

LIMITED WAR: KOREA, 1950

Paul F. Gorman

Lieutenant, United States Army

Government 285

Harvard University

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A
A most interesting
analysis, especially
good on the
tactical components
of strategy.

I'd like to discuss
some of the
attached typed
comments —

Wye

(PFG)

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INTRODUCTION

The Problem of Limited War

The United States is committed, in principle, to a policy of limited war by its two basic strategic objectives. The first of these is to deter World War III; the second, to contain Soviet Communism to its present size. If this nation is reluctant to initiate total war against the Soviet Union itself, but still wishes to prevent, by force if necessary, moves short of total war by Soviet satellites, then it must perforce be prepared to meet limited thrust with limited counter. Were the U.S. willing to forsake its European and Asiatic allies, perhaps it would be possible to retire from all save a few essential overseas bases, ring the North American Continent with a radar wall, and devote vast sums to the development of new, more terrible weapons capable of long-range destruction with which to hold the Soviet at bay. But it is clear in the light of present knowledge, that had America adopted such a course in 1950, the perimeter of world Communism would today be at our door, with most of Asia and probably most of Europe subject to its totalitarian dictates. Instead, the U.S. has prosecuted vigorously a policy of active defense against Red encroachment, and now, rather than standing alone against an enslaved world bent upon its destruction, it is a member of a strong coalition of Western nations whose freedom is buttressed with mutual security arrangements, strategic air bases, and other policy instruments calculated to make war in any area of the world too expensive for a potential aggressor.

Up until June, 1950, the United States, confident that in its monopoly of the atomic weapon it had adequate insurance against military action by Communism, pursued a military policy bent on saving dollars rather than the West. On the 25th of that month, the Republic of Korea was invaded by the Soviet

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trained and equipped North Korean Army. The leaders of this nation were then faced with a decision that will profoundly affect all Americans for generations to come. By June 27th, the decision had been made, and President Truman announced that air and naval forces of the United States had been committed to the defense of South Korea; military force became an active agent of American foreign policy, and the willingness to fight a limited war a condition for overall peace.

An examination of the justification for short-of-total war, or for that decision of 27 June, is beyond the purview of this paper. It suffices here to say that, in the public debate now incipient around President Eisenhower's proposed new solutions for the problems of national security, the fundamental issues of defense will probably have to be placed before the country with a clarity and definitude they have hitherto lacked outside the small circle of leaders privy to the highest state secrets. One such issue is that of limited war, for by the June, 1950, decision, the United States was obligated to maintain armed forces capable of carrying war to strong land powers in places remote from its sources of supply; to raise and support a large land army capable of coping with an enemy who fights his limited war largely with Infantry; and to develop an Air Force capable of tactical support of the Army, as well as lending substance to the strategic threat against Russia. But as Mr. Finletter, the former Secretary of the Air Force, points out, America cannot purchase, all at the same time, a vast strategic deterrent, impregnable continental defense, and balanced forces capable of limited wars all over the globe, without risking collapse from within.² The recently published study of the National Planning Association put

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1. United States Congress, Senate, Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations, Joint Session, Hearings on the Military Situation in the Far East, May 3 through August 17, 1951 (82d Congress, 1st Session), 5 Parts, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1951, p.3384. Hereafter referred to as Hearings.
 2. Senator Styles Bridges, "Where Do You Stand on the Gravest Question of Our Time?", Colliers, January 8, 1954, p.38.

the defense spending potential of the U.S. at 75 billion dollars. (At that figure there would be enough left of the national income to admit of only small increases in the standard of living.) But the current defense spending is around 40 billion dollars per year.³ If an adequate program of civil defense alone would cost 20 billions,⁴ to say nothing of radar defense or augmented air power, then Mr. Finletter is on very firm ground indeed. If our present political commitments are such as to prevent the abandonment of limited war altogether, then the "New Look" for the Armed Forces of the United States may not be economically feasible until after the nation finds a way to wage it less expensive than that required in Korea, which tied down one third of available forces,⁵ and cost 33,000 dead and 103,000 wounded.⁶

The Issues

In the Korean War definite restrictions on when, where, and how much force could be used against the enemy were imposed upon the Theater Commander. The express purpose of those restrictions, to use the words of General Bradley, was to confine the battle to Korea and thereby avoid engaging the U.S. "in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time and with the wrong enemy."⁷ General MacArthur, the august American soldier in command in Korea in 1950, disagreed with the nature and extent of these limitations, publicly labeling them "an enormous handicap without precedent in military history."⁸ For his admitted lack

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3. United States Congress, House of Representatives, Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, 1954, Report No. 680, June 27, 1953, (83d Congress, 1st Session) p.2.
 4. Bridges, op.cit., p.37.
 5. Hanson Baldwin, "The New Look of the U.S. Armed Services is Emerging at the Pentagon," New York Times, December 19, 1953, p.E5.
 6. Graph, "U.S. Losses in Korean War," New York Times, October 31, 1953, p.E2.
 7. Hearings, op.cit., p.732.
 8. Ibid., p.3572. Statement dated 1 December 1950.

of sympathy with the Administration policy, among other reasons, General MacArthur was relieved of his command.⁹

Upon his return to the United States, the General was called before the Senate Armed Service Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee, sitting in joint session to hear testimony on the military situation in the Far East and the circumstances surrounding his dismissal. In addition to the General, other high ranking American soldiers, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rendered their military opinion, and leaders of the civilian branches of the Executive testified on their contribution to the policy which the military was given to implement. Not only was the immediate subject of the inquiry covered at length, but almost every other aspect of the formulation and administration of American foreign policy since the closing months of World War II was dealt with at least briefly. The published record alone contains over two million words,¹⁰ and will stand for generations to come as an outstanding source book for students of public administration. Yet at the conclusion of the testimony, some of the Senators who had participated were avowedly no better informed than they had been about a number of aspects of the matter,¹¹ one of which was that of limited war. As they put it:

The committee has heard much about "limited war." This is a new concept in warfare. Efforts to define limited war, to discover what the phrase means, have met with some evasion.

Some historical examples of limited war were cited, but it turned out that in each case the limitation was imposed by the inability of the commander to bring maximum power to bear. No illustration was given of a commander conducting a limited war when he had the opportunity for offensive effort and the resources to break it up.

The enemy in Korea fought with no holds barred. They had no Navy or they would have used it. They had a small air force, which was steadily expanded as the war went on and the full strength of this air force was thrown into battle.

9. Hearings, op.cit., p.878.

10. Ibid., p.3574.

11. See the "Minority Report," Senators Bridges, Wiley, Smith, Hickenlooper, Knowland, Cain, Brewster, Flanders. Ibid., p. 3561.

We did have inescapable handicaps; witnesses testified to our limitations; but the idea of not exploiting the resources available in the face of an enemy exerting all his power is to us indefensible....12

...We lay no claim to being military experts. However, it appears a matter of common sense that in any kind of warfare, one seeks to bring his maximum power to bear against his enemies weaknesses. In Korea we find an almost exactly contrary strategy has prevailed. Our enemy had the advantage over us in manpower. Our advantage was in the air and on the sea. Yet in this situation our air power was shackled by a political decision against strategic strikes in Manchuria while our sea power was denied, through other political considerations, the opportunity of exploiting its superiority through the imposition of a blockade against the coast of Red China....13

The issues the Senators raise here not only strike at the heart of the question of limited war, they strike at the heart of the whole problem of relationship between the political and military leadership of a democracy. Has the political power the right to commit the military to a war while denying them available resources for conducting it? Or perhaps the question might be phrased in the halls of Congress: "Shall American soldiers die in battle while the nation for which they give their lives denies them the means ^{of} ~~for~~ defending themselves?" If it is necessary to limit the war to prevent its spread, what limitations should be imposed? Should they be "political," or according to a sound military strategy? Who has the right to decide what they shall be? Congress, the Secretary of State, the President, the UN, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Security Council?

To a nation committed to the defense of alien frontiers from Indo-China to Norway, these questions are vital. Particularly in times like these, which dictate a waiver of internal dissention on international issues, public and Congressional misunderstanding of

12. "Minority Report", op.cit., p.3585.

13. Ibid., p.3598

of the nature and origins of the limitations imposed on the use of available military force could incite serious domestic reactions of which the MacArthur controversy may be but prefatory, with consequent peril to all Administration policies, good or bad, and to the morale and efficiency of troops shedding blood for a disputed cause.

This paper will examine the answers provided to the questions above in the instance of the Korean War, up until the end of 1950; specifically, the origin and nature of the restraint placed upon the full military power of the United Nations forces in the Far East will be evaluated in order to suggest a United States policy for analogous future emergencies. The limitations themselves will first be enumerated and analysed, and then the chain of command above the Field Commander will be discussed in detail to determine where such limitation originated, and how much "purely military" or "purely political" agencies contributed to its formulation. That analysis, together with a consideration of certain pertinent military realities and political attitudes which must condition future policy, will admit of conclusions on the optimum course of action for the United States should we again be forced to undertake military action against a localized Communist aggression.

The author is personally familiar with some of the problems of limited military actions, having served as member of the U.S. Army on temporary duty in Berlin during the airlift, and in Greece during the latter stages of the civil war, as well as with the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea during 1952.

PART I

Limited War: Korea, 1950

The Setting

That the impact of your Army may be like a grind stone dashed against an egg--that is effected by the science of weak points and strong. (Sun Tzu, 500 B.C.) 14

..In any kind of warfare one seeks to bring his maximum power to bear against his enemies' weaknesses...(U.S. Senate,1951) 15

At 0400 Korean time, Sunday, 25 June 1950, the Army of North Korea poured across the 38th parallel into the Republic of Korea. The total strength of their forces was placed between 90,000 and 100,000, organized into 7 divisions and 5 brigades, well trained and equipped, chiefly with excellent Soviet material of late World War II models, including approximately 100 Soviet-made T34 and T70 tanks. Its air force operated 100-150 Soviet type aircraft, and initially enjoyed complete command of the air over the advancing columns of its ground forces. Opposed to this formidable array of modern combat strength, the Republic of Korea could muster only 5 infantry division-size formations -- their scattered units and lack of heavy equipment would hardly merit the title "divisions" -- armed only with rifle, machine guns, and other infantry light weapons.¹⁶ The impact of the swift moving Communist forces on this poorly equipped, ill-disposed, and completely surprised army was "like a grind stone

14. The Roots of Strategy, T.R.Phillips,ed., Military Service Publishing Company, Harrisburg, Pa., 1950, p.31.

15. Hearings, op.cit., p.3598

16. First Report, U.N.Command to Security Council, U.N., July 25, 1950, as reproduced in Ibid., pp.3384-4485.

dashed against an egg"; the ancient Chinese military philosopher would have been well pleased with the modern men of Wu.

The Communist mastery of the "Science of weak points and strong" extended beyond the mere tactical victory. In the world-wide struggle of Communism against the West there are a few places which could have been better chosen for a strong thrust against a weak defense in a vital spot. One half of the peninsula of Korea north of the 38th parallel had been converted by the Soviet into a typical totalitarian Communist satellite state, armed to the teeth, and rigidly hostile to its democratic neighbor to the south. The Republic of Korea to the South on the other hand was an autonomous, nominally democratic, state controlled by a strong nationalist party led by Syngman Rhee. Its armed forces were largely made up from the remnants of a native constabulary maintained there by the Japanese occupation forces, and reciprocated the hostility evinced by their northern counterparts, a relationship marked with sporadic outbreaks of firing, cross-border raids and other violence.

The United Nations was unhappily involved in the entire history of this fraternal enmity. In 1947, the UN General Assembly resolved that there should be a free ballot among the Korean people to elect a representative government for a unified nation.¹⁷ The following year elections for that purpose were carried out under a UN Commission in South Korea, jurisdiction by that Commission over North Korea having been denied it by the Soviet Union.¹⁸ On

17. Hearings op.cit., p.3571.

18. "Statement by the U.S. Representative to the United Nations", Ibid., p.3367.

August 15, 1948, Syngman Rhee was installed as president of the Republic of Korea, and U.S. Army military government was officially terminated. Three weeks later, the Supreme People's Government of North Korea formally declared the establishment of a Democratic People's Republic of Korea, claiming jurisdiction over the entire peninsula. However, within a few months, the United Nations had declared the Republic of Korea (Rhee's government) as the lawful government of Korea, and it had been officially recognized as such by thirty-two Western nations.¹⁹ The Soviet Union and its satellites had in turn recognized the People's Republic. Despite this impasse, the UN Commission continued its efforts to unite the peninsula, but in 1949 was forced to report that it had been frustrated in all efforts to contact the North Korean government for negotiation either directly or through the Soviet Union, and that "the border of the 38th parallel was becoming a sea of increasingly frequent exchanges of fire and armed raids, and that this constituted a serious barrier to friendly intercourse among the people of Korea."²⁰ On 8 April 1949, membership in the UN for the Republic was denied by Soviet veto.²¹ On June 19, 1949, the UN Commission reported that withdrawal of US troops was complete; it received no response to its request for entrance into North Korea to conduct a similar inspection of the

19. Department of the Army, Korea, 1950, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1952, p.6. Hereafter referred to as D.A.

20. Hearings, op.cit., p.3367.

21. D.A., op.cit.

withdrawal of Soviet forces.²² The situation a year later stood essentially the same. The United Nations Commission was still in Seoul, still trying to obtain unification, still supporting the Rhee regime. On 10 June, 1950, the Communists communicated to the UN Commission a plan for the unification of Korea -- via three so-called "peace representatives" -- principle features of which were elections in which the Rhee government and the Commission were to abstain from participation. The Commission was dickering with these negotiators when the invasion took place.²³ The Communist blow struck at more than the Republic; it struck at the United Nations; for in attempting to overthrow by force the government established and carefully overwatched by the UN, it threatened to subvert the processes of peaceful settlement which are the sole reason for being of that body. The future of the United Nations was irrevocably tied to the future of the Republic of Korea.

The United States' position in the Korean controversy was less clear. As one of the two powers occupying Korea after the war, it had taken the initiative in the United Nations to obtain a settlement of the problem in 1947, after bi-lateral negotiations with the Soviet had broken down. Its military government had supervised the political reconstruction of the country, including rendering assistance to the United Nations Commissions during the first free elections. Anxious that the new government, which it had helped bring into being, be "given the fullest opportunity to prosper and defend itself against external attack," it allocated from ECA and GARIOA funds several hundred million dollars, as well as furnishing technical assistance for

23. D A, op.cit., p.9.

rehabilitation and inauguration of an educational system, and leaving the surplus military and naval equipment, ^{of} evacuating U.S. occupation forces.²⁵ However, aid to Europe and other areas in the world precluded greater American aid. Moreover, American policy:

...excluded the arming of a South Korean force capable of attacking its neighbors. The United States felt an obligation to avoid any legitimate inference that the South Koreans were being provided with tools for aggressive warfare. Rather, American military assistance to Korea was limited to providing light weapons. The type of assistance given was designed to deter border raids, and to resist aggression by an army from North Korea. The Republic of Korea received some of the arms necessary to defend itself but the great quantities of combat aircraft, naval and attack vessels, and heavy ground weapons which would have been necessary if the South Koreans had desired to launch an attack of their own, were withheld..²⁶

Even at that, "no deliveries of any consequence were made to the Republic of Korea under the Mutual Defense Assistance Program (MDAP) during the fiscal year 1950. The South Korean military forces ... needed great quantities of weapons to repel communist border raids and to suppress diversionist activities. In one case during 1949, the North Korean Army launched a large-scale invasion of the Ongjin Peninsula, which is just south of the 38th parallel in Western Korea. Heavy fighting ensued before the South Korean troops were able to drive the raider back across the parallel."²⁷

Whether, as has been charged by some writers since,²⁸ the few advisory officers and men of the Army had been left in Korea under

25. D A, op.cit., p.7

26. Ibid...

27. Ibid., p.9.

28. Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, Farrar, Straus and Young, New York, 1951, pp.112-114, for example. Hereafter referred to as "R. & S."

Ambassador Muccio were responsible for a gross American military overestimation of the battle prowess of the South Korean Army, or whether their sanguine appraisals of the Republic's ability to defend itself might have been intended for consumption of Koreans only, is not germane to the question of the U.S. military commitment there. It is evident that the United States had already determined that in the event of attack, the defense perimeter of America~~x~~ "runs along the Aluetians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukus...so far as the military security of other areas in the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee those areas against military attack."²⁹ These were the words of the Secretary of State, and they echoed the already delivered opinion of General MacArthur: "Our line of defense runs through the chain of islands fringing the coast of Asia...It includes its main bastion, Okinawa. Then it bends back through Japan and the Aleutian chain to Alaska..."³⁰ In other words, in so far as U.S. defense was concerned, South Korea was not important. The American military interest there was solely to assure the viability of the Republic's government by creating a ROK army. That this interest was handled badly there can be little doubt; American aid was insufficient to permit South Korea to defend itself. The army built with that aid has been well described by a New Yorker correspondent as follows:

29. R. & S., op. cit., p.99, quoting Secretary Acheson's speech to the National Press Club, January 12, 1950.

30. Ibid., p.101, quoting the General speaking to an unidentified British journalist.

When the North Koreans invaded South Korea, the 96,000 R.O.K. soldiers who opposed them were so far from being fully trained that none had ever taken part in any military manuver more elaborate than a battalion exercise. By July 25, 50,000 of the 96,000 had become battle casualties, and because of the exigencies of the situation at that time, they had to be replaced by men only four or five days removed from civilian life...The South Korean Army was trained to maintain fixed lines, like American soldiers, and it disconcerts them to have anybody at their rear, with the result that they try, somewhat disasterously, to get to the rear of the people at their rear..³¹

Some critics have pretended to detect scandal in the battle conduct of the ROK forces.³² It is true that the ROK soldier was the "same breed of cat" as the North Korean, but it takes at least two years to train a modern infantryman, even with a cadre of skilled officer instructors to do the training.³³ South Korea had no such cadre; its army had been in existence for less than two years. The North Korea Army by contrast had been in training since 1945, and had been furnished a cadre of thousands of battle-veteran Koreans from the Chinese Communist Army.³⁴ Even had Korea been deemed essential to the military security of the United States, it is doubtful if, in the time available, an effective military force could have been created out of the ROK constabulary without wholesale committment of U.S. troops as cadre and backbone of tactical units. With only 4 badly understrength and

31. R. & S., op.cit., p.111, quoting E.J.Kahn, Jr.

32. Ibid., p.114.

33. General Ridgway in a speech at Cleveland, Ohio, November 10, 1953, as reported in "U.S. Army Hadest Hitting," Army-Navy-Air Force Register, November 14, 1953, p.4. It is interesting to note that General Wedemeyer's much discussed report recommended that "a strong Korean military force...should be under the control of the U.S.military commander and initially should be officered by Americans..it should be of sufficient strength to cope with the threat from the north." See MacArthur Hearings, op.cit., p.374.

