

S T A T E M E N T
b y
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
o n
SENATE BILL 1
UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING
and
SELECTIVE SERVICE

March 22, 1951

My decision to support the proposal for Universal Military Training and Selective Service was arrived at after months of study, discussion, and analysis. There were many doubts in my mind as to the advisability of adopting such a comprehensive military mobilization program. At the same time in my capacity as a member of the Congress, I had to make a decision. I made that decision in light of what I believe to be the nature of the menace that confronts us in the form of militaristic, international Communism and the long-run security and safety of our nation and the search for peace in this world.

Let me give you some of the background. Shortly after the Korean fighting began the Senate Armed Services Committee conducted a series of hearings pertaining to Universal Military Training and Service. These hearings were suspended at the conclusion of the 81st Congress. Early in the 82nd Congress a new bill was introduced designated as S. 1. On January 10th the Senate Armed Services Committee began the first of what developed into a series of 37 sessions, or over a hundred hours of hearings, devoted to the examination of the relationship of our national manpower potential to our national security. All the hearings were held in open public session. Over 1300 pages of testimony were taken; literally hundreds of witnesses and organizations appeared.

As a result of these hearings, S. 1 was reported to the Congress and was acted upon by the Senate. As you know, the vote was 79 to 5 in support of UMT&S. Two amendments were adopted to the bill as reported by the Committee: first, to limit the total number of our Armed Forces to 4 million; and second, my own amendment, known as the Humphrey Amendment, which provides that "it shall be the duty of the Armed Services Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives to review the provisions of this title (Law) not later than the fourth year following the date of enactment of the 1951 amendments to the Universal Military Training and Service Act, and each year thereafter, taking into consideration the then existing international situation and giving due regard to United States commitments to the United Nations. Upon the completion of such reviews, the committees shall report to their respective Houses and shall make such recommendations with respect to modification of this title (Law) as they may deem desirable."

With reference to the first amendment, I voted against any limitation. I feel a limitation on our Armed Forces at this time would be a sign of weakness in face of the Soviet power. I also believe that to limit the

Armed Forces in view of the critical international situation could be misinterpreted by our friends and allies.

With reference to my own amendment, the purpose is clear. Many people were deeply concerned about the permanent character of this all-embracing legislation. I too had the same apprehension. Therefore, my amendment provides that not later than four years from the date of enactment, the entire subject matter must be reviewed. It provides that the program can be modified, altered or repealed. It places full responsibility upon the Congress to re-examine the necessity of this program in light of existing conditions. I believe that this amendment is very important, and guarantees to the American people full Congressional control over the system of Selective Service and the proposed system of Universal Military Training. The amendment is also essential to prove to the people of the world that our country is not irrevocably committed to militarism and looks to the day when the world may be free of international tensions and armaments.

Why UMT&S

Why was this legislation necessary? The facts speak for themselves. There has been no peace. The tremendous cost of military preparedness and our foreign policy is adequate evidence that we are not living in a peaceful world. Our struggle against aggression and dictatorship has continued since Hitler marched into Poland and the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. The cold war between those who subscribe to a totalitarian communist philosophy and we who believe in the processes of democracy and freedom has been a relentless struggle since 1945.

It is my belief that this struggle may continue for many years to come. Therefore, we must maintain our defenses in a condition of preparedness and strength at all times. We are faced with a situation that may well require years of constant effort and sacrifice.

If we keep ourselves strong in the best sense of the term, militarily economically, and politically, and if we maintain a vigorous foreign policy of aiding and cooperating with freedom-loving peoples, we may avert a major war. This is my hope and prayer.

If my evaluation and judgment of the international situation is correct -- if we are faced with the threat of aggression for years to come, we must have a trained reserve of manpower. This is not only protection for the nation, but it is protection for the individuals concerned. Nothing is more tragic than to send young men into a battle without adequate training. We must provide our military establishment with the material, the men, and the equipment required for the defense of our nation. Furthermore, the veterans of World War II, who have given so much military service to their country, rightfully expect that every effort will be made to use other available manpower before asking them to disrupt their lives again. These are considerations which our national policy must take into account.

Case for UMT

If we continue to have a critical international situation, we will be compelled to either maintain a large standing army or a large active reserve force. A standing army is expensive; it takes men out of production; it breaks their normal home ties; it seriously weakens the economic system. Selective Service alone would provide for a large standing army. But Selective Service recruitment over a long-run period would literally remove millions of young men from normal living. UMT is based upon the proposition that the defense of this nation is not an obligation to be fulfilled by only a select few, but by all. The penalty and the jeopardy of peace-loving nations is that the potential aggressor always holds the advantage of initiative. Thus the United States must plan its defenses on a basis that will find us equally strong this year, or 20 years from now. The only way we can maintain a military posture of the kind that is required without a huge standing army and a ruinous drain on our economy, is by revitalizing our National Guard and the Reserve components. UMT&S will assure a steady flow of trained young men into the National Guard and the Reserve components, and thus make possible the enduring strength we need with minimum dissipation of our productive energies.

This will have the effect of preserving our civilian institutions by keeping our economy healthy, allowing greater orderliness in our plans for education, science, industry and agriculture, while holding our professional military establishment to the smallest number consistent with our national security needs. It will have the further effect of permitting a rapid expansion of our active strength in a sudden emergency by the recall of trained Reserves to military duty rather than relying on inductions of large numbers of completely untrained men.

