

OUR WAR PROBLEMS

By MajGen J. F. C. Fuller

In this lucid commentary on the East-West struggle, a noted military writer displays the analytical powers which have won him distinction. Today's real war, he says, lies in preparation for it. To be prepared, we need conventional as well as nuclear deterrents. Best bet: amphibious forces with VTOL aircraft. Gen Fuller has written numerous books. An American edition of his work, *The Generalship of Alexander the Great*, is just out (Rutgers University Press).

☛ OVER HALF A CENTURY AGO, William James, the American philosopher, wrote in his *Memories and Studies*: "Every up-to-date dictionary should say that 'peace' and 'war' mean the same thing, now *in posse*, now *in actu*. It may even reasonably be said that the intensely sharp competitive *preparation* for war by the nation is the *real war* permanent, unceasing; and that battles are only a sort of public verification of mastery gained during the 'peace' intervals."

In his day preparation for war and its waging were, comparatively speaking, simple undertakings; armies and navies, although they varied in quantity and quality, were much the same in all civilized countries. They were political instruments, whose negative purpose was to back diplomacy in peace time and thereby deter the outbreak of war, and when this failed, whose positive purpose was to defeat the enemy, so that diplomatic relations might be re-established in a negotiated peace.

Today this simplicity has grown into a complexity, which has made James' observation doubly true. The intensely sharp competitive preparation for war has increasingly become the real war, permanent and unceasing. Because the forms of war have been multiplied, we live in an age of paradox: We are preparing for a war which no one wants to fight; we make but a half-hearted attempt to win the diplomatic war which is in daily progress, and we neglect—as will be referred to later—to prepare for a type of war which, at any moment, we may be called

upon to fight. How has this topsyturvy situation arisen?

There are two reasons: the first is the splitting of the political atom by Lenin in 1917, and the second is the splitting of the physical atom by the Western scientists in 1945. Out of these two explosions our present confusion emerged.

Because in a democratic country political power is based on the goodwill and loyalty of its people, a hundred years ago Karl Marx concluded that, as the industrial revolution had created a proletariat hostile to society, were it organized and led it might be converted into a revolutionary instrument to overthrow the government. In brief, his aim was to split a nation into two factions, and use one to destroy the other. According to his materialistic interpretation of history, the triumph of Communism over Capitalism was predestined by the laws of history; therefore, there could be no truce between the two, and no technological discovery could save the latter.

Lenin Inverted Clausewitz

Lenin accepted this philosophy, and related Marx's theory of the class-war to actual war. He saw that modern warfare was fourfold; it was political, economic, psychological and military. From this he inferred that a campaign might be fought and decided before a bullet was fired. Therefore he inverted Clausewitz's well-known dictum that "War is a continuation of State policy by other means," and substituted for it, "State policy is a continuation of war by every means." This meant

the establishment of a state of "war-dorm," of continuous warfare until his aim of world revolution was accomplished, when the Soviet Imperium would embrace the whole globe. Only then could there be peace—a Soviet peace.

In this, the point to note is that the more thoroughly revolutionary war can be waged on the political, economic and psychological battlefronts, the less will the need be to wage war on the military front. Conversely, the less the need to do so is, the more scope will be given to revolutionary warfare. Lenin's ideal war was therefore a bloodless one.

The splitting of the atom introduced nuclear warfare; not a new form of war, but a stupendous expansion of the destructive power of strategic bombing in WWII, which, in its turn, was no more than the great artillery bombardments of WWI translated from ground to air and tilted from an horizontal into a vertical position. In idea it was the opposite of Lenin's, and therefore incompatible with it. It raised the physical attack from last to first priority, and placed it on an absolute or all-out footing.

Out of these two concepts emerged three categories of war:

(1) Nuclear war of the first degree, unlimited in aim.

(2) Conventional war, without or with nuclear weapons of the second degree, limited in aim.

(3) Revolutionary war—war on the political, economic, and psychological fronts—predestined in aim.