34. D A., op.cit., p.8.

indifferently trained divisions in the Far East for the defense of the aforementioned long perimeter,³⁵ it is unlikely that the defense of Korea even with U.S. aid could have been anything but a matter of time, much more time than it was given, until the ROK army was ready for battle.

In so far as the American political commitment in Korea is concerned, however, more definite appraisal is possible. It is true that we had fostered the Republic of Korea; it is even true that we had been acting like we wished to see it defended against its enemy to the North, even if not very convincingly. But what was more politically important than the issue of Korea itself was the fact that, at the time Korea was invaded, we were posturing before the nations of Europe and the Middle East as the defender of the West, the rallying point of freedom from communist domination. For that reason alone we could ill-afford to have Korea slide into the hands of militant Communists without action on our part. Equally important, though, was the fact that the United Nations had supported the Republic of Korea. If the North Koreans were permitted to openly flaunt the UN, the fate of the League of Nations after Japan gunned into its way into China in 1931 might have been meted out to the international organization that had been the keystone of our foreign policy for years, and our sole extant concrete hope for long term peace. These political issues were determinant in carrying the United States into war in defense of South Korea. President Truman sent a message to General MacArthur on January 31, 1951, reviewing the reasons for which the United States

35. D A, op.cit., p.14

had entered the war:

Successful resistance in Korea would serve the following purposes:

- A. To demonstrate that aggression will not be accepted by us or by the United Nations, and to provide a rallying point around which the spirits and energies of the free world can be mobilized to meet the world wide threat which the Soviet Union now poses....
- C. To afford more time for, and to give direct assistance to, the organization of non-communist resistance in Asia, both outside and inside China.
- D. To carry out our commitments of honor to the South Koreans and to demonstrate to the world that the friendship of the United States is of inestimable value in time of adversity.
- E. To make possible a far more satisfactory peace settlement for Japan, and to contribute greatly to the post-treaty security position of Japan in relation to the Continent.
- F. To lend resolution to many countries not only in Asia but also in Europe and the Middle East who are now living within the shadow of Communist power, and to let them know that they need not now rush to come to terms with communism on whatever terms they can get, meaning complete submission.
- G. To inspire those who may be called upon to fight against great odds if subjected by a sudden onslaught by the Soviet Union or Communist China.
- H. To lend point and urgency to the rapid build-up of the defense of the Western World.
- I. To bring the United Nations through its first great effort in collective security, and to produce a free world coalition of incalculable value to the national security interests of the United States.
- J. To alert the peoples behind the iron curtain that their masters are bent upon wars of aggression, and that this crime will be resisted by the free world...³⁶

And so for political, not military reasons, the United States found it expedient to send its armed forces into Korea.³⁷ It was not long before the military realities of that decision were driven home with great force by the hammer blows of long casualty lists; Communist strategians had chosen well their "weak point".

36. Hearings, op.cit., Telegram from President Truman to MacArthur, read into the record by Secretary Marshall, p.504.

37. Rovere and Schlesinger concur; "the decision to lend ships and planes to the Republic of Korea was a political one..." See R. & S., op.cit., p.103.

The See-Saw Battle

The general course of events that followed the President's announcement of American entry into the Korean War is by now familiar; within the first six months the pattern of aching defeat and exhilarating victory that was to characterize the three years of fighting had been set. Certain aspects of that bleak history, those that pertain to the extent of the action and the restraint observed on both sides, deserve review here.

On the 25th of June, 1950, after having been notified by the United States of the invasion, the Security Council of the United Nations, observing that the Republic of Korea was the lawful government in Korea, and "noting with grave concern" the breach of peace occasioned by the armed attack of forces from North Korea upon that government, called for an immediate cease fire and withdrawal of the North Korean Army to the 38th parallel. All member nations of the U.N. were called upon to "render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean forces."³⁸ On the 27th, President Truman announced that pursuant to that directive, he had directed that air and sea units be sent to the aid of the Republic "to give the Korean Government troops cover and support."³⁹ Later that same day the UN Security Council adopted a resolution sponsored by the United States requesting that "the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the

38. "The First U.N. Security Council Resolution", Hearings, op.cit., p. 3368.

39. "Statement of the President of the United States, June 27, 1950", Ibid., p.3369. Time of the President's statement was 1200. Time of Security Council Resolution: 2245 (Ibid., p.3363.)

armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."⁴⁰ General MacArthur received orders from the Joint Chiefs of Staff stating that, at the direction of the President, the Commander-in-Chief, Far East (CINCFE) "was authorized to utilize Navy and Air Force elements of the Far East Command to attack all North Korean military targets (troop columns, guns, tanks) south of the 38th parallel in order to clear South Korea of North Korean military forces." Naval forces of the Far East Command he could use "in the coastal waters and sea approaches of Korea without restriction."⁴¹

On the 29th of June CINCFE received further orders from the JCS stating "that he was authorized to extend his operations into North Korea against air bases, depots, tank formations, troop columns, and other purely military targets. He was cautioned that operations in North Korea stay well clear of the Manchurian and Soviet borders. Utilization of Army forces was limited to communications and essential service units, except that the employment of Army combat and service forces, as might be required to insure the retention of a port and air base in the general area of Pusan, was authorized."⁴² In his testimony at the Senate Hearings, General MacArthur makes no reference to this order, and in one of the many bewildering inconsistencies of the inquest, condemns as erroneous "the estimate that must have been made in Washington, that the South Korean troops, ground troops, with the assistance of our Navy and Air, would be

40. "The Second U.N. Security Council Resolution," Hearings, op.cit., p.3371

41. Letter from Secretary Marshall to Senator Russell, Ibid., p.3192. General MacArthur Received these orders in Tokyo at 2217. See R.&S. op.cit., p.104.

42. Marshall Letter, Hearings, op.cit., p.3192.

sufficient to accomplish our mission of establishing a beachhead..."⁴³
At any rate, on the day he was supposed to have received the order, he flew ~~back~~ to Korea, made a long aerial reconnaissance of the front lines, and reported back "that it would be impossible to hold the beachhead (at Pusan) without the use of ground troops."⁴⁴ His report reached Washington in the early hours of 30 June.⁴⁵ That afternoon President Truman made a public announcement of the content of the June 29 JCS order to CINCFE, and JCS sent MacArthur a directive specifically rescinding "the limitation on the employment of Army forces imposed on 29 June 1950."⁴⁶ As of the end of June then, CINCFE was officially authorized to employ whatever armed forces he had at his command anywhere in Korea, so long as he stayed "well clear of the Soviet and Manchurian borders." It was well understood, of course, by both Washington and Tokyo, that at the moment there was no question of the ground war being extended into North Korea. All available force had to be directed to the execution of the Pusan beachhead mission, and even at that, the beachhead was barely maintained long enough to permit reinforcement of the beleaguered divisions of MacArthur's command by Infantry and Marine Units from the United States. Only then was the safety of its handhold on the Korean Peninsula assured.⁴⁷ The original limitations on the use of

43. Hearings, op.cit., p.236.

44. Ibid., p.236.

45. R. & S., op.cit., P.105.

46. Hearings, op.cit., p.3192.

47. D A., op.cit., p.77.

force in Korea were more a matter of inadequate force than inhibitions from higher command.

It has been mentioned that there were in Japan at the time only four Infantry Divisions. Three of these, the 24th, 25th and 1st Cavalry Divisions, commenced movement to Korea almost immediately after CINCFE received the 30 June order, units of the 24th division being ashore there "within hours," and in actual contact with the North Korean forces by 5 July.⁴⁸ The remaining division, the 7th, was filled out with ROK recruits and set to training for eventual employment. The Far Eastern Air Force had only a total of about 400 fighters, 60 bombers, and one troop carrier group.⁴⁹ The Navy's Seventh Fleet was similarly weak, and its full strength could not be made available for Korea because it had been directed by the President on 27 June to "prevent any attack on Formosa".⁵⁰ The sorry inadequacy of available military force in the Far East is pointed up by the fact that by the end of July the giant B-29 bombers of the FEAF, the mainstay of its strategic air power, had to be diverted from their mission of reduction of North Korean war potential at its source, to tactical support of front line infantry, who were barely holding out against an enemy which had already pressed to Chinju, only 55 miles from the vital port of Pusan.⁵¹ The first three contingents of reinforcements from the United States arrived in Korea during the first

48. D A., op.cit., p.14.

49. R. & S., op.cit., p.105. Source not cited, but figures seem reasonable.

50. "Statement by the President, June 27, 1950," Hearings, p.3369.

51. D A., op.cit., p.20.

week in August, and were thrown into the battle almost immediately. Later in the month, ROK soldiers were assigned to badly depleted American units to bring them up to strength.⁵² These measures, plus the fact that since the second week in July FEAF had kept the sky over the battle line clear of enemy aircraft,⁵³ secured the Pusan beachhead, and by the end of August, large-scale offensive operations were a possibility for the first time.

While the United States was desperately striving to salvage the rapidly deteriorating military situation by deploying the Eighth Army in Korea during July and August -- an operation of which General MacArthur said, with justification, that history recorded none comparable for speed and precision⁵⁴ -- the United Nations had not been idle. On July 7, the Security Council passed a resolution to channel men, ships, planes and supplies from members contributing to a "unified command under the United States", said command to be led by an officer named by the US. The United States was requested "to provide the Security Council with reports, as appropriate, on the course of action taken under the unified command."⁵⁵ On 8 July, the President designated General MacArthur United Nations Commander, and on 25 July, General Orders Number 1, General Headquarters, United Nations Command, Tokyo, officially establishing the command itself, was published.⁵⁶ By the end of August the first substantial United Nations ground forces began arriving in Korea.⁵⁷

52. D A., op.cit., p.78.

53. Ibid., p.16.

54. Hearings, op.cit., "General MacArthur's Estimate of the Military Situation, July 19, 1950," p.3381.

55. Ibid., "The Third United Nations Security Council Resolution, July 7, 1950", p.3372.

56. Ibid., p.3382.

57. D A., op.cit., p.83. First UN units into action were British battalions from Hong Kong. They were organized as the 27th Commonwealth Brigade, landed during the last week in August, and participated in the defense of Taegu during the first week of September.

The orders which were sent to MacArthur during July and August from the Joint Chiefs of Staff altered in no substantial way the original restrictions that had been placed upon the use of the forces at his command. On 1 July instructions were issued to him stating that "he should be careful that in establishing a naval blockade of Korea his forces stay well clear of the coastal waters of Manchuria and the USSR." On 28 August, a similar order went out to Tokyo to the effect that "particular care should be taken that United States aircraft not violate Soviet or Chinese territory or territorial waters." On 8 September, CINCFE was forbidden attacks against the town of Rashin, a North Korean town near the Siberian border, but that order constituted the sole specific limitation in addition to the originals, up until the United Nations amphibious assault of Inchon.⁵⁸

On 15 September 1950, utilizing Marine reinforcements from the United States and the theretofore unused 7th Infantry Division, the United Nations Command made a brilliantly conceived and superbly executed amphibious landing at the South Korean port on Inchon, thirty miles west of Seoul and forty miles south of the 38th parallel. This attack, in conjunction with a vigorous offensive by the Eighth Army from within the Pusan bridgehead, spelled doom for the invaders. Deprived of Seoul's critical highway, rail and communication facilities by the UN capture of that city on 26 September, unable to disengage intact from the driving Eighth Army to their front, and menaced from their rear, the North Korean aggressors melted away from battle, leaving behind them most of their heavy equipment. There was no dramatic Cannae-like encirclement of the enemy; the North Korean Army simply took to the hills because it was no longer receiving the supplies it needed to sustain combat, because UN propagandists said it was surrounded, and because its leaders realized that their

58. Hearings, op.cit., p.3793.

alternative was eventual encirclement and virtual annihilation.⁵⁹ However, it would be a mistake to deem the North Korean Army totally destroyed as an effective fighting force by the September campaign; to the contrary, the vast majority of it fled north of the 38th parallel, and was there able to reform into tactical units prior to the approach of the UN. This fact is proved by prisoner of war statistics. Up until the 15th of October, the total number of NK PW was 66,000.⁶⁰ By that time the UN Army had crossed the 38th parallel and driven against stiff resistance north toward the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. The last two weeks in October, however, saw in quick succession the capture of Pyongyang, an airborne landing behind its retreating NK defenders, and amphibious landings on the North Korean east coast well behind the defending enemy.⁶¹ By 1 November 135,000 prisoners of war were in UN cages; the North Korean Army was finished.⁶²

The prospect of the Inchon landings raised for the first time the question of ground operations in North Korea. Up until that time, the mission of the United Nations had been interpreted by CINCFE, the Pentagon, and the Security Council of the UN as one of clearing the Republic of invaders. The Security Council resolution of 27 June spoke of aid for South Korea "as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and restore international peace and security in the area."⁶³ On 19 July MacArthur announced that the UN was in Korea "to stay until the constitutional authority of the Republic is fully restored."⁶⁴ When the combat potential of the United Nations rose through reinforcement to the point where offensive operations became possible, Washington was ready with directives

59. D A, op.cit., pp.147-152

60. Hearings, op.cit., "Seventh Report UNC (period 1-15 Oct.)", p.3423.

61. Ibid., "Eighth Report, UNC (16-31 Oct.)", pp.3426-3427.

62. Ibid., p.3428.

63. Hearings, Ibid., p.3368.

64. Ibid., p.3382.

for CINCFE to guide him in the execution of the mission originally assigned him by the Security Council. It was apparent that unless the North Korean Army could be trapped and destroyed South of the 38th parallel, it would be necessary for the United Nations to pursue it into North Korea and there to destroy it, for there could hardly be "international peace and security in the area" so long as the threat of renewed aggression from a regrouped and refurbished NK army remained an actuality, On the day of the Inchon landing, 15 September, CINCFE received from the JCS an outline of the general courses of action he would be expected to follow depending on the outcome of the battle and the reaction of Communist China and Soviet Russia.

...the following conclusions which had been approved by the President concerning the United States course of action with respect to Korea;

- (a) Final decisions cannot be made at this time inasmuch as the course of action best advancing United States national interest must be determined in the light of--
 - (1) Action by the Soviet Union and Chinese Communists;
 - (2) In consultation with friendly members of the United Nations; and
 - (3) An appraisal of the risk of general war;
- (b) The United Nations forces have a legal basis for conducting operations north of the thirty-eighth parallel to compel withdrawal of the North Korean forces behind the line or to defend against these forces.
- (c) The Joint Chiefs of Staff were authorized to direct General MacArthur to plan for the possible occupation of North Korea but to execute such plans only with the approval of the President.
- (d) General MacArthur should undertake no ground operations north of the 38th parallel in event of occupation of North Korea by Soviet or Chinese Communist forces. In this event, air and naval operations North of the parallel should not be discontinued; and
- (e) In the event of employment of major Chinese Communist units South of the thirty-eighth parallel the United States would (1) not permit itself to become engaged in a general war with Communist China; (2) authorize General MacArthur to continue military action as long as it offered a reasonable chance of successful resistance (deleted).....65

65. Hearings, op.cit., p.718. Senator Morse read this directive, and several others, into the published record from a classified JCS document distributed to the members of the Committees. This document, were it publicly available, would no doubt do much to clarify a great deal of the obscurity which clouds the relationship between the JCS and CINCFE.

This directive constitutes the first documented reference to the real nature of the United Nations effort in Korea: from its inception it had been limited by a dependence on the reaction of the Communist allies of the North Koreans, and a desire to avoid general war which would follow on their involvement. As usual CINCFE was scrupulous in observing the restrictions explicit in the order. However, during the last two weeks in September, there was a flurry of communications between Washington and Tokyo which altered the picture considerably.

JCS notified CINCFE that at the suggestion of the Department of State and with the concurrence of the Secretary of Defense, they would not object to a cessation of hostilities at the 38th parallel, provided the North Koreans sought either an armistice or a quick peace on that line. MacArthur replied that both solutions were "entirely feasible and practicable", and sent back to JCS his plan for military operations north of the parallel in the event they became necessary.⁶⁶ On 26 September CINCFE was directed that his Air Force units were to be employed "only against objectives which had a bearing on the tactical situation."⁶⁷ On 27 September he received notification that "instructions sent to CINCFE were not to be considered final, since they might require modifications in accordance with developments."⁶⁸ Accompanying that notice was a directive which stated that his forces:

66. Hearings, Ibid., p.179. Again quoted from the JCS classified document: Syngman Rhee, in a sparkling display of his usual acumen for political timing, chose the moment for a strident proclamation that with the UN or without the UN, the ROK army was going to pursue the enemy into North Korea to its destruction. See D A, op.cit., p.151.
67. Hearings, Ibid., p.3193. The purpose of this restriction was to prevent the destruction of industrial facilities, power plants, etc., without which the reconstruction of North Korea would be difficult and costly.
68. Ibid., p.721. This directive, and the 30 September letter from the Secretary of Defense referred to in note 71 below, assume their probable import with the understanding that George Marshall had replaced Louis Johnson as Secretary of Defense on 12 September, and that they represent the kind of notification of basic policy which in good military usage is given by a commander to a subordinate about two weeks after the former's assumption of a new command. See R. & S., op.cit., p.117.

would not cross the Soviet or Manchurian borders under any circumstance, that only Korean ground troops would be used in the northeast province bordering the Soviet Union and the area along the Manchurian border, and that support of the UN operations north or south of the 38th parallel would not include air or naval action against Manchurian or Soviet territory. 69

On September 29, CINCFE received JCS approval on his plan for military operations in North Korea, apparently with the exceptions noted in the directive of the 27th.⁷⁰ The following day, 30 September, he received a message from the Secretary of Defense which gave him "tactical and strategic latitude to proceed north of the 38th parallel."⁷¹

On 1 October the situation along the front varied; in the west and the center, where most of the UN forces were deployed, scattered enemy resistance and the problems of establishing communications and bringing up supplies had impeded advance so that most units were still operating to the south of the 38th parallel. On the east coast, however, the ROK I Corps, supported by the guns of the Seventh Fleet, had quickly pushed through to the border, and was poised there for further advance. General MacArthur, in conformance with the directives that he had received in the preceding week, sent a message to the commander-in-chief of the North Korean Army, calling upon him to surrender unconditionally to avoid further bloodshed and destruction of property. He then ordered the ROK I Corps to begin an attack across the 38th parallel toward the city of Wonsan.⁷² No answer was forthcoming from the North Koreans on the surrender demand, but during the next week no other UN troops crossed into enemy territory. On 6 October CINCFE was notified by JCS that the UN was about to take action on a resolution which

69. Hearings, op.cit., p.3193

70. Ibid., p.719.

71. Ibid., p.721. See note 68.

72. D A., op.cit., p.151.

which would approve operations in North Korea, and that after its approval, MacArthur was to transmit its text to the enemy.⁷³ On 7 October the General Assembly of the United Nations, recalling that the essential objective (of its policy) was the establishment of a unified, independent, and democratic Korea, "recommended that the UN Command take all appropriate steps to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea."⁷⁵ Accordingly, on October 9, CINCFE addressed to "The Premier, Government of North Korea", a demand for the surrender of the forces under his command in whatever part of Korea they were situated.⁷⁶ The same day the US 7th Infantry Division drove through the city of Kaesong and across the 38th parallel, becoming the first western troops to enter enemy territory.⁷⁷ On the heels of the MacArthur announcement that the UN Command was bent on the occupation of North Korea, the previously approved plan for that purpose was put into execution.

