

A New Strategy for KOREA?

By Brigadier General S. L. A. MARSHALL, USAR

ALTHOUGH Mao Tse-tung does not owe his power to his reputation as a military genius, in 1936 he wrote a textbook for the Red Army Academy which deserved a wider audience. *The Strategic Problem of China's Revolutionary Army* is not light reading for a week end in the country. It is a mixture of abstractions and concrete ideas, tactical maxims and philosophical platitudes.

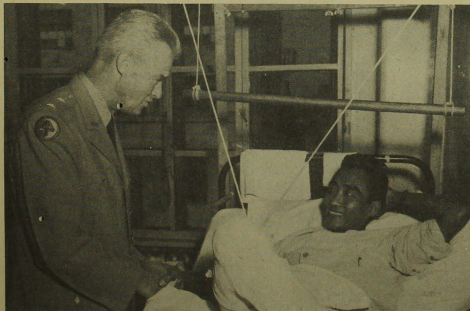
However, there has not been a clearer definition of Chinese military intentions since the building of the Great Wall. Only,

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unlike the meaning of the Wall, which could be taken in at a glance, Mao's meaning was not understood by the outside world because his words were not read.

At one point, Mao noted that a good way to achieve deception is to make sure that in the initial stages of war the opposing side captures exactly the right prisoners. If that was not precisely what the Chinese Communists did on entering the Korean conflict in 1950, then what happened must be dismissed as an ingenious coincidence.

Further along, Mao pays tribute to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations as a pilot model for obstructionism by a revolutionary gov-



Major General William F. Dean, the hero of the Battle of Taejon who was only recently freed as a prisoner of war by the Chinese communists in Korea, greets Corporal Honorato Otian, wounded 14th BCT soldier, in a Tokyo military hospital. The experience of such officers as General Dean in the UN war in Korea might furnish the key to a new strategy for the conduct of operations, if and when the uneasy truce is broken by renewed hostilities.

ernment when time is a main need. Stall them and confound them! So the Chinese knew what they were doing when they first sat down at the Kaesong table, while our side—knowing Brest-Litovsk only as a spot on a map where once upon a time Soviets and Germans parleyed—did not.

The main theme of Mao's treatise on war is that revolutionary governments can always afford a protracted defense because the sacrifice to strategic pressure from

helps explain several things. On the face of it, this is such a silly way to write about war that no civilized staff college would have felt justified in taking Mao seriously. However, the military meat is still present amid the metaphorical hash. His repeated emphasis on victory and the necessity therefor must inevitably raise some questions about our own ability to understand the problem in Korea and the attitude of our main enemy toward it.



Filipino soldiers in Korea cannot yet come home, despite present truce. Threat of renewed and more bitter hostilities make the armistice an uneasy one, and the Philippines is sending over to Korea a new battalion combat team.

without is more than offset by consolidation of the political position within. As events have proved, this was not one of Mao's idle philosophical platitudes; it forewarned that Communist China would intervene in any foreign war where it might expect to outstay its opponent.

Whatever losses in territory are necessary, Mao said, are bargains when they become stepping stones to ultimate victory. The idea is hardly radical. Mao simply agrees with General MacArthur that there is no substitute for being the winner at the final bell. Follow now his musings on that subject: "A fool refuses to sleep and has no energy for the next day. In the market, a buyer must lose his cash to obtain his goods. If what we lose is territory and what we gain is victory over the enemy plus return and expansion of the territory, war is a profitable business."

Because this is a typical passage, it

"Main enemy" means Communist China, not the Soviet Union. While it may have been good electioneering to say that the war is run by Moscow, it is simply not true. Communist China is the great opponent as the struggle stands, and neither the weapons supplied by the Soviet Union nor the auxiliary fanatics from North Korea could keep the war going 1 month if China were to quit. There would be nothing to resist the United Nations coalition if the Chinese Communists backtracked to the Yalu.

Therefore, it is to Communist China's doctrine that we should pay heed if we are to distinguish between a detour and the main road.

A Sound Proposition

Just as Mao's doctrine supplies the reasoning which, from Communist China's view, warranted the intervention and should have forewarned us of it, it hints

at the terminal point: War is a "profitable business" only so long as it points toward eventual victory, with its fruits of territory and prestige.

