



US ARMY

The Joint Chiefs of Staff on 24 November 1972. From left to right they are: GEN Creighton W. Abrams, US Army; GEN John D. Ryan, USAF; ADM Thomas H. Moorer, US Navy, Chairman; ADM Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., US Navy; and GEN Robert E. Cushman, USMC. (GEN Ryan, who retired on 31 July 1973, was succeeded by GEN George S. Brown on 1 August 1973.)

THE AMERICAN MILITARY PROFESSIONALS

by

THE HONORABLE U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

(Editor's Note: Excerpts from remarks made by Ambassador at Large U. Alexis Johnson, August 8, 1972, when he was Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, before the House

Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments.)

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The Honorable U. Alexis Johnson, the only career Ambassador in the United States Foreign Service at the present time, is currently Ambassador at Large and Chief of the US Delegation at the United States-Soviet strategic arms limitation talks. In his almost 40 years in the Foreign Service, Mr. Johnson served at various times as Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Thailand, and Japan; Deputy Ambassador to Vietnam; and twice as Deputy Under Secretary of State. Among his numerous distinctions, Mr. Johnson received the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service.



"... It is, for example, clear that the first responsibility of Government is the physical safety of our people. This responsibility rests no less on Foreign Service Officers than it does on military officers, and our objective is identical—to maintain an international environment in which the incentives and opportunities for conflict are kept to a minimum; and if conflict occurs, to contain and defeat it quickly.

"And while I am on this subject, Mr. Chairman, I want to say a word about my military colleagues. For a good part of my life, in fact going back to my association with

the Marines in North China in 1939, I have worked closely with professional American military men. I think I know them as well as any civilian can. We have, on occasion, had disagreements, sometimes vigorous ones.

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However, on broad policy issues, it has been my experience that differing views are rarely drawn solely along military and non-military lines. The American military professionals I have known have served with devotion and skill the well-being—and the peace—of this land. To picture them otherwise is to draw a caricature. I find extremely painful and dangerous the growing tendency in this country to belittle the United States Armed Services and the contribution they have made to our country and to the world. Neither as individuals nor as national institutions do they deserve it; and although they have better champions than me, I wanted to take this opportunity to say a word on their behalf.

“I cannot understand the argument that we should reduce our military strength as a contribution to the national search for peace. In my experience, military strength is not an alternative to a national search for peace. It is an essential element of it. In the world as it is—and is likely to be for the indefinite future—military strength and diplomacy are fingers of the same hand. A national commitment to the search for peace, not backed up by military strength, would not be

a policy at all. It would be a pious expression of hope, devoid either of credibility or effect.

“To my mind, the Berlin crisis of 1961 and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 were excellent demonstrations of how diplomacy and military capabilities were orchestrated by a skillful President to achieve an important national security purpose without resort to violence. Without deft diplomacy, Mr. Chairman, our strength would not have been enough to save our people from tragedy. But without our strength, the most brilliant diplomacy could not have met these blunt challenges to our security.

“On a somewhat different plane, I believe that the recent SALT agreements, which are now before the Congress, give clear evidence

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of the fact that diplomacy and military strength are not contradictory—but very much complement each other. They are self-reinforcing, and both are necessary instruments of a national policy that aims at a peaceful world. The efforts and the sacrifices that we have made over the years have established the environment in which the President has been able to take great and constructive initiatives in recent months in both Moscow and Peking. One can recognize the consummate skill involved in realizing those profits, without losing sight of the wisdom of the investments which made the profits possible.” ■