These will be considered in turn. The first atomic bomb dropped,

An Amphibious Answer

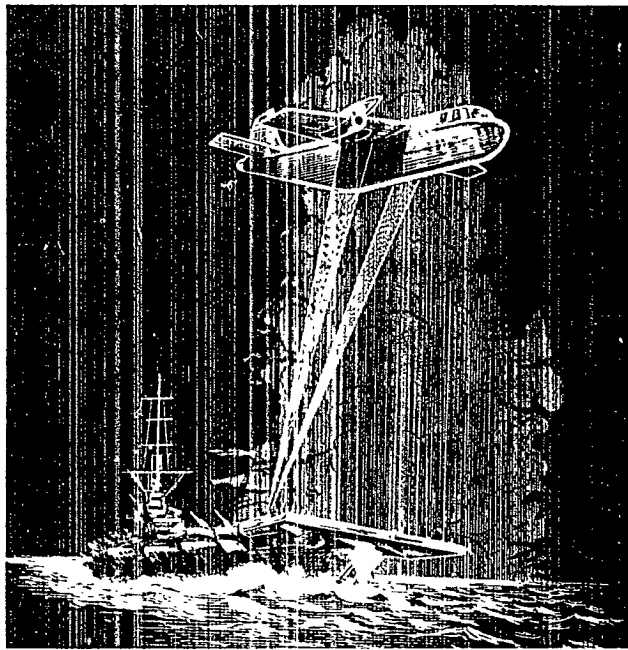
that on Hiroshima, which caused 180,000 casualties, has been graded as a 20-kiloton weapon, which means that its blast is equivalent to the explosion of 20 thousand tons of TNT. Since then, the most powerful bomb, either made or contemplated, is one of 20 megatons, the equivalent of 20 million tons of TNT.

On reliable authority we are told that, without considering wind, 50 well-placed 20-megaton bombs could within an hour result in 40 million casualties in the United States or 30 million in the Soviet Union. And that, because of radioactive poisoning and world winds, "he who strikes at the enemy, whatever the distance, strikes alike at all belligerent nations, at all neutral nations, all friendly nations, and at himself."

As a weapon, this reduces the large scale nuclear bomb to an absurdity; hence all-out nuclear war has been relegated to the realms of diplomacy, and has become an anti-instead of a pro-war instrument, or, what is called, a deterrent.

Since Hiroshima, this purely negative concept has so completely bemused American and British strategic thought that it has become the pivotal factor in their defense policies, and deprives them of a positive aim. Even should it be argued that this is not so, and that the negation of war is in itself a positive aim, is this logical? It certainly is not, because it only deters the outbreak of one of several types of war, and when this one type is cancelled out, the others can be as freely indulged in as they were before the advent of nuclear weapons. Or, as Dr. Kissinger writes in his

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Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy: "A deterrent which one is afraid to implement when it is challenged ceases to be a deterrent."

Negative Policy Dangerous

The point to note is that this negative policy fits admirably into Lenin's positive revolutionary attack which, unless countered by its like, grows in strength the more America and Britain rely on weapons which restrict them from waging war other than nuclear. Therefore it would seem certain that, under cover of the nuclear stalemate now established, Russian pressure on non-Communist countries will continue, and that Khrushchev's "peaceful co-existence" is no more than a euphemism.

Because nuclear weapons are a shield and not a sword, Russia has maintained the most powerful conventional army in the world, not because her intention is to abandon Lenin's revolutionary policy; on the contrary it is in order to reinforce

it. Firstly, its purpose is to secure the USSR against conventional attack on its outer front; secondly, to maintain the authority of the Kremlin throughout the USSR and the satellite countries—that is, to secure the inner front against revolt; and thirdly, to compel all non-Communist countries, through threat of its use, to maintain peace with Russia.

The answer of the Western powers has been to make good the numerical inferiority of their conventional fighting forces by reinforcing them with tactical nuclear weapons of limited power. Not by creating a separate tactical nuclear striking force, but by substituting tactical nuclear weapons for conventional ones.