73. Hearings, op.cit., p.720.

74. R. & S., op.cit., p.134.

75. Hearings, op.cit., p.3364.

76. Ibid.

77. D A., op.cit., p.151.

The Entirely New War

If you know yourself, but not the enemy, for every victory gained, you will also suffer a defeat...Sun Tzu, 500 B.C.

On October 9, the same day that western troops entered North Korea, JCS sent CINCFE a message stating that they:

...recognizing that the Chinese Communists might intervene in North Korea, amplified CINCFE's current directive and included...the provision that, in the event of the employment in Korea of major Chinese Communist units without prior announcement, CINCFE should continue the action as long as, in his judgment, his forces had a reasonable chance of success. He was cautioned, however, that he would obtain authorization from Washington prior to taking any military action against objectives in Chinese territory,.⁷⁸

This directive and the one of 15 September are exemplary of the great concern evinced throughout the campaign prior to that time by both JCS and UNC over the prospect of Red China's entry into the fighting. In late July a UN unit fighting west of Teagu had reported the capture of a Chinese soldier. Eighth Army immediately sent an officer down to interrogate him, but he turned out to be a Korean idiot afflicted with mongolism. Again, late in August, the US 25th Division captured a prisoner who told of a battle group in the Communist line who "held itself apart and spoke a strange language." Patrols were dispatched immediately to the area, but came up with no confirmation of the story. Constant watch was kept on the upper coast roads coming from Manchuria, but weather made observation difficult, and the routine movements of NK units in the area prompted many false reports of troops moving down from China.⁷⁹

UN troops had advanced but a short distance into North Korea when Red China's premier Chou-En-lai made a declaration that his people would not "supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by imperialists."⁸⁰ That announcement

78. Hearings, op.cit., p.720.

79. S.L.A.Marshall, The River and the Gauntlet, Morrow, New York, 1953, pp.6-7. This study by a distinguished infantry operations analyst is the most complete written to date on the tactical aspects of the entry of the Chinese Communists into the enemy campaign against the Eighth Army.

80. Ibid.

was coupled with a warning received in the United States through diplomatic channels, purportedly given by Chou on 3 October to the Indian ambassador in Peiping: "If U.S. or UN forces crossed the Thirty-Eighth Parallel, China would send troops to the Korean frontier to defend North Korea... He said that this action would not be taken if only South Korean troops crossed the Parallel."⁸¹ Secretary Acheson later described the Washington reaction as follows: "We all reached the conclusion that it is more likely that they (the Chinese) would not come in than they would."⁸²

Eighth Army was not quite so confident, and "a dread apprehension gripped the headquarters."⁸³ Their misgivings were quickly sensed by the ROKs, and KAMAG, the American advisors with the South Korean Army, reported that their charges were becoming highly nervous, with signs of demoralization increasing. Even Syngman Rhee lost his aggressiveness, and his blustering Defense Minister, the same Shin Sung Mo who had repeatedly urged invasion of North Korea back in the days before the war,⁸⁴ wanted the advance northward halted immediately.⁸⁵

On the 12th of October, the ROK II Corps captured 9 Chinese soldiers. These men were not taken in battle; they had walked into the ROK lines or had been apprehended in rear areas. They were, of course, interrogated by intelligence officers almost immediately, and they told a simple, consistent story of having entered Korea with small provisional units of "volunteers" which had been dragooned from regular Red Chinese Army formations. The results of this interrogation probably had reached the highest echelon of command just in time to be communicated to CINCFE prior to his departure for Wake Island and a meeting with

81. The River and the Gauntlet, op.cit., pp.6-7.

82. Ibid.

83. Marshall, op.cit., p.7.

84. R. & S., op.cit., p.111.

85. Marshall, op.cit.

President Truman.⁸⁶ At that controversial conference, General MacArthur informed President Truman that the prospects of Chinese or Russian intervention were "very little...Had they interfered in the first or second month it would have been decisive. We are no longer fearful of their intervention. We no longer stand hat in hand. The Chinese have 300,000 men in Manchuria. Of these probably not more than one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five thousand are distributed across the Yalu River. Only fifty to sixty thousand could be gotten across the Yalu River. They have no air force. Now that we have bases for our Air Force in Korea, if the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang, there would be the greatest slaughter."⁸⁷

Shortly after the capture of Pyongyang on 21 October,⁸⁸ the nine aforementioned prisoners were flown there for detailed interrogation by Eighth Army experts. They talked freely, and apparently from a wide knowledge of Chinese operations. Their story put the total strength of the Chinese units fighting in Korea at 9,000, and one of them piously added "only God knows what we are doing here."⁸⁹ The report that went up from that inquisition must have reinforced the opinion of CINCFE, and been most reassuring to the worried staff officers at Eighth Army. An official history of the campaign notes that "the last week of October had begun on a note of cheerful optimism,"⁹⁰ and indeed, the prize looked almost

86. Marshall, op.cit.

87. R. & S., op.cit., p.132. Responsibility for this statement was later denied by MacArthur. The debate as to its authenticity has no place in this narrative. From his subsequent actions there can be no doubt but what he held at least a very similar belief. The purpose for its inclusion here is to demonstrate that on 15 October directives which he had received relative to Chinese entrance were not yet limitations upon any desirable action by his forces, and that he was prepared at that date to meet the Chinese Army on the terms of limited warfare as he had been fighting it.

88. D A, op.cit., p.152.

89. Marshall, op.cit., p.8.

90. D A, op.cit.

won. On the west coast the US 24th Division was only a few miles from the mouth of the Yalu, and on the east ROK units were beginning to descend into gorge of the upper Yalu near the juncture of Korea, Siberia, and Manchuria. Prisoner of war cages were filled to capacity, and what little fighting there was, did little to impede UN columns forging ahead up the narrow valleys toward the Yalu.⁹¹ It seemed as if the Korean war was going to be fought out on the terms established for the United Nations Command by its Washington directives. The only one of these which CINCFE found oppressive was that requiring him to employ ROK forces exclusively in the north east province. MacArthur informed JCS on 25 October that more seasoned commanders were needed there because of the delicate nature of the mission, and that exercising the latitude given him by Secretary Marshall's letter of 30 September and the JCS directive of 27 September, he had determined to use American troops in that area also.⁹² There was apparently no objection by JCS, for units of the US 7th Division were among the first to actually reach the Yalu in the northeast.⁹³

On the 26th of October the first shock warning came; a regiment of the US 1st Cavalry Division was ambushed while it was speeding northward, and cut to ribbons by a well-managed enemy identified as Chinese later by the officers who survived. However, only 2 out of 344 prisoners captured by units sent to the rescue of the encircled regiment were Chinamen. These told the same story as the previously captured nine, even naming their units by the same numbers. There was only one difference between the recitals: these two identified their "small units" as full-sized divisions.⁹⁴ General Walker did not wait for his G-2 to

91. D A, op.cit.

92. Hearings, op.cit., p.721.

93. D A, op.cit., p.227.

94. Marshall, op.cit., p.10.

analyze the story; he gave immediate orders for the 24th Division to withdraw from its advanced position, and directed other forward units to draw back until the Eighth Army was contracted into a better defensive attitude along the line of the Chongchon River. One unit, the 7th ROK Regiment, was beset by Chinese during the retirement, and showed up at friendly lines a few days later minus 500 men, and all its heavy equipment, but bearing a bottle of Yalu River water for Syngman Rhee. By that time, G-2 had come up with some conclusions based on available evidence which placed the strength of the Chinese forces in Korea already at around 60,000; the coincidental identity between this figure and the figures reportedly used by MacArthur at Wake is striking. The Eighth Army Periodic Intelligence Report for 29 October lists among the essential elements of information to be determined by field agencies:

Are these reinforcing elements the beginning of a commitment in piecemeal fashion so as to secure approaches to the border area by emphasis on defensive tactics? Or is this the beginning of open intervention on the part of Chinese forces to defeat UN forces in Korea? At present, the evidence is insufficient to say....⁹⁵

At this point it should be noted that there had been new developments in the air war. During the previous week the fast, Russian-made MIG-15 jet fighter planes made their first appearance in numbers over Korea, flashing down from bases in Manchuria, and retreating behind the border when pursued. ⁹⁶ Nonetheless, FEAF still enjoyed complete air supremacy, and was empowered to strike at any and all military targets in Korea, with the exception of those in the town of Rashin. It is significant that air did not even detect the movement of these Chinese formations into Korea, much less stop them. On 6 November 1950, JCS directed CINCFE to postpone until further orders bombing of targets within five miles of the Manchurian border. Later the same day, JCS withdrew the order, permitting

95. Marshall, op.cit., pp.10-12.

96. D A, op.cit., p.153.

bombing up to the border, but issuing a stringent warning against violation of Manchurian territory or air space.⁹⁷ Air continued its activities unabated; on the ground staff officers pondered the meaning of the meager evidence of Chinese activity, and went ahead with the task of bringing the bulk of the Eighth Army up to the line of the Chongchon. In the east, similar events transpired. There had been some contact with Chinese; prisoners had been taken who repeated the "volunteer" story, but USXCorps continued its advance, probing northward against generally light resistance and some sharp ambushes.

The story of Chinese intervention moves swiftly to its climax. After 10 November, the front quieted down, and both Eighth Army and X Corps advanced slowly against rear guard actions only, all the time building their logistic base for renewed efforts on a larger scale. There were three prevalent theories on the new enemy to their front: the Chinese were (a) a limited assist to help the North Koreans hold a defensive base within their own country; (b) a show of force to bluff the UN away from the Manchurian frontier, or (c) a screening movement to cover the advance of armies behind the Yalu.⁹⁸ Evidently the UN Command, however it evaluated what information it had, placed little credence in the last theory, for by Thanksgiving it deemed itself sufficiently strong to renew offensive operations on a scale that would assure "the defeat of all North Korean troops on the peninsula."⁹⁹ General S. L. A. Marshall describes the events which ensued as follows:

On Thanksgiving Night, 1950, two armies confronted each other along the valley of the Chongchon River... Both armies were poised to attack on the morrow. There the likeness..ended..The United States Eighth Army was an open book. Its battle objective and hour of movement had been

97. Hearings, op.cit., p.3193. See also p.741; Bombing could include Korean side of Yalu bridges.

98. Marshall, op.cit., p.13.

99. D A, op.cit., p.153.

published to the world; war correspondents had described in detail the strength and location of its forces. Concentrated in a tight maneuver mass, guarded by an entrenched screen, north of the river, the Chinese Communist Army was a phantom which cast no shadow. From these ingredients came inevitable surprise, as complete as any ever put upon an army. There resulted one of the major decisive battles of the present century followed by the longest retreat in American history... All Americans had some share in the mistakes which precipitated the winter battle with the Chinese... it fell to but a few of our countrymen to redeem with their sweat, courage and lives the situation thus made....100

On the night of November 24th, after fighting furiously all day, the Eighth Army halted virtually where it had started on its end-of-the-war offensive.¹⁰¹ That night its outposts were overrun by swarms of well-managed Chinese soldiers, and within a week the enemy had inflicted a disastrous defeat upon the Eighth Army. One whole ROK corps was shattered irretrievably; the US 23rd Infantry Regiment in one day's action lost, nearly its entire strength: 3000 men killed, wounded, or missing.¹⁰² During the next week, the ^{US} 2nd Division suffered 25% overall casualties, and lost most of its heavy equipment in barely escaping a brilliantly executed Chinese encirclement.¹⁰³

The Chinese assault on the US X Corps in the east lagged behind the Chongchon assault by three days, but when delivered, came with the same suddenness and with the same result; US 1st Marine Division and attached units was hard put to escape and though it was able to withdraw in somewhat better order than the 2nd Division, its losses were comparable.^{103a} By every means available, the Army of the United Nations streamed southward, fighting desperate delaying actions against

100. Marshall, op.cit., pp.1-2.

101. Ibid., pp.18-30. UNC communique No.12, dated 24 November, included the sentence: "This morning the western sector of the pincer moves forward in a general assault in an effort to complete the compression and close the vise."

102. Ibid., p.360. *23d Infantry was part of U.S. 2d Infantry Division.*

103. D A, op.cit., p.230.

103a. Marshall, op.cit., p.16.

vigourously pursuing Chinese troops. Accompanying the retreating soldiery were 3 million Korean civilians fleeing before the dreaded enemy. The whole exodus filled all available roads to congestion, and the endless columns of moving humanity and vehicles presented an ever profitable target for swift-moving Chinese patrols or guerilla bands of NK soldiers theretofore in hiding. In the first weeks of December, the hard won city of Pyongyang was evacuated; by trucks in the west and by boat in the east, the UN Command retreated rapidly toward the 38th parallel, where it hoped to establish a defense. The United Nations was, as General MacArthur put it, in an "entirely new war." 104

The history of the Chinese intervention is important for the future of limited war, for whether or not the Chinese government contrived to enter Korea in such a way as to bring the UN to battle with its offensive and defensive strength hobbled, its conduct could not have been more cleverly designed to achieve that end. China eschewed the Pearl Harbor tactics of the North Koreans, and achieved surprise a new way:

The new way entailed the slow creep forward....the appearance of confusion and weakness in committment to screen a well-laid offensive plan..the pretense of picking around with a finger to cover the raising of a mailed fist...the schooling of troops on details of the order of battle so that they would be always communicative and always wrong...the hiding of armies in motion by marching them only under cover of night and holding them under rooftops during the day...the staging of little actions to divert attention from the chosen battlefield...105

104. D A, op.cit., pp.227-237.

105. Marshall, op.cit., p.9. The consistency between Chinese tactics and strategy is remarkable. One of the author's friends, a talented artist, was in the habit of making sketches of his platoon positions and the terrain to his front. On 24 November he was making such a sketch, and having finished all but the shading and embellishment, was checking it against the ground, when he noticed a discrepancy between the vegetation as he had drawn it and the way it was to his front. Somehow or other, the number of trees in the field immediately before him had increased two-fold, and some of them had quite obviously moved. Puzzled, he called for machine gun fire at the "grove", brought down 11 Chinese who had been patiently closing in for the swift dusk assault, pushing whole trees before them.

The "new way" was an ancient way in China. Five hundred years before Christ the men of Wu carried battle to the soldiers of Yueh according the precepts of Sun Tzu, which are still taught to Chinese soldiers:

The opportunity for defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.. If you know the enemy, and know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles. If you know yourself, but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat... When able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away. Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him. 106

The staff of the Eighth Army might have found considerable food for thought in these words, for here is a strategy well suited to a nation which seeks to engage without furnishing the sudden startling shock which might arouse its enemy to unleash total national strength against the attack. Here is a strategy which capitalizes upon political maneuvering, which ties the enemy with veiled threats and words backed by obscure actions. Here is a strategy designed to exploit to the utmost the intelligence weaknesses of western armies, and secure tactical advantage for eastern armies.

But despite enemy dissemblance, it cannot be charged that the United Nations Command was wholly insensitive to its danger. To the contrary, on 6 November CINCFE issued a communique which announced the presence in Korea of a new, fresh army, "backed up by a possibility of large alien reserves within easy reach to the enemy but beyond the limits of our present sphere of military action...a privileged sanctuary."¹⁰⁷ CINCFE at that time initiated a series of requests to JCS for an extension of the sphere of action sufficient to remove the privileged sanctuary. On 6 November, he asked to bomb the Yalu bridges, and received permission to bomb the Korean end only. By 8 November he was asking to bomb on into Manchuria, but was denied.^{107a} Nonetheless, there was nothing in the disposition

106. Roots of Strategy, op.cit., pp.29,28,23.

107. R. & S., op.cit., pp.137-138.

107a. Hearings, op.cit., p.741. See also p.3193.

of his troops which would have indicated that he considered his position anywhere near as serious as the events after 24 November proved it to be.

General MacArthur's changing concept of the battle after the initial reverses on the Chongchon is nowhere more apparent than in his published estimates of enemy strength. Up until November 24, he said there were 60,000 Chinese facing him. On the 25th, his headquarters said there were 80,000, and by the 28th MacArthur himself had announced that the figure was 200,000.¹⁰⁸ It is apparent, however, from evidence now available, that whatever force hit the Eighth Army and X Corps must have been in North Korea for at least a week, and undoubtedly large formations had been there ever since the middle of October.¹⁰⁹ Regardless of the interpretation he placed upon his earlier intelligence, he was wrong as to the strength of the "new, fresh army"; had he but known their strength he might have revised his estimate of their intent, and acted differently. He did not know, and his army was trapped; but speculations on the lost battle could have availed him little at the time, and he turned immediately to winning the battle at hand.

In his estimate, the seriousness of the plight in which his retreating armies found themselves warranted a complete reappraisal of the war, and a reframing of the basic directives for its conduct, "issues which must find their solution within the councils of the United Nations and chancelleries of the world."¹¹⁰

108. R. & S., Op.cit., p.143.

109. MacArthur, in an interview with the editors of the U.S. News and World Report on December 1, 1950, said that Chinese troops had but "a night's march from the border sanctuary...to the area of hostilities," distinctly giving the impression that the troops used against him had suddenly fallen upon the Eighth Army after a swift night's march. This is plainly a misinterpretation. The CCF did advance by night marches, hiding their forces from aerial reconnaissance during the day, but the mountains of Korea are difficult to march through, night or day, and the process was of necessity a long, drawn-out one. CCF prisoners captured during the Battle of the Chongchon from the 113th CCF Division reported that their unit had crossed the Yalu on 10 November, and did not reach the Chongchon trench until November 21, marching constantly by night. See U.S. News and World Report, December 8, 1950, pp.16-22, and contrast with Marshall, op.cit., p.151. An excerpt from the U.S. News article is in Hearings, op.cit., pp.3532-3533.

110. Hearings, op.cit., p.3495.

The orders forbidding him to strike at the bases of Chinese supply across the Yalu he termed "an enormous handicap without parallel in military history",¹¹¹ and he undertook himself an immediate campaign in the press and by personal letters to prod the chancelleries in the United States into prompt action. There are some who regard that campaign as the effort of a vain old man to wipe the sole tarnish from an impeccable military career by throwing the blame for his reverses on his political leaders; there are others who saw his actions as the honest effort of a brilliant soldier to cope with a situation made difficult by a bungling, Red-infiltrated Administration. Out of the controversy came his relief, the subsequent Senate hearings, and a public furor the like of which the country had not witnessed since World War II.

