An Investigation into the Problems of Civil Control Over the Military Establishment

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROBLEMS OF CIVIL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT

by

James George Boylan

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B. Investigation of Camp Construction
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D. Duties of Under-Secretary of War
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Once the sword of power has been drawn, it can never again be sheathed. The United States has become the greatest of world powers and, willing or not, must maintain the difficult and challenging role of world leadership. Unless America becomes old, soft, and incompetent, she will be called upon, time after time, to defend and aid the free world against the various forms of totalitarian aggression.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the United States has fought in two World Wars plus the Korean incident. We have been alerted numerous times by threats of war from the current oppressor of freedom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Russia. This country is equal in strength, or at least near equal, to the United States. In addition to these threats, there were times when this country should have aided the cause of freedom but failed to act at all. If there is one matter that deserves attention more than any other, it is our national security and the defense of freedom. It comes close to determining the levels of our annual budget (two of every three dollars spent by our Federal Government go to defense purposes) thereby setting the requirements of taxes. It is on military struggle, economic struggle, political struggle, and scientific struggle. We must not only be strong in military power but we must continue to become stronger. We must be strong not only to protect ourselves but the rest of the free world where we have world-wide commitments. We have alliances which call for defense of ten nations of Western Europe, Canada, Greece, Turkey, Latin America, the Philippines, and
other sectors of the world. Few Americans realize just how far we have gone with our commitments which were definitely necessary and made to combat Soviet aggression. These treaties have forced the United States to take on heavy military obligations. Every additional pact will bring with it added obligations. It is, that we maintain our forces and at the same time control them through able leadership of non-military personnel.

II.

When an extensive military establishment is maintained, particularly when it is of long duration, serious problems are certain to be encountered. The cost of such a force, as hinted at before, places heavy tax burdens on the people, while the manpower devoted to military service will reduce the total national products available for consumption and therefore depress levels of living. Another serious truth about our military defense is that "there is no such thing as maximum security short of total mobilization. This would mean regimentation of the worker, the farmer, the businessman; allocation of material; control of wages and prices; drafting of every able-bodied citizen. It would mean, in short, all the grim paraphernalia of the garrison state....It would, if long sustained, imperil the very liberties we are striving to defend." Yet if there are dangers in too great a military establishment, there are even greater dangers in this day and age that would result.

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from a weak military defense. It is a must for our survival that our military establishment be balanced to both national policy and external threat. Korea proved, as Pearl Harbor had previously, that the United States must have a higher degree of readiness to defend ourselves in the atomic age. It is vital then, that we maintain our forces and at the same time control them through able leadership of non-military personnel. However, an important fact that is overlooked on too many occasions is that the military is not only subordinate to civilian authority but also co-ordinate with it. There must be a proper understanding in civilian-military relations to secure our democratic traditions.

III.

Throughout its history, the United States has been fearful of military cliques and has thrown up safeguards against this threat to democratic government. Under the constitution, we have subordinated the military to civilian control by making the President Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and by installing civilian secretaries to direct the departments. Civilian control of the military is not an easy matter; that is, a secure control. This will become more evident each time the struggle for world power becomes greater between the United States and the U.S.S.R. Two great powers in the same world has always been a cause for conflict. The conventional methods of civil control are:

a) explicitly stating in the constitution the principle of civil supremacy over the military,
b) specific limitations of the purposes and manner of the employment of the military arm,

c) requiring all official personnel to take an oath of allegiance to the constitution,

d) requiring all military funds to be voted by the legislature, and for a limited time only,

e) legislative definition of what funds may be used for, and,

f) budgetary supervision with a final audit to make assurance doubly sure.

It is true that these controls could not prevent military overthrow of the government by force but they are definitely helpful in preventing the military from aberrations which might lead to more serious problems. The question then arises as to just how strong and effective these controls have been in their exercise over the military establishment. Have they been strong enough to insure that the military is using their budget effectively and without waste? Is it in close accord with national needs and national welfare?

IV.

We define civil control as the legal mastery of the military and the effective administration management controlled by the civil leadership of government. Yet in the past decades, Congress has not used effectively one of the great legislative weapons for dealing with not only the military but any other

3 Louis Smith, op. cit., p. 9. 
4 Ibid., p. 12

5 Ibid., p. 12
administrative agency -- the authority to grant or withhold funds. Congress has usually placed the burden on the War Department to justify their demands. On numerous occasions it has given it the benefit of doubt for fear of impairing national defense. It is easy to see how this could happen in time of war when Congress does not have time to make a thorough investigation into military appropriations. The Truman Committee, as we will see, revealed many incidents of extravagance and waste by the armed forces as a result of over appropriations.