This substitution carries with it an obvious danger. Should a crisis arise in which the opposing powers are brought to the verge of war, Russia's conventional forces are so superior to those of her adversaries, that there is nothing to prevent her proclaiming, should they resort to

the use of tactical nuclear weapons, that her reply will be all-out nuclear war. Time and again Russian propaganda has announced that there can be no such thing as a limited nuclear war, and that the employment of tactical nuclear weapons will inevitably lead to all-out nuclear war.

Will the Western powers accept this challenge? Should they not, then all that the substitution of tactical nuclear weapons will have accomplished is to reinforce the deadlock, under cover of which the Russians will continue to push their revolutionary activities against their opponents' inner fronts.

What the Western powers must bring themselves to understand is that they are faced with a problem far more complex than in the past, not only traditional warfare, but also revolutionary warfare, and at bottom the latter is far more a struggle for economic than for ideological supremacy. Today, Marxism is little more than a liturgical language, the chatter of which covers a fierce economic conflict. In it Russia's aim is to gain mastery of the world by expanding her economy and simultaneously undermining the economies of her opponents.

Economic Aggression

With ever-rising populations, the crisis of the present age is an economic one. This is not in the historic form of each nation striving within itself to produce its own subsistence and raw materials in order to survive. Rather, Russia seeks to gain political supremacy over all by monopolizing subsistence and raw materials on a world-wide scale, and to use them as weapons to subject competitors by undercutting their markets. In brief, the Russians understand to the full, whereas the Western powers would appear not to, that the hand that locks the cash box rules the world.

Because revolutionary warfare appears to be so unmilitary, the concentration on all-out nuclear attack and defense has, like a smoke cloud, hidden it from view. Its strategy is to dissolve rather than to destroy; to attack the mind of the enemy in order to paralyze his body, instead of attacking his body in order to master his mind. It is far more

than an auxiliary of actual warfare, and it may be compared with a poison which either incapacitates the enemy before he can strike, or cripples his blows should he do so. Lenin once said: "The soundest strategy is to postpone operations until the moral disintegration of the enemy renders the delivery of the mortal blow both possible and easy."

Propaganda Offensive

Time and again, concentration on the physical aspects of war has offered the Soviet leaders the opportunity to attack their opponents psychologically. In international debates the attention of the world is consistently directed toward the horrors of nuclear war. This is done not only to terrify its peoples and brand America and Britain as the culprits, but to obscure the fact that Russian aggression alone can unleash an all-out war.

Each top conference is turned into a Soviet propaganda opera, in which Comrade Khrushchev is the prima donna, not only in the eyes of his own people, but also in the columns of the democratic press, which shower on him bouquets of headlines which, whether laudatory or disparaging, exalt him into a cosmic prodigy. "The task of psychological warfare," writes Dr. Kissinger, "is to hamstring the opponent through his own preconceptions,

and this has been precisely the Soviet strategy with respect to nuclear weapons."

Today, the USSR is the greatest empire in existence; why not then turn our guns on Russian imperialism and colonialism—two stock lines of Soviet attack. Within its bounds are scores of subjugated peoples, not a few of whom in each war Russia has been involved in during the present century have revolted against Muscovite rule. Because of them, Russia's inner front is far more sensitive to subversive attack than those of any of her opponents, and added to this ninety per cent of the inhabitants of her satellite countries are anti-Russian.

Here is opened to the Western powers a vast field for revolutionary activities, aimed at unhinging the Soviet regime through its inherent weaknesses. Yet few worthwhile steps are taken to exploit it, or to stimulate the will of the subjugated peoples to resist Soviet oppression. When the East Berlin workers struck, these powers stood aloof; when the Hungarians rose against their oppressive government and were smashed by Russian tanks, all they did was to offer their condolences and heartfelt sympathy. Instead, had they marched two armored divisions to Hungary's support, almost certainly the whole of the satellite world would have



Wide World Photo

Chinese Red soldiers entering Canton, 15 Oct 49—war by proxy

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risen in revolt. That this would have meant a general war is far from probable, because it would have caused such a turmoil within the USSR that the Soviet regime itself would have been in peril.

