FOC, Part I, 110.

147. 5 September 1960, Speech, Detroit, Michigan, Cadillac Square, FOC, Part I, 112.
148. Ibid., 113.
149. "Poll #825, The Presidential Election in Michigan, 9/12/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL, 8, 9.
- 150 Ibid.
151. "Poll #826, The Presidential Election in Michigan, II, 10/13/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL, 1.
152. Ibid., 6.
153. 26 October 1960, Remarks, Warren, Michigan, Tech Plaza Shopping Center, FOC, Part I, 760.
154. Ibid., 761.
155. "Kennedy's Michigan Visit a Success?" 27 October 1960, *The State Journal* (Lansing).
156. Willard Baird, "U.S. Must Do More--Kennedy: Democrat Choice Draws Small Crowds Here, Big Throng in Gd. Rapids," *The State Journal*, 15 October 1960, 1, 2.
157. The state gained some distinction in Theodore White's account of the election by being *the* state that put Kennedy over the top, White, *The Making of the President, 1960*, 388-389.
158. Stanley Greenberg, *Middle Class Dreams: The Politics and Power of the New American Majority*, revised and updated edition, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 25.

159. Surprisingly, the Kennedy campaign actually expected an even better showing here. They were allegedly disappointed by early reports that only 745,000 voters had cast ballots in Detroit. *Ibid.*, 32.

160. *California Labor Statistics Bulletin Area Supplement*, April 1960, 2; and *California Labor Statistics Bulletin Area Supplement*, September 1960, 2.

161. *California Labor Statistics Bulletin Area Supplement*, June 1960, 3.

162. *Ibid.*

163. 8 September 1960, Remarks, Dunsmuir, California, rear train platform, FOC, Part I, 163; and 8 September 1960, Remarks, Redding, California, rear train platform, FOC, Part I, 163.

164. 9 September 1960, Remarks, Stockton, California, rear train platform, FOC, Part I, 175; and 9 September 1960, Remarks, Modesto, California, rear train platform, FOC, Part I, 176.

165. 9 September 1960, Remarks, Fresno, California, "Pathways to Peace," FOC, Part I, 178-9.

166. *Ibid.*, 179. Harris had directly alluded to the Democrats being perceived as "the party of war" in his polling reports. See "Poll #800: The Presidential Election in New York State 9/19/60 (Harris)," RFK Papers, Box 44, Pre-Administration Political Files, General Subject File, 1959-1960, JFKL, 12-13.

167. 9 September 1960, Speech, Los Angeles California, Shrine Auditorium, FOC, Part I, 190-191.

168. 9 September 1960, Press Conference, Burbank, California, Lockheed Air Terminal, FOC, Part I, 182.

169. 11 September 1960, Remarks, San Diego, California, Lindbergh Field, FOC, Part I, 195.

170. 11 September 1960, Remarks, San Diego, California, U.S. Grant Hotel, FOC, Part I, 196.

171. *Ibid.*, 196-197.

172. Henry Love, "Kennedy Asks S.D. Defense Role Boost," *San Diego Union*, 12 September 1960, a1, a3.

173. Robert W. Richards, "Kennedy's Cures Span the Continent: A Campaign of Promises for All," *San Diego Union*, 10 September 1960, 1, a-2.

174. Lou Fleming, "U.S. Must Move Ahead, Kennedy Tells Overflow Crowd of 35,000," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 November 1960, 1, 6; Jack Smith, "200,000 Welcome Kennedy in Downtown L.A. Motorcade: Roaring Reception in Streets," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 November 1960, 1, 2.

175. 2 November 1960, Statement, Development of the B-70, FOC, Part I, 1232, 1233.

176. Lou Fleming, "U.S. Must Move Ahead, Kennedy Tells Overflow Crowd of 35,000," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 November 1960, 1, 6; Jack Smith, "200,000 Welcome Kennedy in Downtown L.A. Motorcade: Roaring Reception in Streets," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 November 1960, 1, 2.

177. Fleming, "U.S. Must Move Ahead, Kennedy Tells Overflow Crowd of 35,000," 1, 6.

178. 2 November 1960, Remarks, San Diego California, Horton Plaza, FOC, Part I, 858; 2 November 1960, Remarks, San Diego, California, airport, FOC, Part I, 857.

179. *Ibid.*, 860.

180. Lyn Nofziger, "Kennedy Outlines 'Dreams' for U.S.," *San Diego Union*, 1 November 1960, 1, a3.

181. Henry T. Love, "Kennedy Terms California Role Key to Election: Candidate Assails Record of GOP in Address at Downtown Plaza," *San Diego Union*, 3 November 1960, 1, a4; Lyn Nofziger, "Peace Corps Proposed by Kennedy," *San Diego Union*, 3 November 1960, a4.

182. Rembert James, "Isles Test Seen If Kennedy Wins," *San Diego Union*, 3 November 1960, a1.

183. When reporters asked him in early September if he would match Brown's performance, Kennedy expressed doubts, 3 September 1960, Press Conference of Senator John F. Kennedy, San Francisco, California, International Airport, FOC, Part I, 96.

184. White, *The Making of the President, 1960*, 407.

185. For example, gubernatorial candidate Brown carried Los Angeles in 1958 with over 57.9 per cent of the vote. In 1962, he won the county again, albeit by a smaller margin, against home-town candidate Nixon, bettering Kennedy's share of the vote by more than a full percentage point. Lyndon Johnson carried the county in 1964 by more than 400,000 votes. His 57 per cent of the popular vote in Los Angeles was actually four percentage points less than his nationwide totals, but he nonetheless bested Kennedy's margin of victory by over seven percentage points. All figures from *America at the Polls, 1960-1996, Kennedy to Clinton: A Handbook of Presidential Election Statistics* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Books, 1999).

186. Bob Wilson to Herbert Klein, c/o Nixon Party, Western Union telegram, 9 November 1960, Political Affairs series, Richard Nixon File, Box 71, Robert C. Wilson Papers, Center for Regional History, University Library, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA.

187. Jamieson, *Packaging the Presidency*, 397.

188. Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 344, 345.

189. For example, in Connecticut on 6 and 7 November, Kennedy referred for the first time to a report by the Rand Corporation which predicted *parity* between the U.S. and the Soviet Union by 1970, but at other times on those same days, Kennedy continued to talk

of the nation's sagging prestige worldwide, see 6 November 1960, Remarks, New Haven, Connecticut, street rally, FOC, Part I, 913; and 7 November 1960, Remarks, Hartford, Connecticut, Hartford Times steps, FOC, Part I, 935.

190. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 22.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Memo for Mr. Bundy, 11 February 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

2. John F. Kennedy, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, 15 May 1963, "Bundy, McGeorge, 1/63-6/63" File, Presidential Office Files (POF), Staff Memoranda, Box 62A, JFKL.

3. W.Y. Smith to McGeorge Bundy, Memorandum, 20 June 1963, "Subject: The Missile Gap," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 1, 2.

4. "What Kind of Defense," text of Mr. Kennedy's response to an American Legion question: "What must we do to regain our strength?", *The New Republic*, Vol. 144 (9 January 1961), 6; *The New York Times*, 12 January 1961, both cited in Bottome, *The Missile Gap*, 147.

5. "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960-1961* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961), 919.

6. Dwight D. Eisenhower, "NLE Farewell Address [17 January 1961]," *Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library Web Site*, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, National Archives and Records Administration, <<http://www.eisenhower.utexas.edu/farewell.htm>>.

7. *Ibid.*

8. See, especially, Fred I. Greenstein, and Richard H. Immerman, "What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy about Indochina: The Politics of Misperception," *The Journal of American History* 79 (September 1992): 568-87.

9. Perret, *Eisenhower*, 600. Eisenhower believed that Kennedy's use of the missile gap issue was a sign of his dishonesty, *Ibid.*, 603.

10. Richard Filipink, Jr., "Old Warrior, New President: The Uneasy Relationship of Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy," Paper presented at the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations Annual Meeting, 15 June 2001, Washington, DC.

11. John F. Kennedy, "Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961," JFKL Web Site, 1 July 2001 <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/j012061.htm>>.

12. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 97.

13. "Special Message to the Congress: Program for Economic Recovery and Growth (17)," 2 February 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy, 1961* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1962), 41-53.

14. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 126-127.

15. *Ibid.*, 127.

16. John Pike, "Kennedy Administration – Arms Control & Disarmament," FAS Web Site, 11 April 1997 <<http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/offdocs/jfk/>>.

17. Henry Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) 2, 6, cited in Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 106.

18. Maxwell Taylor, "Security Will Not Wait," *Foreign Affairs* 39:2 (January 1961), 174, 175.

19. *Ibid.*, 176, 177.

20. Ibid., 177-178.

21. Ibid., 176, 178-179, 182. These figures were comparable to Taylor's budget projections from *The Uncertain Trumpet*, see Taylor, *The Uncertain Trumpet*, 178-179, and Chapter Three above.

22. Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 105, 106.

