

OUR ARMY

in the

NUCLEAR ERA

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Modern weapons have dislocated many elements of military art but have not rendered obsolete conventional forces to be needed to fight in a limited or unlimited nuclear war



THE Armed Forces of the Philippines exists because, in the words of Section 2, Article II of our Constitution, "the defense of the State is a prime duty of government, and in the fulfillment of this duty all citizens may be required by law to render personal, military or civil service." In pursuance of this constitutional provision, our legislature enacted Commonwealth Act No. 1, commonly known as the National Defense Act, which provided for the

creation of an army of the Philippines and set down the manner, method, functions in which our armed forces may operate and fulfill the primary mission of defending the state.

Two Principles

Our army also exists and operates within two broad principles enunciated or specifically provided in our Constitution. These are Section 3, Article II which states: "The Philippines renounces war as an instru-

ment of national policy, and adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the Nation; and Section 25, Article VI which provides: "The Congress shall, with the concurrence of two-thirds of all the Members of each House, have the sole power to declare war." Briefly, the elementary meaning of these two principles in actual practice is that our Armed Forces organization exists *solely* for defense; it may not even plan for any war which is not defensive in character, or which might be merely brought about by the prosecution of wrong national policies.

This limitation of the kind of war in which our Armed Forces may engage, or be used for is further tightened by the constitutional provision, just cited, vesting exclusively in the Congress "the power to declare war." Under our system of separation of powers — the "presidential type" as contrasted with the "parliamentary type" — Congress is the policy-making body for the nation. What is known as "national policy" is therefore necessarily defined by Congress, yet in framing such a policy, though Congress has the sole power to declare war, it may not use war as one of the instruments for the prosecution of such a policy.

Two Types of War

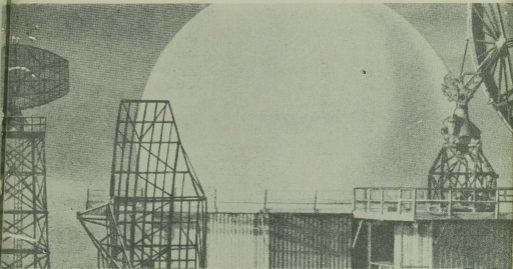
Our Constitution was framed and adopted, and in the National Defense Law which was enacted in pursuance of its provisions, at a time when war was still thought of, and regarded, or prepared for in terms

of what are called "conventional weapons." The atomic bomb, let alone the Hydrogen bomb, and other so-called "nuclear" weapons were not yet in the arsenal of the big powers then. Today, in view of the existence of such nuclear weapons as well as of jet-propelled aircraft, war has to be thought of as consisting of two types: (a) the "limited" war in which only conventional weapons are used; (b) the "unlimited" war, in which all weapons, including the latest nuclear ones, would be used.

For nations this new concept involving two types of war has imposed new practical limitations, aside from those established in their constitutions, or traditions. Nations, for instance, — and ours is one of them — which can never hope to build an adequate arsenal of nuclear weapons are "out of the running," so to speak, in any unlimited or nuclear war. Their field of possible action is now limited to the limited war. As a consequence of this new circumstance in our contemporary world, the nature of the mission, or missions, of the armed forces of small "non-nuclear" powers like the Philippines has also undergone a fundamental change.

Great Power's Needs

To understand, however, the limitations of a small nation's military forces and potentials in the Nuclear Age, one must have a clear understanding of the military needs of a great power like, say, the United States. It is important for Filipinos to have this understanding of



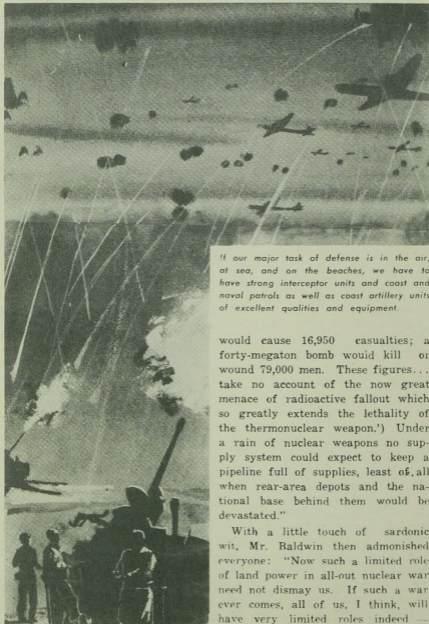
In modern times our Armed Forces must have electronic eyes, ears, and brains that can detect an aggressor and simultaneously give warning for deployment of forces to destroy enemy before he reaches his target.

