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Question 19. Does the Administration believe we have the men and the equipment to handle another ground war on the mainland of Asia without the use of tactical nuclear weapons? If so, on what do we base this estimate given the present deployment and commitment of our forces?

Answer. Whether or not the United States could "handle" another ground war on the mainland of Asia without the use of tactical nuclear weapons would depend very much on precisely what contingency we were facing. In certain emergencies it would clearly be appropriate for the United States to mobilize additional forces in order to broaden the character of the options available to us. For certain situations--certain types of aggression--nuclear weapons would not seem to have any relevance whatever. One cannot, however, completely exclude the possibility of other situations in which tactical nuclear weapons might at some point have to be used. There does not seem to be any general statement about this wide and complex range of contingencies which would be helpful or responsive to the Committee's question. In fact, there are weighty arguments against any definition or discussion by the Administration of just which military options it would select or prefer to meet particular contingencies.

Contingency planning is, of course, carried out routinely by the Department of Defense.

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into operation mechanically if one or another event occurs. Rather they are designed to clarify the character of the choices which would then have to be made, on the basis of political as well as military factors, and in the light of a host of specific circumstances.

Our judgment, implicit in what has been said above, that another war on the Asian mainland would not necessarily require the use of tactical nuclear weapons, is based on our intelligence estimates on the capabilities of likely opponents and the possibility of our being faced with one or another type of attack as compared with the forces available to ourselves and our allies to meet attacks. It is relevant to note that the US has more forces deployed today in the Pacific area not counting those in Viet-Nam than it did in 1963.

Question 20. If we do not intend to use tactical nuclear weapons in any ground war in Korea, should we not start promptly to take steps to reduce our commitments in other parts of the world?

Answer. As indicated above, whether this government would or would not find it necessary to use nuclear weapons in a ground war in Korea would depend on the specific circumstances and characteristics of any attack, and on the degree

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of military success it might meet. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Korea, like the US divisions stationed at their side, are well trained, highly motivated, well equipped with conventional arms, and capable of giving a good account of themselves against any aggressor. Under certain conditions, these forces in Korea might have to be reinforced with troops now stationed elsewhere or mobilized to meet the emergency, or even supported by nuclear weapons, but such hypothetical eventualities do not appear persuasive arguments for modifying the military deployments and the political commitments which we have undertaken to meet actual, current problems and to protect our interests in other areas.