

## Chapter 11b – National Defense

Is use of the military by the government for national defense biblical? When, how, moral restrictions?

### A. Defense Policy in the United States

- Review of Biblical teaching on governments:
    - Gov'ts are responsible to defend their nations from attacks by other nations. Ch. 3: *Peter* - "to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good" (1 Peter 2:14). *Paul* - government is to "bear the sword" (Rom. 13:4) so that it can be "a terror" to bad conduct (v. 3), and it also "carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer" (v. 4). When the ruler uses superior force—even deadly force—against evil, he is "God's servant for your good" (v. 4).
    - Command to protect citizens against one villain from *within* also obligates to protect against armies of villains from *without*.
    - OT Narratives: Promise of God (Deut. 28) to bless Israel in defending against enemies when Israel is obedient. When disobedient, judgment came as defeat (Judg. 2:13-15, 2:16-18; 1 Sam. 17; 2 Sam. 5:17-25; and numerous other examples).
    - 10 Commandments, Ex. 20:13 - *rātsakh/murder*: the unlawful murder of another human being, or "causing human death through carelessness or negligence." This word never used of soldiers killing in war throughout the OT.
    - God Himself commands Israel to go to war on numerous occasions (ex. Deut. 20:1).
    - In the NT, soldiers not condemned for being soldiers in Roman army. John the Baptist tells them "Be content with your wages" (Luke 3:14), and Cornelius, a Roman centurion came to faith and was baptized -- no indication of any moral wrong in being a soldier (see Acts 10:1, 44-48; also Luke 14:31).
  - *If The U.S. has a moral obligation to defend against an aggressor (or aggressors), then it should seek to have enough military power to be able to defeat any other nation or combination of nations that has the potential to attack it.*
  - Pacifist objection: Having so much military power is dangerous. *Military weaponry itself increases tension & instability, making war more likely.*
  - Response: This idea comes from assumption that ultimate cause of evil is not in the hearts of human beings but is in some influence (such as powerful weapons) outside of human beings. To the contrary: there is good & evil in every human heart. The tendency toward evil in some is beyond reason, negotiation, or compromise. It can only be restrained by superior power. Therefore, God gives civil governments the power of the sword (Rom. 13:4) to restrain such unreasoning commitments to evil. *So, military weapons for just governments are God-ordained and are not themselves the cause of evil.*
- a. *Twentieth-century attacks by nations committed to evil aggression: Hitler, Stalin* (rule over the Soviet Union and aggression in Eastern Europe), and the leaders of Japan (Both before and during WWII). Brutality against Manchuria and much of China: *In December 1937, the Japanese Imperial Army marched into China's capital city of Nanking murdered 300,000 out of 600,000 civilians and soldiers in the city.*
- b. *Current threats of possible attack against the United States or its allies*
1. *North Korea and Iran*: While not likely to *directly* attack the U.S., the threat of missile attack against U.S. military bases overseas, U.S. territories, or U.S. allies (South Korea, Israel) is very real. Also, terrorist plots on domestic soil = valid threat.
  2. *Russia*: 1945-91 (Cold War) the U.S.' primary potential enemy was the USSR. Current Gov't: Still not a genuine democracy but essentially a dictatorship ruled by a small group of Communist Party officials who have continued to tighten their grip on power under Vladimir Putin. Russia occasionally acts as an ally, but is unreliable and unpredictable. Its capacity for aggression against the U.S. and other nations is very real. Russia has a strong military and an extensive nuclear arsenal with intercontinental reach.
  3. *Venezuela* (Hugo Chavez) and *Cuba*: Both are military dictatorships that influence and destabilize countries that relatively close the U.S. border (no ocean barrier). Ex: Chavez has placed troops on the border of Columbia & he has convinced Ecuador to do the same. Cuba has a long history of supporting anti-democratic thugs within Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and El Salvador, attempting to weaken their governments. The more such Castro-Chavez influence grows and overthrows gov'ts in S.America, the more the U.S. will have to deal with hostile neighboring countries on its doorstep.
  4. *China*: Currently has relatively good relations with the U.S. However, gov't is totalitarian & autocratic. Ruled by only 9 people (Politburo Standing Committee) = future direction of China is unpredictable.
    - Has been establishing bases of influence in Latin America and Africa (possible centers to project military power).
    - Late congressman Henry Hyde: U.S. influence on the Asian mainland is dangerously close to being removed entirely.
    - Peter Brookes, Heritage Foundation: "...China is legitimizing and encouraging Africa's most repressive regimes, thereby increasing the likelihood of weak and failed states."
    - Navy with 255,000 men, 58 active submarines, 77 principal surface combatants, 387 coastal warfare vessels, and approximately 500 amphibious warfare vessels, along with a total amount of armed forces of 2.3 million personnel and a space system that demonstrated its ability in January 2007 to shoot US communications satellites out of the sky.
    - Chinese hackers: very skilled and periodically launch attacks against the highest levels of US military information networks. In a 2008 report to Congress, it was stated that "China even now is planting viruses in US computer systems that they will activate" in the event of a military conflict with the United States.
    - In 2008, China announced a 14.9% rise in military spending to 480.68 billion yuan (\$70.36 billion). In January 2007, John D. Negroponte, the Director of National Intelligence, reported, "The Chinese are developing more capable long-range conventional strike systems and short- and medium-range ballistic missiles with terminally guided maneuverable warheads able to attack US carriers and airbases."
    - China is extremely powerful. Should China, one day, decide to become an aggressor, the U.S. would need to be well prepared indeed.