23. Ibid., 110.

24. Kai Bird, *The Color of Truth: McGeorge Bundy and William Bundy: Brothers in Arms* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 142-144; Kissinger quoted in Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 110.

25. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor*, 228-229; Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*, 249.

26. Air Force General William Y. Smith remembered that Gavin's views on the use of nuclear weapons were passé by the time that the Kennedy came into office, General William Y. Smith, USAF (Ret.), interview by author, 2 February 2001, by phone, tape recording (hereafter cited as Gen. Smith interview).

27. Robert and Ethel Kennedy named their ninth child Matthew Maxwell Taylor Kennedy after Taylor, Hilty, *Brother Protector*, 418.

28. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor*, 230-245; Kinnard, *The Certain Trumpet*, 53-75.

29. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 121; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 151, 544-547.

30. Quoted in Herken, *Counsels of War*, 140. This quote was taken from Herken's interview with Wiesner conducted 9 February 1982, in Wiesner's office at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Wiesner recollected that the briefing took place in early February, 1961. From Greg Herken, e-mail to the author, 25 April 2000, in author's possession (hereafter cited as Herken e-mail). Wiesner believed that Eisenhower had

allowed him to advise Kennedy during the campaign in order to dispel the missile gap myth, Herken, *Counsels of War*, 133.

31. Herken, *Counsels of War*, 148. Hitch told Herken that he was briefed on the missile gap when he first got to the Pentagon in January 1961. "It was perfectly apparent that there was no missile gap," Hitch said. Herken e-mail.

32. Deborah Shapley, *Promise and Power: The Life and Times of Robert McNamara* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), 96-97; William W. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 44-46.

33. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy*, 45.

34. Historical discussion of this first meeting between the secretary and the Washington press corps has been obscured by a cacophony of competing interpretations and by McNamara's own equivocation. McNamara contends that he reluctantly agreed to meet with the reporters who regularly covered the Pentagon on 6 February 1961, Robert McNamara, Interview by Deborah Shapley and David Alan Rosenberg, 1 May 1985, Washington, DC (Hereafter cited as McNamara interview). Another work suggests that McNamara acted deliberately when he revealed that there was no missile gap. Lawrence Kaplan, "McNamara and the Missile Gap," Paper presented at the Society of Military History Annual Meeting, 19 April 1996, Washington, DC. The consensus view, however, maintains that McNamara's first press conference was an honest effort on the part of the new secretary to meet with the veteran newsmen who covered military matters, see for example Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 97-98; Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 58; Bottomo, *The Missile Gap*, 151, ff. 11.

35. McNamara interview.

36. "Memo From Jack Raymond on the McNamara backgrounder, Feb. 6, 1961," 1, (Hereafter cited as Raymond memo), Robert McNamara File, Box 40, Krock Papers; John Scali recalled that McNamara did not use the term missile gap, but he did make clear his own interpretation that the U.S. was well ahead of the Soviets, Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 97.

37. Raymond memo, 2.

38. Michael Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 65; Robert McNamara, with Brian VanDeMark, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 20-21.

39. Raymond memo, 2.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.; Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 58-59; McNamara interview; McNamara, *In Retrospect*, 20-21.

42. See, for example, Kaplan, "McNamara and the Missile Gap."

43. McGeorge Bundy, interview by author, 10 April 1996, by phone, tape recording (hereafter cited as Bundy interview); Adam Yarmolinsky, interview by author, 23 April 1996, by phone, tape recording (hereafter cited as Yarmolinsky interview).

44. Roger Hilsman, "McNamara's War--Against the Truth: A Review Essay" *Political Science Quarterly* 111:1 (Winter 1996): 151-163. Hilsman repeated these claims in a letter to the author. Roger Hilsman, to author, 7 October 1996.

45. Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 90-91.

46. Raymond memo, Krock Papers, 3. Gilpatric joined the campaign in the summer of 1960, having supported Stuart Symington up to the time of the convention. One of his first assignments was the drafting of a major foreign policy speech for Kennedy, Gilpatric interview, JFKL-OH.

47. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 91; Raymond memo, Krock Papers, 3.

48. John F. Kennedy, *The Kennedy Presidential Press Conferences*, with an Introduction by David Halberstam (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc., 1965), 24.

49. Warren Rogers of the *New York Herald-Tribune* concluded that McNamara had lied when he denied his earlier statement to reporters. Rogers complained that the new

secretary was treating the Pentagon reporters like the “tame” Detroit press, Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 98-99.

50. Letter, Charles J. V. Murphy to Lauris Norstad, 11 February 1961, Lauris Norstad Papers, DDEL. Thanks to Archivist David Haight at the Library for his assistance in locating this document.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Merry, *Taking on the World*, 370.

54. Editorial Note, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, 8:32; Bottome, *The Missile Gap*, 161.

55. *Washington Post*, 17 February 1961, quoted in Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 98.

56. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings on Department of Defense Appropriation for 1962*, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., part 3, April 1961, 59-60.

57. Ibid., 60.

58. Ibid., 60-61.

59. Ibid., 61.

60. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to the President's Special Counsel (Sorensen), *FRUS, 1961-1963*, 8:67.

61. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 127; Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy*, 77; Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 118.

62. Paul Samuelson, “Economic Frontiers,” in *New Frontiers of the Kennedy Administration: The Texts of the Task Force Reports Prepared for the President* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1961), 31, quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 258.

63. Quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 259.

64. From Samuelson, "Economic Frontiers," 31, quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 258. Samuelson had been among a group of liberal economists who had criticized Eisenhower's economic policies. See Chapter Two above. He had advised Kennedy as a senator, and later as candidate, and served as an informal advisor to Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers, "Autobiography of Paul A. Samuelson."

65. Charles J. Hitch, in *A Modern Design for Defense Decision: A McNamara-Hitch-Enthoven Anthology*, ed. Samuel A. Tucker, Washington, DC: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 43, quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 258.

66. Joint Economic Committee, Congress, *January 1961 Economic Report of the President and the Economic Situation and Outlook (1961)*, 615, quoted in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 260.

67. See Seymour E. Harris, *The Economics of the Kennedy Years and a Look Ahead* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 220, cited in Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 258.

68. Michael Armacost, *The Politics of Weapons Innovation: The Thor-Jupiter Controversy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 210-218. On the operational role of the Jupiter missiles see Philip Nash, *The Other Missiles of October: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Jupiters, 1957-1963* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

69. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy*, 78-79.

70. JWA, "Our Government Untruths," *New York Herald Tribune*, 1 August 1958, 10.

71. See "An Investment for Peace," Speech by John F. Kennedy excerpted from Congressional Record, in "Speeches - Misc. JFK 6/7/58-3/18/60" Folder, '60 Campaign Issues, Richard Goodwin Working Papers, Box 996, JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL, p. 1; Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, 69-70; "Here's Kennedy's Foreign Policy," *U.S. News & World Report*, 27 June 1960, 64. Reprinted from *Congressional Record*, 14 June 1960,

11630; 3 September 1960, Book Review of "Deterrent or Defense," "Saturday Review," in FOC, Part I, 979; 18 October 1960, Speech, Miami Beach, Florida, American Legion Convention, FOC, Part I, 652; and "Third Kennedy-Nixon Debate: October 13, 1960."

72. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 122-123.

73. Rosenberg, "Reality and Responsibility," 44-47.

74. On the preparations for this speech, see Department of Defense Report I-12087/62, undated, "How Do the Soviets Think About Strategic Policy?" DDRS (1991) 3286; Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 163-164.

75. Gilpatric quoted in Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 330.

76. McNamara quoted in *ibid.*, 330-331. On the Kennedy press conference see, Kennedy, *The Kennedy Presidential Press Conferences*, 149.

77. Hanson Baldwin, "New Figures Close Missile Gap," *New York Times*, 26 November 1961, 4-4.

78. Alsop, *I've Seen the Best of It*, 413-415; Joseph Alsop, "Facts About the Missile Balance," *New York Herald Tribune*, 25 September 1961; Merry, *Taking on the World*, 370.

79. Bottome, *The Missile Gap*, 165; Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 97-98; Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 246-247.

80. James Baar, "Kennedy War Deterrent Remains Marginal," *Missiles and Rockets*, 30 October 1961, 13.

81. Stuart Symington, "Where the Missile Gap Went," *The Reporter*, 15 February 1962, 23.

82. *Congressional Record*, 21 March 1962, 4701.

83. AWD to John McCone, 20 May 1962, "JFK, 1960" File, Box 104, AWD Papers. Even this minor controversy focused on what was said or not said about an impending American invasion of Cuba. The missile gap was not mentioned. "Nixon Says Kennedy Imperiled Security," *New York Times*, 20 March 1962, 1; E. W. Kenworthy, "White House Denies Charge," *New York Times*, 21 March 1962, 1; Nixon, *Six Crises*, 354 ff.

84. Memo for Mr. Bundy, 11 February 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL. There does not appear to have been any specific episode or event that prompted Kennedy's renewed interest in the gap, but both McGeorge Bundy and Adam Yarmolinsky suspect that the Cuban missile crisis may have been a factor. Bundy interview; Yarmolinsky interview.