To turn opportunities, such as these, to our advantage, we must take revolutionary warfare far more seriously than so far we have done. How can we limit Soviet expansion by merely holding fast to a deterrent, and remain on the passive defensive politically, militarily and psychologically? It is time we ceased cowering behind our nuclear Maginot wall, fearful that a bold move on our part will topple it upon us.

The crying need of the West today is a revolutionary warfare General Staff, to plan, direct, and wage subversive war, under cover of the deterrent, in the political, economic and psychological fields.

War by Proxy

There is one item among Russian revolutionary activities which deserves careful consideration. Unlike nuclear warfare, it is not shrouded in secrecy, and unlike psychological it is strictly military. It is Russia's wars by proxy, which since 1945 have distracted the world to her advantage and to the detriment of her opponents. These operations may be divided into two categories:

(1) Invasion of a non-Communist

country by a Communist power, either under direction of Russia, or in sympathy with her, such as the war in Korea and the Chinese occupation of sections of the northern frontier of India.

(2) Revolt by a Communist or national faction in a non-Communist country stimulated or supported by Russia or China, which either leads to open hostilities, as in French Indo-China and in Malaya, or the threat of a Communist revolution, as in Lebanon.

The aim of these operations is to distract the Western powers; to compel them to scatter their fighting forces and to expend their wealth and resources—that is to attack them economically as well as strategically. Or, should they refuse to answer the call, through loss of face to lower their prestige.

In these operations, more especially those of the first category, Russia and China can select their points of attack on their southern frontier, which extends from the Baltic to the South China Sea, a line over 12,000 miles in length. But, although they are able to operate on interior lines, lack of communications deprives them of its advantages, because it limits both the strength of the attacking force and its rapid reinforcement.

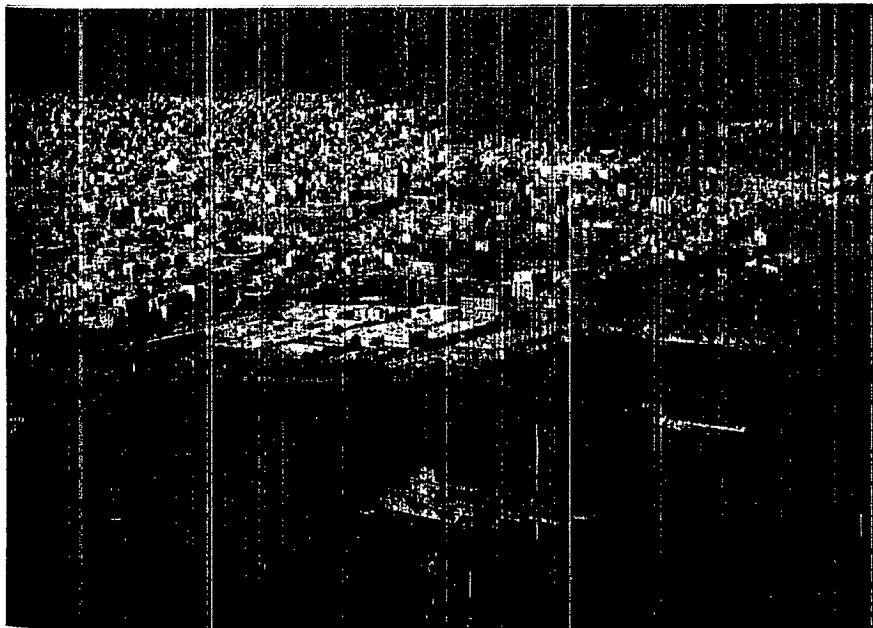
To be prepared to counter them by the establishment of powerful

overseas bases, ready stock-piled and garrisoned, or, when a crisis arises, to assemble at them the forces needed to meet demands, have obvious drawbacks. Firstly, both are very costly; secondly, it is unlikely that the enemy will attack within tactical reach of a base; thirdly, should there be several bases, as would seem probable, there is likely to be a serious waste of resources; and fourthly, should the first alternative be resorted to, the garrison may not be of the type required, or should it be the second, then much time will be consumed in assembling and marshalling before a counter-attack can be launched. Further, should a war by proxy develop into a full-scale conventional war, these bases are liable to capture, as happened with Singapore and Manila in WWII, and in a nuclear war they are standing bomb traps.