The reaction of the "chancelleries of the world" to his pleas is, at any rate, a matter of history: There was no appreciable alteration in the restrictions which had already been imposed upon MacArthur from that day forward. To be sure, the matter was given some consideration in the United Nations, particularly among those countries who had troops embroiled in the trying situation. It is certain that the JCS and other responsible agencies of the United States Government devoted much study to the removal of those limitations; but the fact is that despite repeated requests by General MacArthur, including a program of specific proposals for action he deemed requisite, neither they, nor any higher authority, altered substantially his orders then standing. On 29 December JCS

111. Hearings, op.cit., p.3553. This is a quotation from the U.S. News and World Report interview referred to in note 109. MacArthur also said in this interview that: "The limitations aforementioned, plus the type of maneuver which renders air support of ground operations extremely difficult and the curtailment of strategic potentiality of the air because of the sanctuary of neutrality immediately behind the battle area," accounts for the fact that "an enemy without air power can make effective progress against forces possessing considerable air power."

directed CINCFE to "conduct a ground defense from successive positions". In other words, MacArthur was to follow out the orders he had received on 9 October containing specific reference to the Chinese intervention. In carrying out that directive he was enjoined to "inflict on the enemy such damage as was possible."¹¹² On 9 January 1951 the 29 December directive was confirmed, and CINCFE was informed by JCS that favorable action would not be taken at that time on certain of the proposals he had submitted for lifting of the limitations on his forces, as follows:¹¹³

- (1) Strengthening our effort in Korea
- (2) Blockade of the China coast
- (3) Naval and air attacks on objectives in Communist China
- (4) Obtaining Korean reinforcements from the Chinese Nationalist garrison in Formosa.

The General himself provides as good a summary of the situation as is presently available in his speech before Congress on April 19, following his relief:¹¹⁴

...when Red China intervened with numerically superior forces. This created a new war and an entirely new situation not contemplated when our forces were committed against the North Korean invaders, a situation which called for new decisions in the diplomatic sphere to permit the realistic adjustment of military strategy. Such decisions have not been forthcoming.

While no man in his right mind would advocate sending our ground forces into continental China -- and such was never given a thought -- the new situation did urgently demand a drastic revision of strategic planning if our political aim was to defeat this new enemy as we had defeated the old.

Apart from the military need as I saw it to neutralize sanctuary, protection given the enemy north of the Yalu, I felt that military necessity in the conduct of the war made necessary:

First, the intensification of our economic blockade against China.

Second, the imposition of our naval blockade against the China coast.

Third, removal of restrictions on air reconnaissance of China's coastal areas and of Manchuria.

Fourth, removal of the restrictions on the forces of the Republic of China on Formosa with logistical support to contribute to their effective operation against the Chinese mainland....

112. Hearings, op.cit., p.3193.

113. Ibid.,

114. Ibid., pp.3556-3558.

...once war is forced upon us, there is no alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's every object is victory-- not prolonged indecision. In war, indeed, there can be no substitute for victory...Why, my soldiers asked of me, surrender military advantages to an enemy in the field? I could not answer.....

To an examination of the reasons why "new decisions in the diplomatic sphere" which would "permit the realistic adjustment of military strategy "were not forthcoming, and to an inquiry into why this nation's surrendered "military advantages to an enemy in the field", this paper shall now proceed, for in the answers to these questions lie the facts which will enable subsequent evaluation of the method of waging limited war in Korea.

PART II

The Sources of Restraint

The Enemy

One of the basic causes of misunderstanding on the subject of limited war as it was fought in Korea is expressed in the report of certain of the Senators participating in the MacArthur Hearings. Speaking of limited war, they stated that "the enemy in Korea fought with no holds barred. They had no Navy or they would have used it. They had a small Air Force, which was steadily expanded as the war went on and the full strength of this Air Force¹ was thrown into battle." "These statements betray a misinterpretation of facts. To begin with, the enemy in Korea, including the Chinese, did fight with certain holds barred. They could have gotten a Navy from the same place they acquired a modern Air Force: The Soviet Union. They could have utilized the Air Force they did acquire far more effectively than is shown on the record. Of course, the transferral of the necessary equipment from the Soviet, and the training of Chinese to man it would have taken some time, and it may well have been that, at the time of the MacArthur Hearings, the Chinese could not have had in operation submarines and tactical aviation. It may also be that the truce talks which began during the summer of 1951 inhibited the employment of these arms by the enemy, but the fact remains that at no time did he attempt to do so. The critical condition of the United Nations Command at the time of the Battles of the Chongchon and the Chanjin Reservoir must have tempted him to throw in the full weight of his Air Force against the long columns of retreating UN troops, yet he refrained from so doing. In fact, aside from the July 1950

1. Hearings, op.cit., p. 3585. This is from the "Minority Report" referred to previously.

attacks, there are very few instances of Red aircraft attacking UN ground troops.² Even when, in the spring of 1951, his troops were being badly mauled, he did not use his air for that purpose. Still later, when the defensive positions of the UN meandered over mountain and valley in perfectly aligned targets for strafing attacks, he refrained from attacking, although he was not loathe to sacrifice a regiment or two on a futile ground jab at the same positions. Nor does the answer lie in the assertion that the UN enjoyed complete air supremacy over Korea; it might better be said that the UN enjoyed unchallenged air supremacy there, for the enemy never made a prolonged and serious bid for air superiority despite the fact that he had an admitted advantage in numbers of 6 to 1 over American aircraft,³ and possessed an admittedly better airplane. Our pilots were better, and we may have had better gunsights, but it is difficult to believe that such a slight edge would deter the exploitation of the numerical odds in favor of the Red air force, unless there was some restraint on the use of air-power observed by the enemy.^{3a} Again, at all times during the Korean War, the supply depots of the United Nations Command presented magnificent targets for aerial bombardment. Harbors in Korea were few and constricted by high tides and reefs; had the enemy hit Pusan or Inchon⁴ --especially Inchon where the tides were such as to restrict port work to a few hours a day --with air

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2. Facts relative to enemy limitations are based in part on the author's personal observations, but official substantiation for them may be found, as noted, in the testimony of General James Van Fleet before Congressional Committees in 1953. See United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Hearings on Ammunition Supplies in the Far East, March 5, 6, and 10, 1953 (83d Congress, 1st Session), Washington, Government Printing Office, 1953, p. 54. See also General Bradley's testimony, Hearings, op.cit., pp. 751 ff., and Acheson's, pp. 2277 ff.
 3. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee, Hearings on Department of Defense Appropriations for 1954, March 11, 1953 (86d Congress, 1st Session), Washington, Government Printing Office, 1953, p. 290.
 - 3a. MacArthur Hearings, op.cit., pp.1376, 1377. Testimony of General Vandenburg.
 4. Hearings on Ammunition Supplies in the Far East, op.cit., p.54.

attacks, even on a hit-and-run, sporadic basis, the losses to the UN in equipment would have been severe. Moreover, the rail lines in Korea are few and difficult to maintain, with numerous bridges, tunnels, revetments, and trestles. Attacks on rail lines and rail centers such as Chunchon, Yongdongpo, Seoul, and Uijonbu would have crippled the logistic support of the UN armies immensely.⁵ He never tried, for unknown reasons. Still more inexplicable is the enemy failure to make a pass at a single one of the many capital ships, such as the Missouri,⁶ which pulled inshore off North Korea to shell troops, roads, and towns. It would seem that from the numbers of jets that the enemy was willing to sacrifice daily in dogfights with FEAR, one or two might have been detailed to lug in an aerial torpedo or a rocket for such a fancy target. The enemy never tried. For some reason or other, the sea was out of bounds for the Red Air Force.

The naval support of the United Nations Command was extensive and complete. Heavy aircraft carriers, cruisers, battleships, and other vessels delivered fire on targets ranging from enemy bunkers to power plants. But troop ships made the crossing from Japan unescorted, as did most freighters. An enemy submarine fleet operating off the US Navy base ^{of Sasebo,} Japan, would have been able to sink many an expensive target. Even if the first few such attacks resulted in UN employment of an effective escort system, the detailing of naval vessels to such duty would have eased the pressure against the Communist Armies, particularly in so far as their using the vital coast roads is concerned. The enemy never tried. In fact, he never tried sea warfare at all beyond the sowing of a few antiquated mines along his coast. In this respect, even if he had

5. Hearings on Ammunition Supplies in the Far East, op.cit., p.54. (See also MacArthur Hearings, op.cit., p.751, for confirmation by General Bradley).

6. Ibid.

utilized just a very few of the new type mines which are common knowledge among all technically advanced countries, including and especially Russia, mines which are difficult or impossible to sweep using ordinary methods, the UN would have forced to curtail sharply its mine sweeping activities with the force available.⁷

Other examples in a similar vein might be cited. The inescapable conclusion which follows from them all is that one of the important reasons why we fought limited war in Korea was because the enemy was as reluctant as we to extend the conflict beyond the territorial confines of Korea. Even though China was capable of a greater effort in Korea, or of operations elsewhere -- with appropriate Russian aid, of course, it refrained from actions which would have forced upon us counteraction against Manchuria or China itself. Speculation on the reasons for this restraint could be endless. Perhaps the Soviet put a string on the aid it did furnish, and refused more; perhaps the fear of atomic retaliation deterred the Red leaders; perhaps the Red China regime was strained to the utmost by even the limited war. Whatever the cause, Red China fought us on our terms, and was apparently quite willing to observe them as circumspectly as the United Nations.

The Nature of the Restraint

The most obvious feature of the limitations observed by both sides which have thus far been noted is the geographic or territorial confinement of operations to the political boundaries of Korea itself. During the MacArthur

7. George Fielding Eliot, "Now Russia Threatens Our Sea Power", Collier's, September 4, 1953, p.32. In October, 1950 Rear Admiral A.E. Smith, commanding the armada which was lifting the troops into Wonsan in execution of MacArthur's plan for the occupation of North Korea wired the Pentagon that "The United States Navy has lost command of the sea in Korean waters..." Reference was to use of outmoded Russian mines in Wonsan harbor which delayed troop landings more than a week.

Hearings, the subject of territorial limitation was dealt with many times, but nowhere better than Senator Flanders in his questioning of Secretary Acheson:

Now it would seem to me that General MacArthur's proposals for bombing Manchuria can be interpreted and executed in a way which involves a minimum risk for starting World War III.

Freedom to maneuver, to observe, and to bomb in North Korea is essential to the protection of South Korea. Should we decide that it is desirable to clear all of Korea of Communist forces...all that would seem to be required would be that we have in Manchuria the same freedom of maneuver in the air, and perhaps in the air alone, not on land, to make our protection of the whole of Korea possible.

In other words, we would extend to Manchuria to same kind and degree of freedom that we now have in North Korea for the protection of South Korea.

It seems to me to be foolish to talk about invading the mainland of China when the military objectives can be stated in so much more limited terms.

It would also seem that it would be foolish to assume that such a limited undertaking would start World War III. Communist China is fighting against us an unlimited war. They hit us with all their forces wherever they find us.

It strikes me that we are in a rather silly position...Now Mr. Secretary, I would like your observations on the possibility of a limited extension of the area of conflict which would simply extend to the territory north of North Korea the same type of action that we are now using in the territory north of South Korea.

SECRETARY ACHESON. Senator Flanders, I think I can sum it up by saying I regret I cannot agree with you that to undertake air activity against Manchuria would not produce the gravest risk of extension of this war throughout the Far East and very possibly throughout the world. A catastrophe of that would be so terrible...that we cannot undertake that very grave risk.

SENATOR FLANDERS.....that is the point I am trying to make -- that there is a possibility of extending operations short of large-scale strategic operations.

SECRETARY ACHESON. Well, I don't believe that either the Chinese or the Russians would be much impressed with a difference between the words "tactical" and "strategical".

8. MacArthur Hearings, op.cit., pp.1945, 1946. Senator Flanders must have outlined the limited war paragraph of note 1, Part II.

The point is, are you or are you not going to attack Manchuria. And if you do attack Manchuria, you can say, of course, we are doing this in a limited way, but that doesn't assure that the other people are going to deal with it in a limited way.

It seems to me that sets in operation a chain of events, which in all likelihood would spread to general war.

This exchange demonstrates quite lucidly the tendency on the part of the Administration to think of the Korean War in terms of political, territorial compartments. The first directives received by MacArthur pertained to action only in South Korea; soon he had received orders permitting the use of air and sea forces in North Korea, and on the sea approaches to all Korea. Then, after it looked like ground operations in North Korea were more than a possibility, directives were sent out to Tokyo which delineated the rules for their conduct. Subsequent directives were concerned mainly with reinforcing or changing the ones previous. When it became desirable for the United Nations to enter the next compartment - Manchuria - the proposition of the extension of the war was dealt with in those terms, rather than specific applications of military power. If the United States did not interpret the problem in such terms consistently, at least the members of the United Nations who were fighting with us in Korea did so. Some of them approached the crossing of the 38th parallel with the trepidation of a small boy opening a door in a haunted house; two months later all were convinced that the Manchurian border was the door behind which lurked the dread specter, total war.

The military strategy of the war was dictated by the political concept of national territory; the initial mission of clearing South Korea, and the later, amplified mission of unification of all Korea were both based on a concern for the political control of the stated areas. Even the Joint Chiefs of Staff tended to talk in terms which suggest strongly that their approach to the problem of where and how to apply military force, was based on the premise that the

integrity of territorial units was the paramount consideration. One cannot but wonder if when they considered the problem of how to prevent reinforcements from reaching the advancing Chinese, they did not think of the question as being "are you or are you not going to attack Manchuria". General Collins was specific: "I think the basic thing at issue, from the Chiefs of Staff's point of view, is our endeavor to limit the conflict in Korea to that specific area".⁹ The enemy, as has been noted, made a similar endeavor.

The second general characteristic of the limitations upon CINCFE which is pertinent to this study is their permissive nature; that is, the directives which went out to MacArthur evinced a basic assumption that he could undertake no action unless he was authorized to do so by Washington. The content of the JCS messages to CINCFE, as paraphrased in the Hearings, make it clear that Washington ultimately controlled the power of the United Nations forces at his command; he might recommend, he might even alter if circumstances warranted, but the great decisions on where he could go in the execution of his mission had to come in the form of JCS permission. Thus, CINCFE "was authorized" to attack on 26 June,¹⁰ "was authorized to extend his (air and sea) operations into North Korea"¹¹ on 29 June. On 30 September he was given "tactical and strategic latitude to proceed (with ground forces) north of the thirty-eighth parallel".¹² With a single exception, the restrictions placed upon CINCFE can be classified either as authorizations for some specific action, or instructions designed to make sure the spirit as well as the letter of previous the authorization was observed by all concerned. The Washington directives successively unleashed the power of the UN bit by bit, first with air and sea power, and then ground forces, into each successive territorial compartment, with additional

9. Hearings, op.cit., p.1188.

10. Ibid., p.3192

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p.721

admonishments to insure that the inviolability of the compartment was not jeopardized. From the start of operations, there was no move on the part of JCS which might prompt belief that they adhered to MacArthur's sweeping description of war: "...once war is forced upon us, there is no alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's every object is victory..."¹³ To the contrary, the JCS in their orders sound very much like what they were supposed to be, the central military directors of a nation with world wide commitments which is ill-prepared for a general action, and leery of any move the results of which cannot be carefully estimated ahead of time. It cannot be charged that the JCS did not believe in victory, but clearly the JCS wanted to know at each step the price of victory, and to be sure that the step did not commit them to buying victory at a price they were not prepared to pay.

The one exception to the foregoing observation, mentioned above, refers to the JCS refusal to grant CINCFE reinforcements from the Chinese Nationalist garrison of Formosa as he had requested. The history of that request, and the reasons for its refusal, is as long and complicated as that of the confused relationships between this nation and the people of China. In brief, on the 29th of June 1950, and again on the 30th, the Chinese Nationalist Government offered to put at the disposal of the United Nations 33,000 troops for employment in Korea.¹⁴ On July 2, in reply, the US informed the Republic of China that in view of the Chinese Communist's threat to attack Formosa, a conference should be held with General MacArthur before troops were dispatched from the Island. The US 7th Fleet had already been ordered by the President to defend Formosa, and to prevent the Nationalists from carrying out military operations against

13. Hearings, op.cit., p.3557

14. Ibid., p.3363, and R.&S., op.cit., p.126

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Communist held territory. On 28 July JCS sent CINCFE a summary of their views on Formosa, which included the statement that the Communists had announced their intention of capturing the Island, that Chinese Nationalist forces were best employed in defense of the Island, that they (the JCS) had recommended to the Secretary of Defense that those forces be permitted to carry out defensive operations even if such operations included attack against CCF amphibious concentrations on the mainland. The following day CINCFE replied to JCS that he was in complete concurrence with their recommendations, and informed them that he was proceeding to Formosa on the 31st to make a reconnaissance there. The results of that conference were announced in glowing terms by General Chiang, terms which gave Washington and foreign capitals the impression that MacArthur had gone ahead and backed Chiang, that Sino-American military cooperation, including of course Chiang's proffered Korean aid, had been agreed upon. On 4 August JCS hastened to notify MacArthur that its recommendations referred to on July 28 had not been approved, and that the United States policy toward Formosa stood as it had been all along. On August 5 it received back a message from CINCFE reaffirming his understanding on the President's order of June regarding the isolation of Formosa by the 7th Fleet, that no concordat contrary to that policy had been made, and that "he would under no circumstances extend the limitations of his authority as theater commander."

15. Hearings, op.cit., p.3363, and R.&S., op.cit., p.126

16. Ibid., p.709

17. R.&S., p.126

18. Hearings, op.cit., p.713

General MacArthur later said of his trip to Formosa that, at the time, "it was necessary for the generalissimo's Chiang troops to be held in Formosa for its defense". The threat, as he saw it, came from a grouping of Communist Armies, the 3d and 4th, opposite Formosa. When those formations appeared in North Korea in November, MacArthur recommended that "the wraps be taken off the generalissimo, that he be furnished such logistical support as would put those troops in fighting trim, and that he be permitted to use his own judgment as to their use. The slightest use that was made of those troops would have taken the pressure off my troops. It would have saved me thousands of lives up there." The date of that recommendation is nowhere given exactly, but it can be assumed that it was coeval with the initial identification of Chinese units in Korea, which he reported to the UN on 6 November. That assumption is bulwarked by the fact that he does not mention use of Chiang's troops in Korea, but rather implies their use around Formosa, to lure Communist strength away from the force attacking him. Moreover,

...in late November General MacArthur recommended the Eighth Army be reinforced as rapidly as possible with fifty or sixty thousand Chinese Nationalist forces from Formosa. It was his view that this number of Chinese Nationalist troops were sufficiently well-trained and equipped to be committed to combat; that the Korean War had sufficiently drained the Chinese Communist's potential to negate the possibility of an early invasion of Formosa; that since the Chinese Communists had already intervened, no widening of hostilities by the Chinese Communists would result, and that the needs for reinforcements in Korea and the inability to obtain them elsewhere justified the use of Chinese Nationalist troops.