85. Gen. Smith interview.

86. Robert McNamara, "The Missile Gap Controversy," 4 March 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 4, 5, emphasis added.

87. *Ibid.*, 1. S. Nelson Drew counted 35 instances from the public record in which Eisenhower refuted claims of a missile gap, see Drew, "Expecting the Approach of Danger," 335.

88. McNamara, "The Missile Gap Controversy," 2, 3.

89. *Ibid.*, 1.

90. Bundy's handwritten notes on "Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy" by Adam Yarmolinsky, 4 March 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL. (Emphasis in original).

91. Yarmolinsky interview.

92. Adam Yarmolinsky, Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, 15 March 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL. (Emphasis in original).

93. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 499-500; Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 174-78; Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking*, 17-18.

94. Desmond Ball in particular criticized the unnecessary haste of Kennedy's defense budget preparations; see Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 125-126.

95. During a meeting in February 1961 to discuss the proposed missile force, Herbert York was prepared to argue that the force could be cut in half. Bundy aide Carl Kaysen, along with science Advisers Jerome Wiesner and Spurgeon Keeny, believed that the U.S. needed no more than 400 ICBMs to deter the Russians, but recommended 600 out of recognition for the political pressures on the president, Herken, *Counsels of War*, 153-155.

96. The Air Force consistently dissented from the majority opinion of the USIB, routinely erring on the high end of the estimate. Air Force intelligence continued to express contrary opinions as late as 1963. Robert McNamara, "Memorandum for the President: The Missile Gap Controversy," Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 5; McNamara interview. Numerous secondary accounts that have addressed this issue include Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 111-126; Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 108; Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, 178-184; and Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking*.

97. Tazewell Shepard, Jr. to McGeorge Bundy, 30 March 1963, "Missile Gap 2/63-5/63" File, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

98. John F. Kennedy, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, 15 May 1963, "Bundy, McGeorge, 1/63-6/63" File, Presidential Office Files (POF), Staff Memoranda, Box 62A, JFKL.

99. Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 30 May 1963, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL; Lawrence C. McQuade to Nitze, "But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?" 31 May 1960, Missile Gap 2/63-5/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, JFKL.

100. *Ibid.*, 14.

101. *Ibid.*, 19.

102. *Ibid.*, 22.

103. *Ibid.*, 21, emphasis in original.

104. See, for example, Kennedy's speeches on the floor of the Senate on 14 August 1958, and 29 February 1960, respectively, in Chapter Three above.

105. McQuade to Nitze, "But Where Did the Missile Gap Go?" 23.

106. Memorandum for Mr. Bundy, 3 June 1963, Missile Gap, 6/63-7/63, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

107. Cover letter, Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 17 June 1963, Missile Gap 6/63-7/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 2.

108. Paul Nitze to McGeorge Bundy, 17 June 1963, "The Missile Gap, 1958-1960 - The Public Record," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63 Folder, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 3.

109. W.Y. Smith to Bundy, Memorandum, 20 June 1963, "Subject: The Missile Gap," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL, 1.

110. *Ibid.*, 1, 2.

111. *Ibid.*, 2.

112. *Ibid.*

113. *Ibid.*, 3.

114. *Ibid.*

115. W.Y. Smith to Bundy, Memorandum, 10 July 1963, "Subject: Missile Gap Materials," Missile Gap 6/63-7/63, NSF, D&A, Box 298, JFKL.

116. *Ibid.*

117. Ibid.

118. Gen. Smith interview. McGeorge Bundy hailed the agreement, signed by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain in 1963, as “a good first step” toward controlling nuclear weapons. Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 460-461; James Giglio argued that the agreement was personally satisfying for Kennedy, but was only modestly successful. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 216-218. For the full text of the agreement see “Limited Test Ban Treaty,” ed. John Pike, FAS Web Site, 29 August 1999 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/ltbt/text/ltbt2.htm>>.

119. “Remarks Prepared for Delivery at the Trade Mart in Dallas, 11/22/63,” JFKL Web Site, 17 June 2001 <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/jl12263b.htm>>.

120. McGeorge Bundy, “The Presidency and the Peace,” *Foreign Affairs* 42:3 (April 1964): 354.

121. Ibid.

122. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy*, 50.

123. Ibid., 65.

124. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 610-611.

125. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 317.

126. Theodore C. Sorensen, “The Election of 1960” in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., ed., *The History of American Presidential Elections, 1789-1968*, Volume IV (New York: Chelsea House, 1972), 3465.

127. Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 350.

128. Rosenberg, “Reality and Responsibility,” 36.

129. Purchases by the Federal Government accounted for as much as 80 percent of production in this industry. *America's Industrial and Occupational Manpower Requirements, 1964-75*. Department of Labor, W. Wirtz, 1 January 1966, 67.

130. Ann Markusen, Peter Hall, Scott Campbell, and Sabina Deitrick, *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 86-87.

131. Donald M. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope: The American Aircraft Industry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 171.

132. *Ibid.*, 172.

133. *Ibid.*, 229.

134. *Ibid.*, 230.

135. Brown, *Flying Blind*, 218; Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 165-167.

136. See Chapter Three above.

137. "Eisenhower-Nixon And The Missiles Failure," *The Propeller*, 17 March 1960; see also "War Vet Jobless 13 Months; Calls it 'Worse Than Battle'," *The Propeller*, 28 April 1960, both in Propeller (PROP) Files, Southern California Labor Newspaper Collection (hereafter cited as PROP Files), Urban Archives, Cal State – Northridge.

138. The union applauded Kennedy's pledge to use defense contracts to combat unemployment, and reprinted in full Kennedy's statement that the redistribution of defense contracts would be "economic folly." "Kennedy: Urges Step-Up in Missile and Aircraft Production to Fight High Unemployment," PROP Files, Urban Archives, Cal State – Northridge.

139. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 167.

140. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 230.

141. Brown, *Flying Blind*, 221-222.
142. "Local 887 Launches: 'Operation Save Our Jobs'," *The Propeller*, 6 April 1961, PROP Files, Urban Archives, Cal State – Northridge.
143. Brown, *Flying Blind*, 223-226; Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 230.
144. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 160-161; John Pike, "SM-64 Navaho United States Nuclear Forces," FAS Web Site, 17 July 1998 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/icbm/sm-64.htm>>.
145. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 230-231.
146. Bill Yenne, *Into the Sunset: The Convair Story* (Lyme, CT: Greenwich Publishing Group, 1995), 8-10.
147. William Wagner, *Reuben Fleet and the Story of Consolidated Aircraft* (Fallbrook, CA: Aero Publishers, 1976), 160, 175.
148. Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 14-19, 22. On the unique role of military spending in San Diego's economic growth see Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Roger Showley, "Military, City Fare Well: San Diego Outgunned Competition and Gained Economically from National Defense Spending," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 5 April 1992, D-2.
149. Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 23-24.
150. *Ibid.*, 29-31.
151. *Ibid.*, 33.
152. *Ibid.*, 33-35.
153. *Ibid.*, 44-45.

154. *Ibid.*, 58-62.
155. Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 168-170; Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 53.
156. Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 225.
157. Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 64.
158. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 35; Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 225; John Pike, "B-58 Hustler United States Nuclear Forces," FAS Web Site, 29 May 1997 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/bomber/b-58.htm>>.
159. On TFX, see Robert J. Art, *The TFX Decision: McNamara and the Military* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968); and Robert F. Coulam, *Illusions of Choice: The F-111 and the Problem of Weapons Acquisition Reform* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977). See also Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 253-260.
160. Interview with John Lull, 12 April 2001, tape and transcript (Hereafter cited as Lull Interview), 7-8; Interview with Bill Chana, 4 April 2001, tape and transcript (Hereafter cited as Chana Interview), 8; Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 225-6, 256; Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 101. See also Richard Austin Smith, *Corporations in Crisis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963), 192.
161. Yenne, *Into the Sunset*, 71-73.
162. *Ibid.*, 73-74.
163. Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt*, 58.
164. *Ibid.*, 60-61; Donald J. Norton, *Larry: A Biography of Lawrence D. Bell* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 48-52; Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 113-114.
165. Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt*, 59-60.
166. *Ibid.*, 60; Norton, *Larry*, 105, 133-141; Thomas A. Scott, "Winning the War in an Atlanta Suburb: The Coming of Bell Bomber and its Impact on Marietta, Georgia," *The*

Second Wave: Southern Industrialization, 1940-1970, 1 April 1998
<<http://www.hts.gatech.edu/cssi/2ndwave/scott.html>>.

167. Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt*, 60.

168. Ibid., 61. On Curtiss Wright, see also Eugene Gholz, "The Curtiss-Wright Corporation and Cold War-Era Defense Procurement: A Challenge to Military-Industrial Complex Theory," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2:1 (2000): 35-75.

