



# MINITALK AND MEGATHREAT

*by A. R. Hibbs*

There are a number of ways to characterize traditions in the U.S. approach toward international affairs. Using modern jargon, one of these traditions might be called "The policy of minitalk and megathreat." This policy was stated in more commonplace terms by Teddy Roosevelt as "Speak softly and carry a big stick" — a proverb which he identified as "West African."

Although Theodore Roosevelt had always enjoyed having big sticks, he had never given much of an impression of speaking softly — at least before his succession to the presidency. His attitude toward a big stick can be found in many statements, such as in his speech of 1897, when, as Assistant Secretary to the Navy, he spoke before the Naval War College.

There he said, "All the great masterful races have been fighting races. No triumph of peace is quite so great as a supreme triumph of war. We of the United States have passed most of our few years of national life in peace. We honor the architects of our wonderful material prosperity . . . but we feel, after all, that the men who have dared greatly in war or the work which is akin to war, are those who deserve the best of the country."

In his autobiography, when he wrote of his experiences in the West, he said, "Every man who has in him any real power of joy in battle knows

that he feels it when the wolf begins to rise in his heart; he does not then shrink from blood or sweat or deem that they mar the fight; he revels in them, in the toil, the pain, and the danger, as but setting off the triumph."

Of course, we all know of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders and their participation in the Spanish-American War. But, even before this episode, Teddy, as Assistant Secretary to the Navy, had, without authorization from his superior, directed Admiral Dewey to launch his attack on the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. In response to the criticism which this act drew in later years from historians, he remarked to a friend, "Our generals . . . had to grapple with a public sentiment which screamed with anguish over the loss of a couple of thousand men . . . a sentiment of preposterous and unreasoning mawkishness."

His own description of his actions in the Spanish-American War tells not only of the incident but of the character of the man who participated: "I waved my hat, and we went up the hill with a rush. I killed a Spaniard with my own hand like a jackrabbit." And then, at the moment of triumph, he exhorted his men to "look at those damned Spanish dead!" Three years later he was President of the United States.

In a speech 13 years after a particular event, Roosevelt described one example of his "Big

Stick" policy. The parallel between this example and one of quite recent memory is so striking that it almost sounds as if it were made up.

In 1902, a Venezuelan dictator had committed various offenses against different European nations, including Germany and England. The German Emperor decided to exact some sort of punishment against Venezuela and sent a fleet of ships to bombard the Venezuelan coast and capture or sink the small Venezuelan fleet. Roosevelt states that he became convinced that "Germany intended to seize some Venezuelan harbor and turn it into a strongly fortified place of arms, on the model of Kiauchau, with a view to exercising some degree of control over the future Isthmian Canal and over South American affairs generally. For some time the usual methods of diplomatic intercourse were tried. Germany declined to agree to arbitrate the question at issue between her and Venezuela and declined to say that she would not take possession of Venezuelan territory, merely saying that such possession would be 'temporary' — which might mean anything. I finally decided that no useful purpose would be served by further delay and took action accordingly."

The action which Roosevelt took was to order Admiral Dewey to bring the U.S. fleet in the Caribbean to a state of one hour's readiness. Roosevelt then called the German Ambassador, Von Holleben, and delivered an ultimatum to Germany — an ultimatum demanding arbitration of the dispute and a promise for no seizure of Venezuelan territory.

According to John Hay, Roosevelt's Secretary of State at the time, "The German Government firmly counted on our well-established jellyfish squashyness and felt sure they had a free hand." After Roosevelt's ultimatum, "Holleben informed his Government that probably Roosevelt's attitude was a bluff."

Roosevelt called back the Ambassador a few days later and asked what the reply was from the German Government. There was no reply, so Roosevelt writes, "I informed him that in such event it was useless to wait as long as I had intended, and that Dewey would be ordered to sail for the Venezuelan coast 24 hours in advance of the time I had set."

According to Hay, the German Ambassador had second thoughts about the determination of Roosevelt and cabled his Government accordingly. As a result, Roosevelt reports, "Less than 24 hours before the time I had appointed for cabling the order to Dewey, the Embassy notified me that his Imperial Majesty, the German Emperor, had

directed him to request me to undertake the arbitration myself."

Truly, this incident has a remarkable similarity to the Cuban crisis in the fall of 1962 — the threat of naval blockade, the few days' worth of ultimatum, and the retreat of the European power and its abandonment of its strategic base; but the most amazing thing of all, perhaps, is the name of the Venezuelan dictator — Castro.