Right Place, Right Time

Time and place are the essence of the problem. "The advantages of time and place in all martial actions," wrote Sir Francis Drake in the days of the Spanish Armada, "is half a victory; which being lost is irrecoverable." This maxim is as true today as it was in 1588. The ability to be at the right place and to strike quickly from an unexpected direction is not only a warrant that the enemy will be hit before he can establish himself and exploit the position he has seized, but once it has been proved effective, it will also become a deterrent and make him think twice before he repeats his snatch-and-grab raid.

While Russia and China can operate on interior lines, the United States and Great Britain can operate on exterior—the oceans and the seas. They can base themselves on amphibious task forces which, whether large or small, are self-contained units, permanently organized and not hastily assembled. They do not require costly and vulnerable overseas bases or terminal ports, which may be in the wrong place at the right time. They can move from position to position as required, hide in the depths of the sea, and strike suddenly from ship to shore by means of their landing craft. But their power to strike inland is restricted to the



Task force in Beirut, 1958—". . . the right place at the right time"

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bomber and fighter planes of their aircraft carriers, because troop carrying aircraft cannot operate from their decks. How to effect this, how to combine troop carrier and aircraft carrier is therefore the problem which has to be solved if full use of sea power is to be made in war.

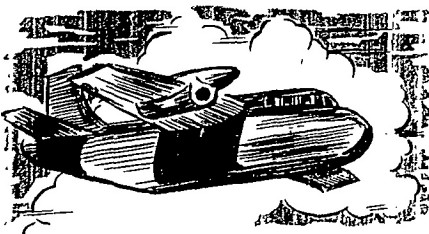
Since 1945 the main characteristic in the development of air power has been ever-increasing speed, and although speed in itself is a military asset, by adding to the length of the runways it has complicated the problem of taking off and landing. To mitigate this, increasing attention has been paid to the helicopter, and British experience in Kenya, Malaya and Cyprus, American in a number of places including Korea, and French in Algeria, have proved its usefulness for military purposes. Some helicopters, now in use or coming into use, can lift 40 men.

In addition to the normal helicopter there is the British Fairey Rotodyne, first flown in 1958. Besides being able to rise vertically on its rotors, it can transfer its power to forward-thrusting jet-props, and can therefore attain a far higher speed than the helicopter. But both these machines are limited in their usefulness by their high cost, lack of speed, vulnerability to ground fire, and their need for elaborate maintenance. Further, in war time, they offer no solution to the problem of landing Marines or supplies in bulk from an aircraft carrier.

VTOL—True Answer?

Although the development of the helicopter will undoubtedly continue, it seems certain that the true solution will be found in the vertical take-off and landing aircraft (VTOL). Already a jet engine has been made which by direct downward thrust can lift more than 12 times its own weight, and we are informed that "a small prototype is already flying with such success that larger aircraft of this sort ought to be available for practical use within the next six or seven years." Another authority states that designers visualize by 1969 a supersonic airliner, engined by turbo-jets or a combination of turbo-jets and ram-jets, lodged in the tail, capable of

carrying 120 passengers across the North Atlantic in under two hours. "But," writes this authority, "the most remarkable aspect of this aircraft of the future may well come in its vertical landing. Faced with the problem of ever-growing runways to cope with ever-growing speeds, many designers now accept that vertical take-off and landing, on the thrust of downward-pointing jets, is the only final solution."



