

Ike Urges Congress to Lower Voting Age to 18, Cut Spending \$5 Billion

(Story also on page one)

By DOUGLAS B. CORNELL
WASHINGTON — President Eisenhower urged Congress Thursday to enact a blueprint for a "stronger America" — a nation with "bold hopes" of peace and prosperity but ready to strike with atomic weapons if necessary to preserve its freedom.

The President said America's growing military forces are for purposes of defense and deterring aggression, but "we and our allies have and will maintain a massive capacity to strike back."

Defense planning is based on several fundamental considerations, Eisenhower said, and the first of these takes "into full account our great and growing number of nuclear weapons and the most effective means of using them against an aggressor if they are needed to preserve our freedom."

This was the strongest the administration has gone so far in serving notice that an aggressor may expect to be hit with atomic and hydrogen weapons.

Eisenhower backed up his words with a request that Congress provide authority, under proper safeguards, for sharing with the nation's allies "certain knowledge of the tactical use of our nuclear weapons."

The President outlined three broad purposes for his administration and divided his message into compartments built around them. They are, he said:

"Protect Freedom."
"First, to protect the freedom of our people; second, to maintain a strong, growing economy; third, to concern ourselves with the human problems of the individual citizen."

In the field of foreign affairs, Eisenhower noted "heartening political victories" for the forces of "stability and freedom" in West Germany, Iran and other areas. "Slowly but surely," he said, "the free world gathers strength."

Meanwhile, from behind the Iron Curtain, there are signs that tyranny is in trouble and reminders that its structure is as brittle as its surface is hard."

Now, he said, the initiative "is becoming ours" and we shall "continue to advance the cause of freedom on foreign fronts."

As if in reassurance to those who have criticized plans for pulling two divisions of U. S. troops from Korea, Eisenhower said America retains its vital interest there and is "prepared to meet any renewal of armed aggression." He said he will submit to the Senate promptly, for ratification, a mutual security pact with Korea.

Help Promised Chiang

He promised continued military and economic help for Nationalist China, asked for more aid for the war against Communism in Indo-China, pledged support for South Asia, friendship for the Middle East and the Western hemisphere, and emphasized again a desire for a European Defense Community with an international army.

Eisenhower called, too, for a healthier, freer flow of trade within the free world, with detailed recommendations yet to come.

The emphasis in the national defense program was on less manpower and more new weapons and air power. Eisenhower called, too, for more generous benefits for men in uniform, ability to shift swiftly into all-out mobilization, and a quick go-ahead from Congress on the St. Lawrence seaway project.

"This new program," he said, "will make and keep America strong in an age of peril."

With his bid for action against future Red conspirators, the President coupled an announcement that 2,200 employees have been tossed out of government as security risks. That's up 744 from the last figure of 1,456.

Turning to the question of a strong economy, Eisenhower went into the federal budget, taxes, the farm problem and other issues.

"As additional reductions in expenditures are brought gradually but surely into sight," he promised, "further reductions in taxes can and will be made."

25 Suggestions

He said his budget message, to be laid before Congress Jan. 21, will include 25 suggestions for tax reforms that are expected to whittle 1 1/2 billion dollars off government income. He said they include more liberal treatment for dependent children who work, for widows and widowers with dependent children, and for medical expenses.

While he mentioned tax revisions for business that wants to expand and modernize plants, Eisenhower again asked Congress to hold corporation income and excise tax rates where they are now. Otherwise, they would come down on April 1, with a loss of some three billion dollars in revenue.

Even though appropriations and spending are to be slashed again, Eisenhower still couldn't see a balanced budget for the fiscal year starting July 1. It will be closer, he said, but the 275 billion dollar limit on the national debt still ought to be boosted to 290 billions. On that, he has a fight on his hands in Congress.

Eisenhower didn't spell out budget details Thursday. But he said seven billion dollars was sliced from the spending program the Truman administration had proposed for the present fiscal year and another five billion reduction is planned for the year ahead.

Perhaps 3 1/2 to 4 billions of the new cut reportedly has been assigned to national defense, foreign aid and the atomic program.

This would bring spending down to a level of \$66,600,000,000 in the coming fiscal year. Since Uncle Sam's income for the year is expected to reach some 63 billions, that would leave a deficit of upwards of four billions.

Promising not to leave to chance the vital matter of keeping the economy strong and growing, Eisenhower told Congress special messages later on and his economic report on Jan. 28 will have proposals for action in this field.

Flexible Credit

He said they will cover such items as flexible credit and debt management policies. Tax measures to encourage spending by consumers and business, public works plans laid out in advance, and bigger opportunities for international trade and investment.

If additional steps are needed, he said, the government "will still be ready" on both the administrative and legislative fronts.

In a preview of the new farm program to be presented to Congress next Monday, Eisenhower set the stage for another likely clash with Congress.

In place of present rigid, high price supports for farm products, he wants a gradual shift to a flexible system. He said this would stimulate production of needed commodities and encourage consumption of those flooding the markets.

Evidently he referred to a system where price supports would rise as scarcities threatened, and fall in case of big surpluses.

Huge surpluses of agricultural products — the government has some five billion dollars tied up in them — must be "insulated" from normal trade channels, the President said, and used for such things as school lunches, disaster relief, and stockpiling for emergencies.

"Sound Law"

Skipping swiftly over proposed changes in the Taft-Hartley Labor Law — likewise to be developed in detail in a supplementary message Monday — the chief executive said they will "reinforce the basic objectives" of what he called "a basically sound law."

Unemployment insurance, the President said, ought to be given 6 1/2 million workers lacking this protection.

He repeated last year's request that 10 million more people be brought into the social security program. This and other major improvements, he said, "will bring substantial benefit increases" and cut the need for payments to the states for relief.

Eisenhower said he intends to send Congress a message on the social security plan Jan. 14, on a health program Jan. 18 and on housing Jan. 25.

Voicing flat opposition to "socialized medicine," the President said there still are many things the government can do to help families suffering heavy hardship.

He mentioned medical research, a broader program to assist in hospital construction, and a measure of support for private and non-profit companies operating in the field of health and medical insurance.

Homes For All

As for housing, he said, if the individual, community, and state and federal governments apply themselves, "every American family can have a decent home."

In a strong boost for lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 years — it will require a constitutional amendment — the former general noted for years citizens between 18 and 21 have been summoned to fight for their country in time of peril.

"They should," he said, "participate in the political process that produces this fateful summons."

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