Roosevelt's entry into the Morocco dispute between France and Germany is considered by some historians to be simply a display of his own desire for international publicity and to have had little, if any, benefit to the U.S. and, in fact, even perhaps some detrimental effects. On the other hand, there are those who think that Roosevelt here brought the United States out of its traditional isolationism in a very significant manner.

The dispute over Morocco centered around the desire of the French to establish a preferential commercial situation, much to the economic damage of German merchants. The Kaiser made a trip to Morocco where, in March 1905, he delivered a defiant, saber-rattling speech. The long predicted European war seemed at hand.

Roosevelt entered this situation somewhat reluctantly, for he privately admitted that America had no direct concern of any significance in Morocco. But he recognized that the crisis was serious and might indeed lead to general war which might thereafter involve the United States, so he gave in to some of his advisors who persuaded him to bring pressure to bear on Britain and France. Roosevelt's involvement in Morocco marked the sharpest departure from traditional isolationism that the United States was to experience before the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

The Japanese opened the Russo-Japanese War by a surprise attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. This sneak attack, without declaration of war, was quite damaging to the Russian position in the Pacific. However, the Americans were sympathetic to the Japanese, who were looked upon as the underdog. The American press praised the "clever little Japanese for having caught the stupid and overconfident Slav with his guard down." President Roosevelt wrote admiringly, "Was not the way the Japs began the fight bully?"

The Russians, of course, were somewhat put out by all of this, since they expected to find traditional American friendship for that largest and most populous white Christian nation. However, Russian imperialism in Asia, the banishment of political dissenters to Siberia, the takeover of Finland, the pogroms directed against the Russian

Jews, had all taken their toll of U.S. friendship toward Russia. On the other hand, we saw the Japanese as protecting the Open Door policy in China. It seems surprising, then, that Roosevelt was instrumental in bringing this war to an end and acting as a mediator, when his announced sympathies were so one-sided. It turns out that he acted in this role on the basis of a secret request from the Japanese Government. Although the Japanese had been quite successful in the military theatres, it was at a tremendous expense and they were exhausted even in near victory.

Roosevelt's arbitration in this dispute won friends in neither Russia nor Japan, but his own reputation as a world leader and peacemaker was tremendously enhanced; and in the next year, 1906, the man who had once boasted of killing a Spanish soldier "like a jackrabbit" was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In spite of all the criticism, Roosevelt's concept of the balance of power in Asia turned out to be reasonably correct. Subsequent events indicated that neither Russia nor Japan, had either been completely victorious, would have maintained the Open Door policy. Only the balance achieved by Roosevelt's mediation worked to the long range interests of the U.S. and other powers.

After the close of the Russo-Japanese war, Roosevelt sent the U. S. fleet on a world cruise, including a stop at Japan. He undertook this venture in spite of a war hysteria whipped up by the Hearst press and fears on the part of many Senators that the unprotected East Coast would be attacked from Europe in the meantime or that the fleet would be destroyed by storms or Japanese treachery. Nevertheless, the cruise was a tremendous success. The fleet was received everywhere, including Japan, with great good feeling. It demonstrated to the world America's new awareness of world problems, and Roosevelt himself stated that he looked upon this act as "the most important service that I rendered to peace . . ." On the other hand, one of the results was a stimulation of a naval arms race in Japan as well as in other countries.

By 1915, Roosevelt was complaining to Lodge that the American people themselves "are cold; they have been educated by this infernal peace propaganda of the last 10 years into an attitude of sluggishness and timidity." In fact, Roosevelt was anxious to participate personally in the first World War and continued to protest American inaction, calling Wilson "purely a demagogue," "a doctrinaire," "an utterly selfish and cold-blooded politician always," for his refusal to commission

Roosevelt and permit him to raise a division. This boyish demand for excitement continued throughout his life. A decade earlier, a contemporary had written of him, "You must always remember that the President is about 6."

Roosevelt had no more ability to see himself as others saw him than the rest of us. His Secretary of State, John Hay, in the March 20, 1904, entry in his diary of meetings with President Roosevelt, wrote, "He has heard that some people in New York have said that he was a grotesque figure in the White House, and wonders what they mean."

We must recognize that Roosevelt was a war-like man and desired Napoleonic fame. Nevertheless, in the White House he often showed amazingly peaceful intentions — although he himself often described them as being forced upon him by public opinion. But let us give him his due. He had a glorious opportunity to whip up a war with Japan, but instead went to extraordinary lengths to prevent it. Despite his bellicose ambitions, he is far better known for his efforts at peacemaking than at warmaking. And, what is more, he deserved this acclaim.