Should it be so for civil aircraft, then it will certainly be adopted by military aircraft. For purposes of war the solution is an urgent one. In this writer's mind, some of the money now being devoted to circling the moon and projecting apes and dogs into outer space would be far more profitably spent on it.

From both the military and naval points of view, the possibilities of an efficient VTOL aircraft are revolutionary. It can operate in confined spaces, such as among trees, inaccessible to helicopters; it reduces the need for expensively trained parachutists, frequently at the mercy of the wind; it obviates the scattering of air dropped supplies; and its ability to convey forces of Marines deep inland from a fleet at sea solves the problem under discussion—how to wed the troop carrying aircraft to the aircraft carrier.

Granted this marriage, then an entirely new complexion will be given to wars by proxy, which may be compared with the activities of a malicious arsonist.

Should he set fire to an occupied house, the owner, if in possession of a fire extinguisher, will stand a good chance of dousing the flames before they catch hold. Should he have nothing at hand to do so, he can call up the nearest fire brigade. But the difference in time between immediate and delayed action may well cost him his house.

Translate this into military terms. Russia arranges her arson opera-

tions in some remote corner of the world, and selects as victim a country which has no fire extinguisher—no local defense force at hand to respond to the challenge. The victim calls on the UN for assistance, and—assuming the improbable—the call is promptly met.

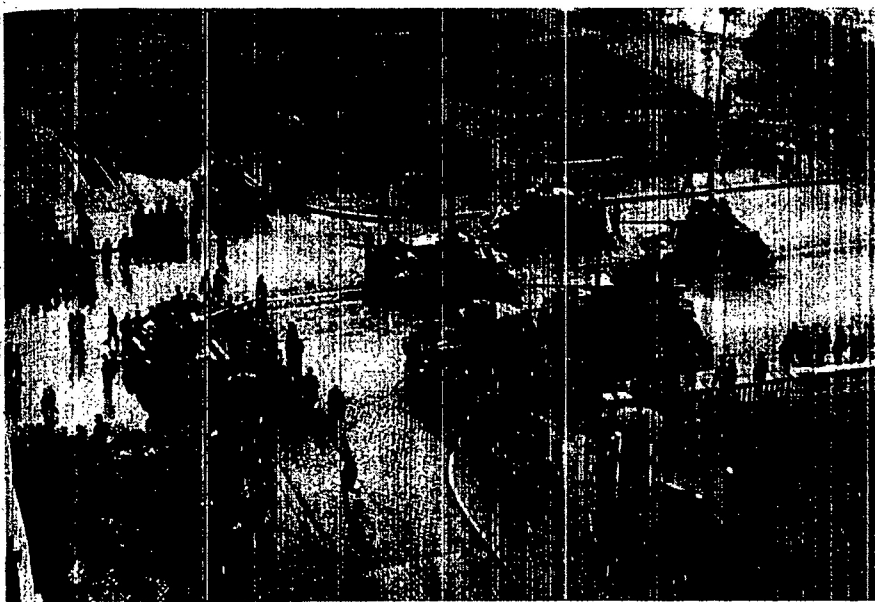
As things at present are, the fire brigade will have first to be assembled, next organized, and then transported to some land base, possibly hundreds of miles from the scene of the conflagration, from where it may take weeks to arrive at it. By then it will probably be faced with a *fait accompli*, which will demand a minor conventional war to eject the invader.

While this is being got ready, what will the Kremlin do? It will rattle its nuclear sabre and, after a summit conference or two, some face-saving formula will be agreed; the operation will be abandoned, and another bit of foreign territory will be nibbled off and added to the Communist Imperium. Incidentally, a few years ago it was calculated that since the reign of Ivan III (1462-1505) the Russian Empire has expanded at the average rate of 49 square miles a day.

Amphibious Advantages

Replace the land base, or more probably the no-base, by an amphibious task force stationed, let us suppose, in the Indian Ocean. As it is improbable that there will be no warning of a crisis brewing, directly rumors of it are received, this force can steam in the direction of the seat of trouble, and, should a call for assistance be made, it can close in and strike. Instead of taking months—preparations for the Suez fiasco took three—the blow will be immediate, and such political difficulties as may be related to this in no way detract from it as the most effective reply to a proxy incursion.

