

Where does the U.S. stand?

By Graham Patterson



U.N. troops. Thailand sent 1,200. Acme

There has been much conflict of opinion as to what course America should take regarding the defense of Europe against possible Russian attack. Some argue that we should first build up our own armed strength and war production, to be better able to aid our Allies if they are attacked. Others say Europe is our first line of defense.

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There is something to be said for both sides of the argument. Certainly Europe is important. If it were to fall to the Russians, with its huge manpower and industrial capacity, we would lose the war production superiority that the democracies now enjoy and which, along with our greater supply of A-bombs, makes the Kremlin conspirators hesitate to take the fateful step to all-out war.

On the other hand, if we send our fighting forces and war matériel to Western Europe, and find our men overwhelmed and our military supplies taken by the Red hordes because of lack of preparation and resistance on the part of our Allies, we would be in a dangerous position indeed.

The U.S. is entitled to expect the other members of the Atlantic Pact and the United Nations to take adequate measures in their own defense. This is not merely a struggle between the United States and Russia and her satellites. It is a global conflict, with the Communist dictatorships on one side and all free countries of the world on the other. And if and when it comes, it will be a war of survival. If we go down, the rest of the free world will go down with us.

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When the Korean Communists invaded South Korea last June, the U.N. was quick to authorize the use of armed force to combat the aggression, but not so quick when it came to contributing troops. U.N. forces in Korea total about 275,000. Of this number 150,000 are American and 100,000 are South Koreans. This leaves less than 25,000 from 11 of the other U.N. members—a pitifully small contribution. American casualties already total almost twice that number.

Of these 11 nations, England's contribution of 10,000 combat troops was the largest, followed by Turkey with 4,500, Australia with 1,500, France 1,200 (France is, however, heavily committed in Indochina), Canada and the Philippines 1,200 each, little Thailand (Siam) 1,200, Belgium and Greece 1,000 each, New Zealand 900 and Holland 600. Colombia is training a battalion; Ethiopia plans to send 1,000 men. Sweden, Denmark, Italy and India supplied medical units.

Some countries have contributed naval and air support, but MacArthur's pleas for additional ground forces were largely unheeded. There are 60 nations which subscribed to the Charter and purposes of the U.N. Yet, when the challenge came, only 14 made good on their pledge. What is their definition of "collective security"? Have they so soon forgotten Munich? Have they forgotten that collective firmness by the Allies when Germany invaded the Rhineland might have prevented World War II?

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The United States is big and strong and rich—but not big enough, strong enough, or rich enough, to shoulder alone the burdens of the world. It's time for the United Nations members to recognize the meaning of the word "united." Or was the philosopher right when he said "We only learn from history that we do not learn from history"?

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