Another American president famous for his powers in the international arena was Woodrow Wilson. Some 30 years before his fathering of the League of Nations, Wilson had expressed an attitude toward social change which is in rather curious contrast to his subsequent action. "In politics, nothing radically novel may safely be attempted," he wrote in his study, *The State*, in 1889. "No result of value can ever be reached . . . except through slow and gradual development, the careful adaptations and nice modifications of growth."

Perhaps more basic to Wilson's motivation was his attitude toward himself and his relations with other people. He had a powerful need for affection. Combined with this, he had a deep sense of isolation and a very limited capacity for any sort of warm, personal communication. He wrote of himself, "When I am with anyone in whom I am especially and sincerely interested, the hardest subject for me to broach is just that which is nearest to my heart.

"It isn't pleasant or convenient to have strong passions; I have the uncomfortable feeling that I am carrying a volcano about with me. My salvation is in being loved . . . there surely never lived a man with whom love was a more critical matter than it is with me!"

Of his reserve, his difficulty in making friends, he wrote, "Sometimes I am a bitter shame to myself when I think of how few friends I have

amidst a host of acquaintances. Plenty of people offer me their friendship; but, partly because I am reserved and shy and partly because I am fastidious and have a narrow, uncatholic taste in friends, I reject the offer in almost every case; and then am dismayed to look about and see how few persons in the world stand near me and know me as I am — in such wise that they can give me sympathy and close support of heart.”

He was writing these words to his wife, and continued, “Perhaps it is because when I give at all I want to give my whole heart, and I feel that so few want it all or would return measure for measure. Am I wrong, do you think, in that feeling? And can one as deeply covetous of friendship and close affection as I am afford to act upon such a feeling?”

Perhaps one of the reasons why Wilson chose politics as the main goal of his career was that he derived from groups of people the feelings of affection and support which he missed from individual contacts. As early as 1884, he wrote. “One feels no sacrifice of pride necessary in courting the favor of an assembly of men such as you would have to make in seeking to please one man.”

In later years, when Wilson was in the White House, he told his friend Tumulty, “I want the people to love me, but I suppose they never will.”

If these were part of his limitations and his drives, there were in addition strong forces from his family background. His father was a Presbyterian minister, and his mother a Presbyterian minister’s daughter. Woodrow Wilson had learned to look upon life as the progressive fulfillment of God’s will and to see himself as “a distinct, moral agent.” Early in his life he was afflicted with an almost impersonal ambition to become great in order that he might serve greatly. His drive toward politics and toward a political career did not in any way involve the feeling of need to submit to political chicanery. Perhaps he persuaded himself that, even though such activities went on in somebody else’s area, he could continue to hold himself aloof from them. When the political bosses of New Jersey approached him to run for the governorship, he was puzzled and could not obtain from them any satisfactory answer as to why they had chosen him as a standard bearer. “So I had to work one out for myself. I concluded that these gentlemen had been driven to recognize that a new day had come in American politics and that they would have to conduct themselves henceforth after a new fashion.”

In his campaign, he stated that, if he was elected, he would enter the governorship “with

absolutely no pledges of any kind.” And, if the bosses imagined that he would go back on these pledges, they were mistaken. After his election, he called the bosses “warts upon the body politic” and refused to assist them, even though they had been instrumental in his election. Boss Richard Crocker of Tammany Hall said of Wilson, “An ingrate in politics is no good.” But he was underselling Wilson by a long margin. For this policy on the part of Wilson was far more than simply ingratitude: it was a matter of dedication and moral conviction. During this period, he wrote to a friend, “I shall make mistakes, but I do not think I shall sin against my knowledge of duty.”

The Wilson Administration had several significant diplomatic dealings prior to the events immediately preceding our entry into the first World War. The Marines were sent into Haiti in 1915, and backed up Roosevelt’s customs house control (instituted in 1905) with the landing of Marines in the Dominican Republic in 1916.

Our attitude toward Haiti was represented by a telegram sent from Admiral Caperton to the Secretary of the Navy: “Next Thursday unless otherwise directed, I will permit Congress to elect a President.” In the Dominican Republic, when the regime refused to accept our dictated treaty, a six-year military government was bodily established under the direction of the Navy Department in Washington.