American military needs and potentials, in this era, because they are intimately associated with the U.S. in defense and military matters, through the Philippines-United States Mutual Defense Treaty. What, then, are the military needs of the U.S. in the Nuclear Age?

The well-known American military commentator (of the *New York Times*) Hanson W. Baldwin, in an article featured in a recent (January, 1956) issue of the *Army Combat Forces Journal*, has summarized with sweeping relevance what a great power like America need to do in the way of preparedness under the conditions of the Nuclear Age. "What we must do," he said, in concluding a long exposition about the need to develop land power to the maxi-

mum, both for limited and unlimited wars, "is prepare the Army to fight conventional wars, to stand guard in the Cold War, and to fight limited nuclear wars."

The reason he envisions only "limited nuclear wars" as the kind of nuclear wars the U.S. Army must prepare to fight is his belief that "land power, in an unlimited thermonuclear war, would face almost insuperable problems: the problem of large-scale unit replacements — not merely battalions for battalions, but regiments and divisions for liquidated regiments and divisions. The supply problem would be well-nigh intolerable. (He estimated that 'if an army march with all its soldiers a hundred yards apart, a one megaton — million-ton — bomb



If our major task of defense is in the air, at sea, and on the beaches, we have to have strong interceptor units and coast and naval patrols as well as coast artillery units of excellent qualities and equipment.

would cause 16,950 casualties; a forty-megaton bomb would kill or wound 79,000 men. These figures... take no account of the now great menace of radioactive fallout which so greatly extends the lethality of the thermonuclear weapon.') Under a rain of nuclear weapons no supply system could expect to keep a pipeline full of supplies, least of, all when rear-area depots and the national base behind them would be devastated."

With a little touch of sardonic wit, Mr. Baldwin then admonished everyone: "Now such a limited role of land power in all-out nuclear war need not dismay us. If such a war ever comes, all of us, I think, will have very limited roles indeed —

and probably *very brief* ones." (His own italics)

Conventional Forces Necessary

Baldwin quoted Foreign Secretary Harold Macmillan of Britain's incisive logic on the need for "conventional forces" even in the Nuclear Age. "In (all-out) nuclear war," he (Macmillan) said, "there can be no victor. There can only be mutual and universal destruction... The sanction (of all-out nuclear war) is so terrible, we must realize that men, however resolute, will shrink from using it — even against unprovoked aggression — unless they are convinced that to be conquered is worse than to be annihilated. It follows that ruthless and daring men, counting on this hesitation and exploiting it, may risk minor and even substantial acts of aggression, because they believe that the sanction will never be employed. In other words, the sanction may be made impotent by its overwhelming strength. Thus, what are called *conventional forces will still be necessary* (Our italics), not merely for what might be called police operations, but to take away this temptation, and thus to interpose against aggression, from whatever quarter, a delaying period."

Dulles View Debunked

We have quoted at length from Mr. Baldwin, not only because his article is long and thorough in its examination of the whole problem of American defense, but also because his concluding paragraphs pose a startling logic and point of view which are not yet considered orthodox among both our political and

military leaders in the Philippines. Here are Mr. Baldwin's concluding paragraphs:

"In other words, the problem — the great problem — of our military planners is to organize and maintain armed forces capable of fighting *any kind of war anywhere*. (His italics) This, I know, disagrees fundamentally with the massive retaliation doctrine enunciated by Secretary of State Dulles. In fact, the Secretary explicitly stated that the United States could *not* afford to prepare to fight any kind of war anywhere. I disagree with him. I say we cannot afford *not* to prepare to fight any kind of war anywhere. By this I do not mean all kinds of forces — strategic air, defensive air, tactical air, conventional land power, submarines, carriers, amphibious forces, airborne forces — should be maintained at great strength, ready instantly for war. I mean, rather, that we must keep alive the art of fighting any kind of war anywhere in the world, that we must have at least cadre forces of many different types keyed to different missions, capable of expansion in case of war.