It is true, however, that Congressmen have been handicapped in their dealings with military appropriations. The rules of organization in the House of Representatives and the Senate have divided responsibility for military appropriations between the Committees on the Armed Forces and the Committee on Appropriations. The former handle the bills that authorize Congress to appropriate public funds while the latter authorizes administrative agencies to spend those funds. The sub-committees on military appropriations have ranged widely over operations of the military establishment. However, a Congressman's attention, if any, has been focused chiefly on those army activities that have direct effects on their constituents. They have been anxious, of course, to provide adequately for the national defense. While doing so, however, they have been less interested in how much, or for what, military funds are to be spent than they have been in locations at which the money is to be expended. This interest has been manifested in the procurement of military supplies.

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It is not only a lack of interest, however, that is responsible for the average Congressman's passive role in the enactment of military bills. Usually only the members of the Committee know what is being done. It was the practice of the Senate until 1947, and in the House, to hold meetings in executive session to which outsiders were excluded. It was also the usual procedure in both chambers not to release the printed hearings and committee reports until the eve of the day when the appropriations bills were being considered on the floor. The result of this was that discussion was limited to the Congressmen who were on the committees of military appropriations. Since the average Congressman is handicapped by a lack of understanding of military finances, few ever enter the discussion. The fact that Congressmen rely on their subcommittees on military appropriations is a danger to the effectiveness of the constitutional doctrines that the legislative controls the purse and that civilian authority is superior to military power. The subcommittees have not been able to subject military budgets to the screening for which these doctrines call. They have had the same time for the multibillion-dollar military budgets submitted today as they did for multimillion-dollar budgets of decades ago. These larger budgets made these committees heavily dependent on the War Department's administrators, both for preparation of estimates for appropriations and for their economical expenditure. Representative Mahon called attention to the fact that "no human being, regardless of his position and regardless of his capa-

Ibid., p. 53.
city could possibly be competently familiar with all the items of appropriations contained in this bill and all the operations of the War Department." The root of the trouble is that there is too much to cover adequately with the restricted means and the limited time available in Congress for review of military budgets. As pointed out, this forces the subcommittees to rely heavily on military administrators.

V.

The Armed Service Committee under Vinson lacked an efficient investigation procedure. A big reason was that it lacked an investigation committee. The subcommittee members just do not have time to make thorough investigations. They may be serving on other committees or more concerned with the general work of a Congressman. When Dewey Short succeeded Vinson, it was recommended by Vinson that an investigating committee be re-established. Vinson stated that "it is absolutely essential that we re-create or re-establish an investigating committee. When I was chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee we had an investigating committee...that gave evidence of companies that were earning $75 and $100 million more than they should have...and three billion dollars were saved as a result of these investigations. Seventy-five percent of our total expenditures are being made through defense expenditures and legislation before the Armed Service Committee. It is highly important, with such enormous expenditures, that the servants of the people have some knowledge

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7 Ibid., p. 59.
to carry out this work." A reason which Vinson gave why the investigation committees were hard to formulate was that the government would not give decent pay to the highly trained people needed for such investigations. For such a broad committee as the Armed Services Committee which covers national problems, personnel, pay, promotions, retirement benefits, and reserve programs, a large amount of personnel would be needed. There could not be one investigating committee that could cover the whole field but rather an investigating committee for each specialized field.

The situation was worse before the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 established a single Armed Services Committee in each house. Up to this time, the responsibilities of Congress relative to military forces were divided between separate committees on the Army and Navy. There was such strict division of labor between these four committees and such rigid self-sufficiency in their action, that no agency existed to secure co-ordination and balance among the armed services with respect to budget, policy, or performance. This of course kept our services apart in the legislative field. One never knew what the other was doing, which was detrimental to our national security. This also tempted each service to try to outvalue the other by getting influence in Congress with their own committees.

8 House of Representatives, Hearings Before Committee on Armed Services or Sundry Legislation Affecting the Naval and Military Establishments (33rd Congress; 1st Session. 1953-1954), Pts. 1-25, p. 12.
9 Smith, op.cit., p. 247.
There still remains in Congress a serious lack of co-ordination. The separate committees of the two houses do not achieve a unified treatment of the problem. Administrators and military officers have to appear before each house committee and repeat their testimony.