In 1913, the Mexican Government was in the control of a ruthless military dictator, General Huerta. Wilson, objecting to Huerta’s regime on moral principle, attempted to force its collapse by refusing diplomatic recognition. In a message to Congress, August 27, 1913, Wilson described why he elected this course of action. Now, it should be pointed out that this lack of recognition represented a sharp clash between the idealism of Wilson and a long-established precedent of United States foreign policy. From the days of Thomas Jefferson, the United States had generally, though not invariably, pursued the policy of recognizing established governments regardless of how they had come into office. A long list of other countries around the world had applied this simple test to the Mexican Government of General Huerta, and recognized it. But Wilson refused.

In his message to Congress, he said, “Clearly, everything that we do must be rooted in patience and done with calm and a disinterested deliberation. Impatience on our part would be childish, and would be fraught with every risk of wrong and folly. We can afford to exercise the self-re-

straint of a really great nation which realizes its own strength and scorns to misuse it.

"The steady pressure of moral force will before many days break barriers of pride and prejudice down, and we shall triumph as Mexico's friends sooner than we could triumph as her enemies — and how much more handsomely, with how much higher and finer satisfactions of conscience and of honor!"

Instead of "many days," it was more than a year before the Huerta regime fell, and then because of much more direct pressure than the "moral force" Wilson counted on.

In this same speech, Wilson had assured Congress that he was not going to permit traffic in arms to Huerta or to the two other leaders who were now doing battle with Huerta, Carranza, and Villa. However, within six months, Wilson changed this noninterventionist policy and lifted the arms embargo so as to permit war materials to reach Huerta's opponents.

Wilson was as highly criticized for this act as for his general policy toward Mexico. He was denounced in Europe as impractical and idealistic. The German Kaiser spoke for many European leaders when he said, "Morality is all right, but what about dividends?" Most people felt that Wilson's action was simply prolonging a battle and preventing the arrival of that day when the Mexican situation would be settled down enough so that European investors would feel safe again.

The Republicans in the United States called Wilson's action the policy of "deadly drifting" and a popular dance step was called the "Wilson Tango"—one step forward, two backward, a side step, and then a moment of hesitation.

But Wilson stood fast and remarked to his secretary, "I have to pause and remind myself that I am President of the United States and not of a small group of Americans with vested interests in Mexico."

But the situation continued to worsen. In Tampico, on April 9, 1914, a group of U.S. sailors were arrested by Huerta's militia. Although they were later released, the Commander of the U.S. Fleet demanded redress from the Mexican Government for its injury to American honor. Huerta replied with profuse apologies but declined to "hoist the American flag in a prominent position on shore and salute it with 21 guns," unless the Admiral gave the same honor to the Mexican flag. Since the U.S. did not recognize the Mexican Government, this reciprocity was diplomatically impossible — and the two governments were at an impasse. In America, tempers flared. Even the

peace-loving Secretary of State W. J. Bryan felt that American honor had to be backed, and Wilson decided to use the incident to justify armed intervention in Mexico.

After receiving approval from Congress, Wilson ordered the Navy to take the port of Vera Cruz in order to prevent the landing of a shipload of munitions from a German merchantman. This invasion of Mexico was roundly denounced, not only by the dictator Huerta, whom Wilson was trying to oust, but also by the leaders of those insurrectionist movements in Mexico, which up till then had been conspiring with the U.S. for the armed overthrow of Huerta; and, of course, there was a general cry of outrage from other Latin-American countries. Wilson clearly wanted out of the spot he had gotten himself into and leaped at the offer of mediation received from the ABC powers (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile).

Even though a plan was finally evolved by this group at Niagara Falls, Canada, and even though Huerta was finally forced to flee to Spain within a month after the Vera Cruz incident, principally because U.S. pressure had finally crumbled his regime, his successor General Carranza refused to accept the results of the Niagara Conference.

Carranza had been one of the men the U.S. was pushing as a replacement for Huerta. The other alternate was Francisco Villa. It turned out that Carranza was not much better than Huerta, even though the U.S. finally recognized the Carranza regime about a year after it had taken office. Furthermore, Carranza and Villa, friends during their common fight against Huerta, had a falling out, and Villa decided to revolt against Carranza. One of his ploys in this circumstance was an invasion of the United States and the sacking of the town of Columbus, New Mexico, on March 9, 1916, with the shooting of at least 17 Americans. By this move, Villa hoped to involve the U.S. in a war with Carranza, which might bring Villa to power.

