Bush, Eisenhower Critiques Draw Opposite Reactions in Pentagon

By Earl H. Voss

Two prominent Americans with long experience in our defense establishment have made some pretty harsh comments recently about a "confusion" in the Pentagon. One is President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower, former Army Chief of Staff and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The other is John Vannevar Bush, head of the military's wartime research program.

There is, of course, a difference in the two men's attitudes to the confusion. The general is eager to find political implications in the confusion, while the same time half-heartedly blaming his friends in the Defense Department. "Dr. Bush," on the other hand, says repeatedly his friends to attack one another, and that "members of both parties have been about equally involved in the definition of the laws of the laws and procedures under which our planning is conducted." (2)

Thus in significant areas, however, Gen. Eisenhower's criticisms of Pentagon operations parallel those of Dr. Bush.

1 Both think civilian influence on the military establishment should be increased.

2 Both call for a clearer definition of the line of authority.

3 Both believe the National Security Council has not been as effective as it could be.

Indications are that all of these points will be brought before the new Congress which convenes next January. Some believe a bill will be brought before the body. (3)

Bipartisan Commission

Gen. Eisenhower's plans for increasing civilian influence, were outlined in his speech at Baltimore recently. He proposes to create a bipartisan civilian, who would replace the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The new office would be give to the National Security Council, and was to be used as a sounding board in the development of new programs.

Dr. Bush, speaking in a Baltimore Minn. (4) meeting the Joint Chiefs of Staff need not and will do not seek or get competent, disinterested professional advice in science, business or human relations.

As for lines of authority, Dr. Bush observes that "the control is poor, in the upper echelons, is to some extent circumvented because of the dual role—one of command and one of authority. The Joint Chiefs of Staff. Dr. Bush also believes that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have not done their job to the best of their ability. (5)

Farther Criticisms

Gen. Eisenhower made many more striking criticisms of the Defense Department. The Pentagon has no plan, for example, for manpower and training. (6) Eisenhower himself played a role in the military planning since 1943. Here are some of the things he had to say about his old service.

1. Our defense program has suffered from lack of foresight.

2. Real unification of our armed forces is yet to be achieved.

3. Our defense program needs not and must not push us steadily toward economic collapse. (7)

4. The largest savings in the budget need to be made in the 86 billion dollar defense budget without reduction of the armed forces.

5. He wants to get help from civilian leaders—business, labor and professional—"let them know their jobs." (8)

6. Service disagreements have been allowed to become "public brawls."

This country needs a "civilian weapons program" with special emphasis on "simplicity in design." (9)

Many anonymous Pentagon officials wonder now Gen. Eisenhower can avoid sharing some of the responsibility for whatever lack of foresight and incompetence there has been. He was the Army Chief of Staff until 1945, and served as president of the Columbia University in 1948, he was 34 years of age. (10)

Others had thought that Gen. Eisenhower approved the Lovett approach to unified, that is, the "old" way of setting up voluntary co-operation in the services, which is slower than knocking heads together. (11)

Dr. Bush has said that "the joint chiefs of staff are like the most typical of the m... mind people of the special circumstances under which unification is being achieved. (12)

As Mr. Lovett points out, we are fighting a war in Korea, mobilizing and training manpower, and designing new weapons, including weapons programs.

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