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ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE STROM THURMOND,
MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE,
BEFORE THE CONFERENCE OF
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PROSPECTS FOR DISARMAMENT

The maintenance of strong armaments by any nation must of necessity weigh heavily against the settlement by peaceful means of a dispute with another country. To this extent, the arms race which the nations of the world have experienced during the last 15 years is self-perpetuating.

The increased danger of war attributable to the existence of strong armaments, as great as it be, is not the only tragic result of the arms race. The concentration of the wealth of nations on armaments decreases immeasurably the enjoyment by each individual of the fruits of his own labor and God's bounty. None can deny that the service of man and his posterity is far from enhanced by the devotion of so much of the world's resources to the creation and maintenance of weapons of destruction.

Disarmament is an ancient and elusive goal that has been sought by civilized societies since groups of people first equipped themselves for combat. The prophet Isaiah recognized the wisdom of disarmament, but relegated the time of fulfillment, when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks," to the "last days."

Throughout history, efforts to achieve disarmament have been more notable for their loftiness of purpose than for their effectiveness. Such steps toward disarmament as have come about through international agreements have been unilateral in application, usually against a prostrate and defeated nation at the end of a war. Even these forced disarmaments have been temporary in nature, and enforced more by economic conditions within the defeated country than by the dictates of victor nations.

In post-World War II years, disarmament has been promoted as never before as an ultimate solution of the world's political problems and disagreements. Some seem to think that actual disarmament is just beyond our grasp, with agreement among nations prevented merely by differences over concepts and techniques of inspections to assure compliance. This same school of thought anticipates solution of the inspection barrier through the continued development and perfection of such scientific achievements as the observation satellite and seismographic instruments of increased sensitivity.

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As pleasing as are the temptations to join in the utopian dreams of a world unarmed lying just over the horizon, both the lessons of history and the cruel practicalities of the current political status of international relations reveal with stimulating clarity the opiate unrealism of such dreams.

Just as the development of defensive weapons never quite catches up with the development of offensive weapons, the development of observation and detection devices will never match the devices of subterfuge used to conceal the development, tests and build-up of new and advanced weapons. The design of observation and detection devices is necessarily dictated by the nature of the object or activity to be detected or observed, just as the defensive weapon’s design is dependent on that of the offensive weapon.

The failure to achieve enforceable agreements for disarmament stems, however, not from the inadequacies of scientific devices with which to assure that such agreements are being adhered to, but rather from a failure in basic approach to the problem. The approach to disarmament which has been exclusively adopted in international negotiations, both in the past and in the current crisis, has been premised upon the mistaken assumption that the tremendous emphasis on armaments by the various nations of the world is a cause, rather than an effect, of the political differences which exist among those nations.

Prospects for disarmament are no better and no worse than -- but indeed are identical to -- the prospects for peaceful resolution of the controversies among nations. So long as any nation or group of nations harbor ambitions of aggrandizement at the expense of other nations, hope is futile for the development of the international good-will which is a prerequisite for cessation of the arms race.

Unfortunately, national and bloc aggrandizement still exist as the foundation of the political system which holds sway in countries behind the Iron Curtain. Peaceful expressions of intent by the leaders of these countries are belied by their actions as well as by the words of their counterparts in other nations of their bloc.

Although the scientific instruments devised by free men may be inadequate to detect the breach of disarmament agreements which might be reached, the minds of free men can always detect the inconsistencies of peaceful words with the subjugation and enslavement of millions of people and the patently aggressive aims underlying the incitement of others to rebellion and revolution. No disarmament and no resolution of the conflicting aspirations of the several nations, which constitute the cause of the arms race, is probable or possible so long as deception and aggression are the goals of one or more governments; for free men will not willingly jeopardize, even for the preservation of life itself, their even more precious possession -- individual liberty.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, which encourages free discussion of questions of paramount importance to the peoples of the world, provides a magnificent forum for expression and exchange of ideas.

It is to be fondly hoped that the delegates in attendance here, upon return to their respective countries, will utilize every opportunity to discourage and thwart the ambitions of those who would practice aggression and deceit. Mankind would be forever grateful to them for their efforts in promoting peace and freedom.
In closing, we desire to again express our deep and sincere appreciation to the Japanese Government and people for the unsurpassed manner in which they entertained the delegates at this Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference. We are grateful for their hospitality and friendship. I was here in 1956, and the progress they have made during the past four years is phenomenal. I wish these fine people continued success in the years ahead.

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