169. Norton, *Larry*, 117-131; 169-186.

170. Norton, *Larry*, 144. On Arthur M. Young, see Richard S. Tipton, "Part 1: In Search of a Challenge," *About Arthur M. Young: Arthur Young, Maker of the Bell*. <<http://www.arthuryoung.com/maker1.HTML>>; idem, "Part 2: The Model 42... beauty and the beast" *About Arthur M. Young: Arthur Young, Maker of the Bell*. <<http://www.arthuryoung.com/maker2.HTML>>.

171. Norton, *Larry*, 164-165.

172. Interview with Hugh M. Neeson, 11 July 2001, 17 August 2001, tape and transcript. (Hereafter cited as Neeson Interview); Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 179-180, 208.

173. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 311; John Pike, "UH-1 Huey Helicopter – Military Aircraft," FAS Web Site, 12 March 1999 <<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/ac/uh-1.htm>>.

174. John Pike, "GAM-63 Rascal – United States Nuclear Forces," FAS Web Site, 2 June 1997 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/bomber/gam-63.htm>>.

175. Neeson Interview; Pike, "GAM-63 Rascal."

176. Following the acquisition, the renamed Bell Aerospace Corporation consisted of three operating enterprises – Bell Aerosystems in upstate New York, Bell Helicopter in Fort Worth, Texas, and Hydraulic Research and Manufacturing Company in the northern Los Angeles suburb of Santa Clarita, California. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 222.

177. Neeson Interview.

178. Ibid.

179. Ibid.; Interview with Dick Passman, 7 June 2001, notes of conversation (Hereafter cited as Passman Interview).

180. Several works criticize the Kennedy administration's defense policy decisions in the wake of information that there was no missile gap. See, for example, Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 142-263; and Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 107-109. Bottomo gives Kennedy some credit for creating the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), in an "attempt to reduce the conflicting estimates produced by interservice rivalry within the American military establishment," but he also faults the administration for its unwillingness to reduce the number of projected missiles, Bottomo, *The Missile Gap*, 164, 167. Raymond Garthoff asserts that the Soviet build up of the late 1960s was "set in motion in 1961-62" and was precipitated by "the Kennedy administration's strategic program launched in 1961." Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking*, 4.

181. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 178. See also Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking*, 16-18.

182. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 93. See also Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 214; and Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 352.

183. Desmond Ball found "little evidence of extensive industrial pressure for a further expansion of the U.S. missile program," Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 254.

184. Ibid., 116-117; and Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 190.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. 26 October 1960, Remarks, Warren, Michigan, Tech Plaza Shopping Center, FOC, Part I, 760.

2. *Area Trends of Employment and Unemployment* [U.S. Department of Labor periodical], (hereafter cited as *Area Trends*), July 1960, 21.

3. Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1994). See also Paul A. C. Koistinen, *Beating Plowshares into Swords: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1606-1865* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996); *Mobilizing for Modern War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1865-1919* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997); and *Planning War, Pursuing Peace: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1920-1939* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

4. For example, employment in the aircraft and parts industry rose from a low of 238,000 in 1948 to 796,000 in 1953 and employment in the ordnance and accessories field rose from a low of 26,000 in 1949 to over 243,000 in 1953. Figures from *America's Industrial and Occupational Manpower Requirements, 1964-75*. Department of Labor, W. Wirtz, 1 January 1966, 25, 68.

5. Diane Kunz, *Butter and Guns: America's Cold War Economic Diplomacy* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 2.

6. Robert Higgs, *Crisis and Leviathan: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), especially Chapter 10, 237-257; and Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, passim; Robert Buzzanco, "What Happened to the New Left: Toward a Radical Reading of American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 23:4 (Fall 1999): 592. See also Benjamin Fordham, *Building the Cold War Consensus: The Political Economy of U.S. National Security Policy, 1949-1951* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

7. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 September 1960, 1, 7; and 16 September 1960, Remarks, Reading, Pennsylvania, excerpts (advance release text), FOC, Part I, 1022.

8. 28 October 1960, Remarks, Pottsville, Pennsylvania, FOC, Part I, 790; 26 October 1960, Remarks, Warren, Michigan, Tech Plaza Shopping Center, FOC, Part I, 761; 28 September 1960, Remarks, Niagara Falls, NY, Bell Aircraft Co., FOC, Part I, 384.

9. 2 November 1960, Remarks, San Diego California, Horton Plaza, FOC, Part I, 858; 2 November 1960, Remarks, San Diego, California, airport, FOC, Part I, 857.

10. 26 October 1960, Remarks, Warren, Michigan, Tech Plaza Shopping Center, FOC, Part I, 760.

11. Consider, for example, the case of a politician who goes to Iowa promising farmers higher prices for their crops, but who then goes to Chicago promising lower food prices for consumers. Politicians who promise to reduce taxes while also increasing public services provide another obvious example.

12. An unpublished paper presented at the 2001 annual meeting of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations is a notable exception. See Ed Wehrle, "Guns and Butter: American Organized Labor Approaches the Military -Industrial Complex in the Post-War Era," Paper presented at the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Annual Meeting, 14 June 2001, Washington, DC. Among published works, there is virtually no mention of DMP-4 in any of dozens of books and articles that discuss federal employment and regional economic aid programs. A leading scholar in this field, Sar Levitan, made only two passing references to the policy in all of his many works on federal aid programs. See Sar Levitan and Joyce K. Zickler, *Too Little, But Not Too Late: Federal Aid to Lagging Areas* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1976), 5, 10.

13. *Area Trends*, July-September 1981.

14. *Area Trends*, September 1957, 14. Various agencies were given authority and responsibility for implementing this policy over the years, but the Labor Department always retained control over the classification and designation of labor surplus areas.

15. At Bell Aircraft in Niagara Falls, on 28 September 1960, Kennedy said that DMP-4 was "thrown out" in 1952, 28 September 1960, Remarks, Niagara Falls, N.Y., Bell Aircraft Co., FOC, Part I, 383. One month later, in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Kennedy claimed that Republican Senator William Knowland had led the fight in 1953 to repeal DMP-4, 28 October 1960, Remarks, Pottsville, Pennsylvania, FOC, Part I, 790.

16. *Area Trends*, July 1960, 21.

17. "Special Message to the Congress: Program for Economic Recovery and Growth (17)," 2 February 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy, 1961* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1962), 41-53.

18. No area labor market trends was issued in February 1961, but the March 1961 issue of *Area Trends*, the first such issue published by the new Kennedy Administration, reflected no substantial change in DMP-4, *Area Labor Market Trends*, March 1961, 1. The president also formed a Cabinet-level advisory committee to the Secretary of Defense in order to ease the impact on communities of curtailing activities at defense installations. Congress, Senate, Select Committee on Small Business, *Impact of Defense Spending on Labor Surplus Areas – 1962: On Effect of Defense Spending on Small Business in Labor Surplus Areas*, 87th Cong., 2nd Sess., 29 August 1962, 21.

19. *Ibid.*, 50.

20. From Exhibit III, "Memorandum for Cabinet and Principal Agencies, February 27, 1962," in *Impact of Defense Spending on Labor Surplus Areas – 1962*, 53-54.

21. "Area Labor Markets Show Spring Pick-Up," Press Release, U.S. Department of Labor, attached to the May 1962 issue of *Area Trends*.

22. *Impact of Defense Spending on Labor Surplus Areas – 1962*, 26-27.

23. *Ibid.*, 60.

24. *Ibid.*, 9-10.

25. *Ibid.*, 39.

26. *Ibid.*, 60.

27. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, especially Chapter 7, 245-295.

28. Accordingly, the Youth Conservation Corps, introduced by Humphrey and 21 other cosponsors in January 1961, died with the adjournment of the 87th Congress. *Impact of Defense Spending on Labor Surplus Areas*, 37.

29. Ibid., 56.
30. Ibid., 61.
31. Ibid., 12.
32. Ibid., 95-96. Evidence that the Maybank Amendment continued to govern procurement in the 1980s is found in *Area Trends*, January-June 1981, 37.
33. *Impact of Defense Spending in Labor Surplus Areas – 1962*, 114, 110.
34. Ibid., 121.
35. Ibid. On Joseph Campbell, see United States, General Accounting Office, "Introduction to GAO History, Joseph Campbell: Economy and Efficiency Audits, 1954-1965," *GAO History*, <http://www.gao.gov/about/history/gaohist_1954-1965.htm>.
36. *Impact of Defense Spending in Labor Surplus Areas*, Report of the Subcommittee on Retailing, Distribution, and Marketing Practices to the Select Committee on Small Business, United States Senate on Government Programs and Policies as They Relate to the Use of Procurement in Redeveloping Distressed Areas and a Compilation of Policy Directives, Statutes, and Regulations Relating to Procurement in Distressed Areas, 19 August 1963 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), 3, 23.
37. Perret, *Eisenhower*, 603-604.
38. Shapley, *Promise and Power*, 208. On TFX, see Art, *The TFX Decision*; and Coulam, *Illusions of Choice*. See also Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 253-260.
39. *Area Trends*, June 1968, 3.
40. *Area Trends*, January 1970, 1-2.
41. *Area Trends*, July 1970, 1-3.
42. The apparent anomaly presented by areas with less than 6 percent unemployment being classified as a D area (with unemployment between 6.0 and 8.9

percent) is at least partially explained by a two-month or more lag between labor surplus area classifications and the calculation of unemployment rates. So, for example, whereas the December 1971 issue of *Area Trends* reported the current classification of each major area, it reported the unemployment rate for each area as calculated in October 1971.

