

45 in Congress Seek Rein on Military

By JOHN W. FINNEY

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WASHINGTON, June 1 — Warning that the nation is in danger of becoming a "national security state," a group of nine Senators and 36 House members urged today that the military be brought under greater Congressional control and be radically reduced in size.

"The most urgent challenge confronting Congress today is to reassert control over the military bureaucracy and the policy decisions it has pre-empted," the Congressional group declared in a 61-page report.

The report called for a one-million-man reduction in the armed forces, and immediate start on withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, formation of an interim coalition government in Saigon, and a United States-Soviet moratorium on the testing of multiple warheads as well as on deployment of missile defense systems.

Beyond those immediate steps, the group proposed the formation of various committees and agencies, all intended to give Congress greater ability to review the military budget and to establish priorities between domestic and foreign needs.

The report is an outgrowth of a two-day conference last March at which members of Congress, former Government officials, weapons experts, economists and foreign policy scholars discussed the military budget and its impact upon national priorities.

Largely Democrats, the signers of the report were drawn from either liberal or anti-Vietnam factions in Congress, which have provided the core of the new Congressional anti-Pentagon coalition. There was only one Republican signer—Senator William B. Saxbe of Ohio.

The report reflects the growing awareness among the military critics of the basic premises of the defense budget—premises that they are coming to believe must be challenged if they are to succeed in reducing the size of the military establishment.

The report notes, for example, that present levels of the armed forces and the military budget are based on requirements that the United States must be prepared to fight three wars simultaneously—a major nuclear war in Europe, a major conventional war in China and a "brushfire war elsewhere," such as in South America.

"If more realistic contingencies are assumed and the defense of our own shores is taken as the primary and proper role of our armed forces," the report says, "substantial savings could be made."

Throughout the report runs the theme that "bloated" and "burgeoning" defense spending is leading to the "militarization" of American society, the diversion of resources from domestic needs, and the "discontent" and "alienation" of the people, particularly the young.

The blame for this militarization is placed not so much upon the uniformed military as upon its civilian leadership and the institutions they have created "to centralize and expand the performance of national security functions."

"In the name of efficiency," the report said, "we unified the operations of the armed services, introduced the techniques of computer management and encouraged closer interactions between the military and industry. As a result, power once checked by rivalries and inefficiency is now wielded as a single force, defying effective democratic control."

ABM Fight a Test

From this perspective, the report viewed the present fight over deployment of a missile defense system "as a test of whether or not the national security state is sunk in concrete for this generation."

What is at issue, it said, "is the transformation of the United States into a different sort of civilization—into a national security state."

Thus the overriding problem confronting Congress, it continued, "is how to resist this interwoven bureaucracy, so large and entrenched, so zealous and parochial, so unrestrained by an effective counterbalancing force in our society."

What is needed, it said, is a new national defense policy "built around those core interests which are so vital that if they were violated they would threaten the very existence of the nation itself."

Specific Proposals

To assist Congress in developing "an authoritative perspective for questioning the judgment of the Defense Department," the report proposed the following specific steps:

¶Creation of a defense review office, similar to the General Accounting Office, to analyze defense spending for Congress.

¶Creation of a temporary National Security Committee, modeled after the temporary

National Economic Committee that examined the nation's basic economic structure in the 1930's, to investigate the military-industrial establishment.

¶Formation of a Congressional Joint Committee on National Priorities to provide continuing review of military and civilian needs.

Senators signing the report were:

J. W. Fulbright, Arkansas; Harold E. Hughes, Iowa; George S. McGovern, South Dakota; Walter F. Mondale, Minnesota; Gaylord Nelson, Wisconsin; William B. Saxbe, Ohio; Joseph D. Tydings, Maryland; Harrison A. Williams Jr., New Jersey; Stephen M. Young, Ohio.

House members signing the report were:

George Brown Jr., California; Philip Burton, California; Hugh L. Carey, New York; Shirley Chisholm, New York; William L. Clay, Missouri; John Conyers Jr., Michigan; Charles C. Diggs Jr., Michigan; Bob Eckhardt, Texas; Don Edwards, California; Donald M. Fraser, Minnesota; Jacob H. Gilbert, New York; William J. Green, Pennsylvania; William D. Hathaway, Maine; Augustus Hawkins, California; Ken Hechler, West Virginia; Henry Helstoski, New Jersey; Robert W. Kastenmeier, Wisconsin; Edward I. Koch, New York; Robert L. Leggett, California; Allard K. Lowenstein, New York; Abner J. Mikva, Illinois; Patsy T. Mink, Hawaii; William S. Moorhead, Pennsylvania; Robert N. C. Nix, Pennsylvania; Richard L. Ottinger, New York; Bertram L. Podell, New York; Thomas M. Rees, California; Henry S. Reuss, Wisconsin; Benjamin S. Rosenthal, New York; Edward R. Roybal, California; William F. Ryan, New York; James H. Scheuer, New York; Louis Stokes, Ohio; Robert O. Tiernan, Rhode Island; Lester L. Wolff, New York; Frank J. Thompson Jr., New Jersey.