There is nothing uniquely Communist or Chinese about that proposition. However, stating it underscores the fact that until now Communist China has found the Korean conflict a bargain. It has its victory with the prestige of having defeated a modern coalition that includes the

of a superior situation for the bluff and bluster that frequently mask an inferior position. Why did the Chinese not walk off with their victory then, after we had effectively conceded it to them? The answer is not to be found in the prisoner-repatriation issue, which was simply seized upon to tie up operations as long as possible while the Communists took a reading of our long-term intentions. During the months the parley went on, the



PEFTOK fighting men take time out to pray together during a field mass. They have faced, and perhaps may face again, together with other man-poor albeit machine-rich allies an enemy who places little value on human life.

world's foremost power. Mao's armies have squatter's rights on the territory of a greatly weakened neighbor. His own domain remains inviolate. The war has become a tactical stalemate for the United Nations side, but it has not been at any time a strategic stalemate for Communist China. Nothing has happened to indicate that in the end the prize will be physically wrested from Communist China—and, accordingly, nothing has happened to put an insupportable strain on the working arrangements between Communist China and the Soviet Union. From the view of both partners, the deal is still a sound one.

However, simple as the truth may be that the military credit of the Peking regime has never for a moment been in jeopardy, it counts for nothing so long as we will not see it. When the Chinese Communists acted like victors at Panmunjom, we mistook the confidence that comes

United Nations side continued to weaken its relative position along the front, encouraging in the enemy the belief that by fighting longer he could enlarge his victory.

This was a major mistake because it discounted the basic principles by which war is conducted. Being more realistic than the people on our side, the Communists know that the object in war is not the prevention of killing, but victory, enhanced prestige, and greater organizing power when the fighting ends. To men like Mao, the lives of a million or so Chinese mean nothing compared to the furthering of their own position as top dogs in Asia. Mao says as much. Yet we persist in the illusion that these men must in time give up because Chinese Communists are dying along the front line and our weapons are deadlier than theirs.

Acceptance of Stalemate

Another myth of our own devising is the acceptance of stalemate as a tactical fact rather than as a condition in the American and United Nations mind. There has never been a true stalemate in Korea because we have never made a first-class effort there. We have fought the entire war on a shoestring.

In the early days of the war we took one great gamble that failed. Thereafter we have remained content to hold on with as little as possible. Instead of asking what must be done to gain mobility and stretch our power, we fold our hands and say it cannot be done anyway, and even if it could, it would change nothing.

Several reasons are advanced in justification of the limited effort. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Council is not alone in singing "We Must Not Defend Ourselves into Bankruptcy"; the tune is a smash hit on Capitol Hill. Also, it is said that this is a United Nations conflict, and that we are only a large stockholder in a syndicate undertaking. However, this too is a delusion. If the conflict is won, it will be a famous victory for collective security; if it is lost, the beating will be taken by the United States, and our prestige will shrink the world over.

We are up against what the Duke of Wellington meant when he said a great power cannot have any such thing as a small war, though it is not acknowledged in the conduct of our affairs. We do not even budget for the Korean conflict; it is financed under the heading of "Miscellany" out of the petty-cash drawer. The main object appears to be to make the unpleasantness as painless as possible to the taxpayer. Public relations has been substituted for generalship. We have forgotten that in war just enough is never quite enough and that success is bought by the strength of one's reserves.

So it is that the Army is fretted by the desertion rate in the home establishment, though for the sake of economy its training structure has been converted into a network of replacement depots which give the young soldier no chance to form ties with a unit before he is introduced to a foxhole.

So it is that along the firing line in Korea, junior leaders are cheated of hard-

won promotions because the Bureau of the Budget has tried to save money at the wrong point. So it is that amid the cry that the Eighth Army is short of certain types of ammunition, the manufacturers of the same ammunition are at a loss to understand why such inadequate use is made of available capacity. So it is that we wasted two critical years before deciding that the provision of more equipment to build a strong Republic of Korea (ROK) Army might be a sound investment, and so it is that we are now getting on with it only because of the argument that it is one way to save American lives.

The Discarded Book

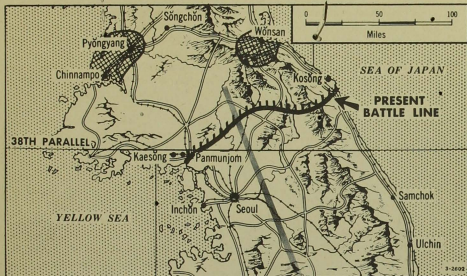
When the artificial fog envelops all policies pertaining to organization for war, it is not remarkable that there is so little hard-boiled and realistic thinking about how to fight it to a decision. Yet war is generally fought forward, since the enemy lies that way. The usual highroad to success is to collapse his works and smack his backsides. The main object is to beat him on the main battlefield, the place where he has staked his fortune.