43. Within the 50 states the greatest disparity among areas officially classified as having a labor surplus can be found between Sacramento (unemployment rate of 4.5 percent) and Seattle, Washington (unemployment rate 11.8 percent). The highest unemployment rate for the month was recorded in Ponce, Puerto Rico (unemployment rate 15.8%). *Area Trends*, December 1971, p. 31.

44. Consider, for example, the case of Portland, Maine. In June 1968, it was reported that Portland had been moved to a B classification (low unemployment, between 1.5 and 2.9 percent) for the first time in nearly 11 years. During this 11-year period, Portland was generally grouped as a Class C area (moderate unemployment, 3.0 to 5.9 percent) and therefore not eligible for preference under DMP-4. In December 1971, there were a total of 84 major areas classified as group C. In this same month there were a total of 60 areas that were eligible for preference, but 48 of these 60 were in group D, with unemployment between 6.0 and 8.9 percent. Of these C and D areas, consider the following: 15 of 84 C areas had unemployment between 5.0 and 5.9 percent, 30 had unemployment between 4.0 and 4.9 percent. Meanwhile, of the 48 areas in class D, 20 had unemployment rates below 6.0 percent, and another twelve had unemployment ranging between 6.0 and 6.5 percent, *Area Trends*, June 1968.

45. The foregoing applies to all major sports, with the notable exception of the National Basketball Association, which uses a lottery to determine the draft order for all teams who do not make the playoffs. The lottery is weighted, however, with the teams with the worst record receiving the highest number of lottery "tickets."

46. Figures compiled from *Area Trends*, March 1972, 64-70.

47. Figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population: 1970, Subject Reports, Educational Attainment* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1973), 1-3.

48. To cite just one example, a review of federally assisted manpower programs published in 1971 listed 18 different programs intended to aid workers. DMP-4 was not among those listed. See Sar A. Levitan and Robert Taggart, III, *Social Experimentation and Manpower Policy: The Rhetoric and the Reality* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 108-111.

49. Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt*, passim. Since the publication of the *Rise of the Gunbelt*, Markusen has followed-up on these arguments by discussing ways in which the persistence of the gunbelt after the Cold War can be partially attributed to the same political dynamics that contributed to its growth during the Cold War. See Ann Markusen and Joel Yudken, *Dismantling the Cold War Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

50. For example, the concept of a "belt" stretching from the East to the West, through the South, gives the impression of an unbroken string of defense-dependent regions, whereas, in reality, many of these areas are far removed from one another. Further, there are many other factors – other than military spending – that contributed to the rise of these areas, not the least of which is climate.

51. See, for example, the works of Seymour Melman and Robert Higgs, discussed below.

52. See, for example, the works of Paul A. C. Koistinen, and Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, discussed below.

53. For example, James Tobin, who had sharply criticized Eisenhower's fiscal restraint, which had reduced spending "at a time when the world situation cried out for accelerating and enlarging our defense effort," later became the youngest member of Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers. Quote from Tobin, "Defense, Dollars, and Doctrines," 324.

54. Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 121.

55. Paul A. C. Koistinen, *The Military-Industrial Complex: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980).

56. Paul Dunne, "The Political Economy of Military Expenditure: An Introduction," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 14:4 (1990): 395-404, provides a brief introduction to the scholarly literature.

57. Baran and Sweezy had attributed to military spending a unique role in spurring economic activity in capitalist economies. Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966), 212-217.

58. The authors may not have known the details of NSC-68, which was declassified in 1975, and first published in 1977, see May, ed. *American Cold War Strategy*, 16.

59. Larry J. Griffin, Joel A. Divine and Michael Wallace, "Monopoly Capital, Organized Labor, and Military Expenditures in the United States, 1949-1976," *American Journal of Sociology*, 88:Supplement (1982): S116, S128.

60. Griffin et al, "Monopoly Capital, Organized Labor, and Military Expenditures in the United States, 1949-1976," S144.

61. Alex Mintz and Alexander Hicks, "Military Keynesianism in the United States, 1949-1976: Disaggregating Military Expenditures and Their Determination," *American Journal of Sociology*, 90:2 (1984): 411, 413.

62. *Ibid.*, 416.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Christopher Jencks, "Commentary and Debate: Methodological Problems in Studying 'Military Keynesianism,'" *American Journal of Sociology*, 91:2 (1985): 376. (Emphasis in original).

65. Seymour Melman, *The Permanent War Economy: American Capitalism In Decline*, Revised and Updated (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985).

66. *Ibid.*, 17.

67. Ibid., 260-261. See also Seymour Melman, *Pentagon Capitalism: The Political Economy of War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970).

68. *The Permanent War Economy*, first written in 1974, was revised in 1985. This latter revision failed, however, to incorporate either anecdotal or aggregate economic data from the early 1980s. The exclusion of these crucial later years in the Cold War significantly weakened Melman's arguments. Another work that approaches the problem of military spending and long-term economic growth is Robert Higgs, ed. *Arms, Politics and the Economy: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives, Independent Studies in Political Economy* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1990).

69. Robert Ayanian, "Political Risk, National Defense and the Dollar," *Economic Inquiry* 26:2 (1988): 345-51.

70. Vittorio Grilli and Andrea Beltratti, "U.S. Military Expenditure and the Dollar," *Economic Inquiry* 27:4 (October 1989): 737-44.

71. James E. Payne, Kevin L. Ross, and Edward A. Olszewski, "Defense Versus Nondefense Spending: A Macroeconomic Comparison," in James E. Payne and Anandi P. Sahu, eds., *Defense Spending and Economic Growth* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 135-150.

72. Lawrence H. Meyer and Fredric Q. Raines, Chapter 5, "Defense Spending and Economic Growth: Spillovers vs. Crowding Out," in Payne and Sahu, *Defense Spending and Economic Growth* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 85-114.

73. Mark Hooker has postulated that state data more accurately reflects the effect of defense spending on the economy. Mark A. Hooker, "How Do Changes in Military Spending Affect the Economy? Evidence from State-Level Data," *New England Economic Review*, March/April 1996: 3-15. Mark Thomas has made a related argument in his study of defense expenditures in England during the 1930's. He employed disaggregated data using a regional input-output table or matrix to demonstrate the unique economic behavior of military spending within particular industries and regions. See Mark Thomas, "Rearmament and Economic Recovery in the Late 1930s," *Economic History Review, Second Series*, 36:4 (1983): 552-79.

74. Johnson is quoted in Bundy, "The Presidency and the Peace," 355.

75. 2 November 1960, "Statement, Development of the B-70," *FOC, Part I*, 1232, 1233.

76. Peter Roman postulates that the release of B-70 funds late in the campaign was designed to help Nixon, especially in California, but he stresses that Eisenhower remained completely opposed to the program in principle, Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*, 167. See also DDQC 1982/2881; and Brown, *Flying Blind*, 219-221.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. "Episode Two Transcript, Part II," *Surviving the Bottom Line with Hedrick Smith*, PBS, January 1998, transcript, Hedrick Smith Productions, <http://www.pbs.org/bottomline/html/e2_trans2.html>.

2. Michael E. Porter, *San Diego: Clusters of Innovation Initiative* (Washington, DC: Council on Competitiveness, 2001), 39, 41.

3. Patillo, *Pushing the Envelope*, 251.

4. *Ibid.*, 261.

5. *Ibid.*, 252. See also Herbert Solow, "North American: A Corporation Deeply Committed," *Fortune*, June 1962, 145-149, 164-182; and Kenneth S. David, ed., *Arms, Industry, and America* (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1971), 214-215.

6. *Ibid.*, 248-249. See also Herman O. Stekler, *The Structure and Performance of the Aerospace Industry* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965); F. M. Scherer, "The Aerospace Industry," in *The Structure of American Industry*, ed. Walter Adams, 335-379, 4th edition, (New York: Macmillan, 1970); Raymond Kucera, *The Aerospace Industry and the Military* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1973).