The Joint Chiefs felt that based on the past performances of these same troops on the Chinese mainland and the reports of the survey party which was sent by General MacArthur to Formosa as to the adequacy of training and the equipment of the Chinese Nationalist forces there, the Joint Chiefs were convinced that these forces would not be effective in Korea.

(DELETED)

Furthermore, their departure from Formosa would leave that Island with inadequate defensive forces to meet a possible Communist attack. 20

This quotation was taken from the secret paraphrase of communications between JCS and MacArthur frequently referred to in the Senate Hearings, and it contains the JCS decision to which MacArthur undoubtedly referred in his limitations protests. It is difficult to come to any conclusions regarding the recitude of either the viewpoint of the JCS or CINCFE because of the frequent deletions in the recorded testimony of Administration officials whenever the subject of Chinese Nationalist strength and capabilities was mentioned. MacArthur claimed later that Chiang had 500,000 troops, "excellent...just exactly the same as these Red troops I am fighting...".²¹ On the other hand, if the paraphrase quoted above in any way reflects his viewpoint in November, his estimate of the number of fighting troops available to the Nationalists was closer to 70,000 than $\frac{1}{2}$ million. Added to that, Secretary Marshall testified that the survey mission referred to had influenced the JCS to consider adversely²² CINCFE's November request, and General Bradley stated that in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Nationalist leadership, equipment, and training were all of such a state that they could not then assure the security of Formosa, much less fight in Korea.²³ The Administration's position was stated by Secretary Marshall and corroborated by the Chiefs of Staff:

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We also feel that the the present time while we are endeavoring to hold this to a limited war confined to the Korean Peninsula, that it would be ill advised to carry out such action (use of Chinese Nationalists) since we are directly contributing to the defense of Formosa by the instructions to the Seventh Fleet, by our mission that we have established there, by the supplies that we are shipping there, and that therefore we would be endangering the confinement of the present operations to the Korean Peninsula....It does not appear to us...that the return from such action would be in proportion to the probable results brought about by such action....²⁴

20. Hearings, op.cit., p.337

21. Ibid., p.23

22. Ibid., p.339

23. Ibid., p.1078. See also General Collins' testimony, p.1260

24. Ibid., p.692

Furthermore, by the figures MacArthur himself provided, China possessed an army of $\frac{1}{2}$ million men. If the General really believed those figures, then surely the shifting of a 200,000 man troop concentration should not have caused a change in his strategic estimate. In fact, if China did have that many soldiers available, it would appear that the selection of the 3rd and 4th CCF Armies for employment in Korea was designed to lull the US and the Nationalists on Formosa into a sense of security which the large numbers of other CCF troops and the speed with which they can concentrate--and who should know of that better than MacArthur--would hardly warrant.

The argument is complicated not only by the security clamp on the real data behind strength estimates, but also by political overtones which go back to the days after World War II, and the vacillating US policy in China. It may have been that the Administration was reluctant to throw further support behind Chiang by using his troops for fear of offending its domestic critics and its overseas allies, the British for instance, who were opposed to Chiang or prepared to deal with Communist China as the effective government of the Chinese people. At any rate, the Administration's military men appearing before the Committees, whom it must be admitted are men of integrity, gave it as their opinion that Chiang was incapable of furnishing forces for Korea. If this estimate was correct--it will be impossible to determine whether it was or not until the records are public--then the refusal of the Administration to use Nationalist troops could not be construed as a limitation upon General MacArthur. If on the other hand, the political overtones of the decision to use Nationalist troops were determinant against strong military recommendations for their use, then General MacArthur was eminently correct in insisting on being heard in this respect. There is however, little to suggest that such was the case, and therefore the matter will here be dismissed without conclusions,

except to note that in so far as future policy is concerned, the Formosa-Nationalist issue in Korea, 1950, was a special case. If another limited war springs into being in the Far West, then the whole question of Nationalist employment deserves to be considered in the same light as the use of any other UN troops, and the decision pro or con made on the basis of a reasoned military estimate of their capabilities and limitations--as it is to be hoped that the 1950 decisions were made.²⁵

Now, having by-passed the question of Nationalist troops, the remainder of the limitations imposed upon General MacArthur can be examined as to their source. To effect that examination, each link in the chain of command over CINCPAC will be scrutinized for its contributions to the restraints, with particular attention to the origin of their two main characteristics discussed above. Only after establishing from whence CINCPAC's restrictions derived their territorial aspects and their permissive nature, can proper estimate be made of the desirability of applying similar limitations on future conflicts, or suggestions be made for a different approach to restrained warfare.

25. The Senate Committees "Minority Report" referred to previously interprets the issue in the same terms of collective security and military considerations first, as it might be expected it would. "We are unable to comprehend why the administration persisted in its attitude of refusing the offer of 33,000 fighting men advanced by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. At first, administration spokesmen stated that any acceptance would result in an open invitation to extend the war to Red China. After the Chinese Communists entered the war, the excuse for still refusing the Nationalists troops was that this might provoke Russia into interfering in the Korean War. The experience of our fighting men on the battlefields of Korea raise serious questions about the strength of the theory of collective security as it has been implemented thus far." See Hearings, op.cit., p.3586, 3587.

The United Nations

The critical importance of the Korean conflict to the viability of the United Nations has already been dealt with. In a very real sense, the continued development of the United Nations as an instrument of international peace and amity -- indeed its very existence as such -- hinged on whether or not the North Koreans would be allowed to openly flaunt its will by overthrowing with force the government it had brought into being in the Republic. Moreover, Korea was the first instance in which nations, operating in accordance with the charter of the United Nations, had banded together in a joint military effort to punish an aggressor and restore, by the use of counterforce, the conditions of peace which he had disrupted. Korea stands as the first implementation of what is today labeled "collective security", the keystone of the Western world's hopes for peace. Perhaps most important for the future of the United Nations -- and for the political ideals of the West which it embodies -- Korea marked the first attempt to check Communist aggression by direct action. Of course, certain nations of the UN had attempted to do just that with indirect action -- Britain and the US in Greece; France, Britain, and the US in Berlin, for example -- but the Korean War represented the first attempt by the United Nations as a body to condemn and punish an act of military violence perpetrated in the name of the communist world revolution. As such, Korea will furnish a most valuable precedent and guide for the Free World in the event of similar Red expeditions, and therefore the manner in which the UN executed its tasks there is vitally important to future US policy.

US leadership in the United Nations throughout the Korean War has been pronounced and decisive in all actions pertinent to UN participation. It was the United States who carried to the Security Council word of the Korean aggression, and submitted the subsequently adopted resolution which President Truman quoted as his authority for sending American ships and planes into

South Korea. Again, on 27 June, the US introduced into the Security Council the resolution which when later adopted served as the basis for collective action against the aggressor. On July 7 the Security Council designated the United States as its military agent for the collective action, requesting member nations to participate by directing their men and supplies to a unified command which the United States was to establish, and on the next day President Truman announced the creation of the UNC under General MacArthur.²⁶ By the end of August the UN force in Korea was a truly international organization, although its command structure, most of its equipment, and the great preponderance of its logistic support was predominantly American.

It is to be noted that the original actions taken by the United Nations were accomplished at the behest of the Security Council, appropriately enough. This feat was made possible only by the absence of the Soviet Union, which had boycotted the Council meetings since January 10, 1950.²⁷ How it happened that the Soviet was absent during that critical period, when its veto could have meant the end of collective action in the Council anywhere along the line, is a matter well worthy of conjecture and study. It may be that the Soviet was reluctant to be placed in a position of condoning the North Koreans until after world reaction was more definite. It may be that the Soviet wanted to give the UN plenty of loose rope with which to accomplish the hanging for which it had long since erected a gallows. Or it may even be that the North Korean action came as a surprise to the Soviet, although in the face of available evidence it seems hardly likely that such was the case. Whatever its reasons, the Soviet was not present, and the Western leadership was able to procure UN participation through the quick, simple process of a Security Council vote, without having to

26. Hearings, op.cit., pp.3362-3373

27. Ibid., p.3369

muster support in the Assembly.

The Soviets returned to the Security Council in August. The next time that UN action became appropriate, when UN forces had reached the 38th parallel, the US moved its UN activities to the General Assembly, and elicited without difficulty the October 7 resolution calling for a united Korea, which it used as authority to proceed with the invasion of North Korea. The membership of the Security Council during the period was --besides the Soviet Union and the United States-- the United Kingdom, France, the Republic of China, Norway, Ecuador, Cuba, Yugoslavia, India, and Egypt. Yugoslavia being the only other communist nation, the various measures proposed by the US were, in the absence of the Soviet, easily passed. (Yugoslavia had, of course, none of the veto powers of the Soviet.) India's reactions in the Security Council and in the Assembly were interesting then as now. India voted for the initial Council resolution, and against the second, although within two days she reversed her stand.²⁸ On July 13, 1950 Pandit Nehru sent personal notes to the US and the USSR asking aid in "localizing and terminating the Korean fighting by breaking the present deadlock in the Security Council".²⁹ Thereafter India was the focal point for all UN resistance to extension of hostilities, and it is significant that from the beginning the territorial concept of limitation is prominent in her efforts. India abstained from the Security Council vote on the creation of the UN Command, and by August, Sir Benegal Rau, the Indian delegate in the UN, was transmitting to the Assembly the warnings of Pannikar in Peiping and the admonitions of the Indian Government itself that entry into North Korea would bring about the entry of the Red Chinese, if not the Soviet Union.

28. Hearings, op.cit., pp.3369, 3371.

29. Ibid., p.3364.

The October 7 resolution passed the General Assembly by a vote of 47-5.

Sir Bengal Raj rose to make the following comments on its provisions:³⁰

49. Whatever may be the strict technical interpretation of this clause, it has been widely regarded as authorizing, if not positively, at least by implication, the United Nations forces to enter North Korea, and to remain there until the unification of Korea has been completed and stability achieved. If such is the intention of the draft resolution --and there is widespread impression that it is-- then the draft resolution authorizes the United Nations not only to cross the 38th parallel, but to remain in North Korea for a somewhat indefinite period of time, because no one knows how long unification may take.

50. My government fears that the result may be to prolong North Korean resistance, and even to extend the area of conflict. Our fears may turn out to be groundless, but each government has to judge the situation upon the best information at its disposal and to act accordingly. Thus we view with the gravest misgivings the particular recommendation that I have mentioned.

India, along with a number of members of the Communist bloc, abstained from the voting on the resolution.³¹ The warm support which the measure received can be attributed directly to the magnificent achievements in arms which MacArthur had presented to the United Nations in the preceding three weeks. To the Assembly, as to the world, a sort of military miracle had taken place; at one stroke --the Inchon landing-- had changed a serious defeat into a major victory, and there were few who were willing to listen to the Indian warnings when the fruits of so tremendous a victory lay ripe, and easy at hand for picking.

Within a month the Indians had acquired new standing among the United Nations as the evidence of Chinese intervention began to mount, and more and more member nations came to share the Indian concern that the United Nations Command was acting so as to "extend the area of conflict". By December the majority of the United Nations feared that total war was imminent. The United States did little to assuage the growing international panic. President Truman declared a national

30. Hearings, op.cit., p.3171.

31. R.&S., op.cit., p.148.

emergency and made a statement which the press interpreted as meaning that the US was about to drop atomic bombs on the Chinese; Clement Atlee hurried across the Atlantic to find out if atomic warfare was at hand.³² In the Mediterranean, the US fleet went to battle stations, and the eastern end of the sea was abandoned. All over the world American air squadrons were observed flying in from the US, some of them equipped with late model jet aircraft. In the overseas bases of the US Army, as well as in posts and stations all over America, American divisions went on short-notice alerts. National Guard Divisions were called to the colors, and maneuvers began to assume very purposeful aspects, such as the airlifting of regiments from the US to Alaska and dropping them into simulated action. Any one of the United Nations with press service and military attaches knew these facts. To them, there could be no other interpretation but that the US was preparing for a major war in which they, if they happened to be situated on the Communist front, would suffer severely. It is little wonder that their principal concern was to prevent the US from taking the step which might precipitate World War III, and that step they conceived of as any move to violate the Manchurian border. Small wonder too, that it was three months before the US could get the General Assembly to act at all on the subject of Chinese intervention, and then its only move was to brand the Chinese an aggressor in a resolution dated February 1, 1951.³³ On the whole however, US leadership had not attempted to deal with the General Assembly since October, most of its negotiating being conducted directly with the nations which were fighting alongside of American troops in Korea. These nations, and not the General Assembly, were the source

32. R.&S., op.cit., p.156.

33. Hearings, op.cit., p.3365.

of most of the restrictions which General MacArthur was to find onerous after the 24th of November. The story of US relations with them is key to an understanding of his limitations, but before passing to it, notice should be taken of the fact that as a means for obtaining direct and immediate action on specific military enterprises, the United States had first used and later abandoned the Security Council, then the General Assembly, and was by November acting, in conjunction with the nations contributing with it to the United Nations Command, virtually independent of the UN itself. That may have been the intent of the Security Council in designating the US its agent. The language of the resolution of 7 July clearly gives to the US latitude to conduct the Korean War as it deemed best, reporting the course of action it adopted to the Security Council as appropriate.³⁴

The Security Council...

- (3) Recommends that all members providing forces and other assistance pursuant to the aforesaid Security Council resolutions make such forces and other assistance available to a unified command under the United States;
- (4) Requests the United States to designate the commander of such forces...
- (6) Requests the United States to provide the Security Council with reports, as appropriate, on the course of action taken under the unified command.

It must also be said that up until November and the first evidence of Chinese intervention, the United States behaved as though it were in command in Korea, as though other nations were "under" its direction. The UNC in Korea reported duly to the UN, but transmitted its report through Washington. (MacArthur was subsequently told that in as much as his reports were purely military, they could be sent direct to the UN) But it is a fact that "no specific directive from the United Nations in explicit military terms has been forthcoming, but these policies (the conduct of the war) have been established under the President as executive agent acts for the other nations in directions for the campaign

34. Hearings, op.cit., p.3372

in Korea"^{34a} The crossing of the 38th parallel provides a good example to point. Although the anticipated event had been drawing fire politically among the UN, the US made the decision to go ahead one week in advance of the action by the General Assembly. Secretary Marshall said of this:³⁵

He (MacArthur) received instructions regarding the thirty-eighth parallel shortly after the landing at Inchon.....
In the fall, when he started his advance, following the landing at Inchon, he was authorized to pass the parallel with his own efforts to destroy the North Korean troops, and finally given authority by the United Nations.... This authority, however, has always been considered as permissive, rather than mandatory.....

Of course, the allies of the United States in Korea were at the time quiescent, docilely following American leadership. As Secretary Marshall remarked, in connection with the statement quoted above:³⁶

....I might add that where the foreign governments became very active in the matter, seemingly to disapprove or to be fearful of what was to be done, was after there were indications of the Chinese Communists' entry into the fight. As I recall, that occurred about the last few days of October when the first Chinese Communist prisoners were taken.

The reaction of the United States Government to this new activity is most interesting, and very significant for the future of collective security, but so long as the conflict appeared to be limited to the territory of Korea, the "foreign governments" were, and the United States allowed them to be, unimportant to the conduct of military operations.

34a. Hearings, op.cit., p.362; Secretary Marshall.

35. Ibid., pp.339-340, and p.362. For the paraphrase of the specific directives see ibid., pp.718-721.

36. Ibid., p.340.

The Allies

At the end of the first week of November, CINCPAC forwarded to JCS the first of a series of recommendations for the removal of restrictions which he felt hampered his efforts to cope with the new principals in the war, the CCF "volunteer" army, and the MIG equipped Red Air Force. Most of those recommendations were disapproved after consideration by the JCS and other policy agencies. Two of them, however, met with their approval. One, the bombing of the Yalu bridges was approved on the condition that the bombing be directed against the half of the bridge in Korean national territory.³⁷ Whence came that peculiar concession to legal territorial integrity is not stated in the record, but the fate of the other JCS approved plan is suggestive.

MacArthur's pilots had been complaining to him for some time about the orders which forced them to desist from pursuing an enemy aircraft across the Yalu River. Obviously they could not be expected to secure and maintain air superiority in the important area near the border if their opponents could dodge in and out of their sanctuary to attack FEAF aircraft. Therefore, MacArthur sought permission for "hot pursuit", that is, authorization for his planes to pursue an engaged enemy across the border in order to complete the job of shooting it down. In this proposal the JCS concurred, and forwarded it to the President for final sanction. The Secretary of Defense, the Department of State, and the President all agreed with the plan.³⁸ State, however, in view of the increasing sensitivity of the allies, suggested that prior to MacArthur's being given the directive, they be consulted to make sure that they would go along with the US decision. Secretary Acheson described the events as follows:³⁹

37. Hearings, op.cit., p.741, General Bradley's testimony.

38. Ibid., p.2279, quoting Secretary Marshall.

39. Ibid., p.1723.

Some days prior to the 13th of November 1950 there were discussions between the Department of Defense and the Department of State, as the result of which the Department of State transmitted to our embassies in certain countries....

To our embassies in certain countries we transmitted a message saying that at an early date we might permit United States aircraft to defend themselves in the air space over the Yalu River, to the extent of permitting hot pursuit of enemy aircraft up to 2 or 3 minutes flying time over enemy territory...

I do not recollect that that went to the President, but I am not sure about that...

Those telegrams resulted in our Embassies taking up with the governments of those countries, this question.

We did not ask them to get any expression of views, but informed them that they might, in a short time, have to ask these governments about this matter. They discussed the question with those governments, and in all cases they got strongly negative responses from the governments, saying that they thought it was dangerous, and not desirable.

The governments, which were mentioned, there were five, and I think, later, six governments with whom this discussion took place.

Shortly after that some of these governments in their turn came to our Embassies and again stated that if we were thinking about this, they wanted to register their view that it was unwise and undesirable.

I transmitted the views of these governments to the Secretary of Defense in a letter, one dated November 23, 1950, and in another letter which I believe was dated November 24, 1950.

After considering these responses, it was determined between the Department of State and the Department of Defense that it was not desirable to go further with this suggestion.