At least those were the rules yesterday, although today we have thrown the book away. Let it be mentioned that giving communism a thorough beating in North Korea might be a main step toward liquidating present hostilities, and the response is a lot of shopworn argument about why it does not make military sense.

"Fighting in the north will strengthen the Chinese by lengthening our supply lines while shortening theirs." This is not necessarily true, since we control the seas. Moreover, the same argument would have invalidated almost every successful offensive plan in the history of war.

"We cannot win that way. If they are pushed into Manchuria, the Chinese Communists will fight back across the border." However, meanwhile, they will have suffered a first-class defeat. By attacking from their own soil, they would invite attack into it, which they do not seem to want.

"It is the attenuation of their communications which makes them vulnerable to our air attack." What nonsense! Reducing their rear area would make possible a more perfect concentration of our air effort.



"Our planes cannot attack their lines and bases in Manchuria"—and why not?

"It would not end the war." Who can be so sure about something that has not been tried? Mao wants victory; he is not likely to soften until he sees it slipping finally from his fingers.

"The Soviet Union might be provoked." The Soviet Union will not be provoked until the day it is ready for a third world war, and then no provocation will be necessary.

That is the list. The answers are academic and without military meaning if the United Nations cause has no real staying power and is now concerned mainly with foreclosing what some of its early champions have come to consider a bad business. However, the unwisdom of permitting large forces to become pinned down in a strategically profitless area is quite another argument. All we are looking at here is the question of how best to employ these forces toward decisive ends if the commitment is to continue.

Finding a sufficient answer to that question is now the main problem before the Eisenhower administration, and there are already several new roadblocks in the way. Increasing the defense budget is abhorrent to the new majority, but a bigger build-up cannot be achieved on fewer dollars. Further, because of manpower shortage, lack of reserves in the theater, and the scarcity of ready formations here at

home, we cannot bring off a decisive concentration this year. The index, therefore, points to 1954, which is also an election year. To ask larger means now for an expanded military undertaking—which might bring success 18 months hence and then again might not—is a capital political risk. The President might nerve himself to it. But would his party follow him?

Educated Guessing

War planning, if it is to work, must be kept secret in main detail. So while President Eisenhower may have given some indication of his program in his State of the Union message to Congress, the pressure points will not be finally revealed until there is action at the operating end. That has not stopped the Washington press corps from making some educated guesses, based on President Eisenhower's rescinding of former President Truman's order to the Seventh Fleet. Some of the items include:

Chiang on Formosa, his quarantine ended, will be given increased training and material aid and will be encouraged to spread many alarms while being held back from any major excursions for a while, at least.

More military supply will go to the French in Indochina to increase the pressure from that quarter.

More Americans, possibly three to four divisions, will be sent to Japan and held

there in readiness.

The China coast will be put under naval blockade.

There may be bombing of rail lines, bridges, canals, and other communications in the Chinese interior.

The clairvoyance of this forecast cannot be guaranteed. However, if it is anywhere near the truth, it scarcely promises a new era of firmness. Rather, like the Fairy Queen in *Iolanthe*, it makes our weakness more besettingly strong. There will be a build-up of material means by a side that is impoverished for fighting men. We shall spread ourselves around more, even though we are already faltering for lack of concentration. Against an enemy who has already proved that he will not be bluffed, we will threaten more and spring less. By the slowest means known to warfare, blockade, we shall attempt to hasten victory over an opponent who is not dependent on sea commerce.

Some correspondents have already gone into raptures over these measures. Maybe it is again time to quote from Mao: "What is decisive is not determined by general considerations. In military operations, the selection of the direction and point of attack is based on the present situation of the enemy and the terrain. When supplies are plentiful, care should be taken against overeating; where there is a shortage, the only problem is how to overcome hunger."

Nothing has happened in the conflict's development to discredit the view that North Korea is the decisive battlefield. There is no reason not to believe that we could win it by adding four to five full-strength divisions, so that the Eighth Army would dig itself out and get mobile.