Wilson ordered General Pershing to invade Mexico with 12,000 men, after Carranza had grudgingly permitted the invasion to start. (Carranza had required a face-saving agreement which permitted "the pursuit of outlaws by either nation in the future.") Unfortunately, Pershing's cavalry never quite captured Villa, but instead indulged in a clash with the Mexican troops at the town of Carrizal. By now the Pershing expedition had been dubbed the "perishing expedition" and, in February 1917, threatened by the possibility of entry into war in Europe, Wilson withdrew the U.S. troops from Mexico.

In spite of his honest intention and high ideals, Wilson's policy in Mexico failed by a long way in meeting the objectives he himself had set. Many American lives were lost, and many more Mexican lives. Not only was American and other foreign capital investment destroyed, but the capital goods of Mexico herself were greatly depleted by the *continuing revolution*. Even when Pershing's troops were finally withdrawn, the armed conflict between Villa and Carranza was still boiling — a conflict that Wilson's actions had helped to promote and prolong.

In the first year of World War I, the course of American neutrality was indeed a difficult one. There was a great outcry over the sinking by German torpedoes of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915. Eleven hundred and ninety-eight persons were killed, 128 of them American citizens. Wilson recognized, however, that the country was not clamoring for war even though it objected most violently to this act on the part of the German submarine. He attempted to control the feelings of the nation in the same manner that he controlled his own. He continued to emphasize what he considered to be America's great moral mission.

Speaking in Philadelphia three days after the *Lusitania* sinking, he stated, "There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight. There is such a thing as a nation so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right." Of course, his phrase "too proud to fight" was quickly taken out of context and used against him by the jingoes of the time, including Teddy Roosevelt.

After his reelection on the slogan "He kept us out of war," Wilson made another attempt to end the conflict. He requested both sides to clearly state their war aims, and, after contemplating the replies from both German and allied capitals, Wilson addressed the Senate (really the world) on January 22, 1917. Here was his first suggestion for a League of Nations, and he warned both sides in the war that only "peace without victory" could bring a permanent end. Americans were enthusiastic about the speech, but of course the Allies could not afford to accept the stalemate, so Wilson's attitude gained nothing as far as immediate objectives were concerned. Nevertheless, it put Wilson in the center of the stage as the moral leader of the world. Germany's answer to the "peace without victory" speech was to establish on January 31, 1917, unrestricted submarine warfare.

Germany knew this would push America into the war, but they also knew that America was essentially unprepared. Until the Naval Act of

1916, the American defense budget had been very small. And even this Naval Act had gone to buy large battleships, vulnerable to the submarines, instead of small, fast submarine chasers. So, at this point, America had no "big stick," and this lack was significant to German decision-makers. Fortunately, we built our big stick in time.

Wilson helped bring an early end to the first World War not only by the entry of the United States into that war but also by his enunciation of his famous Fourteen Points. The faith of the German people in Wilson and their acceptance of his Fourteen Points brought about an armistice much earlier than it would otherwise have occurred. Unfortunately, Wilson could not force the Fourteen Points onto France and England, whose bitterness toward Germany was not restrained by Wilson's idealism. Nevertheless, and harsh though the peace with Germany turned out to be, it undoubtedly would have been much harsher without the idealistic force of Wilson at the peace table.

Indeed, Wilson had almost insuperable obstacles in his dealings with France and Britain. Clemenceau habitually dozed off when matters unrelated to French security were under consideration at the conference. Lloyd George, on more than one occasion, lightheartedly admitted his ignorance of some of the most elementary facts of European economics and geography. "Please refresh my memory," he once asked an aide, "Is it Upper or Lower Silesia we are giving away?"

Every evening, Wilson came home to his suite, haggard and white, and, as one of his aides remarked, "with one eye twitching painfully." In the small hours of the morning, he would go down on his hands and knees, poring over maps and charts, trying to master the complicated maze of facts involved in the negotiations.

By compromise and retreat on many of his Fourteen Points, in fact on most of them, Wilson managed to save at least the basic doctrine of the League of Nations. It was eventually incorporated into the treaty. Then came the fight with the U.S. Senate. The Senate wanted some reservations. Actually, the reservations were rather mild. Certainly, in comparison with the compromises which Wilson had already given to France and England in order to secure the treaty, the compromises demanded by Senator Lodge and the Republicans who followed him were small. Nevertheless, Wilson refused to budge an inch before the Senate. When the possibility of Senate rejection was broached to him, he snapped, "Anyone who opposes me in that, I'll crush!"