The Secretary of State gave as a reason for not referring this matter either to all 13 of the nations then fighting with the US in Korea, or to the Security Council of the UN, a desire to safeguard the secrecy of the contemplated military action. He also made it explicit that State had not disapproved of the plan, but that both State and Defense "thought it was highly desirable to get the reaction of our partners in Korea on this matter. We undertook to get that for the Defense Department."⁴⁰

It should be pointed out that what was at issue here, the real issue as General Collins would agree,⁴¹ Was the integrity of China, and that what the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Department of State, and the President of the United States

40. Hearings, op.cit., pp.1723,1724.

41. Ibid., p.1188.

had agreed upon was a measure which would extend the action taken by the United Nations Command against its enemies some 50 miles into Manchuria ("2 or 3 minutes flying time over enemy territory" in a jet aircraft traveling at pursuit speed-- say conservatively 500 miles per hour-- comes to fifty miles, and that does not include the long turn-around space required for aircraft traveling at that speed). Yet our allies in Korea were in opposition to any move which would carry the war beyond the political boundary of North Korea. General Collins stated the attitude of the Joint Chiefs as follows:⁴²

I think the basic thing at issue, from the Joint Chiefs' of Staff point of view, is our endeavor to limit the conflict in Korea to that specific area. We have felt, all along, that we went into Korea under the aegis of the United Nations, and that if the conflict were broadened at all, it should be done with the full agreement of the nations participating in the Korean show.

And, furthermore, that if we get into major war, we would need allies; and if we were to take unilateral action in Korea to broaden the war there, then -- not only would there be a possibility of a third world war, developing there, but we might very well stand to lose the principal allies whom we certainly would be dependent on in the event of future war....

From this statement, it is evident that the "hot pursuit" proposal was very important to the future conduct of the war. As the first effort on the part of the JCS to extend the war into Manchuria, it was the first step in a program designed to bring military pressure to bear against the Red Chinese sufficient to deter larger efforts, and to offset their advantage on the ground. The desire to secure the cooperation of allies is a legitimate military objective, as well as a political one; certainly a military estimate by the JCS that we would be in dire straits without their cooperation is a serious matter, and one which should influence US policy. On the other hand, the JCS had determined in November that it was a matter of necessity for the UNC to enter Manchuria. It is entirely reasonable for the JCS to be concerned with the effect of their decision on the allies, despite the fact that they had been unafraid of unilateral action theretofore; the allies

41. Hearings, op.cit., p.1188.

were then in a new and different temper than previously. However, the manner in which so critical an issue was handled is open to serious criticism.

The State Department undertook to find out for the Department of Defense what the reaction of our allies might be by sending a telegram to our ambassadors abroad. The text of that telegram follows:⁴³

Please discuss with Foreign Minister at earliest possible moment grave problem confronting UN forces in Korea in use by enemy of Manchuria as privileged sanctuary for forces which are in fact attacking UN forces in Korea itself...

This problem arises in two respects. First, ground forces can move into Korea and supply themselves from bases and lines of communications which are largely sheltered by immunity of Manchuria. Secondly, enemy aircraft (nationality not always known) operate from Manchurian fields, dash into Korea air space to strike UN air and ground forces and then fly to safety behind Manchurian border a very few minutes away. UN commander has very strictest orders about violations Manchurian territory in addition to orders use extreme care in operations near the frontier itself to insure that hostilities are restricted to Korea. This determination to play according to the rules imposes most serious handicap in face of an enemy which is willing not only to break the rules themselves but to exploit proper conduct UN forces. United States Government is determined to do everything possible to localize conflict in Korea. This is illustrated by rigorous instructions to commanders as well as by efforts made to adjust accidental intrusions into Chinese territory by offering compensations for damages, et cetera. It is obvious, however, that the abuse of Manchuria by the enemy could easily impose an intolerable burden upon UN forces operating lawfully and properly on UN missions in Korea. Therefore, United States Government wishes to inform government to which you are accredited that it may become necessary at an early date to permit UN aircraft to defend themselves in air space over the Yalu River to the extent of permitting hot pursuit of attacking enemy aircraft up to 2 or 3 minutes' flying time into Manchurian air space.

It is contemplated that UN aircraft would limit themselves to repelling enemy aircraft engaged in offensive missions into Korea.

We believe this would be a minimum reaction to extreme provocation, would not itself affect adversely the attitude of the enemy toward Korean operations, would serve as a warning, and would add greatly to the morale of UN pilots who are now prevented from taking minimum defense measures and for whom in case of bomber pilots it is impossible under existing conditions to provide adequate air cover.

For your information we are not asking the concurrence of Government because we believe the highly limited application of hot-pursuit doctrine in this situation would turn upon the military necessity and elementary principles of self-defense, but we think it important that Government be notified of the problem. Please telegraph any reactions NIACT (for immediate action).ACHESON

43. Hearings, op.cit., p.1928.

This remarkable document demonstrates conclusively that prior to the receipt of the reactions requested, State and Defense were:

- (1) agreed that Manchuria sanctuary constituted critical danger to UNC.
- (2) agreed that Chinese violations of border rendered further adherence to rules of territorial integrity undesirable.
- (3) agreed that hot pursuit was minimum reaction demanded by situation.
- (4) agreed that concurrence of allies was not necessary for execution of hot pursuit, and consequent disregard of border.

Note that the above decisions reflect very closely the characteristic actions of US leadership in regard to limitations discussed previously. Here again, the JCS, with State concurrence, determined a military necessity for movement into the next territorial compartment, sanctioned it, but were careful to authorize only a minimum penetration at first so as to warn the enemy in the hope of deterring him, and experiment with his reaction before taking further steps. Quite obviously more than "minimum" action would follow in the event the "abuse of Manchuria" became, as it threatened to become, "an intolerable burden". This was a military policy, adjudged and agreed to by the Department of State, and approved by the President. On the Night of 24 November, the Manchurian refuge became an "intolerable burden," but the military necessity of easing it even though recognized and previously approved by the Government, was overridden by the adverse reaction of 6 of 13 nations fighting with the US in Korea. It may be that later the JCS and the Department of Defense re-evaluated the military importance of allied approval for their actions, but the record is clear that as of 23 November, the fatal Thanksgiving Day of 1950, they were prepared to enter Manchuria, and that the letter from Secretary Acheson to Secretary Marshall of that date prompted any re-evaluation which became necessary. To the question of how much of that estimate was "purely military" and how much of it reflected a concern for a political reaction among the allies which would adversely affect NATO, one can but answer with conjecture. To the question of whether the JCS were rendering to the top councils of the US Government after the 23rd of November advice which reflected solely their military opinion and not their political misgivings, one can but

answer with speculation. For the purposes of this study, however, this conclusion seems wholly justified: six of thirteen of our allies in Korea -- not even a majority of them -- established the key limitation upon General MacArthur, that of enforcing the integrity of the Manchurian border.

This conclusion receives further support from the history of another of the limitations which MacArthur felt should be removed. When the Chinese effort in North Korea came to be recognized as a major war on the part of the Communist government, among the measures proposed by General MacArthur and considered by the JCS was a matter of naval blockade. Admiral Sherman testified to the vulnerability of Red China to blockade, and stated that "it had in November become an urgent necessity to do all possible by means of an economic blockade to reduce the ability of Communist China to wage war, no matter how the ground fighting in Korea developed." The economic blockade was determined as being essential because a naval blockade "could not be tight without allied cooperations." Apparently the Admiral looked upon the economic blockade as the first step toward a real naval effort to stop Red commerce, and he expressed the hope, encouraged by the progress which had been made up to the summer of 1951 in achieving an economic blockade, that "we can still prevail upon our allies to join in an effective United Nations commercial and naval blockade of the ports of the declared aggressor as a sanction short of war, as contemplated by articles 41 and 42 of the United Nations Charter." He said that an effective blockade would seriously hamper the ability of the Red regime to wage war, but that "our allies have been unwilling to join in a naval blockade of China, and been slow to establish an economic blockade." The alternative to attaining the desired blockade was unilateral action, but Admiral Sherman hastened to say that "from a political standpoint, unilateral action would set us apart from our allies, and promote the feeling that the war with China was just a United States war," and then went on to point out the military facts

above.⁴⁴ It is obscure here where the Admiral is speaking from the standpoint of a naval expert or a diplomat, or whether the importance of our deferring to allied wishes became preeminent before or after the initial decision to blockade China, but at any rate, the JCS policy became "economic sanctions first", and the matter was referred to the State Department for action.

During January through April, 1951, 450 American-built trucks arrived in China,⁴⁵ presumably to be put to work immediately hauling supplies to the victorious Red Army which was by that time well south of the 38th parallel, a long night's walk from the Yalu. A May, 1951 resolution of the UN directed each state of the UN to enforce an economic blockade of the Reds, and by the end of June, the Secretary of State looked to receive the first reports from member nations on exactly what action they had taken.⁴⁶ By that time the trucks were probably being pressed into use to haul the equipment of the Red Army as it retreated across the 38th parallel or perhaps to bring down from Manchuria the tents and furniture for the truce talks site. At any rate, it is evident that the State Department's action was hardly swift action, and because Secretary Acheson denied ever having received any request or suggestion from the JCS that a naval blockade be established,⁴⁷ no other conclusion is possible than one similar to that reached above: the allies established the limitation upon the naval blockade of China, presumably on the same grounds that the conflict must not be carried beyond the territorial waters of Korea.

These conclusions raise a serious question as to the value of allies in

44. Hearings, op.cit., pp.1511-1517.

45. Ibid., p.1515. Transhipped through India. HongKong was another important source of strategic materials for the CCF, for during the period 235 western vessels put in there, of which 96 were British, and 46 were ships of the enormous and wealthy merchant marine of the maritime state of Panama, Central America. See Ibid., p.1516.

46. Ibid., pp.1830, 1931-1932.

47. Ibid.

in Limited War. In all the testimony of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of State, there is a consistent adherence to the need for multi-lateral action in Korea. Yet when questioned on the military aspects of this need, the Joint Chiefs uniformly replied by talking about total war, and the prospect of facing the Soviet alone. They asserted that the allies had a great deal to lose in the event of such a war, and that therefore they would not condone actions in Korea which exposed them to the risk. The implication is that if total war came, the allies had more to lose than the US, being nearer to the sources of Soviet power than we, and hence the risk, which we were willing to take in November, was not evaluated the same by them.⁴⁸ This explanation is specious. One of the fundamental arguments for collective security, and therefore for the Korean action, is the fact that all nations stand to lose so much by total war that individuals can no longer stand alone. Certainly in the case of the United States, it is clear that this nation will suffer as much if not more than any other. The point at issue in Korea was who shall command in collective security actions. There the command had been intrusted to the United States. The US had decided to go into Manchuria after weighing carefully the factors involved. It then abrogated its command responsibility when timorous partners registered a protest through the curious medium of the "reaction" of six foreign ministers. There can be no doubt that American consultation with the Allies went further than the hot pursuit inquiry,⁴⁹ but the language of the Acheson telegram suggests very strongly that inasmuch as we were unable to get a favorable reaction on the "minimum" proposal, the proposition

48. Hearings, op.cit., p.1188. General Collins, quoted above, as an example.

49. Ibid., p.362. Secretary Marshall: "Thereafter, enemy air action did not develop to such an extent that it was deemed necessary to take a decision with respect to hot pursuit." No mention of development of ground action, or remainder of action suggested by Acheson telegram.

of bombing troops concentrations and supply lines in Manchuria, or of blockading ships off the China coast, must have been wholly abhorrent to our compeers, and elicited from them the kind of panic that brought Mr. Atlee flying across the Atlantic. That panic was evidently determinant in causing both US military and civilian leadership to abandon its agreed course of action, and to confine its military operations to the territorial limits of Korea, as the allies desired. In October the US commanded; in November the US obeyed.

The argument that should have been introduced regarding allied evaluation of the risks involved in the US decision to enter Manchuria is not that the allies had more to lose -- or thought they did -- from the risk, but that they did not have enough to lose. The names of the five or six allied nations who vetoed the crossing of the Manchurian border were never made a matter of record. If they were the six nations who in 1950 contributed the most men to the UNC, then they were the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Turkey, the Phillipines, and Australia. (Turkey and the Phillipines, each of whom contributed 5000 men, seem a little odd as sources of strong protest against American policy, but together they contributed nearly as many men as the whole British Commonwealth, and ten times the number of France or Australia). The total contribution of these six was 33,000 soldiers, 10,000 sailors aboard an unstated number of ships, and three squadrons of aircraft. This, their stake in the outcome of the Battle of the Chongchon River, is small indeed beside the 350,000 Americans involved in the struggle. ^{49a} The US had the grave responsibility for the safety of that vast force, and the future of the United Nations in whose name it acted to consider at each step of the war. The British Commonwealth, for instance, had only 12,000 men and two aquadrons of aircraft embroiled in the move toward the

49a. Hearings, op.cit., p.422-424. Senator Wiley. Figure is probably accurate.

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Yalu. It is hard to see how Mr. Atlee, assuming he was competent to express a military as well as political estimate of risks involved, could have rendered any decision other than the one he did when asked about entry into Manchuria; after all, what he weighed against the probability of total war -- and it is very hard to see how a foreign minister of an allied nation would be in possession of the latest intelligence on which to base a reasoned evaluation of the prospects of Soviet intervention or CCF intentions with which to gage probabilities -- was the safety of a division or so of troops. Of course the risk must have looked undesirable to him, as it must have looked to other allies with less at stake. It is to be hoped that subsequent negotiations were conducted more soundly, but for the purposes of this study -- which is not an attempt to fix blame for apparent failures in American policy -- it is sufficient to conclude that if the United States were to enter another Korean War, it could better discharge its responsibilities, as delegated by the United Nations, unaided by allies, for if this nation is reluctant to exercise the responsibilities of command thrust upon it by its position of world leadership, than it might better dispense with collective security, and fight alone such limited wars as may be necessary.

In this connection, this paper should register the view opposite of the uniformly enthusiastic reports on the performance of allied troops in Korea. General MacArthur, General Bradley, and General Collins were all vocal in their

50. Strength figures here are taken from Hanson Baldwin, and look high. The Commonwealth troops were grouped tactically in a brigade up until the spring of 1951, when enough had arrived to admit of a divisional organization. The D A records show a regiment of UK troops and a battalion of Canadians participated in the campaign during December, 1950. The Phillipine contribution listed as a battalion, and was occupied as an anti-guerilla force in South Korea during the period. The Turk strength of 5000 men is probably accurate. The French sent a small but good battalion. See Hearings, op.cit., p.3586, quoting Hanson Baldwin; contrast with D A, op.cit., pp.227,228, and 232.

praise of their fighting ability and tactical proficiency. These reports, and subsequent wild tales authored by bored war correspondents, have given the American people a somewhat distorted picture of their overall contribution to the UN effort. The troops sent by the allies to Korea were, by and large, excellent soldiers; however, except those from the European nations, they were seriously deficient in the training and skilled personnel required to mesh their efforts effectively with the American units with which they worked. Consequently, only after a period of training and familiarization, were they at all able to master the techniques of fire direction, communication, motorization, intelligence, and command sufficient to decide their battles on anything but a man-for-man basis. Even after that period, even after they were modernized, they still presented numerous problems.

In 1950 there were 13 allied nations with us in Korea. Of those 13, only two had contributed tactical ground organizations larger than a battalion (the British, and Turkey)⁵¹. Thailand, Colombia, France, Greece, the Netherlands and the Phillipines had each sent a battalion. A US division has nine battalions of about 900 men each and can hold defensively up to 13 miles of Korean mountains. A UN battalion then, might be expected to hold down about two miles of terrain. It can readily be seen then that on a peninsulawhich is nowhere narrower than 100 miles, the handful of allied battalions can hardly have been decisive. Even if all the allies were strung out together on a stabilized line with adequate American artillery and logistic support, the frontage they could defend would only add up to about 15% of the total UN effort.^{51a} But the foreign battalions

51. The author is at a loss to account for this figure 13, which is used frequently throughout the hearings. DA records show 9 nations furnishing ground forces; UK, Canada, Netherlands, Greece, New Zealand (artillery only), France, Phillipines, Thailand, Turkey; perhaps the ROK is counted, and it should be. Perhaps the Australians were fighting in the UK 27th Inf. Brigade. Maybe too, the UK gets a count for Scotland and Wales as well as England. More likely, the count includes those countries which, like South Africa, had sent a few planes, ambulance units, or naval vessels. See note 50.

51a. As General MacArthur put it: "The subtraction of those forces would have no material effect upon the tactical situation." Ibid., p.10.

and regiments other than the Commonwealth units were incorporated into American divisions as extra battalions to permit extended frontages and to utilize more effectively the available American divisional artillery and supply forces. Because it was then overstrength, the US unit was expected to fight over greater distances, that expectation being based on the assumption that foreign battalions would contribute as much to the division effort as American units. It was common practice in Korea for the division to rotate its battalions through periods of reserve and rest after tours on the front, and the foreign battalions took their normal turn at both, the same as the others. However, infrequently a situation would arise where a US commander would find it impossible to use the foreign battalion for a given task, and then the US units would have to do double duty. Just as an example, during one violent UN assault, the nine US battalions of an American division were thrown into the attack, and were being shot to bits by a rigid Chinese defense. On the third day of the battle, the division commander had only two battalions uncommitted. One of these was a US unit which had led the initial assault, and had lost 40% of its men and a great deal of its equipment. The other was a fresh, unused foreign battalion. The commander of the latter refused to allow his troops to enter the zone of action, for his unit was an elite group from a small country, and were it to be shot away, his career would be forfeit. Significantly enough, the US general acceded, and the battered American unit took up the assault once more. But these tactical difficulties are as old as the history of coalition warfare, and the principal reason for introducing them here is to temper the overenthusiastic reputation the allied units presently enjoy, and to reassert the military realities of their contribution to the Korean effort.

The principal drawback to the allied contribution was the political voice it gave those nations in the military councils of the UN. Nor was this voice confined to an effort to have the fighting held to the territorial limits of Korea. To the contrary, in Washington and abroad the representatives of those nations participated through their influence in even relatively

minor military decisions, many times to their own best interests and the detriment of the United Nations Command. For example, take the very recent case of the ammunition shortage investigation in the US Senate. Just before the hearings commenced, the UN forces holding Hill 250 in the Chorwon area, known as Old Baldy, had relinquished the position to an enemy attack. The UN troops were from a small foreign country. Old Baldy had been purchased with fully 5000 American casualties, and because it was one of the hills in dispute at Pammunjom, it had been fortified with materials brought over from the United States, and equipped with every lethal device in the UN arsenal. There was enough ammunition on the hill to burn out the barrel of all available weapons, and there were more automatic weapons per yard there than at any other point along the UN line. The Chinese recaptured the hill by walking in with a company of UN soldiers going forward to relieve the troops on the hill. The position fell without hardly a shot being fired, and cost the foreign battalion about 20% casualties. (An American battalion lost 40% trying to retake the hill before General Taylor called off the assault). But these facts were misrepresented to the newspapers by the commander of the foreign battalion; according to him, his forces had been pushed from Old Baldy because they had run out of ammunition and were reduced to throwing rocks at the Chinese.⁵² This made excellent publicity at a time when the Armed Forces were trying to cope with a serious problem grossly misunderstood by the public and distorted by the press.

The salient aspect of allied political influence remains, however, the fact that they were thereby able to limit the military action to Korea. As Secretary Marshall summarized it:⁵³

52. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Preparedness Subcommittee No. 2, Hearings on Ammunition Shortages in the Armed Services, April 1, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 20, 1953 (83d Congress, 1st Session), Washington, Government Printing Office, 1953, p. 52. The tactical details of this account, as well as the preceding, are personally familiar to the author.

