

news from

# Senator DANIEL K. INOUE

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NATIONAL DEFENSE

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During the last week of October 1944, the 1st Battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment of the 36th Division found itself surrounded by the German Army's 202nd Mountain Battalion, the 933rd Regiment of the 338th Infantry Division and the 198th Fusilier Battalion. Thus began the Battle of the Lost Battalion. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 141st were ordered to break through to the 1st Battalion but they were thrown back each time they attacked. And so General Dalquist called the 100th and 3rd Battalions of the 442nd Infantry Regiment to rescue the Lost Battalion. A few days later, the 2nd Battalion joined the battle.

After two weeks of fierce fighting, the enemy line was broken and the Lost Battalion was found and rescued. General Dalquist, desiring to personally express the gratitude of the 36th Division and the Los Battalion, ordered a retreat parade and directed our regimental commander to ensure that every man was present.

When the 442nd Regiment was called to order in formation, it was readily noticeable that something was missing. I and K Companies had fewer than two dozen men apiece, and K Company was led by a Staff Sergeant. E Company, my company, was the largest with 45 men in formation. The General was very unhappy with the turnout and is reported to have reprimanded our Colonel, reminding him of the order that all of our men were to be present for the parade. Our Colonel turned to General Dalquist and responded, "This is my regiment. Other than two men from each company who are detailed to provide security, the rest are here. The others are either dead or wounded." Needless to say, the General was stunned.

This happened many years ago. And there are many among us who were extremely bitter over the Lost Battalion incident. Why were we sacrificed? Were we expendable? And why was the rescue kept secret at the time and credit not shared by the 442nd?

But, as it happens in many instances, a strong bond of friendship and comradeship developed from this atmosphere of adversity and anger. After all, when the dust settled, we were all Americans, fighting for the same flag and the same cause.

It is in that spirit that we gather here tonight, members of the 442nd from all over the United States to be with our comrades from the 36th Division. We are here to renew our friendship and to show that we are proud to have been given the opportunity to participate in the rescue of the Lost Battalion and we are proud to have worn the Texas "T" shoulder patch.

When your invitation was received, I began a process that involved much thought and much time, the process of deciding on a subject for my speech. I considered telling you about the recent victory which was won with the passage of S. 1647, an act which establishes a Commission to study the wartime relocation and internment of Japanese Americans, and to thank your organization for the important role you played in gathering Congressional support for this measure.

Since this is a political season, I considered discussing the Presidential election. But I quickly rejected that idea because this is not a partisan gathering.

And then I thought about my sixteen-year-old son and I realized that most of you are fathers of young men, many of whom are in the eligible age bracket for registration. The issue of registration is one that transcends the politics of the day, it is an issue which deeply affects all of us, especially those of us who are fathers of sons. I wish, therefore, to share with you my thoughts on the issue of registration, war and peace.

Last year, the nations of the world spent \$480 billion for military purposes. These monies were spent for aircraft carriers and ICBMs, jeeps and rifles, uniforms and combat boots, and all the other costs that a nation must bear in order to maintain military organizations.

Some of this vast expenditure was undoubtedly ill-advised, and much of it was spent by nations that can ill-afford ambitious military programs, yet military expenditures for this year will rise worldwide and nations will probably give an even higher priority to the development of their military capability.

Why is it that nations are willing to set aside programs such as health and education in order to purchase guns and jet planes? Why is it that the internal needs of a country are often sacrificed to the perceived need to meet external threats?

The reason for this choice is clear. Most countries, for reasons justified or otherwise, feel threatened by their neighbors. And, some governments even feel threatened by their own people. Whether we like it or not, in much of the world in which we live today, "might makes right".

Only a handful of nations have been fortunate enough to feel sufficiently secure with their neighbors that they can conduct foreign relations without having strong military organizations. But even these countries would probably not be able to behave in this fashion were it not for allies who do possess military strength.

A brief recounting of history would show that this worldwide armament drive was spurred by the events which occurred at the end of World War II. It was at this point that Western leaders concluded that the real enemy was not an heir to Hitler, but rather the Soviet Union and international communist expansion. The enemy was not a relatively small European country, but rather a geographically awesome nation which borders Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East, promoting revolution in both hemispheres. We entered the era of the Cold War.

As a result, we recognized our need to be a counter-force to Soviet aggression and committed ourselves to a foreign policy backed by arms. This commitment to diplomacy backed by military strength requires that we live by certain basic rules.

The first rule is that we must show that we will use our military muscle if the situation requires the use of military might. In other words, we must have the will to use arms as well as the means. It is not enough to spend money on research and development; it is not enough to produce new and more powerful armaments; it is not enough to maintain a large permanent armed force; there must also be a willingness to use that military might in certain situations. Moreover, it is equally important that the rest of the world realize that we are willing to use our military forces. Incredible as it sounds, it is essential that the other side accept the possibility that we would use nuclear force to protect certain vital interests if there was no other option.

