

Gen. Bradley Sees Need for Increased Air Power

CHICAGO, (U)—Gen. Omar Bradley, in a major address on strategy revision to the atomic era warfare, said today the joint chiefs of staff have agreed "we must greatly increase our combat air."

The increase, the joint chiefs chairman said, must be not only in the strategic and tactical strength of the air force, but provide "considerable increase in navy and marine air strength." He said there must be additional forces for all the services—ground, air and sea.

Of nuclear weapons, Bradley said "the airplane continues to be the best method of projecting the power of the atom to the battlefield, and to the heart of any large land-mass nation." At another point, he spoke of "atom bombs of all sizes." Taken together, the two statements suggested that atomic artillery and guided missiles still remains definitely in the experimental and development stage.

Bradley, a foot soldier by training and career until he became chairman of the army-navy-air joint chiefs group, made his strongest case for air power in an address prepared for the American petroleum institute. That address was prepared against a background of these events:

1. The address by Pres. Truman last night in which he said the new U.S.-British-French disarmament proposal and the West's intense arms buildup "both have the same aim—the aim of security and peace. If we can't get security and peace one way, we must get it the other."
2. Preparation in Washington of preliminary estimates on forces for which the budget of 1953 should provide. Generally, they will include an air force raised from the present 57-wing strength to about 140 and lifting the overall military personnel strength of the armed forces from the 3.5 million goal to about 3.8 million. (Bradley did not use specific figures in his prepared address.)
3. A recently concluded series of atomic tests in Nevada which included new small A-bombs for tactical use and the deployment of troops as part of the atomic battlefield studies.
4. Intensification of the European defense effort, urged by Gen. Dwight Eisenhower in his Washington conferences earlier this week.

Bradley disclosed that the joint chiefs believed the air buildup must be started now. He said that to meet two major requirements—to achieve proper balance of U.S. military forces and to make major contribution to the collective defensive forces for the north Atlantic treaty nations of Western Europe—"We must buy substantially more air power this year."

Then he added:

"In arriving at this decision, the joint chiefs of staff gave long months of careful study to a review of our capabilities and our needs. Based upon the best intelligence at hand, we examined every strategy which might be employed against us."

"We surveyed every method which gave any promise or hint of success of achieving national security. We sought the advice of experts. We included in our thinking foreseeable developments in the field of atomic energy and in the field of new weapons. We also considered the economic capability of our country."

Bradley said a balanced force did not mean "an equal budgetary division of funds among the three services" but rather "effective forces equal to the task that modern warfare may thrust upon us, with each service assuming its share of the calculated risk we must take."

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