53. Hearings, op.cit., p. 362.

Serious concern was registered by several nations that action in the way of hot pursuit might precipitate an extension of the hostilities. In response to this concern our Department of State advised that the United States would continue to give other governments having forces in Korea information in advance of taking such decisions in order that they may express their views, to which full consideration will be given.

The Department of State and the Joint Chiefs of Staff concurring, the allies were the source of the limitation of the Korean War to the geographic confines of that nation. This conclusion raises the question of who of what agency in the United States Government was responsible for this situation, and whether the decision which brought it into being was "political" or "military".

The Government of the United States

The Administration was under fire during the MacArthur Hearings. Certain of the witnesses, particularly Secretary Acheson, had been personally attacked by both the press and certain of the Senators whom they faced. This fact, plus the normal reticence of high officials speaking on matters which pertained to secret plans and decisions -- which includes the customary military loyalty to the commander and respect for privy counsel -- makes it very doubtful if the full story of the relationships between the various top military and civilian agencies can be determined with any accuracy from the Senate records. With regard to the matter of how the allies came to occupy so important a place in the chain of command, over CINCPAC, little can be added to the above recital. This much more can be said, however: from the record, it would appear that there was no coordinated evaluation, military and political, of the effect on US command having numerous allies, or the desirable size of an allied contribution. Instead, the military gave the State Department a blank requisition, as it were, for anything and everything it could elicit from foreign governments above a certain sized unit. General MacArthur was asked by JCS what the criteria should be, and he replied that "to be of any military value they should be in groups of not less than a thousand with ability to furnish their own replacements and as much logistical support as possible, and he thought that any group of less than a thousand fully equipped and capable of being maintained at approximately that strength would be of questionable value although he admitted that from a United Nations viewpoint that maybe we should accept some forces smaller than that, and some of the battalions over there do have less than a thousand in them"⁵⁴ Then the Defense Department referred the problem to State, who undertook to get what

54. Hearings, op. cit., pp.980-981.

they could from allied countries, with the result that less than one-third of the nations approving the establishment of the United Nations Command actually contributed to it,⁵⁵ and as has been shown above, the majority of the contributions were the 1,000-man groups, the battalions. In view of the demonstrated propensity of both the JCS and the State Department to confuse collective security and collective action with collective command, it would seem that in the event another war must be fought under circumstances similar to Korea, the United States should either fight it alone or revise its attitude toward its responsibility for leadership. At the very least, it should devote to the question of who shall fight with us, and how much he will contribute before he deserves a place in the chain of command, considerably more study than it did during the Korean War. It is also evident that channels of communication between this nation and whatever allies it might then have should more ^{be} sentient to military considerations than US ambassadors and allied foreign ministers.

The history of the relations with the allies also demonstrates that in 1950 the major decisions about limitations on the war were being made in conferences between State and Defense, probably with the approval of the President after a policy had been agreed on between them. The record provides a better example of that relationship in the restrictions placed on CINCFE in regard to the bombing of the town of Rashin. Rashin, or Nanjin, is a town about 20 miles down the east coast of North Korea from the Soviet border. It was the nearest large Korean town to Siberia, and was used by the North Korean Army as a depot for supplies coming in from Vladivostok. CINCFE of course sought to destroy it with his strategic bombers, and did in fact deliver two attacks against the target, one of which failed because of weather obscuration. On 8 September JCS sent CINCFE a directive enjoining him from further attacks on Rashin.^{55a} The source of that

55. Hearings, op.cit., pp.980-981.

55a. Ibid., p.3193.

directive is indicated in the following exchange at the Hearings:⁵⁶

SENATOR HICKENLOOPER. Yes. Now, do you know or do you have any knowledge of whether or not the State Department wrote a most vigorous letter of protest perhaps over the signature of Under Secretary Webb, to the military or to the Defense Department protesting certain of these bombings and, in effect, demanding that they cease?

GENERAL BRADLEY. The State Department has always objected to the bombing of Rashin because of its being 17 miles from the Russian border --17 miles is not a very long space in which to turn around and get back out, and that was their principal objection to it. The objection to the bombing of Rashin naturally comes primarily from the State Department because you are bordering on a political issue of crossing the border into Russia.....

When questioned about it, Secretary Acheson said:⁵⁷

Well, we then objected to these bombings for the reason that it might cause involvement with the Soviet Union and extension of hostilities; we discussed this thing out with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In going into the situation they got out all the information which they had. We asked them to tell us exactly what the whole military significance of this operation would be, and they went over it and described what the situation was. We pointed out on the other side the grave dangers which would occur of involvement. They then analyzed further to see how the same objective could be reached with less danger and believed that they had reached it in that way -- by cutting the lines, road and rail and everything else, at a lower place. And looking over their map and their information with it, they thought they could achieve substantially what they wanted to achieve without getting into the dangers which the bombing of that place might get into.

When the Committee had General Emmet O'Donnell, commander of the Far East Bomber Command during the period, on the stand, he gave it as his expert opinion that Rachin could be "bombarded and destroyed without any damage to or encroachment on Soviet territory".⁵⁸ It would certainly seem that such would be the case with an Air Force capable of bombing and destroying the southern half of the Yalu bridges without hitting the northern portion.

It might be charged, as indeed it was, that in this case at least the Secretary of State had assumed military functions.⁵⁹ But while he had interfered

56. Hearings, op.cit., pp.1063-1064.

57. Ibid., p.2276.

58. Ibid., p.3068.

59. Ibid., p.3587. In the "minority report".

with an approved military program for his own reasons, and while it would appear that his own reasons were of dubious military validity, the fact remains that the JCS concurred in his proposal, and translated his suggestion into a directive to CINCFE. If the JCS felt that there was serious military loss thereby, the record does not show it. To the contrary, the record shows that in this case, as in the case of hot pursuit, in the case proposed Manchurian operations, and in the case of economic blockade, that the Department of State sold its proposition to the JCS, and that the JCS agreed with and acted upon its recommendations. The label "political" attached to the Korean War limitations would then hardly seem justified. No "political limitation" would have been possible unless at some point the military --the JCS-- had agreed that some limitation had been unwise, and had then been overruled. There is absolutely no evidence that any such overruling ever occurred. There is on the other hand ample testimony to the effect that the JCS approved the letter and spirit of every directive which it forwarded to MacArthur, regardless of whether the source of the directive was the State Department, the National Security Council, or any other agency or person outside the military, including the Secretary of Defense.

Secretary Marshall testified that to his knowledge there had never been a decision by the President or the Security Council which was adverse to a recommendation by the JCS in favor of the State Department. He added that in almost all cases an agreement was reached between State and Defense without having to refer a matter to either the Council or the President.⁶⁰ Later he mentioned that after he had relieved Louis Johnson in September, 1950, he had put in a system of lower-echelon squads from Defense and State working jointly on policy problems to eliminate all except major differences between the two agencies prior to their

60. Hearings, op.cit., pp.383-384.

being placed before the two Secretaries.⁶¹ General Bradley pointed out that any matter up for discussion before the National Security Council which had "military implications" was referred to the JCS for remark, and that whether or not the Secretary of Defense disagreed with the JCS evaluation, the JCS remark went forward unaltered. Furthermore, he pointed out that he or a representative of the JCS was present at all NSC meetings to give, if necessary, the JCS viewpoint in greater detail, and that failing all else, he always had direct access to the President.⁶²

During the period of this study, the National Security Council was not, on the record, the origin of any of the specific limitations placed upon CINCFE, although it is inconceivable that any were sent forward to him without the knowledge and general concurrence of the Council after the fact, if not before it. The first formal action by NSC with respect to MacArthur's recommendations for lifting the restraints came during January of 1951, when it reviewed his December proposals, and discussed a JCS plan for extending the war in the event it became necessary to withdraw from Korea. The discussion was precipitated not only by CINCFE's repeated urgings for the removal of his restrictions, but also by certain reports he had submitted indicating that withdrawal would be necessary to save his command, which was on the verge of collapse. Two of the JCS then flew to Korea --Generals Collins and Vandenburg-- to inspect conditions there, and returned with the opinion that the UNC was in good shape, could and would continue to fight in Korea. On the basis of their report, and with the complete approval of the JCS, it was decided that neither withdrawal nor extension of the conflict was desirable at the time. From that time forward, from all indications, the National Security Council played a much larger role in deciding policy on

61. Hearings, op.cit., pp.638-639.

62. Ibid., p.1067.

limitations.⁶³

In the light of the above, attempts to condemn MacArthur's limitations as "political" would appear to have little foundation in fact. To the contrary, the interaction of the various agencies at the top level of the Government was so complete that throughout the Hearings "military" men were heard delivering political opinions, and "political" leaders rendered military estimates. Whether or not this is a healthy situation, whether or not the frames of reference for the JCS and the Secretary of State were clearly enough defined for each so that both voices could be heard at the highest levels of Government without mufflings in the name of interdepartment cooperation, is a matter for a more profound study than is essayed here. Interestingly enough, however, General MacArthur himself answers those who seek scandal in the JCS-State relationships of 1950:⁶⁴

I think that it is quite impossible to draw a line of differentiation and say this is a political and this is a military situation. The American Government should have such coordination so that the political and military are in coordination.

On the other hand, he goes on to say:⁶⁵

The general definition which for many decades has been accepted was that war was the ultimate process of politics; that when all other means failed, you then go to force; and when you do that, the balance of control, the balance of concept, the main interest involved, the minute you reach the killing stage, is the control of the military. A theater commander, in any campaign, is not merely limited to the handling of his troops; he commands that whole area politically, economically, and militarily. You have got to trust at that stage of the game when politics fails, and the military takes over, you must trust the military, or otherwise you will have the system that the Soviet once employed of the political commissar, who would run the military as well as the politics of the country. Now the differentiation that exists between the political features and the military features, I am not able to discuss because I have not been here in Washington. Others will be able to tell you more about that than I, but I do unquestionably state that when men become locked in battle, that there should be no artifice under the name of politics, which should handicap your own men, decrease their chances for winning, and increase their losses.

63. Hearings, op.cit., p.329. General Marshall's testimony.

64. Ibid., p.45.

65. Ibid.,

These sentiments are a direct attack on the permissive aspect of the limitations placed upon MacArthur, as well as their source. In order to evaluate the validity of his contentions, and to adjudge the wisdom of territorial limitations, it will now be necessary to examine the military aspects of limited war, strategic and tactical. Before doing so, however, it would be well to review briefly the conclusions regarding limited war in Korea that have thus far been reached.

Summary of the Sources of Restraint

- A. The limitations imposed upon CINCFE from above have been characterized as:
- a. territorial
 - b. permissive
- B. The enemy was an important source of the territorial aspect of the limitations in that he refrained from actions within his capabilities which would have prompted or necessitated:
- a. UN total engagement of Red China
 - b. violation of Manchurian territory or Chinese waters
- C. The United Nations did not give specific directives for the conduct of the campaign in Korea, but rather delegated that responsibility to the United States. The United Nations could not be considered a source of limitations.
- D. The United States up until November 1950 exercised to the fullest extent the latitude explicit in the UN's resolution delegating to it the conduct of the war. In the UN itself it dealt initially with the Security Council, but after the return of the Soviet in August, sought confirming resolutions from the General Assembly. By November it was responsible in the conduct of the war principally to the 13 nations with whom it was fighting in Korea.
- E. These allied nations were the primary source of the territorial limitations on MacArthur, prohibiting him from violating the Manchurian border. These countries were also determinant in preventing naval blockade of the Chinese coast, apparently for reasons which stemmed from a similar regard for Chinese national waters.
- F. In view of the foregoing conclusion, in the future the United States should fight limited wars for the UN either:
- a. alone, so that allies cannot limit its military action unnecessarily

- b. collectively, exercising without compunction or faltering the position of leadership thrust upon it by the condition of the world, and the command prerogatives delegated to it by the United Nations.

G. Although it is impossible to brand any of MacArthur's limitations "political" because the Joint Chiefs of Staff were party to them all, and the voice of the military at no time was disregarded or voted down, these procedures adopted by the State Department with the knowledge of the Defense Department which led to limitations are reprehensible:

- a. the polling of foreign ministers to determine action on a military decision.
- b. the wholesale recruitment of allied units for the United Nations Command without any apparent evaluation of the difficulties numerous allies raise in the exercise of American command over them.
- c. the insistence on a prohibition against bombing ^Rashin despite military assurance that it could be done without violating the Soviet border, which was State's fundamental concern.

H. The top levels of American Government appeared to be highly coordinated throughout the period, and although the National Security Council did not act specifically on limitations prior to 1951, indications are that thereafter those issues were decided in that body.

I. In order to adjudge adequately the nature of MacArthur's limitations it will be necessary to study the tactics and strategy of limited war.

PART III

The Theory and Practice of Limited War

Political Strategy

When the North Korean Army invaded the Republic of Korea it deliberately flaunted the vested interests of both the United Nations and the United States. The UN had been committed to its defense by a long history of attempts to unify all of Korea which began before the United Nations created the Republic itself. The Republic of Korea was the legally constituted government for all Korea, recognized as such by the UN and most of its member states. At the time of the invasion a United Nations Commission was on the scene working for a peaceful settlement of the long standing dispute between North and South Koreans. The invasion then constituted an overt act of international brigandage to which the UN has to reply or manifest impotence as an agency for world peace. The United States was involved no less deeply not only by the fact that the success of the United Nations was the cornerstone of postwar American foreign policy, but by virtue of being the sponsor of the Republic of Korea in the UN. Although Korea was not critical to the military security of the United States, our political commitment to its survival as sovereign nation had been made explicit by the detailing of American soldiers to train the ROK Army, by the furnishing of arms, equipment and money for the ROK defense establishment, and by a visit of John Foster Dulles to the Republic only 6 days prior to the invasion to assure the Republic of "continued United States support."⁶⁶ Therefore, when the NK Army moved, the UN and the US had to act, or else forfeit their position among nations.

66. Hearings, op. cit., p. 3362.

The political leaders of the United States, acting under the auspices of the leadership of the United Nations, determined to take military counter-action against the North Korean invader; the survival of Korea then became an objective of the overall military strategy of the United States. The decision to counter the Communist thrust in Korea with military force was the logical implementation of an American policy which remains in effect today: containment of Sovietized communism to its present size. In fact, the present policy of the United States more clearly draws the lines around Communism over which an aggressor may not pass with impunity. Therefore, means adopted by the military establishments of the West under the leadership of the US to cope with the North Korean aggression are of paramount importance for present and future American foreign policy. From an appraisal of the weaknesses of the past, mistakes of the future can be minimized.

Military Strategy

The alternatives before the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States as they sat down to determine how they would counter the Red thrust in Korea were two: action against the source of the aggression, Soviet Russia; or limited action against the aggression itself. The first choice clearly entailed immediate total war. There are many strategians today who feel that their choice would have been the former and not the latter. Their argument is as follows:⁶⁷

- (1) future conflict, if it came, would inevitably find the US with less of an advantage in atomic weapons as Russia developed her own nuclear attack.
- (2) the alternative action fails to exploit the sole effective deterrent to Soviet aggression: the threat of total, atomic war.

67. This argument is based on a note to Professor Elliott from Henry Kissinger, Harvard University, 2 March 1951. Mr. Kissinger was commenting on the policy of physical containment in general, and made only passing reference to the Korean War. However, his sentiments, poorly paraphrased here, reflect the expressed opinion of many commentators who have criticized the conduct of the Korean War from the standpoint of basic strategy.

- (3) the alternative action established a policy which allows the Soviet to deploy western forces, left initiative solely in their hands.
- (4) the alternative brings the west to battle on the worst possible conditions, for Communism possesses interior lines and vast resources for land warfare.
- (5) the danger of total conflict is increased with each limited counteraction but each limited conflict drains Western strength for the ultimate trial.

Their proposals for future policy are very ably expressed in this summary:⁶⁸

The United States should consequently develop an integrated policy capable of treating Soviet measures as aspects of a pattern, not as isolated incidents confined to specific geographical areas. The concept of "situations of strength" is useful as a policy guide only if it takes into consideration total power relationships apart from the accidental peripheral constellation of forces. Such a policy of containment would pose the threat of a major war with the United States as the ultimate deterrent of Soviet aggression, while not committing the United States to fight in theaters of the Soviet Union's choosing. A line should be clearly defined, any transgression of which would involve a major war, though not necessarily at the point of aggression. This would eliminate the "grey areas" as policy problems and put the question of their defense into the realm of total military strategy.

In so far as the decision to fight a limited war in Korea is concerned, the arguments above neglect the following factors which must have influenced the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

- (1) America's ability to capitalize on her atomic superiority was far less than was ordinarily supposed. The Strategic Air Force, which would have carried the total war to Russia for a decision there, was equipped on July 10, 1951 with only 147 B-36 aircraft. Of these 60 were inoperative, in the

68. Ibid. The "situation of strength" concept he attributes to Secretary Acheson, who sought "the physical containment of the Soviet Union by the assembly of superior force at every point around the Soviet periphery."

process of being modernized. Production was 3 per month.⁶⁹ Assuming, justifiably enough, that initial Soviet activity deprived the USAF of most of its bases near the Soviet from which it could conduct strategic bombing with World War II type aircraft, our strategic potential in June of 1950 must have been indecisive.

- (2) total war at that time would have meant the immediate loss of Europe. Given a year or two, NATO could be built up sufficient to defend Europe long enough to prevent its productive capacity from falling into the hands of the Soviet in a total war.
- (3) the successful counteraction of an aggression in Korea would stimulate the free world into preparations for total war which would at once increase the deterrent against it and future local aggressions as well.
- (4) the concept of Soviet "interior lines" is specious. Western naval and air power can deploy force to any given point in the world faster than the strained land communication system of the Soviet can move and supply its power. Communist land potential is offset by Western superior tactical firepower and mobility.

With respect to a future American policy, suggestions to base containment squarely on the threat of total war ignore these facts:

- (1) total war, even with the most advanced technological weapons, will be no quick decision affair, but will be a long struggle in which the United States and its allies will suffer most terribly, the results of which may place the world in a worse plight than it is today.

69. R. & S., *op. cit.*, p. 242. Quoting testimony which "leaked" from a closed Hearing of the House Committee on Armed Services, R.&S. deem this strength "terribly inadequate for a sustained bombing offensive which must expect a high rate of attrition." If the figures are accurate, the author concurs.