7. Chana Interview.

8. Ibid.
9. Lull Interview.
10. "Episode Two Transcript, Part II – Surviving the Bottom Line with Hedrick Smith."
11. Thom Mrozek, "Convair Slayer Plea-Bargains, Gets Life Term Crime: Fired General Dynamics worker pleads guilty in a deal negotiated the day his second trial was to begin," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 November 1992, San Diego County Edition, 1. See also Michael Mantell, with Steve Albrecht, Chapter 5, "Problem Employees, Problem Behaviors: A Case Study in Workplace Homicide," in *Ticking Bombs: Defusing Violence in the Workplace* (New York: Irwin, 1994), 93-134.
12. In 1997, Roy Gilmore handed me a table showing the major U.S. aircraft manufacturers of World War II. There were 22 different U.S. companies manufacturing aircraft in 34 different cities. Today, only 5 companies (Bell-Textron, Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, McDonnell-Douglas, and Northrup-Grumman), are actively engaged in the manufacture and development of military aircraft. "Table 1: Major U.S. Aircraft of World War II," in author's possession.
13. Stephen S. Cohen and Clara Eugenia Garcia, "California's Missile Gap," *California Management Review* 37:1 (Fall 1994), 110.
14. Ibid., 120.
15. The authors called for regulatory reform and an aggressive program to develop low-cost housing on the grounds of the 21 military bases slated for closure in California. Ibid., 125-126.
16. Porter, *San Diego: Clusters of Innovation Initiative*.
17. James Bernstein, "Grumman in Decline," *LI History.com: Long Island Our Story*, Newsday, <<http://www.lihistory.com/9/hs9grum.htm>>.
18. Neeson Interview.

19. Passman Interview.
20. Neeson Interview.
21. "Economic Boom Elusive for Many in New York," *Labor Research Association Online: Economic Growth*, 13 September 2000, Labor Research Association, <http://www.laborresearch.org/econ_growth/growth_nys.htm>.
22. G. Scott Thomas, "New York Economy is Strengthening – 2001-02-26," *Business First*, 26 February 2001, Business First [Buffalo, NY], <<http://buffalo.bcentral.com/buffalo/stories/2001/02/26/story1.html>>.
23. Neeson Interview.
24. Eisenhower, "A Chance for Peace," 182.
25. On "creative destruction" see Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 3rd edition, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 81-86. For Schumpeter, the process of "creative destruction" was not always a positive force. For a critical review of Schumpeter's theories see Arnold Heertje, ed., *Schumpeter's Vision: Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy after 40 Years* (New York: Praeger, 1980); and Israel M. Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 92-93, 125-131.
26. Michael Kinsman, "Working for a Living," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, D1.
27. Porter, *San Diego: Clusters of Innovation Initiative*, 41.
28. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 201.
29. *Ibid.*, 3-4.
30. According to Robert Collins, Milton Friedman "struck the single most telling intellectual blow against the reigning Keynesianism" in his 1967 presidential address before the American Economic Association. James Tobin called the speech, subsequently

published as an article, "very likely the most influential article ever published in an economics journal." Robert M. Collins, *More: The Politics of Economic Growth in Postwar America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 180; Tobin quote from James Tobin, "The Natural Rate as New Classical Macroeconomics," in *The Natural Rate of Unemployment: Reflections on 25 Years of Hypothesis*, ed. Rod Cross (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 40. The speech was published as Milton Friedman, "The Role of Monetary Policy," *American Economic Review*, March 1968: 1-17. On the property of price adjustment that incorporates expectations of future inflation, known as the accelerationist or natural rate property, see also Edmund S. Phelps, "Money Wage Dynamics and Labor Market Equilibrium," *Journal of Political Economy*, July-August 1967: 678-711.

31. Bernard Brodie had dismissed as highly unlikely the possibility that defense spending in excess of 10 percent of GNP would cause inflation "rapid enough to have self-intensifying effects." Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*, 369. On the economic crisis of the late 1960s see, Collins, *More*, especially Chapter 3, pages 68-97.

32. On Eisenhower Revisionism see, for example, Immerman "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist"; and Stephen G. Rabe, "Eisenhower Revisionism: A Decade of Scholarship," *Diplomatic History* 17 (Winter 1993): 97-115.

33. Richard Immerman, "Book Reviews," *Political Science Quarterly* 106:1 (Spring 1991), 146.

34. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 317.

35. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 417, 418.

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APPENDIX: REGRESSION SERIES

Several key questions or problems emerge from the competing and contradictory findings presented by Grilli and Beltratti, and Payne, Ross and Olszewski. (See Chapter 6, Part II, above). First, do the different time series partially explain the different interpretations? Second, these works use aggregate economic data, possibly obscuring the unique regional effects of either defense or non-defense spending, or both. Finally, each of these papers uses different models (vector autoregressive vs. nonstationary time series) suggesting that this might also have contributed to their contradictory findings. The research presented below begins the process of re-examining the contradictory findings by using a longer time series (from 1940 to 1990) in a multiple regression analysis using the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method.

This research considers the macroeconomic effects of government spending on economic performance as measured by long-term GDP growth. By separating government spending into two components – defense and non-defense spending – this simple model yields intriguing evidence that changes in non-defense spending (measured either as a percentage of GDP or in real dollars) exert a modest but deleterious effect on the macroeconomy as measured by long-range GDP growth. By contrast, defense spending's effects are more ambiguous, but appear to exert a mildly positive effect on long-term GDP growth. By considering these effects at the macroeconomic level, and by carefully scrutinizing the precise historical background behind several key episodes in the history of government spending during the Cold War period, scholars might be better able to develop

models for use at the regional level, where the effects of defense spending are likely to be more pronounced.

First Regression Series (GDP, GDP1, GDP2)

THE MODEL - Based upon a simple macroeconomic model, we know that economic output (Y^P) is a function of capital (K), labor (L), and technology (Tech):

$$Y^P = f(K, L, \text{and Tech})$$

From this, an alternative model is constructed to test whether defense spending (DS) has a differential impact than government spending (GS) generally where gross domestic product (GDP) is used as a proxy for Y^P .

Growth of real GDP is based upon a three-year moving average and yearly growth (GGDP) is calculated from these averages. I then postulated that technology is related in some way (either positively or negatively) to government spending, generally, and defense spending, specifically. I expressed this in terms relative to either GDP or total spending:

$$\text{Tech} = f(G/GDP, DS/G, DS/GDP)$$

where, for example, G/GDP is government spending as a percentage of GDP, and where DS/G and DS/GDP represents defense spending as a percentage of government spending and GDP, respectively. By substituting this into our original equation we obtain:

$$\begin{aligned} Y^P &= f[K, L, \text{and } f(G/GDP)] \\ Y^P &= f[K, L, \text{and } f(DS/G)] \\ Y^P &= f[K, L, \text{and } f(DS/GDP)] \end{aligned}$$

Finally, by holding K and L constant over this period we show that real GDP growth (GGDP) is related, in the simplest of terms, to government spending:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GGDP} &= f(\text{G}/\text{GDP}) \\ \text{GGDP} &= f(\text{DS}/\text{G}) \\ \text{GGDP} &= f(\text{DS}/\text{GDP}) \end{aligned}$$

Based upon this model, my regression analysis tests the relationship between long-range GDP growth (GGDP) and government spending, broken down into defense and non-defense components. If the defense and non-defense components are found to have differential effects, then we can build upon the historical work of Melman and Koistinen, while also testing the more general economic theories of Ayanian, Grilli and Beltratti and Payne, Ross, and Olszewski, to discern the specific effects of spending (both defense and non-defense) on the macroeconomy, if they in fact exist.

We know from the outset that these models are underspecified. Years of economic research have created macroeconomic models of greater, not lesser, specificity and complexity, and have identified countless factors, other than government spending, which have a measurable effect upon GDP growth (these include monetary effects, natural disasters, specific price shocks – particularly within oil or other critical commodities – and consumer behavior). Nonetheless, the basic framework stated above is theoretically sound. More sophisticated testing and re-testing remain beyond the scope of this paper, but are expected to incorporate the lessons learned here as a foundation for a more complex analysis that takes into account many more variables.

Some specified models from a series of regressions and the associated statistics derived from the method of OLS:

Linear Models using data from 1940-1990 (51 cases) and specified subsets:

(Equation 1) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\text{GS} + \mu$

Where GS=Total spending as a percent of GDP

(Equation 2) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\text{DS} + \mu$

Where DS=Defense spending as a percent of total spending

(Equation 3) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\text{D} + \delta\text{N} + \mu$

Where D=Defense spending as a percent of GDP
N=Non-defense spending as a percent of GDP

(Equation 4) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\Delta\text{D} + \delta\Delta\text{N} + \mu$

Where ΔD =Percent change in real defense spending
 ΔN =Percent change in real non-defense spending

(Equation 5) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\Delta\text{D} + \delta\Delta\text{N} + \mu$

(Equation 6) $\text{GDP Growth}_t = \alpha + \beta\Delta\text{D}_{t-1} + \delta\Delta\text{N}_{t-1} + \mu$

(Equation 7) $\text{GDP Growth} = \alpha + \beta\Delta\text{D} + \delta\Delta\text{N} + \text{TT} + \mu$

(Equation 8) $\text{GDP Growth}_t = \alpha + \beta\Delta\text{D}_{t-1} + \delta\Delta\text{N}_{t-1} + \text{TT} + \mu$

Where ΔD =Percent change in defense spending as a percentage of GDP
 ΔN =Percent change in non-defense spending as a percentage of GDP
TT=Time trend variable