VI.

The Senate has been handicapped to a greater extent than the House which has priority on supply bills. The fiscal year starts on July the first of each year. The House takes a long time but does as adequate a job as possible on the military budget. By the time the Senate reviews the bill they have too much to investigate with too little time to conduct a proper investigation. This was especially the case during the war years. The Senate might have stood on their legal rights and left military agencies without Senate approval until they investigated their military budgets but this was not practical. Senator Gurney, then on the committee stated, "We are lucky this time in that we have 100% more time this year. Last year we had three days but this year we have six." The budget they were examining in six days called for $6,377,000,000! In the Senate Committee on Appropriations, members are assigned to several sub-committees in addition to serving on at least one legislative committee. The diversity of committee assignment has made it impossible for Senators to give appropriations for the military establishment the attention that is possible for their colleagues in the House.

Hurzar, op. cit., p.
Another problem Congress has had is with chairmen of committees. The Armed Services Committees of the two houses are the most important agencies for legislative authority over the military program. The chairmen of these committees are very powerful men. These committee chairmanships are filled on the basis of seniority. The member of the party in power who has served the longest on the committee is the man among congressmen, and yet not to suppress its voice to a harmful who will get the job regardless of his qualifications. This may degree, to try to get military information without military be a convenient way for Congress to avoid strife, but it does propaganda entering into the process. It is evident that military influence is strong in Congress. The Armed Services Committee dangerous to national security. He may be a mediocre man in a position where strong leadership is very important. He may be request that the Bureau heads of the military establishment be wholly out of sympathy with the program of the President. Andrew Jackson May, Chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, had to relinquish his post held during the war. He was convicted of war fraud against the government. Senator Robert Reynolds of North Carolina became head of the Military Affairs another, have seen service with the Armed Forces. In relation Committe by seniority and did not appear to have much knowledge to the members placed on the House Armed Services Committee of the subject. He gave a speech to the Senate in 1940 where a proclamation that America need not worry about an invasion from Hitler because American men, especially mountaineers, have been trained to shoot a gun at an early age. However, many of the men appointed to these positions have been first rate. It is my intention only to point out that under this system of seniority importance that we have many veterans in Congress. Most of these

Smith, op. cit., p. 251

12 House of Representatives, Hearings before Committee on Army Legislation Affecting the Naval and Military Establishments, (83rd Congress), 1st Session, (1953-1954) pts. 1-5, p. 17
a man detrimental to national security can receive an important post in Congress, which has the authority as to size, support, organization, and general purposes of the armed forces.

VIII.

To what extent does the military influence congressional legislation? The problem is to keep the military from becoming the voice of the nation by lobbying and special interest groups among congressmen, and yet not to suppress its voice to a harmful degree; to try to get military information without military propaganda entering into the process. It is evident that military influence is strong in Congress. The Armed Services Committee and the Appropriations Committee in many instances will request that the Bureau heads of the military establishment testify rather than the Secretary of Defense. It is also a known fact that these committees use top ranking officers as personnel on the congressional committees. Add to this the fact that most members of the present Congress are men who, at one time or another, have seen service with the Armed Forces. In relation to the members placed on the House Armed Services Committee, Dewey Short, appointed chairman in 1953, stated that, "the members we have put on there are men with a great deal of military experience, and fellows who have had a long and earnest interest in building up an effective and efficient fighting reserve force." 13

However, when we talk of civil-military relations, it is of little importance that we have many veterans in Congress. Most of these

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13 House of Representatives, Hearings before Committee on Armed Services on Sundr Legislation Affecting the Naval and Military Establishments, (83rd Congress) 1st Session. (1953-1954) pts. 1-5, p. 17
men were never professional soldiers which are the men with whom we are concerned. It undoubtedly must play some part in congressional thinking about military affairs but it is not enough to be important. Many of the members during World War II retained their reserve commissions and alternated their duties between the national capitol and the training camps. This aspect is seen to be intolerable since their position as legislators would have to suffer. This endangers the entire security of the country. Truman was ready to drop his work as chairman of the Senate Investigating Committee to resume military duties he had left off in 1918.