An ambassador from France brought news to Wilson that the Allies would be glad to accept American membership in the League of Nations even with the set of reservations that would satisfy an influential group of Republican Senators, a set of reservations which, if accepted, would have guaranteed American entry into the League and the signing of the Versailles Treaty by the U.S. But to this suggestion Wilson replied curtly, "Mr. Ambassador, I shall consent to nothing. The Senate must take its medicine." But the Senate held fast, and Wilson then went out to stump the country.

Any logical reason behind this tour by Wilson is hard to discover. Even if his stumping efforts should have defeated every Republican senator up for reelection in that year, Wilson's party would still not have enough votes in the Senate to pass the treaty. Perhaps Wilson was in search of martyrdom. He had been warned by his physician not to undertake a strenuous campaign, and he told his friend Tumulty, "Even though, in my condition, it might mean the giving up of my life, I will gladly make the sacrifice to save the treaty." In Spokane he declared in a speech, "I am ready to fight from now on until all the fight has been taken out of me by death to redeem the faith and promises of the United States."

Who can say what might have happened if Wilson had actually achieved the martyrdom he appeared to be seeking? If he had killed himself with these exertions, the resulting wave of sympathy might have swept the League of Nations through the Senate. But, instead, he suffered a stroke which held him incapacitated for many months and even prompted malicious talk about his mental health. People pointed to bars on the windows of the White House as evidence that a madman lived inside, although the bars had been there since the days of Teddy Roosevelt and were originally installed to prevent Roosevelt's sons from breaking the windows with their baseballs.

Thereafter, the Democrats in the Senate were almost without a leader, and when, on March 19, 1920, the final vote on the treaty came up, the best that Wilson could do was to write a stern letter to his party leadership. The vote was 49 to 35, and thus fell short of the required two-thirds majority. Wilson had asked the Senate to give it to him his way or to give him nothing, and he got nothing. Senator Ashurst of Arizona, a fellow Democrat with Wilson, bitterly declared, "As a friend of the President, as one who has loyally followed him, I solemnly declare to him this morning: 'If you want to kill your own child because

the Senate straightens out its crooked limbs, you must take the responsibility and accept the verdict of history.'"

Wilson tried to keep up the fight. He hoped that the presidential election of 1920 would be "a great and solemn referendum," giving a clear mandate for acceptance of his treaty and his League. But the Democratic candidate, Cox, together with his vice-presidential nominee, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, went down to a stunning defeat before the landslide of Harding, the high priest of normalcy. The verdict of history was against Woodrow Wilson.

This is the point where I cease my historical review. The America of the first 20 years of the century has similarities to the America of today which are more basic than the vast and obvious differences. We were then, as now, a powerful industrialized nation. We took our place as world leaders in international conflicts. We leaned upon the moral strength of our fundamental beliefs in democracy. We had arguments, quarrels, and major battles with dictatorial regimes and won them. We kept getting ourselves into trouble in Latin America and regularly lost friends in the process.

But we can look back upon these times with an air of rational judgment. The leaders who walked that political stage are gone. Although the Republican and Democratic parties were respectively conservative and liberal then, as now, it is hard to identify with the politics of those days any more deeply than by party label. Thus it may be possible to conduct a rational study of this age of America in such a manner that we can gain vital insights into the solutions of today's problems.

It is tempting to transform the lessons so learned into broad generalizations. Admitting that such generalizations are seldom accurate, limited in application, and quite often misleading, nevertheless they offer some virtues, if only as a guide to further thought.

Such a generalization derives from our comparison of the two presidents, Roosevelt and Wilson, who left the principal marks upon this score of years. On the one hand, there is Roosevelt, the Rough Rider, the Warhorse. And on the other, Wilson, the idealist, the moral agent.

Roosevelt was always ready for a fight, and approached the world with a chip on his shoulder. His attitude toward foreign policy was that of self-interest for the United States — and not always too well-enlightened self-interest. Wilson kept holding before him and before America the

basic morality of Christianity. In both policy and act, he was guided by a deep and real concept of principle.

Roosevelt seldom deviated from his Big Stick policy. His reliance on pure diplomacy was usually reserved for other people's problems — the Russo-Japanese War, the Moroccan conflict, and so on. In these, it seems clear that he was guided as much by a desire to enhance his own fame as a desire to bring peace between the disputing parties. Thus, one might say that, when it was not self-interest of the nation that guided him, it was self-interest of Teddy Roosevelt. Wilson was forced often to deviate from his fundamental morality. In spite of the guiding principles in his denial of recognition to Mexico and his determination to stay out of any conflict there, he was led by still other principles to eventually give arms to the insurrectionists and finally to invade the country. He gave up his principles with anguish, but give them up he did — time and time again.