5. *Islamic terrorist threats*: Stem from groups within various Muslim countries. The most prominent military challenge today and constitute the most imminent current threat to the security of the United States.
- c. *Defense alliances and responsibilities to help protect other countries*
1. 2009 = U.S. most powerful military force in the world: 1,454,515 people on active duty + 848,000 in reserve. Defense budget = \$515.4 billion, the largest in the world. Navy had 328,798 active personnel + 109,158 reservists, 286 deployable battleships, and 3,700 aircraft. Air Force = 327,452 active duty personnel + 115,299 in Selected & Individ. Ready Reserves, 106,700 in the Air National Guard, and 5,603 active aircraft.
  2. Great military power => great responsibility to assist the world in maintaining peace.
  3. Monroe Doctrine: 12/22/1823, Pres. Monroe: If any European nation attacked or attempted to colonize any nation in North or South America, the US would intervene to oppose such action. Invoked on numerous occasions by US presidents.
  4. NATO alliance treaty first signed on April 4, 1949.
  5. Mutual Defense Treaties or Agreements. Example: Israel and Taiwan
    - Appropriateness of such treaties? They are voluntary and mutually beneficial. The U.S. decided long ago that such agreements are in the best interest of the nation, contribute to the protection of world peace (they provide significant deterrence against aggressors). Nations with whom we have such agreements are a great value to the U.S. (trade, tourism, cultural/educational exchange, preservation of stability, etc.)
    - We as a nation hold certain truths to be “self evident” (see Declaration of Independence). Among those truths we hold that God (the “Creator”) has granted to every individual on earth certain basic rights, including both “life” and “liberty.” This implies that it is in our best interest and also consistent with our foundational convictions as a nation to promote the protection of life and human freedom in various nations around the world.
    - “Noninterventionist” view according to Congressman Ron Paul
      - o Paul says foreign interventionism is of no benefit to American citizens, but instead is a threat to our liberties.
      - o He opposes all foreign aid (including aid to Israel).
      - o Opposes foreign US military bases (such as Korea, Japan, and Europe)
      - o Paul on 9/11 attacks: “...They attack us because we’ve been over there. We’ve been bombing Iraq for 10 years.”
      - o Three Primary Reasons why Ron Paul is wrong:
        - a. Such a view cannot be found in the U.S. Constitution (However, Paul will use quotes from various Founding Fathers. Such quotes were spoken at a time when the U.S. was young & weak and a low profile was in the best interest of a nation at its birth. But no quotes from Constitution – because “nonintervention” is not in the Constitution!
        - b. Bible does not support Noninterventionism. God, through Obadiah, rebuked Edom for its “noninterventionist” policy with regard to Israel (Obad. 11).
        - c. The great power of the U.S. gives us an obligation to help weak nations who are attacked (when we are able or have treaties with such nations). Such support has stopped aggression in the world. Ex. NATO halted USSR, Taiwan agreement deters China, S. Korea alliance deters N. Korea, Support of Israel stabilizes Palestine, support of Kuwait stopped Hussein and possibly saved Saudi Arabia as well.
      - o The actions of the U.S. military the world over deter hostility and makes the world a freer place. Therefore, Ron Paul’s noninterventionist policies, which would halt such action, would bring about a much less free, much less peaceful, and much more antagonistic and dangerous world.
- d. *The value to the world of a strong US military*. Superior military weaponry in the hands of a nation that protects freedom for itself and other countries is a good thing for the world, not a harmful thing. Superior military power in hands of a peace-loving, freedom-supporting nation brings great benefits to the world.
1. Genuine peace in world comes from military might of U.S. and other peace-loving military powers.
  2. US military weakness would invite war & provoke attempts at conquest by aggressive nations led by evil rulers.
  3. However, practically the only area of government spending that was cut in 2009 by President Obama was defense spending.
  4. Ex. of cuts: *F22 Raptor* fighter jet. In early 2009, in the midst of massive increases in federal gov’t spending—far in excess of any increases promoted by any admin. in American history—President Obama insisted on cutting funds for the F–22.
    - Most advanced fighting plane in the world. Can fight battles against multiple attackers and defeat them all simultaneously.
    - Can “see” an approaching enemy over the horizon and destroy it before the enemy is able to see the F22 approaching.
    - Can outrun, outclimb, & outmaneuver any potential enemy fighter in the world (according to W. Thomas Smith, former US Marine rifle-squad leader and counterterrorism instructor in *Human Events*).
    - July 21, 2009, yielding to Pres. Obama’s insistence, US Senate voted to stop production at 187 (250-380 were planned for and deemed as needed).
    - The President signed the defense authorization bill killing the production of more F–22s, as he wished, on Oct. 28, 2009
    - In making such cuts, the President “rejected the notion that ‘we have to waste billions of taxpayer dollars to keep this nation secure.’ ” I think this was a tragic mistake.