When we speak of military influence in Congress we can start right at the top of the military establishment, the Secretary of Defense. It is important that he possess the stature, sincerity, and restraint in order that he will not become a puppet for self-centered establishments which seek powers and funds beyond what are consistent with national welfare. The Truman Committee found numerous cases of this greed by private enterprises who, through the War Department, had made ten times more money in time of war than they could in time of peace for the same work. Then too, there is always the danger that the professional associates of the secretary "will seek to dominate or undermine his program; to sidetrack presidential proposals which do not have their approval; to high-pressure Congress or keep important facts from it; or contrive war scares which stampede the public into supporting unnecessarily large and costly military establishments."15

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14 Smith, op. cit., p. 232.
15 Ibid., p. 235
The Armed Services themselves have tried to prevent this by strict regulations which apply to the members of the United States Army. "Except as authorized by the War Department, efforts to procure or influence legislation are forbidden." A rule very similar applies to the other branches of the Armed Forces. Since World War II, the military have developed elaborate and effective public relations divisions. Such large and energetic publicity agencies under the control of the military must exert public pressure upon Congress in matters affecting the armed forces. The problem here all comes down to this basic point. It is that of securing information without indoctrination, of seeing to it that the chief objective is the interest of the nation rather than military prestige. To repeat, it is not the idea that the military voice is to be suppressed, but rather to keep it from becoming the voice of the nation. The military should be permitted to speak but not command.

IX.

Most of the business between Congress and the military is transacted at the budget hearings by the Committees on Appropriations and the Armed Services. It is here that the military wins or loses approval for what they consider a necessary budget. It is here too, as pointed out earlier, that the military establishment must realize that the military is not only subordinate to civilian control but also co-ordinate with it. In other words, Congress can advise, approve, disapprove, and legislate but the actual abolishment of waste, extravagance, and stock piling must

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be done by the military themselves. The principal function of the appropriations committee is to examine budgets, not to prepare them. The primary responsibility for improving estimates and the justification rests on administrators. Substantial improvements in legislative treatment of military appropriations are not likely without corresponding changes in administrative preparation of military budgets. This is not hard to understand. In addition to the control exercised by the president, Congress can refuse money for matters it deems wasteful but for any substantial savings and for the utmost in efficiency it is dependent on the effective management of the administrators of the Armed Forces.Yet cost consciousness has not been the first thing on the minds of the administrators in the last few decades. The Hoover Commission Task Force stated in their report that "the military services are far too prodigal with government funds. Economy in the military services, however, cannot be achieved simply by ordering the tide of extravagance...there must be a will to eradicate waste." Better military management would stimulate great savings and promote economy as well as civil control. In fact, the Eisenhower administration has recognized this and attempted to install a "new look" in foreign and military policy. The "new look" started as a natural result of the Republican administration's attempt to lay out and act upon policies differing from those of the preceding Democratic administration. The essence of the new policy is that it is actually possible for the United States to have greater security at less cost. This is a

17 Hurzar, op.cit., p. 380.
matter of opinion and up to this time it has not decreased
military spending. The important thing is that the problem is
being considered constantly and that the military is co-operating
as much as possible. It is my contention that as long as the
world race for power in arms continues (which it will), military
expenditures will increase in direct proportion.

In addition to the control exercised by the president, Congress, and the Courts, it is a tradition that control of the
armed forces at the department level be headed by civilians. The
National Security Act of 1947 required that the Secretary of
Defense be a civilian. The appointment of General Marshall as
Secretary of Defense in 1950 is, of course, a clear break with
this tradition. In fact it was necessary to amend the National
Security Act of 1947 to make his appointment possible. Even in
this case, however, Congress stipulated that after Marshall's
term expired, no additional appointment of this type would be
approved. The reason is that a civilian has his roots in the
political life of a nation. He lacks limitation of outlook and
inflexibility of procedure so typical of many military men. His
leadership in the department may provide energizing
administration of the military establishment and relationships between the civil and the military. He is also a
symbol of civil supremacy over the military. Basic, however, to
the fulfillment of these established points is that the depart-
ment head is a strong leader. The Hoover Commission stressed
the point and reported that in the organization of the military
establishment at that time there was "continued disharmony and