TABLE 1 – First Regression Series, 1940-1990, 51 cases (GDP)

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Total Spending (as % of GDP)		Constant	R ²	
1	GGDP	.0033 (6.66)		-.0376	.491	
Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense (as % of total spending)		Constant	R ²	
2	GGDP	.0746 (3.62)		.000104	.222	
Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense (as % of GDP)	Non-Defense (as % of GDP)	Constant	R ²	
3	GGDP	.333 (6.93)	.185 (2.18)	-.021	.539	
Eq.	Dependent Variable	ΔDefense (Real)	ΔNon-Defense (Real)	Constant	R ²	
4	GGDP	.0627 (5.89)	-.0497 (-1.87)	.0338	.496	
Eq.	Dependent Variable	ΔDefense (as % of GDP)	ΔNon-Defense (as % of GDP)	Constant	R ²	
5	GGDP	.0653 (4.51)	-.0585 (-2.73)	.0354	.485	
Eq.	Dependent Variable (at time t)	ΔDefense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1)	ΔNon-Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1)	Constant	R ²	
6	GGDP	.0627 (8.60)	-.0363 (-2.22)	.032	.660	
Eq.	Dependent Variable	ΔDefense (as % of GDP)	ΔNon-Defense (as % of GDP)	Time Trend Variable	Constant	R ²
7	GGDP	.0623 (4.30)	-.06145 (-2.88)	-.0003 (-1.38)	.0414	.506
Eq.	Dependent Variable (at time t)	ΔDefense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1)	ΔNon-Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1)	Time Trend Variable	Constant	R ²
8	GGDP	.0624 (8.14)	-.0363 (-2.19)	-.00002 (-.14)	.032	.660

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.68 (.10 level of significance), 2.01 (.05 level of significance)

TABLE 2 – First Regression Series, 1950-1989, 40 cases (GDP1)

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Δ Defense (Real)	Δ Non-Defense (Real)		Constant	R ²
4	GGDP	.0368 (2.41)	-.0226 (-.70)		.0328	.252
5	GGDP	Δ Defense (as % of GDP) .0252 (1.41)	Δ Non-Defense (as % of GDP) -.0559 (-2.13)		.0341	.268
6	GGDP	Δ Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t) .0374 (2.27)	Δ Non-Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1) -.0459 (-1.90)		.0331	.341
7	GGDP	Δ Defense (as % of GDP) .0178 (1.00)	Δ Non-Defense (as % of GDP) -.0592 (-2.31)	Time Trend Variable -.00035 (-1.78)	.0338	.329
8	GGDP	Δ Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t) .0330 (1.96)	Δ Non-Defense (as % of GDP) (at time t-1) -.0476 (-1.97)	Time Trend Variable -.0002 (-1.13)	.0379	.365

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.68 (.10 level of significance)

2.02 (.05 level of significance)

TABLE 3 – First Regression Series, 1961-1989, 29 cases (GDP2)

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense (as % of GDP)	Non-Defense (as % of GDP)		Constant	R ²
3	GGDP	-.326 (-1.14)	-.3346 (-2.11)		.1015	.225
Eq.	Dependent Variable	ΔDefense (as % of GDP)	ΔNon-Defense (as % of GDP)	Time Trend Variable	Constant	R ²
7	GGDP	.0258 (.73)	-.13175 (-2.76)	-.0008 (-2.64)	.0572	.307
Eq.	Dependent Variable (at time t)	ΔDefense (at time t-1)	ΔNon-Defense (at time t-1)	Time Trend Variable	Constant	R ²
8	GGDP	.001 (.03)	-.1201 (-2.42)	-.0008 (-2.33)	5.455	.281

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.70 (.10 level of significance)

2.05 (.05 level of significance)

Observations from First Regression Series: GDP Growth as it Relates to Government Spending

In the generic case (1940-1990) from Equation 2 we infer that defense spending as a percentage of total spending accounts for 22 percent of the variation in Growth of GDP (GGDP) as opposed to 49 percent for total spending as a percentage of GDP (Equation 1). However, breaking spending into components (defense, D, and non-defense, ND) appears to yield the best model, based on the results of the regressions, with $R^2 = .539$ and both D and ND variables passing t significance test at a 95 percent confidence level. In this instance, the effects of spending appear to be mildly favorable, with increases in both defense and non-defense spending having a positive effect on GGDP.

However, the use of raw data from 1940-1949 critically obscures the historically significant changes that took place during this short period. This historical volatility (the end of the Great Depression, outbreak of World War II, unprecedented expansion of the government's taxing and spending authority, the end of the war, rapid demobilization, the outbreak of the Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, Détente, and the military build-up of the early 1980s) is reflected in a similarly volatile data set. The succeeding case which excludes this period (1950-1989), would more accurately reflect unique Cold War spending patterns, such as they were. In this case, however, the regression yields decidedly more ambiguous empirical results: all five models are less satisfactory than in the generic (1940-1990) case. Still, Equations 5-8 all find non-defense spending components to have had a statistically significant effect (at a 90 percent confidence level) on real GDP growth. Defense spending is significant only in the time-lagged Equations 6 and 8

suggesting, perhaps, that the effects of non-defense spending are more immediate than defense spending.

In the final case, (1961-1989) chosen to reflect the changes in military budgeting beginning with John Kennedy's presidency, the results are especially ambiguous. Particularly troublesome are the low t-statistics for defense spending in all 6 models. Non-defense spending is found to be statistically significant only at the 90 percent level of confidence in Equation 5. It retains, however, its mildly negative characteristics suggesting, again, that increases in non-defense spending exert a negative or deleterious effect on GDP growth.

It might be argued that this model expresses a spurious relationship as GDP growth and government spending have been generally consistent--both increasing--throughout the Cold War period. This is not entirely true. Defense spending has risen and fallen during the forty-year period from 1950 to 1989, particularly as a percentage of GDP. On the other hand, non-defense spending has generally risen, even as a percentage of GDP, since the mid-1960's. Using *changes* in spending, ΔD and ΔND , is one way of controlling for this presumed simultaneity bias. This technique also responds, specifically, to Jencks' critique (see page Chapter Six above), and is reflected in Equations 4-8. Regardless, the addition of a time trend variable in Equations 7 and 8 helps to isolate those spurious effects associated with simultaneity and it yields some important results within the time-frame 1950-1989. The trend variable itself is found to be statistically significant at a 90 percent confidence level in Equation 7, but demonstrates only an infinitesimally small effect on GGDP. The non-defense variable, however, is found to have a slightly higher t-statistic than in the original model (Equation

5), and the coefficient remains essentially unchanged. On the other hand, the t-statistic relating to the defense spending variable is diminished, but this change is not statistically significant as defense spending in the original model was also found to be statistically insignificant.

The question of causality is not completely answered in these models. The Marxists might object to my contention that GGDP is the endogenous, left-hand side, variable, just as Jencks had objected to the Marxists' presumption that economic conditions (in that case unionized unemployment, but other economic factors would be expected to behave similarly) were exogenous. While a more formal causality test might shed light on this particular question, a preliminary test for lag effects within this simple model was intriguing. The results of these two models, 6 and 8, are reprinted herein. We should note that in the first two cases (1940-1990 and 1950-1989) associated t-statistics for the defense variable, D, increase in the lagged case, but decrease for the non-defense, ND, variable. From this we can infer that the effects of non-defense spending are more immediate.

Second Regression Series

Payne, Ross, and Olszewski had found a modest relationship between prices and defense spending. Keynesians, meanwhile, believe in a general sense that government spending is inflationary and therefore appropriate during deflationary periods of slow economic growth. From a simple macroeconomic model, $Y = C + I + G + (X-M)$, where Y represents GDP, C is consumption, I is investment, G represents total government spending and (X-M) represents net exports (exports X, minus imports M). We expect that a rise in G will lead to a rise in Y. Based on this, an alternative model is constructed to test whether defense spending (DS) has a differential impact than government spending (GS) upon Y. We substitute the consumer price index (CPI) for Y and use percentage changes (% Δ) of each of these variables as a share of GDP (ω_1). The model, therefore, looks like this:

$$(Eq 1) \quad \% \Delta CPI = \alpha + \beta \omega_1 \% \Delta G + \chi \omega_1 \% \Delta I + \delta \omega_1 \% \Delta C + \varepsilon \omega_1 \% \Delta NX + \mu$$

Where:

G	=	Government spending
I	=	Investment
C	=	Consumption
NX	=	Net Exports
ω_1	=	I's Share of GDP

If, based upon an OLS regression, we find each of the above coefficients to be similar, we would conclude that government spending has no differential effect.

However, if government spending does have a differential effect, then we can break G into defense spending (D), and non-defense spending (ND), and test again the differential effects of these two components of government spending.