To employ the new units frontally against a fortified line would be risky and foolishly wasteful when, by exploiting our one supreme advantage—amphibious power—we could turn the barrier and at the same time force the enemy either to stand in the open or to flee. To reach once again for the Yalu would be not less foolish, because of the length of the frontier, and equally because a decision cannot be won there if it cannot be forced farther to the south where the peninsula narrows and the ground is suitable to defensive organization.

Finally, if an amphibious maneuver were

to be attempted, we should get away from conventional defense in line. Atomic development has deprived it of any real future, and in the Korean laboratory we should be evolving tactics that will also serve tomorrow.

Twin Tobruks

Defense by bulkheads, or expanded beachheads, with fortified perimeters enclosing the base establishment along each coast, is the pattern that fits the situation. One block could enclose Wonsan, with the opposite block enclosing the Pyongyang-Chinnampo area. (See the map on page 9.)

No field force would be needed to hold the interzone ground, which is rough and largely roadless country. Along that alley, air interdiction would be given its main chance to neutralize a canalized enemy force. If lesser methods fail to discourage the enemy, it might be the suitable time and place to undertake atomic counterattack, after warning the civil population.

On the west coast the tides make landings more difficult, but a bulkhead there would cover the main supply routes through Seoul and to the south. On the east coast, port facilities have been smashed flat. But in past wars we have taken pride in the engineering genius and material resources that enabled us to overcome far greater obstacles than these.

All this is easier said than done, and none of it is possible if the nation is still looking for a riskless course. To expand the enterprise would require an increase in mobilization and all other costs, which includes the blood price paid for a major battle. The alternative is far greater cost over a long term, not only in dollars but in lives, national prestige, and resolution here at home—all this for a slow-burning conflict which in the end we probably would not win.

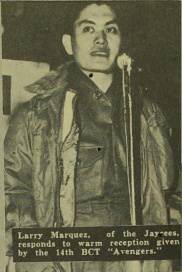
What we now attempt is not our kind of contest. As we are organized in relation to the enemy, we are man-poor and machine-rich. When mobility fails for lack of men, the resulting contest of attrition is all in favor of the side that values human life less. "While the game of matching pearls is nothing between two dragon gods of the sea, it is ridiculous between one beggar and one dragon god." So wrote Mao.



Maj Gen P D Ginder, CG of 45th Thunderbird Division extends welcome to the troupe.

AFP-JAYCEE TROUPE CHEERS PEFTOK BOYS

IN the quivering peace that hangs over Korea today, Filipino troops wait with other UN allies for the final outcome of the truce negotiations. During the tense lull in fighting, the morale of the boys has to be kept high. To help achieve this, the AFP and the Manila Jaycees last month sent a troupe of movie stars and entertainers to cheer the 14th BCT officers and men.

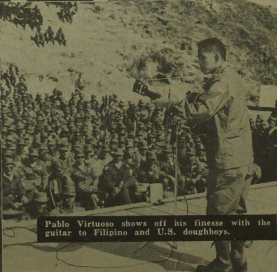


Larry Marquez, of the Jaycees, responds to warm reception given by the 14th BCT "Avengers."



Members of troupe pose for picture after one performance. From l to r: Cora Madrid, Pablo Virtuoso, Rumella Floris, Jaime de la Rosa, Oscar Obligacion and Lilia Dizon, all big names in the Philippine movie and entertainment world.

Cora shares a hearty breakfast with officers and men of Company "A".



Pablo Virtuoso shows off his finesse with the guitar to Filipino and U.S. doughboys.



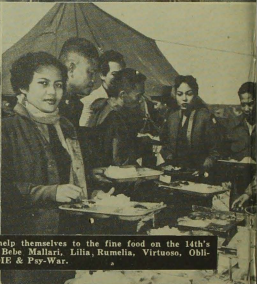
UN soldiers from nearby camps trekked to the 14th BCT area to hear and see the troupe. Above, Rumelia Flores wows them with a song and Filipina terno.



Gen Ginder and Col Nick Jimenez, 14th CO, joined in merriment by singing "Avenger" and "Thunderbird" songs.



Troupe members serve soldiers, then help themselves to the fine food on the 14th's tables. In picture are Jaime, Cora, Bebe Mallari, Lilia, Rumelia, Virtuoso, Obligacion, and Maj Moises J Buhain of OIE & Psy-War.



Gen Ginder gave gifts to the troupe members. Bebe gets hers with happy look at the American officer.



Col Antonio de Veyra, slated to command next BCT to Korea, meets Gen Ginder. Col Jimenez looks on.