19 Smith, op. cit., p. 380.
20 Ibid., p. 68.
lack of unified planning." This was not the first time this was discovered. In a way it was the fault of the Japanese after their attack on Pearl Harbor. No member of Congress then wanted to be accused of delaying or getting in the way of the military. Officers in uniform became very effective witnesses before Congressional Committees. Word that the War Department favored a bill was likely to be decisive testimony. Military appropriations virtually unlimited in language or amount were voted one after another without demur; within six months nearly $100 billion were appropriated and another $60 billion was added the next four months. Congress, by the Second War Powers Act, gave the President authority to requisition, enforce priorities, and allocate materials and facilities in short supply. Official price controls over suppliers' charges to the military establishment drawn up by the Emergency Price Control were waived as to combat items and components. In essence it preserved OPA price controls over procurement of goods that were sold in civilian markets. It recognized the need for more speed and freedom in pricing munitions and other special items than OPA procedures allowed. Contract renegotiation administered by the military contracting authorities was the substitute for price controls over military goods, and the excess profits tax was a second line of protection for the government's interest.


22 Ibid., p. 63.

23 Ibid., p. 68.
Two thirds of planes owned by companies were requisitioned by the military, and the pilots and other operating personnel were taken over either as soldiers or as uniformed civilians. It was the power that the military had gained because of our unpreparedness at the outbreak of the war that caused the Senate to approve funds for the setup of the Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. Harry Truman was named the chairman.

The idea of the committee was to conduct the investigation of the defense effort simultaneously with the war program in order that mistakes could be remedied before much damage was done. The power to investigate is necessary to the intellectual exercise of the power of Congress. This, needless to say, is especially true in wartime when the Congress must delegate many of its powers. By investigation it can review the exercise of them and ascertain how and to what extent they should be modified. The Truman Committee had been authorized and directed by the United States Senate to investigate "the operations of the program for procurement and construction of all supplies, materials, munitions, vehicles, aircraft, vessels, plants, camps, and other articles and faculties connected with the war program. It had been directed to examine the types and terms of all contracts awarded; the methods by which they were; the contractors selected; the utilization of small business concerns through subcontracts or otherwise geographical distribution of contracts and locations of plants and faculties;" (Harry S. Truman, Years of Decision, Vol. I (Garden City, Doubleday and Company, 1955, p. 145).
the effects of such a program with respect to labor and the management and practices of labor; and the benefits occurring to contractors with respect to amortization for purposes of taxation or otherwise." As one can see, the committee made a very thorough examination of the National Defense Program.

The essence of the committee's task was to explore how the products of our national security establishment could be improved and at the same time, the costs reduced. Also, how to obtain the maximum security at the minimum of cost in terms of resources. The committee was formed with the outbreak of the war. Our national defense machinery which was not adequate to start the war suddenly expanded to enormous proportions. Contracts for construction, supplies, and munitions were negotiated in desperate haste. It had become necessary to let enormous contracts for the expansion of airplane plants and for construction of new ones throughout the country. Our country only produces about one-tenth of total munitions so it was necessary to construct new munition plants. The supplies we purchased were at prices previously unheard of. In 1941 over $16 billion were appropriated for defense. This did not include aid to foreign countries nor $4 billion which was later appropriated to the Army. Total expenses for the first few months of 1941 exceeded $25 billion.

Truman was concerned about charges that the huge contracts

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26 Ibid., p. 157.
and the immense purchases that had been a result of appropriations were being handled through favoritism. There were rumors that some of the plants had been located on the basis of friendship.

"I feared that many of the safeguards usually observed in govern-

ment transactions were being thrown aside and overlooked... I knew too that certain lobbyists were seeking the inside track on purchases, contracts, and plant locations. There were rumors of enormous fees being paid to these gentlemen and of purchases having been concentrated among a few manufacturers of supplies." He further stated, "I saw cliques in labor and in capital, each greedy for gain, while small production plants by the hundred were being pushed aside by active big business."

One of the biggest wastes of money was in camp construction. The Army had not realized during the war that there was enough second-hand equipment available in the country to provide for a billion dollar camp-construction program in addition to the large amount necessary for other defense purposes. As a result, the Army went ahead and rented new equipment at prices that were ridiculously high. It did this with the stipulation whereby it could take control of the equipment when the rentals exceeded evaluations. These recapture clauses were sometimes as much as 64% above the cost of new equipment and it was a common practice to set recapture values at thirty to thirty-five percent above cost. The Chief of the Quartermaster’s Equipment Unit estimated

27 Ibid., p. 165.
28 Ibid., p. 165.
29 Ibid., p. 173.
that, had the government purchased the equipment new instead of through this rental-recapture device, it could have saved $13 million on one item alone.