Roosevelt found no conflict between his personal ambition, his concepts of running the country, and his policies of international diplomacy. Wilson was in continual conflict between the demands of his moral precepts and the requirements of workaday politics. In many cases, he could save one only by sacrificing the other.

Roosevelt's belligerence and self-interest won for us the Panama Canal (on terms of maximum benefit to the United States), preserved the Monroe Doctrine against a very real threat from Germany and England in the Caribbean, settled a bitter war in Siberia, prevented a war over Morocco, and won for the man himself the Nobel Peace Prize.

Wilson's continual conflict between morality and politics gained for us the animosity of Mexico and many other countries of Central America and the Caribbean, failed to prevent a war in Europe or to keep us out of it and, finally, in a most glaring display of wearing the wrong hat at the wrong time, doomed to defeat his own most beloved creation, the League of Nations.

The generalization is obvious: In world politics, self-interest is considerably more successful than moral principle. In this statement, the word "success" is not qualified. One can say that self-interest is a more successful basis than moral principle even in the achievement of morally desirable results.

Once one has created a generalization, the next step is to test out its potential application. There are a number of issues that face the nation today,

domestically and internationally, to which one might apply this generalization. Among these, one of the most pressing is the problem of war. Here, both from a moralistic point of view and from the point of view of self-interest, there is no doubt that war must be avoided. If small wars seem unavoidable, and we should be prepared to accept this possibility, nevertheless a war between the major powers would very likely involve nuclear weapons and the probable destruction of civilization. From self-interest or morality, we are directed to take whatever acts are necessary to minimize the risk of major war. One of these acts might be the establishment of a disarmament agreement with the Soviet Union.

I say "might be" here instead of "will be" for this reason: Suppose we could achieve complete disarmament. Surely all of us would then breathe a sigh of vast relief. But what would happen next? What would prevent the rebuilding of armaments? The nonexistence of weapons does not mean that all trouble between the two major powers, the U.S. and Russia, are solved. And, if these troubles should flare up again, might not the leadership of either country feel forced into resorting to a rebuilding of armed might? In the ensuing frantic arms race, might not the danger of war be even greater than it is at present?

On the other hand, continuation of the present arms race involves constant risk — risk of accidental nuclear war, risk that many other nations will develop nuclear weapons, and use them to turn limited "brush-fire" wars into major nuclear holocausts.

Here is a place, then, where we might apply the generalization developed from history. We might approach disarmament as a moral process, an end in itself, something which is so obviously right that it transcends such considerations as power politics and national self-interest. Or, with equally powerful morality, we might say that any thought of disarmament in the face of the communist menace is evil. To surrender one iota of strength, regardless of the apparent guarantees of a negotiated treaty, is to make a pact with the devil and to surrender our honor and eventually our liberty.

On the other hand, we might set aside moralistic arguments from either side and approach the disarmament negotiations from the viewpoint of national political self-interest. In particular, we might look upon such negotiations as one way of avoiding general war while enabling us to advance our national goals in the international

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arena. Our historical generalization says that this latter point of view is likely to be the most successful.

Under this generalization, we do not seek to "ban the bomb" simply because the bomb is evil. Instead, we consider under what circumstances the banning of nuclear bombs serves the self-interest of the United States. Nor do we break off negotiations with the Soviets simply because communists always break promises. Recognizing the pitfalls that threaten any negotiations with Moscow, we ask ourselves quite objectively, "What are the risks? What are the gains? What sort of treaty will best serve the self-interest of the United States?"

Indeed, when we ask such questions, we find that there are a number of treaties affecting nuclear weapons that might serve our interests. At the present time, for example, we believe we have nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. Therefore, if we could negotiate some sort of reasonably reliable treaty with the Soviets to prevent or even greatly limit the testing of new nuclear bombs, we might be able to preserve for a long period of

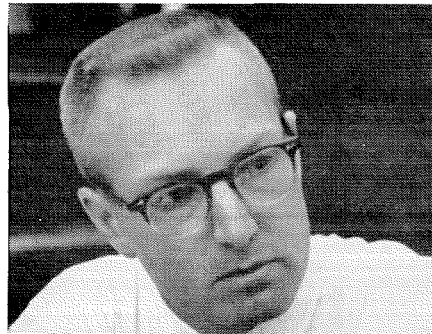
time our present superiority — superiority which would be eroded more rapidly without a treaty. Such a treaty would also discourage the development of nuclear bombs by other countries presently without them. Clearly, a treaty limiting all nuclear testing is in our own best interests.

