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Anne Wheeler, Acting Press Secretary to the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF THE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT,
DELIVERED FROM THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,
IN THE WHITE HOUSE, THURSDAY EVENING,
NOVEMBER 7, 1957, AT 6:00 P.M. EST

SCIENCE IN NATIONAL SECURITY

My subject tonight is Science in National Security.

Originally this talk was to be part of one I intend to make in Oklahoma City next week. However, I found that I could not possibly deal with this subject in just one address. So tonight I shall concentrate on the most immediate aspects of this question of the relationship of science to the defense of our country.

Let me tell you plainly what I am going to do in this talk and those to follow.

I am going to lay the facts before you -- the rough with the smooth. Some of these security facts are reassuring; others are not -- they are sternly demanding. Some require that we resolutely continue lines of action now well begun. Others require new action, and still others new dimensions of effort. After putting these facts and requirements before you, I shall propose a program of action -- a program that will demand the energetic support of not just the government but every American, if we are to make it successful.

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First: some facts about our present security posture. It is one of great strength -- but by no means should this assurance satisfy any of us. Our defenses must be adequate not just today, but tomorrow and in all the years to come, until under the safety of these defenses, we shall have secured a durable and just peace for all the world.

As of now, the United States is strong. Our nation has today, and has had for some years, enough power in its strategic retaliatory forces to bring near annihilation to the war-making capabilities of any other country.

This position of present strength did not come about by accident. The Korean War had the effect of greatly expanding our peacetime defense forces. As we begin the partial demobilization of these forces we undertake also an accelerated program of modernization.

As a first step, scientific surveys were instituted soon after the Korean Armistice. The result was a decision to give a "New Look" to the defense establishment, depending for increased efficiency more upon modern science and less upon mere numbers of men.