Most of the work was done on a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract basis. This allowed private industry to earn three or four times more than it normally could. Robert Patterson, then Under-Secretary of War, testified before the Senate Committee and stated that "the Department of War was permitted by legislation to more contracts with or without advertising and to employ cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts. The fixed fee could not exceed 7% of estimated costs. This, in addition to the procedure of contracting by advertising for competitive bids, under which the contract goes to the lowest responsible bidder. The War Department may also let contracts through negotiation." Negotiated contracts are resorted to only when necessary to expedite the defense program. The general rule was the advertising contract. Negotiated contracts involving less than $500,000 were not subject to approval of the Under-Secretary of War. This was a very responsible position during the war. It will be worth while to outline the procedures by which the War Department carried out its work and also how the Under-Secretary fitted into the total operation. The Army had the responsibility for deciding what weapon it wanted and also the design of the weapon. It also determined the amount.

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29 Ibid., p. 173.
30 Hearings Before Senate Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program, Senate Hearings, pts. 1-2, Feb. 1941, p. 27. Testimony of Robert Patterson.
needed and the time wanted. The Office of Production Management, which more will be said about later, had the function of facilitating the production in general. The supply services of importance which are charged with the procurement of the equipment were the Air Corps, Ordinance Department, and the Quartermasters Corps. There are other branches but these are the most important. The Under-Secretary of War "supervises, directs, and co-ordinates the work of the supply services. He also does the planning of supply. He is charged with the supervision of the procurement of all military supplies and other business of the War Department pertaining to the assurance of adequate provisions for the mobilization of material and the industrial organizations essential to wartime needs."  

In less than nine months, the War Department entered into 739,000 contracts at an aggregate estimated cost of $6,062,000,000. Of this total, $733,000 were let through advertising at a cost of $1,615,000,000; 5,000 contracts through negotiation at a cost of $1,800,000,000; and 200 contracts on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis totaling $1,738,000,000. Most of the latter were cantonments where the manufacturers' costs could not be predicted or estimated. These contracts were made in great haste but we were unprepared when Pearl Harbor occurred. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War at the outbreak of war informed the Senate Committee that "the magnitude of the task and the speed and pressure under which it

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32 Ibid., p. 29.
was performed inevitably caused some mistakes to be made." The Truman Committee in its investigation of ship building by the Navy found that it was building only thirty percent of the total output while private industry was building seventy percent. It also found the Navy to be quite liberal with the private shipbuilders. Nine of the thirteen companies were entitled to receive fees plus possible bonuses which exceeded in one case by nearly eight hundred times their annual net profits, in other cases by twenty times their annual net profits. The profits for repairs and ship conversion were even more staggering. The Navy had permitted the shipyards to charge their regular hourly rates for repair despite the fact that such rates had been fixed at a time when there was very little business and overhead. At one of the hearings the representative of the Todd Shipyard Corporation had testified that Navy ship-conversion contracts "gave us a profit of $1.80 a day on every man we had, and I think we had about 35,000. If it hadn't been for taxes, we couldn't have handled our profits with a steam shovel."

The committee also began a nation wide investigation of Army Ordinance plant construction. Hearings had been held on the cost of construction of the Wolf Creek Ordinance Plant and the Milan Ordinance Depot. It was found the "cost was far in excess of a reasonable value for the faculties turned over to government. The War Department used an estimate based on 1917 experiences.

34 Truman, op.cit., p. 178.
Careless construction of a vast amount of roads at an exhorbitant cost, improper practices in purchasing and in handling of payrolls by placing relatives and friends in sinecure positions, and the improper establishment of accounting records were the principal causes of the excessive cost."

The most spectacular portion of the investigation was concerned with the Office of Production Management. It made mistakes inexcusable and then tried to get cleared of them by pretending that they never existed. Its record was unimpressive primarily because it was unwilling to use the facilities at its disposal. The committee found that some of the so-called dollar-a-year men and those working without compensation who had flocked to Washington from industry and business to offer their services were still on the companies' payrolls. Truman said that "in nine months.....the Army and Navy had given contracts totaling almost three billion dollars to sixty-six firms whose associates had served the government at a dollar a year." There had been too much dissension within the OPA. This caused uncertainty to business and had been a hindrance to increased production. In almost every case the OPA could not understand the extent of the problem or else it did its best to lay the problem aside in a hope that it would solve itself. The committee was under dual control (Knudsen and Hillman) and the Truman Committee recommended that it be under a single chief and this eventually took