"If we do not maintain these diverse capabilities, we shall freeze, in a one-service, one-weapon, one-concept mould, not only tactics, but strategy. And our foreign policy will be rigidly tied to an inflexible strategic concept that permits us no freedom of action. Yet the art of diplomacy, the art of politics, the art of strategy and war is the art of choice. We risk defeat in peace

or war if we put all our military eggs in the nuclear basket.

"For all these reasons I believe in land power and its continued validity as an element of national power."

P.I. Role In Nuclear Age

Our armed forces, though quite modest in proportions, have been conceived essentially as a land power — the bulk is the infantry, capable of mechanization and supported by armor, with field artillery units, coast artillery corps, engineering corps, and supported or assisted in the important missions by the other services, the air force and the naval units. With the premises and conclusions laid down by Mr. Hanson Baldwin, in the excerpts from his article just quoted, we may now discuss with some relevance and logic the nature of our Armed Forces' mission or missions in the Nuclear Age.

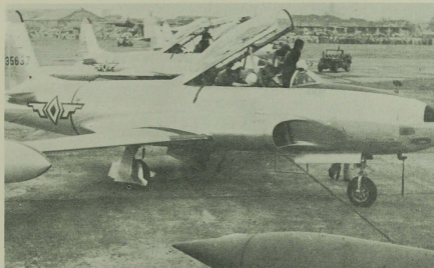
Since we lack the capabilities to build armed forces for a nuclear war, and the nature of our defense

problem is vastly different from that of America, the primary mission of our Armed Forces is necessarily one of limited defense — against any possible attack from the outside — and the maintenance of internal security. What is meant by a "limited defense" mission? It means, in terms of calculable hazards that we now face in our region of the globe, the task of foiling a possible invader — who is not a nuclear power — in the air, at sea, and at the beaches. The nature of this "limited defense" mission, in turn, imposes upon us the kind of military arms or units which require emphasis in our training and preparedness efforts. It stands to reason that if our major task of defense is in the air, at sea, and on the beaches, we have to have strong interceptor units, coast and naval patrol units of adequate strength, and coast artillery units of excellent qualities and equipment.

In our case, then, — assuming always that the possible invader of



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Assuming always that the possible invader of our shores is not a nuclear power — the kind of "deterrent" power we need to build to the utmost of our resources available must consist of strong interceptor units, coast patrols and coast artillery establishments.

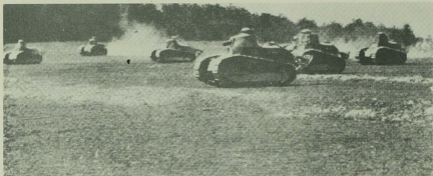
our shores is not a nuclear power—the kind of "deterrent" power we need to build to the utmost of our resources available for the purpose must consist of strong interceptor units, coast patrols, and coast artillery establishments which, all together, would make any possible attack against us by a non-nuclear power so costly that it would not likely be undertaken except by the most reckless and foolhardy. This is, however, only one aspect of "limited defense." The other aspect is our Armed Forces' task against *infiltration and subversion* by the enemy.

Demands of Second Aspect

The struggles of nations and between ideologies in our time always include economic and political components, aside from the purely mi-

litary aspects. The enemy, through its agents or tools, may undermine our economic strength, or sabotage sound economic projects, or undermine political morale by promoting dissension or sowing confusion; if the enemy should succeed in doing all these — or what is worse, if through ineptitude in the art of strengthening and consolidating our democracy we incur such weaknesses ourselves — then our military defense potential would be very much weakened, and we could be easily overwhelmed. Or, what would amount to the same thing, we might be plunged into internal civil strife, with the enemy within and on the outside rapidly exploiting our internecine war to his tremendous advantage and gain.