As an example, let us take the northeastern frontiers of India. The Chinese advance into Bhutan. To eject them by a land force would take weeks; but an airborne force could cover the distance from the Bay of Bengal—500 miles—in a matter of hours. It may be said that the aircraft carrier is too vulnerable a vessel for such an opera-



Wide World Photo

Soviet tanks hit Budapest. The West's response: heartfelt sympathy

tion. It might be in a nuclear or full scale conventional war, but a nibbling operation is neither of these. When compared with them it is a low-grade, third class war.

Even in a full scale conventional war, when risks of every kind must be accepted, on occasion the strategic use of independent airborne striking forces, which operate like old fashion cavalry raiders, would surely be of great value to cause alarms, create panic, effect demolitions, and distract the enemy generally.

A particular operation of this kind suggests itself, which would involve no more than moderate size forces. It is known that the Russians have numerous slave-labor camps in eastern and north-eastern Siberia, whose unfortunate inmates are largely Ukrainians and other subjugated peoples. Picture a series of liberating raids based on an amphibious task force in the northern Pacific, or on a land base in Alaska; their sudden arrival, the overpowering of the camp guards, and the dumping of guerrilla warfare weapons, ammunition and explosives—

then back home again. Then picture tens of thousands of desperate men surging over the countryside, pillaging for food and wildly fighting their way to freedom. Attacks, such as these, on Russia's highly sensitive inner front, would certainly give the Kremlin a severe strategic headache.

Today, all this may seem impossible; so also would many of the aircraft now flying have seemed so 10 years ago. We live in an age of ever-increasing mobility; daily in terms of time the globe is shrinking in size. Our crucial danger is that, unless we press on toward the future, the past will swallow us up.

Summary

To summarize the salient features discussed in this article:

We live in an age of "wardom" initiated by the Russian and nuclear revolutions, in which the competitive preparation for war is the real war, permanent and unceasing.

In it every national potential has become an instrument of war where-with to attack the enemy, either physically on his outer or military

front, or psychologically and economically on his inner or national front. These two fronts are complementary and of equal importance.

War, in all its forms, is a political instrument, the means whereby the political aim is achieved, namely a profitable peace. And unless this aim is attained, even should the enemy be annihilated, the war will politically be lost.

Weapons, in all their forms, possess a negative as well as a positive purpose; through threat of their use to deter the outbreak of war, and through actual use to wage it.

The destructive power of nuclear weapons is so great that the threat to resort to them deters the use of their like, and mutual fear of their use is so great that it invalidates them as deterrents of forms of war other than nuclear.

These forms are revolutionary and conventional war. The aim of the first is to rot an enemy internally and undermine his will and economy, and of the second to defeat him in battle in the traditional way.

To mix tactical nuclear weapons with conventional ones carries with it a dual danger; either it may lead to all-out nuclear war, or the threat to unleash it may prevent conventional war being resorted to as an instrument of policy.

Should the latter alternative occur, then complete freedom of action will be given to revolutionary warfare, and should it be the former, then a war of mutual annihilation will be waged in which war will cease to be a political instrument and become a devastating absurdity.

Finally, in wars by proxy and many inner front operations, their solution is to be sought in vertical take-off and landing coupled with speed.

USMC



Read Twice Daily

THE COMPANY BULLETIN BOARD was fast becoming a catch-all for cartoons and bright remarks. One morning the following unofficial notice appeared: "CONTEST FOR ALL MARINES. Write a 500-word essay on why you dislike the Marine Corps and this outfit in particular. Tear off the top of your haversack and mail in with your entry." The contest notice received quite a laugh until one of the NCO's added the following pen and ink change. "In case of a tie, duplicate courts-martial will be awarded."

\$15.00 to SSgt L. R. Anderson

