

Moreover, there are growing doubts among the military, certainly on the Western side, about some of the strategies on which nuclear deterrence has been based and especially about the element in western strategy which makes the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States dependent on a strategy of flexible response, a strategy which Bob McNamara and I, just about 20 years ago, managed to persuade NATO to adopt as an alternative to the trip-wire theory which was even less satisfactory.

What I want to do, in this opening talk at the conference, is to try to put our current problems in the perspective of the history of the last 40 years, although I recognize that it is very dangerous to isolate a single aspect of the military problem from the political framework which it inevitably reflects, and I apologize in advance for leaving the sort of problems, with which ambassadors and high commissioners deal, out of the calculation I am about to put to you.

Let us get to grips with the nuclear situation.

What struck me very much, in reading some histories which have been written recently about the period, when the western allies first discovered the secret of nuclear weapons, is that the debate which took place then was very similar to that which is surrounding President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. In the United Kingdom, when we first heard, towards the end of 1944, that it might be possible to produce a nuclear weapon, quite improbable people, such as Sir John Anderson and Professor Lindeman, whom most would regard as fairly right-wing by current standards, tried to persuade Winston Churchill to tell the Russians all about it, but he refused.

Some months later, in April 1945, well before the dropping of the first nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Secretary Byrnes told President Truman, and I quote his words as recounted in Truman's diaries: "The atomic bomb will allow the United States to dictate its own terms at the end of the war." This was a very strong feeling, certainly in Washington, at that time, although later the American Secretary for War, Mr. Stimson, warned President Truman, and I quote his words: "Relations with Russia could be irretrievably embittered if we fail to approach Moscow now on limiting the bomb as an instrument of war."

In fact, as we now know, spies in the United States, Canada and Britain had kept Moscow informed of the development of nuclear