To cope with the twin dangers of



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infiltration and subversion our defense forces, then, need to build an adequate and highly efficient counter-intelligence corps. Such a corps must be capable of ferreting out and countering efforts or activities of the enemy not only in the military sphere but also in the economic, political and cultural fields as well. Its officers and ranking men have to be equipped with broad knowledge and firm backgrounds on the dynamics of democratic institutions because in this kind of battle of ideas, or competition of economic and political system, a superficial or sketchy understanding of democratic dynamics, an inadequate grasp of the institutions of freedom, could merely play into the hands of the enemy.

It is here, in the field of counter-intelligence — and we may add counter-propaganda — where the nation, may justifiably pour the major portion of its allocations for defense, because it is in this field where, just so the methods adopted are sound

and effective, there can be no possible wastage of military appropriations. Good and efficient counter-intelligence and counter-propaganda, aside from keeping the enemy at bay, also perform the role of constantly contributing to the strengthening and development of a people's democratic institutions.

Whether the battle is ever joined, in military terms, or never at all, the nation loses nothing, but on the contrary constantly gains from high-grade counter-intelligence and counter-propaganda efforts and expenditures. It may also be added, at this juncture of this discussion, that these "limited defense" tasks or missions of our Armed Forces are ones of long-range validity. Their nature will not change from year to year, nor perhaps from this decade to the next, regardless of how the world situation may turn out in the foreseeable future.

Commitments

So far we have spoken of the "limited defense" mission of our Arm-

ed Forces from a strictly "insular" point of view; that is, as though we were not closely associated in defense with the U.S. The nature of the mission of our army, as discussed so far, is offered as the valid one whether we belong to a military alliance, with specific obligations under such an alliance, or we stand alone uncommitted to any military grouping of powers. In actual fact, however, and by the logic of our political history, we are intimately associated in defense with the United States, and through her, with other powers, as in the SEATO.

By reason of this association, it is entirely conceivable for us to be involved in what Baldwin has called "limited nuclear Wars"; because of such a possibility, our Armed Forces acquire what we may call "special" or "treaty" missions; that is, obligations to perform, a role to play, in the event our nation is involved in any kind of war up to "limited nuclear war" by reason of our treaty commitments. In such an eventuality it is easy to see that our own Armed Forces' special mission would be confined perhaps to the tactical levels. The strategic missions, in the planning of which we may not participate actually, are out of our hands. They are mainly America's with whom, of course, we would closely coordinate in all steps or efforts in which we have a role to play.

Substantially, in such an involvement in any kind of war up to the "limited nuclear" variety, the same units we have emphasized in our discussion of our Armed Forces' "li-

imited" defense missions, from an "insular" point of view, — that is, the air interceptor units, the coast artillery, the coast and naval patrols, finally the infantry as a whole — would be the ones which could most fruitfully discharge our share in the larger effort of defense. The U.S. strategic air command will discharge its missions, the U.S. navy will fight the sea battles if there be any, and any heavy bombing to be done will have also to be assigned to the U.S. forces in the area.

Conclusion

Such, in outline, may be our Armed Forces' tasks in the Nuclear Age. It is obvious that if we are to be adequately and competently prepared to accomplish those tasks, or missions, we shall need to pursue a continuous training program, a much expanded troop information and education campaign and a speedy modernization of equipment and weapons suitable to missions that our armed forces are called upon to discharge and accomplish. We need constantly to have our bearings straight, and both our military planners and the Congress, as well as our foreign policy-makers, must always see our Armed Forces' problems in the right perspective, and with sufficient sympathy not to begrudge them their minimum requirements in budgetary appropriations from year to year. A nation's defense is always costly, the maintenance and preservation of a people's freedom is even costlier; but paraphrasing a well-known general's dictum, only those who are fit to remain free are willing to defray the cost of freedom.