36 Ibid., p. 179.
place in the name of the War Production Board. Donald Nelson was head of the WPB. His duty was to exercise general direction over war procurement and production programs. His management was a vast improvement over the "two-headed monster" it replaced. 37

The Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program did a tremendous job to insure that the war program was effective. In 1942 the war effort was involved in red tape, waste, poor leadership, and conflicts between military and civilian agencies. The committee found thousands of pounds of virgin copper piled up to the rafters in naval warehouses awaiting future use in ships while a nearby factory was threatened with shutdown on a vital Army contract for lack of copper. Vanadium is a rare metal that is very important in the manufacture of alloy steel, and early in 1942 the Army-Navy Munitions Board estimated that in the year ahead they would need between fifty and sixty million pounds. However, what they did not realize was that fifty million pounds was about ten times the entire annual output of Vanadium for the entire world. 38

The reports of the committee did more than summarize the findings. They contained definite recommendations for legislation to correct abuses brought to face. In many cases more knowledge that the committee was interested in a particular subject was enough to make everyone concerned to clear up the difficulties before the committee got to them and publicly exposed them.

37 Ibid., p. 180.
38 Ibid., p. 182.
Truman resigned as chairman to accept the nomination for vice-president. In all, the committee made recommendations resulting in the savings of billions of dollars. It had made a tremendous investigation of all phases of our national defense effort.

The Truman Committee proved that during wartime there is a laxity of control. The fact that the Army, as reported by the Eberstadt Committee—otherwise Task Force—appointed by the Hoover Commission to appraise the National Military Establishment, could lose 9,000 tanks after the close of hostilities in World War II indicates lack of property control during wartime. The Task Force was established "to plan for and provide adequate national security—political, military, and economic, to develop sound and practical measures against present and future contingencies, to do so at a minimum cost but on a sufficient scale, to do so with full military efficiency but under civilian control." It was clearly pointed out that civilian influence must be dominant in the formulation of national policy and in the maintenance of the military establishment. The committee, as did President Eisenhower (refer page three), realized there was no "absolute" security that civil predominance could be attained without the formation of a military state. Even then security is doubtful.

The Task Force made major contributions to the national security establishment of the Under-Secretaries of State and the military departments because the organization was too heavy. It also overhauled the military budget and vested full power on the Secretary of Defense as to budget matters. The committee in a short space of time made very valuable contributions.

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40 Ibid., p. 1.
security program. It was concerned with the executive branch of the military and concentrated on improvement in the organization of the establishment with the hope of producing a better economy in the Armed Forces. It made recommendations for a stronger centralized authority in the military establishment. The trouble was between the relations of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is difficult for the Secretary to "expedite decision on the part of Joint Chiefs, or to secure from them sound unified and integrated plans and programs." The committee thought that the relations could be improved by providing the Secretary of Defense with an under-secretary and a better secretarial staff. The Task Force also recommended the abolition of the Under-Secretaries of the three military departments because the organization was top heavy. It also overhauled the military budget and vested full power on the Secretary of Defense as to budget matters. The committee in a short space of time made very valuable contributions.

The United States faces a security problem more critical and more complex as each year passes. In this age of thermonuclear warfare, intercontinental ballistic missiles and atomic submarines that can launch missiles, it is easy to see that there is no such thing as a "natural" barrier. We live in an age that may witness total warfare.

The problem of civil control over the military existed since

41 Ibid., p.55.
the Revolution of 1776. It will continue and will never finally be achieved to such an extent that it will not require the constant watchfulness of the legislative branch of government. The question is not how much the military spends needfully but how much it spends wastefully. The problem is in the effective administration of the military to insure that our national needs are fulfilled. The problem exists in Congress where they must have a more adequate program of investigation of the national defense budget. This could be done by appointing a committee that would operate on a continuing basis despite adjournment of Congress. The only way the "new look" will ever work is to first eradicate basic problems. There must be an understanding on the part of the military administrators that waste is harmful to our economy, and moreover, they must have a desire to eliminate waste and extravagance. This is the only way we will have a stronger national security at less cost. A cutback on military spending in the long run will hurt us more than an increase in the military budget provided that every cent can be accounted for upon request. Congress should demand a complete account of inventory before the approval of the fiscal budget. If we are to fight power with power, it is certain that military expenditures will continue to increase. This is a good sign. Civilian control over a military force that has control of its aggressors is a guarantee of security for the United States.