Civilian Control

It is necessary that the fullest practicable measure of civilian interest and guidance be provided in the administration of the military program. To this end, the bill provides, that the President establish a National Security Training Commission. This Commission, which will be composed of five persons to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, will consist of three civilians and two active or retired members of the Regular components of the Armed Forces. This will assure that the universal training program will be under predominantly civilian control and supervision.

The National Security Training Commission will, subject to the direction of the President, establish policies and standards with respect to the conduct of initial basic military training (including the moral, religious, recreational, informational, and educational phase of such training). It will also designate the Federal departments and agencies which will carry out such training. Men, who at the time the universal training program goes into effect, have not attained their nineteenth birthday, and are not members of the Armed Forces, shall be liable for basic military training

for a period of not less than four months and not more than six months.

Selective Service -- UMT -- and Education, Science, Industry, Agriculture

Any new policies for strengthening our Armed Services and for maintaining an adequate trained Reserve must take into consideration the maintenance of our political, economic and educational institutions. Modern military strength requires technological, scientific and political knowledge. Because of the recognition of these facts, the UMT&S Act, S. 1, as passed by the Senate, authorizes the President to relieve from active service, upon completion of their basic period of training, 75,000 persons each year for the purpose of study and research in medicine, science, engineering, the humanities, and other fields determined to be in the national interest. This legislation requires that these individuals shall be selected by a commission nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The appointment of this commission is to be on a bi-partisan basis; the selection of individuals is to be accomplished on a competitive basis in accordance with rules and regulations established by the commission. This program would be under civilian control. Likewise, provision is made for financial assistance to qualified students who need such assistance to take advantage of the program. There is further provision for ROTC students. There is a mandatory requirement of postponement of induction or training for all persons to complete their high school education.

The Congress has recognized the importance of integrating our colleges and universities in the military mobilization program. It is my opinion and the expressed will of the Congress that the splendid facilities plus the excellent faculties of our colleges and universities can and must be used to strengthen our national security. It should not be forgotten that the universal military training period is limited to not less than four months or more than six months. This, within itself, gives assurance that the lives of our young people will not be interrupted to such a point as to deny them educational opportunities. Likewise, a defense manpower program must make provision for the use of scientifically trained persons in industry, agriculture and the professions. Provision has been made for this in S. 1. It is imperative that we have scientists, doctors, nurses, engineers and other professional people in the civilian economy as well as in the military establishment. Then, too, there are always the problems of adequate manpower in our factories and on our farms. Skilled labor is required for modern industrial production and modern farm management and production. A selective and effective policy of deferment under the provisions of Selective Service has been outlined. This has been done in the realization that industrial and farm manpower is essential to an adequate mobilization program. No nation can be strong without an adequate production of food. We need reserves of food for ourselves and our allies. Food is a weapon in modern war as important as any gun, tank or bomb. I have brought this problem directly to the attention of General Hershey, Director of Selective Service. I have urged a clear-cut, well-defined policy for industrial and farm deferments and Selective Service Standards.

Attached is an analysis of the manpower resources of our country. Also, I

have outlined the government's policy on drafting 18-year-olds. I fully realize that this is a highly controversial issue, but I do believe the program which has been worked out is fair and reasonable.

Conclusions

May I just make this further comment. It must be clearly understood that the proposed program of UMT does not and will not go into effect for some years to come. We must rely on Selective Service. We do not have the trained officers or Reserves to enact UMT. UMT is essentially a long-range defense program. It will go into effect when and if the international situation permits orderly demobilization of the large standing army. Prior to the establishment of UMT there will be a complete re-examination of our manpower needs and of our position as a great nation in the international scene. My amendment specifically provides for this re-examination and re-appraisal.

I realize that military preparedness alone is no guarantee to peace or national security. I realize that war does not solve problems. The answer to aggressive international Communism is not to be found in military power alone. Our major emphasis must be directed towards creating and building the conditions of peace if peace in the world is to be obtained. Peace will not come to us by treaties, alliances and power. Peace in Asia will come only when injustice and exploitation have been removed; when people have the right of self-government; when economic and social opportunity is made available; when poverty, ignorance, and disease have been checked and rolled back. These are the objectives towards which our major effort and sacrifice must be directed.

I have consistently fought for this program and will continue to do so. I look upon the building of our military strength as but a means to secure time and a degree of safety which will afford us the opportunity to launch an all-out attack upon those unwholesome and destructive conditions in far too many areas of this world which provide fertile soil for the seeds of Communism or Fascism. I want you to know what is in my heart. Like most Americans I abhor militarism, but believe with a deep conviction that we cannot close our eyes to the brutal power and force that is ready to engulf the world. If we wish to do good deeds and to create a world based upon a just and enduring peace, we must first prepare ourselves to curb lawlessness and aggression or there will be no opportunity for a program dedicated to peace and justice.

These are difficult days. I am sure that no one has ready-made answers for the difficulties that beset us. We are a nation and a people devoted to the ways of peace, yet we find ourselves living in a world where brute force, aggression and military power threaten every value and every institution of our democratic way of life. I view these heart-breaking and difficult problems with a sense of personal emotion. As the father of three boys and one daughter, I know that the decisions we make now will affect their lives and the lives of every other boy and girl in America for years to come. May God

in His infinite wisdom grant this nation the spirit and the understanding so desperately needed in this hour. Let us all hope and pray that our country, working in cooperation with the freedom-loving people of the world may succeed in bringing about a just and enduring peace. Then mankind can put away the instruments of war and enter upon an era of humanitarian service, constructive development, understanding and peace.



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