A second set of regressions along the same lines substitutes employment data to test the relationship between government spending, generally, and defense and non-defense spending, specifically. As above, we begin with the assumption that employment is related in some way to the components of the macro model. Two separate statistics expressing employment--unemployment and average hours worked in manufacturing--were used to derive the following models:

$$(Eq 2) \% \Delta UNEM = \alpha + \beta \omega_1 \% \Delta G + \chi \omega_1 \% \Delta I + \delta \omega_1 \% \Delta C + \epsilon \omega_1 \% \Delta NX + \mu$$

$$(Eq 3) \% \Delta HOURS = \alpha + \beta \omega_1 \% \Delta G + \chi \omega_1 \% \Delta I + \delta \omega_1 \% \Delta C + \epsilon \omega_1 \% \Delta NX + \mu$$

Where:

G	=	Government spending
I	=	Investment
C	=	Consumption
NX	=	Net Exports
ω_1	=	I's Share of GDP

Again, as in the case of the above CPI models, if the coefficients are the same, we can conclude that government spending has no differential effect. In this case, equation 2 measuring average weekly hours worked appeared to yield the most promising results. Accordingly, we can break government spending into two components, defense (D) and non-defense (ND), to obtain the following:

$$(Eq 4) \% \Delta HOURS = \alpha + \beta \omega_1 \% \Delta D + \gamma \omega_1 \% \Delta ND + \chi \omega_1 \% \Delta I + \delta \omega_1 \% \Delta C + \epsilon \omega_1 \% \Delta NX + \mu$$

We then add a time trend variable TT for our final model:

$$(Eq 5) \% \Delta HOURS = \alpha + \beta \omega_1 \% \Delta D + \gamma \omega_1 \% \Delta ND + \chi \omega_1 \% \Delta I + \delta \omega_1 \% \Delta C + \epsilon \omega_1 \% \Delta NX + TT + \mu$$

The results of the most promising regression series are listed below.

TABLE 4 – Second Regression Series, 1940-1990, 51 cases

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Gov't Spending	Investment	Consumption	Net Exports	Constant	R ²
3	HOURS	.030 (2.14)	.0495 (2.84)	-.446 (-6.59)	-.001 (-.86)	-.004	.645

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Constant	R ²
4	HOURS	.0188 (3.20)	.0299 (2.23)	.040 (2.70)	-.399 (-5.95)	.0001 (-.16)	-.005	.694

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Time Trend	Constant	R ²
5	HOURS	.021 (3.13)	.0314 (2.29)	.045 (2.72)	-.407 (-5.95)	.00034 (-.28)	-.0001 (.69)	-.007	.697

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.68 (.10 level of significance)

2.01 (.05 level of significance)

TABLE 5 – Second Regression Series, 1950-1989, 40 cases

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Constant	R ²
4	HOURS	.0266 (1.04)	.0284 (.89)	.0755 (1.65)	-.224 (-1.52)	-.0003 (-.21)	-.004	.249

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Time Trend	Constant	R ²
5	HOURS	.025 (.95)	.028 (.86)	.075 (1.60)	-.219 (-1.44)	-.0002 (-.16)	-.00005 (-.21)	-.003	.250

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.69 (.10 level of significance)

2.03 (.05 level of significance)

TABLE 6 – Second Regression Series, 1961-1989, 29 cases

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Constant	R ²
4	HOURS	.041 (.68)	-.0795 (-.95)	.0345 (.51)	-.1887 (-.44)	-.0008 (-.42)	-.002	.130

Eq.	Dependent Variable	Defense Spending	Non-defense Spending	Inv.	Cons.	NEX	Time Trend	Constant	R ²
5	HOURS	.051 (.84)	-.114 (-1.22)	.027 (.40)	-.160 (-.37)	.0009 (-.46)	-.0004 (-.88)	.010	.160

t values in parentheses

Critical values, 2-tailed: 1.71 (.10 level of significance)

2.06 (.05 level of significance)

HOURS = Average Weekly Hours worked in Manufacturing (from U.S. govt statistics)

Observations from Second Regression Series: CPI, Unemployment (UNEM) and Average Weekly Hours (HOURS)

Regressions of the CPI model (Equation 1) did not yield useful results: no meaningful relationships were found. The data from these regressions are, accordingly, not reprinted here. Likewise, a relationship between unemployment and government spending is not established in this model.

Average weekly hours worked in manufacturing (HOURS - taken from BLS statistics) shows some promise as a measure of how government spending effects the macroeconomy. In the generic case especially (1940-1990), four of the five exogenous variables pass the t-test at the 95 percent confidence level (NX fails), and the model yields a surprisingly high R^2 of .694.

It might be assumed that this model expresses a spurious relationship as manufacturing employment in the United States has declined steadily in the Cold War period, irrespective of specific government spending policies, as a function of this country's transformation into a post-industrial society. The addition of a time trend variable (Equation 5) does not significantly alter the model.

However, the period 1940-1990, as we have already discussed, obscures crucial historical differences. In this case, especially, the HOURS models reflect the unique characteristics of the World War II economy when the labor force neared total mobilization and when virtually all manufacturing work originated from a government contract. The successive analyses of 1950-1989 and 1961-1989, which exclude the World War II years, yield considerably more ambiguous results and are not reprinted.

Within neither period are defense nor non-defense spending found to be statistically significant determinants of either unemployment or manufacturing labor.

Interpretation

Overall, these models suggested some negative long-term effects of government spending in that increases in government spending can be expected, based upon this model, to result in a decrease of GDP. This finding fails, however, to support Melman's contention that military spending is inherently harmful to long-term economic growth and productivity. On the contrary, defense spending typically does not appear to be statistically significant, and when it is, its effect is actually positive, not negative, as Melman likely would have expected.

Part of the negative relationship associated with non-defense spending is understandable; to the extent that non-defense spending is explicitly countercyclical, we would expect such expenditures to increase during periods of lackluster GNP growth. During economic slowdowns, increased government spending in the form of unemployment claims, for example, are inevitable as more and more people file for jobless benefits. Likewise, other cash assistance programs such as food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are expected to increase as various economic hardships force more and more people to turn to the government for financial assistance. Our lagged models lend additional support to this conclusion, as the negative effects of non-defense effects appear to diminish over time.

An increasing percentage of non-defense expenditures, however, are explicitly *not* tied to macroeconomic conditions. Social security benefits are adjusted for inflation and are paid out regardless of need. The very wealthy and the very poor receive benefits.

These benefits are only modestly redistributive. Likewise, government spending for medical care for the elderly--in the form of Medicare--has increased precipitously since the program's inception, and this growth has not depended upon broader economic conditions. Interest on the national debt, to cite one more example, has absorbed a larger and larger share of government spending, particularly within the last ten to fifteen years. However, in the artificially bifurcated scenario established here, all of these spending programs are categorized only as non-defense spending.

Accordingly, a more sophisticated disaggregation of government spending might be in order. Non-defense spending might be divided into two types of spending--counter-cyclical or anti-poverty, on the one hand, and "entitlement" spending (that is, benefits not tied to economic "need"), on the other. Military spending, meanwhile, might be easily broken down into its service components (Army, Navy/Marine Corps, Air Force) or alternatively into pay and veterans benefits, on the one hand, and industrial spending (manufacturing, procurement and research and development) on the other hand. In fact, as Mintz and Hicks have suggested, spending in the form of transfer payments and salary (especially veterans pension benefits, and active duty military and civilian pay) might be found to have a different macroeconomic effect than military spending and investment in industry. Such a difference would have important ramifications in determining the relative benefits of military spending in a particular region. Military investments in industry might be more likely to have long-term effects while military spending in the form of pension and salaries would likely be more transient.

By considering the effects of military spending at the macroeconomic level within an even longer time series (say, for example, from 1935 to 2000), and by carefully

scrutinizing the precise historical background behind several key episodes in the history of government spending during the Cold War period, scholars might be able to develop better models for use at the regional level, where the effects of defense spending are likely to be more pronounced. A more sophisticated disaggregation of government spending might also be in order. As Mintz and Hicks suggested, spending in the form of transfer payments and salary (especially veterans pension benefits, and active duty military and Defense Department civilian pay) might be found to have different macroeconomic effects from that of military spending and investment in industry. Such a difference might have important ramifications in determining the relative benefits of military spending in a particular region and within the nation as a whole. Non-defense spending, for example, might be divided into two types of expenditures – counter-cyclical or anti-poverty, on the one hand, and “entitlement” spending (that is, benefits not tied to economic “need”), on the other. Military spending, meanwhile, might be easily broken down into its service components (Army, Navy/Marine Corps, Air Force) or alternatively into pay and veterans benefits, on the one hand, and industrial spending (manufacturing, procurement and research and development) on the other hand.

At a more fundamental level, future research might yield additional evidence to support or refute the notion that “military Keynesianism” was a major characteristic of the American economy during the Cold War period. To the extent that it was, scholars must strive to understand better both its origins and its long-term effects. The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that scholars should not rely exclusively on economic data to study what was, and is, a complex phenomenon. Military

Keynesianism during the Cold War had both political and economic roots, and must therefore be studied within an interdisciplinary framework.