The second rule was dictated by the bombing of Hiroshima. From that day forward, it became essential to maintain two distinct forms of military might. We are now required to have the capability to fight either a Strategic Nuclear War or a Conventional War. It is not enough to simply have nuclear capability. If our only option were to start a nuclear war, we could be constantly blackmailed by minor incursions. If we don't have the ability to respond to a small crisis with small arms, we will soon find ourselves either destroying the world or we will find ourselves in a position where we must acquiesce to the outrageous acts of other nations. We have already found ourselves in this predicament all too often. Unless we commit ourselves to a first-rate conventional force, the future for our allies and the non-aligned nations is bleak.

What is the present condition of our strategic nuclear force? The U.S. arsenal now contains 2,000 vehicles capable of delivering nuclear payload. These include ICBMs, submarines and heavy bombers. Overall, we have over 9,500 nuclear warheads. In order to appreciate the destructive capacity of this arsenal, you should know that the U.S. have 3,253,000,000 TNT-equivalent tons of nuclear power versus the Soviet Union's 7,836,000,000 tons. This compares to the 20,000 tons of TNT-equivalent power which we dropped on Hiroshima. This means that the U.S. alone has a destructive power more than 160,000 times the power unleashed on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Whether we have one million tons or ten billion tons, the numbers have become almost irrelevant. Both the Soviet Union and U.S. possess sufficient nuclear weapons to destroy the world many times over. Neither possesses a first strike capability sufficient to prevent a devastating response.

The SALT II Treaty recognizes the absurdity of stockpiling more nuclear weapons. It seeks to end this deadly competition and yet leave each side with enough nuclear force to be an effective deterrent to actions by the other side.

Despite current international tensions, the SALT II concept remains essentially sound. I am hopeful that we someday soon will be able to reconsider the SALT Treaty because the need to limit the further build-up of nuclear arms remains as important as ever.

What then is the present condition of our conventional forces? Do we have a credible non-nuclear capability? In many ways, what is at issue here is the effectiveness of the All-Volunteer Army.

While statistics have a way of being used to prove just about anything, the following numbers do present a sobering appraisal of the situation.

This volunteer force is not the same Army as the one in which I served during World War II, or the one which served us so well in the Korean conflict, or even the one in Vietnam. Reenlistment bonuses, pay increases, and other incentives have been greatly increased. Much more remains to be done.

Despite these improvements, fully 40 percent of our present-day volunteers for military service fail to finish their training and complete their first enlistment.

There are half-a-million vacancies in the Individual Ready Reserves, a reserve which must play a crucial role in supporting our front-line military in the event of a major conflict of any duration.

The Army is planning to field \$61 billion worth of extremely high technological weaponry, beginning with the XM-1 tank, and urgently needs to upgrade the capability of its recruits. A recent Army training study shows that even today 21 percent of the U.S. Army tank gunners serving on NATO duty in West Germany do not know how to aim their gun sights.

One-fourth of our naval fleet -- some 96 ships -- are rated as either "marginally combat-ready" or "not combat-ready" at this time because crews lack the necessary skilled non-commissioned officers to operate sophisticated equipment and weapons systems.

The Air Force is critically short of maintenance technicians and engineers and the number of pilots who are not reenlisting has caused a doubling of the Air Force's pilot training program.

The Army is short some 46,000 non-commissioned officers. The Navy needs some 17,000 additional skilled petty officers with nine to sixteen years of service. The Air Force needs more than 3,000 NCOs to meet its strength needs. The military must now rely very heavily on new recruits with less than adequate skills and training and on more senior personnel who are committed to securing their retirement benefits.

These numbers do raise serious questions as to the adequacy of our conventional forces. And these numbers and the conditions which exist are no secret to other nations -- friend and foe -- around the world.

Maybe this is why we don't seem to be taken seriously by many countries.

Or alternatively, we may ask the question, would the Russians have invaded Afghanistan if we were a truly credible conventional power?

There is no way to answer these questions with any certainty. There is, however, a need to recognize that we have allowed our conventional forces to become the subject of open question. As a result of this, a key support of our foreign policy has been undermined. I firmly believe that we must change this state of affairs -- that we must upgrade our conventional forces to the level at which they lend credibility to our foreign policy.

We are not a warlike nation and we do not seek domination over other nations.

We have been, however, an active world leader. If we wish to continue this role, we must be willing to accept the burdens that this places upon us. One of these burdens is the maintenance of a credible conventional military force.

There are some who view the strengthening of our armed forces as a warlike act. I view it as a necessary step to securing peace.

Some see the world as they want it to be. Faced with grave responsibilities to provide for our nation's welfare and our common defense, I must seek to deal with the world as it is, while trying always to encourage agreements which provide for a more secure and peaceful world.