What about the possibility of doing away completely with the bombs — that is, with the bombs now in military arsenals? First, we must remember that there is no way of preventing the manufacture of new bombs at some future date even if all current bombs are destroyed in some sort of a treaty arrangement. Nuclear innocence cannot be regained. But, if we could do away with all nuclear bombs today, would that be in our national self-interest?

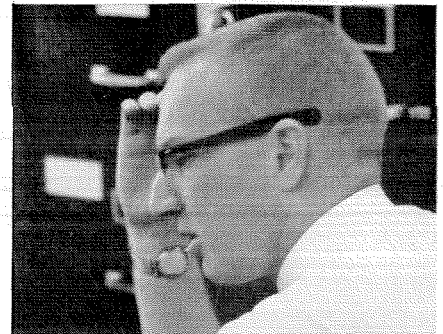
Actually, it doesn't appear that that measure alone would be beneficial to the U.S. Currently, we and our Allies are faced with a substantial disparity in conventional forces: the East having a significant margin over the West. The importance of this imbalance is minimized by the existence of nuclear weapons. Thus, it would not be to our

*continued on page 26*

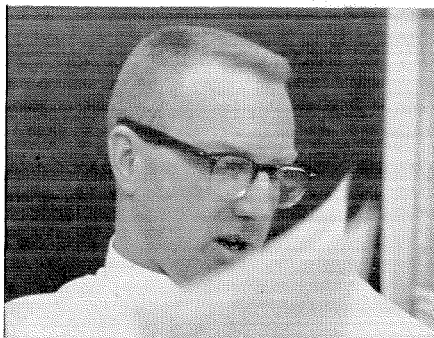
## What's your group doing?



We're developing two specific systems for JPL spacecraft. The first accepts the data output of transducers and instruments on board and prepares it to pass through our communication channel. A data-handling system.




The other system allows us to efficiently transmit signals over great distances from the spacecraft to Earth and vice versa. It's an interesting operation. Thankfully, it's a shirt-sleeve operation.



Oh, I might wear a coat when I go to the cafeteria. The informality and freedom here is one way of saying that JPL conducts its affairs on a highly professional plane.



I've been trying to find an excuse to be unhappy for five years — since I graduated from the U. of Michigan. I haven't been able to do it yet.

You've just been talking to Benn Martin, Engineering Group Supervisor at Jet Propulsion Laboratory — responsible for R & D on lunar, planetary and interplanetary explorations. He's been at JPL for five years. He plans to spend  fifty more here. If your future doesn't look as bright, you might write now to JPL.

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interest to do away with nuclear weapons alone. However, an arrangement which would simultaneously decrease both nuclear and conventional weaponry would be desirable. Such an arrangement would place more and more emphasis on economic competition with the Soviet Union and less and less on military. This move would clearly be to our benefit, since all the evidence of the last 40 years points out that on an economic battleground democracy can beat communism.

Of course, we still face a major problem: Is it possible to negotiate an arrangement acceptable to both East and West? Certainly there is every reason to believe that the Soviets approach the problem with the same basic attitude — that is, national self-interest for them. Is it possible, then, that both of us will find the same treaty acceptable? If this is possible, then it must be because the two of us have quite different points of view on the nature of reality. But, after all, this is true, isn't it? We do have different points of view. The Soviets still cling to the belief that, given an opportunity on an economic front, communism will

beat capitalism; quite the reverse of what we believe to be the case. At the same time, both countries realize that on the militaristic level, neither side has very much to gain and both risk losing everything. It would appear then that both sides, each from their separate points of view, might consider an economic struggle in a disarmed world to be in their own self-interest.

Certainly such a result would be more desirable on purely moral grounds than either the continuing arms race or surrender to communism. But the lesson of our brief survey of history suggests that we rely on self-interest to direct our course through the maze of negotiation.

History gives us no guarantee that this approach — or any other approach — will lead to success. It only suggests. The importance of that suggestion I leave to your consideration. In the world of the megathreat, each individual is personally affected by the course of international negotiation. It is only reasonable that these negotiations should in turn be affected by the individual.



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