- (2) advances in nuclear weapons by the Soviet, plus their acknowledged facility for the design and construction of sound aircraft, suggest that this country may have as difficult a time surviving intercontinental bombing as Russia.
- (3) these factors taken together militate against a policy which would call upon the Congress of the United States for a declaration of total war to preserve the independence of a South Korea. Such a policy in effect forces upon the American people the question "will you risk national survival for the political independence of some tiny, remote country?" Even if support for such a policy could be mustered here--and it must be remembered that no policy is viable without such support--it is doubtful if American overseas allies would find it convenient to remain committed to joint action with the US, perhaps preferring to make their bid against Communism after the Soviet and the US reduce themselves to impotence in a total struggle.
- (4) any policy so rigid as to commit the US to "containment or else" plays into the hands of Communist initiative, for their international activities could then rapidly assume a subtlety and obliquity which would make it practically impossible for us to decide when "or else" should be our action. Deprived of active US military support in peripheral areas, the western outposts would rapidly succumb to relatively weak, informal military organizations of "volunteers," "native" resistance movements, sabotage, duplicity, or revolution.

But these ruminations are digressional. In the ultimate analysis, the debate hinges upon whether or not war with the Soviet Union is inevitable. If it is, then a policy which accepts now the risk of total war is eminently reasonable; if however, war with Russia can be avoided, then the

bid for time, implicit in the decision to fight limited war in Korea, was justified.⁷⁰

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff, men trained in the science of force, that decision, calling as it did for deliberate physical restraints which were bound to handicap their own men, must have been most difficult. Yet they so decided, and thereby set aside a definition of war long cherished by the American military because it expressed the belief of the American people: "war was the ultimate process of politics;...when all other means failed, you then go to force; and when you do that...a theater commander is not limited...meet force with maximum counterforce...there is no substitute for victory...war's every object is victory."⁷¹ This definition represents the military application of the long standing legalistic-moral approach to foreign policy traditionally American:⁷²

the carrying over into the affairs of states of the concepts of right and wrong, the assumption that state behavior is a fit subject for moral judgment. Whoever says there is a law must of course be indignant against the lawbreaker and feel a moral superiority to him. When such indignation spills over into the military contest, it knows no bounds short of the reduction of the law-breaker to the point of complete submissiveness--namely unconditional surrender. It is a curious thing, but it is true, that the legalistic approach to world affairs, rooted as it unquestionably is in a desire to do away with war and violence, makes violence more enduring, more terrible, and more destructive to political stability than did the older motives of national interest. A war fought in the name of high moral principle finds no early end short of some form of total domination....

It is a curious thing, but it is true, that the very nation who forced upon the Japanese nation a constitution which "outlawed" war, should within a

70. W. Y. Elliott, United States Foreign Policy, Columbia University Press, New York, 1952, pp. 214-219.

71. General MacArthur. These phrases appear here out of context, but there can be little doubt that they express the General's attitude.

72. George Kennan, American Diplomacy, 1900-1950, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1951, pp. 100-102. Of MacArthur's pronouncement he says: "I am frank to say that I think there is no more dangerous delusion, none that has done us a greater disservice in the past or that threatens to do us a greater disservice in the future, than the concept of total victory."

short time have found it expedient to rearm Japan. It is a curious thing, but true, that the man who wrote that provision into the Japanese constitution, Douglas MacArthur--who had been a life long believer in the principle that war, as an "arbiter of international dissensions", "must be abolished if the world is to go on"--was the protagonist of extended hostilities in the Far East.⁷³ But Douglas MacArthur spoke and spoke well for all Americans who went to war over a Stamp Tax, who knew their property rights well enough to make it "Fifty-four forty or Fight," who learned at Munich that you can't appease Totalitarians, you fight them to unconditional surrender, who readily grasped the issue of hot pursuit in Korea as "a doctrine of criminal law which enables a peace officer to pursue a fleeing felon outside the area of his jurisdiction when he is close behind the culprit. The privileged sanctuary of Manchuria is comparable to the area outside the policeman's jurisdiction."⁷⁴ Douglas MacArthur was and is The American Soldier, the inevitable product of the American system which decrees one set of leaders and values for peace, another set for war. He is the inevitable product of a society which hates war but fights with an emotional frenzy; which despises soldiers, but idolizes the military hero. He was and always will be great, as the American people are great. But they, and he, were bound to find restraint incompatible with combat. They, and America, must learn.

In today's war, there can be victory in battle; but victory in war, war in the traditional total American sense, can not be other than Pyrrhic. Thus the Chinese Army in Korea might have been defeated in battle, but to bring the Chinese people to its knees in unconditional surrender would have been beyond any but maximum American effort, and would have indeed been the "wrong war, the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy." But was the effort put forth sufficient to assure victory in battle? Were the

73. R. & S., op.cit., pp. 317,91.

74. Hearings, op.cit., p. 3583. Quotation is from the "minority report."

limitations imposed upon CINCFE as inconsistent with sound tactics as they were with his concept of sound strategy? To provide the answers to those questions, it will be necessary to review briefly the tactical aspects of limited war.

The Tactics of Limited War

Strategy is the art of bringing the enemy to battle on as advantageous terms as possible; tactics is the art of defeating him once he is upon the battlefield. On the Korean peninsula the strategy of the United Nations brought its army to grips first with the North Koreans, and subsequently with the Chinese Communist Forces. The UNC was a modern, motorized army equipped with every weapon that science had devised for the military during the years of World War II, and a few of those developed since. It gained and held, without serious challenge, control of the air. It enjoyed the advantages of modern electronic communications and fire control systems without rivals for flexibility and efficiency. By contrast, its opponent had virtually none of these advantages. It was an army of peasants armed largely with hand weapons, with almost no transportation, communication, or fire control beyond the most primitive. But it enjoyed three tactical advantages which were nearly decisive. The first of these was superior foot mobility in the mountainous terrain of the battlefield; the second, superior combat intelligence; the third, a callous disregard for human life. Capitalizing brilliantly upon these three, the North Korean Army in the first few months of the war came close to defeating the UN, and drove it into a compact defensive position on the Pusan perimeter. Then quite suddenly the tide of battle reversed. In September the Inchon landings were made, and the enemy was thrown into uninterrupted retreat to the far northern sections of his country, pursued closely all the way. On the night of November 24th, the situation changed abruptly once more. The "phantom which cast no shadow" struck savagely, and the UNC was thrown into a

precipitous and disastrous retrograde movement which was not stopped until both armies were south of the 38th parallel. Then in the winter of 1951, the UNC rallied, took up the offensive, and drove the CCF back. By spring that drive had faltered, and the Chinese once again marched south. Once more the UN fought them to a halt, and with the arrival of General Van Fleet after MacArthur's relief, took up the "killer offensive", which inflicted on the enemy a serious defeat--serious enough to bring about a virtual armistice and truce talks. In the positions they had then attained, both sides remained for the rest of the war, fighting essentially defensively, neither side willing to essay a large offensive, but battling bloodily for the "political hills" which were being disputed at Panmunjom. So the armistice found them in 1953.

There are very sound tactical reasons for the see-saw course of the war which has seemed inconclusive and frustrating to soldiers and civilians alike. There was no prospect for victory in the sense that General MacArthur and most Americans understood victory; to the contrary, the limitations which had been imposed upon the UNC seemed to obviate victory, to render it impossible for the conflict to take any course other than endless, irresolvable dispute at the conference table, and ever mounting slaughter on the battlefield. It was this prospect, as much as any other factor, which evoked widespread condemnation of the Administration's conduct of the war. But professional soldiers, MacArthur and the JCS included, understood well the tactical consequences of the decisions made in Washington which made of Manchuria a sanctuary for Red military power:

General MacArthur: "The enemy is fighting for a very definite purpose--to destroy our forces in Korea. We constantly, every day, run that risk, without the potential of defeating him, and stopping him--to come again. He attacks today. We resist. We fall back. We form a new line, and we surge back. Then, he is right back, within a week, maybe, up to the battle front with his inexhaustible supply of manpower. He brings in another

hundred thousand, or another half-million men, and he tosses them at these troops constantly. That is a new concept in war."⁷⁵

General Vandenburg: "If I might explain, the difficulty as we go north and as the distance between the Yalu River and our front lines decreases is due to the fact that night movements can be made in two successive stages, and that there is a very short time comparatively speaking that their supplies and reinforcements are under attack because of the length of time, the short length of time in a motor convoy or otherwise that it takes them to run down from the border to the front lines. With the increase in night operations in which we are becoming increasingly successful, and we are pressing that with everything we can, it would be more difficult today for them to successfully operate than it was 6 or 7, 5, 6 or 7 months ago, but still the greatest length of road and rail that you can get the enemy from his main source of supply, the more advantageous it is to the Air Force, and therefore, as you decrease it, it becomes less advantageous."⁷⁶

General Van Fleet: "Air is unable to do the job alone. However, our air power has imposed a tremendous loss on the enemy in point of materiel, draining great quantities from Russia...." Urging lifting the restrictions on ground maneuver under which he operated, he made the point that the result would be "greater consumption of supplies and a greater flow of casualties to the rear, which gives them a great tonnage problem they could not handle satisfactorily just at night. They would have to revert to a daylight haul and there would be many bottlenecks and jamups which would give our Air Force beautiful targets both day and night. So there is a

75. Hearings, Ibid., p. 68. The General went on to add: "That is a new concept in war. That is not war--that is appeasement." His concurrence in the matter of the importance of air-power in Korea is evident in this statement: "You are a bridge player. You know--lead from your strength. Our strength is the air and the Navy...It is there we should apply the pressure. They have nothing to resist it with. They are wide open..." Ibid., p. 49.

76. Ibid., p. 1505.

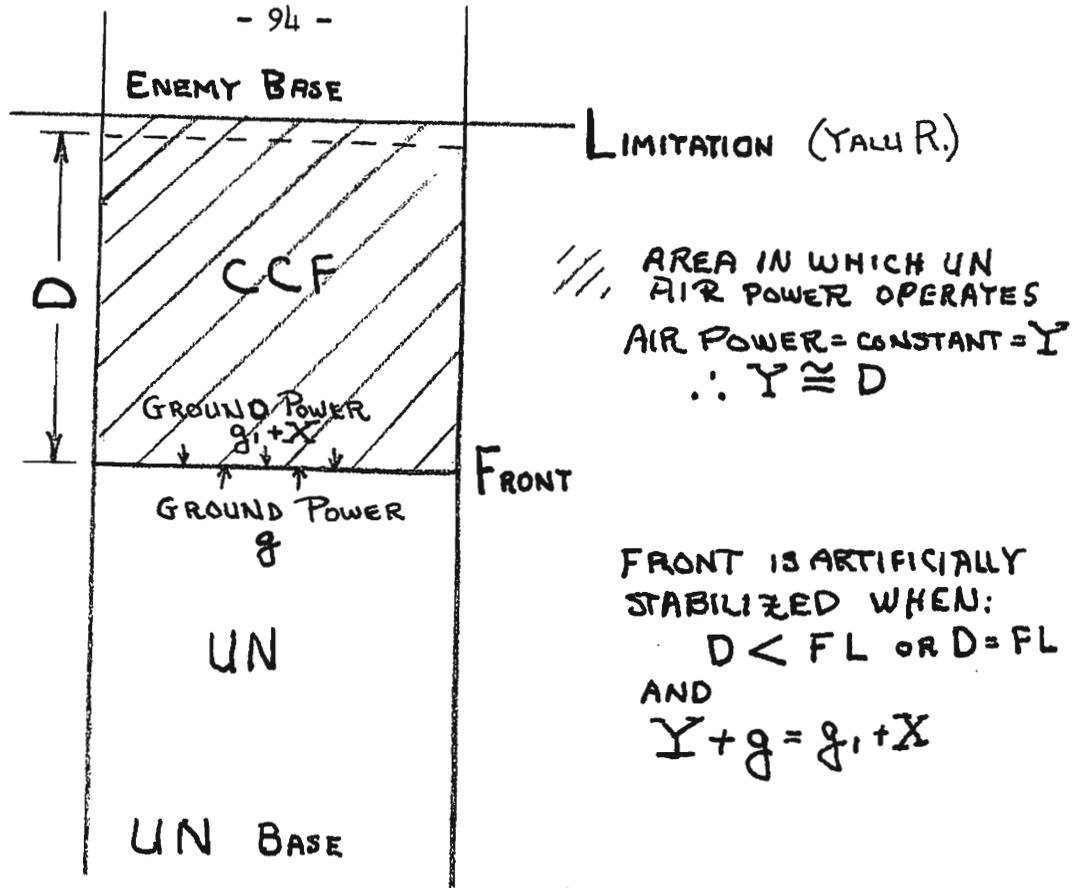
point at which they are able to maintain battle positions, doing the present type of fighting /1953/ and getting down there by various means--rail, trucks, and hand carry with sufficient tonnage to maintain their positions..."⁷⁷

To sum up these opinions, a set of military laws might be postulated which would govern campaigns like the Korean, with limitations upon the use of UN force:

1. With a limited input of UN ground power, enemy ground power will always be superior by X amount, representing their advantage in numbers.
2. X amount of enemy ground power is compensated for by Y amount of UN air power applied to the lines of enemy supply. But Y is also limited, therefore:
3. Y is a function of a distance D behind the enemy line over which enemy supplies on their way forward are subjected to constant attack.
4. Hence, if the enemy applies an increment of ground power to X, then D must be increased to compensate. If there is a limitation on D like there was in Korea, as UN ground power approaches that limit, D will decrease, causing Y to become less than X, and the enemy will defeat the UN on ground, driving it back until D is long enough to make Y equal again to X. In Korea, to be specific, as General Vandenburg put it, "As the distance between the Yalu River and our troops decreases, the effectiveness of our tactical air force decreases in direct proportion."

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77. U. S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Hearings on Department of Defense Appropriations for 1954, March 11, 1953 (83d Congress, 1st Session), Washington, Government Printing Office, 1953, p. 290.



Obviously, the war was not as simple as all that. There were other large factors not mentioned above, such as the superiority of UN fire power, but consider that the enemy feeds enough troops into the fight to just offset UN total ground power, and then adds the increment X for offensive advantage. Then too it must be remembered that as the relative advantages assert themselves in the conflict, there will be time-lags between cause and effect which will give rise to a cyclic or periodic vacillation of the front, and the "see-saw" aspect of the battle will be accentuated. When the enemy is on the offensive, "see-saw" phenomena are further emphasized by certain limitations upon the Chinese ability to maintain sustained offensive effort which is entirely independent of friendly action, being the result of their necessity to stop and regroup after the terrain and objectives covered in initial plans have been taken, the usual decimation of their advanced units which must be replaced, their great difficulties in communicating new orders and resupply to tactically extended units, and other defects of the organization and equipment of their army. Accordingly, there may be an

artificial hiatus in an enemy drive while his regrouping and so forth takes place, a hiatus which may admit of a UN halt, or even a minor counter-offensive; but at the completion of the enemy's necessary rearrangements, his advantage will be reasserted so long as the UN air power has no room to curtail his build up.⁷⁸ However, the front might be artificially stabilized by the UN's assumption of a position where D is less than the distance from the front to the limitation line. Then enemy increases in ground power might be offset by judicious increases in the amount of UN air power operating over D , and barring additions to the enemy ground force beyond UN air resources, the line of contact could be held almost rigid. Such an artificial stabilization was accomplished, but it was also greatly assisted by the establishment of a heavily fortified line with tremendous defensive fire power to increase UN weapon-to-man advantage over enemy troops, by the arming and training of large numbers of ROK formations, and by the expenditure of unprecedented amounts of artillery and other ammunition along the front to counter local concentrations of enemy force.

Somewhat parenthetical to this study, it should be pointed out that the artificial stabilization of the UN front was successful, and that the above theory explains why it was that the UN halted and talked truce in 1951 instead of driving north and compressing the distance D to the point that the safety of its ground elements was imperiled, and why it imposed a stringent prohibition on Van Fleet against offensive or moving war which would have had a similar effect. In the light of this argument it is difficult to understand General Van Fleet's repeated assertion that had those restrictions been lifted he could have brought the war to an end without carrying the war outside the boundaries of Korea.⁷⁹ Assuming that the

78. For a good description of this process see DA, op.cit., p. 230. It is to be noted that Russian armies advancing into Germany displayed the same sporadic thrust.

79. Hearings on Ammunition Supplies in the Far East (March 5, 6, & 10, 1953), op. cit., pp. 28, 37, 48, 134.

territorial limitation was necessary, the military policy of the UN action after 1950 seems reasonable and necessary.

But the subject under discussion here is the fateful decisions of November and December, 1950. It can be readily understood that without distance in which to assess telling attrition on enemy supply and reinforcement, MacArthur's command was bound to have to retreat to the 38th. Probably the initial defeat at the Chongchon River would have occurred despite permission to operate into Manchuria prior to 24 November. Probably also the Changjin Reservoir disaster would have been equally impossible to avoid. But it is certain that had bombing been permitted beyond the Yalu River, the UN position could have been artificially stabilized further up the peninsula than it eventually was, although probably no further north than the Hungnam-Anju "waist" because of the increasing density of Red air power potential in Manchuria would counteract in part UN air efforts as it progressed deeper into that country. By the adoption of the Yalu limitation, the Joint Chiefs of Staff committed the nation to the stabilized position just above the 38th parallel that was to bleed the nation for two long years. With limited forces no decision could be sought, for with restrictions the limited force had perforce to seek an artificial combat balance, or run the risk of destruction. But how did the Joint Chiefs expect to bring the war to an end? A member of the German General Staff, writing before the Second World War, foresaw the outcome of their decision quite clearly:⁸⁰

....when a decision has been sought, has been fought for, but has not been found; when the contending forces are so in balance that neither can push through to victory. True, such a situation cannot last forever, for other non-military factors--moral and economic forces--will then come into play to put an end to the stalemate. Strategically, however, a war becomes frozen when strategy is deprived of one of its elements, namely, that of movement. When there is no movement possible (or permitted), there is no room for strategy. Immobility can never lead to a military decision. Even the greatest

80. Hermann Foertsch, The Art of Modern Warfare, Oskar Piest, Berlin, 1940, p. 35.

reciprocal deterioration of force will, in such a situation, require other than military means to bring about a decision, if a decision there is to be.

On "deterioration of force", however, the JCS apparently based considerable faith, if only as a lever to precipitate political crises in the Red Chinese regime which would force their coming to terms.⁸¹ It is impossible to say whether they, or the wily German, were right; certainly the enemy manifested no growing reluctance to sacrifice his men in the months before the recent armistice. Quite the opposite, he strongly increased his ground action and absorbed more casualties as the peace drew nearer, no doubt to better his bargaining position. Whatever made him knuckle is obscure, and will remain so until the enemy history of the war is made public in the West.

However, this much can be said of the JCS decision to accept limitation: from a strictly military point of view it invited defeat, retreat, and attendant casualties, and even if the military objective was the destruction of large amounts of Chinese manpower, was inconclusive and indecisive. MacArthur's military mission has been the subject of much debate. The Administration maintained that militarily all the UN was attempting to do in Korea was restore the political integrity of the Republic of Korea, and that the campaign in North Korea was firstly a military necessity to destroy the North Korean Army, and secondly a politically desirable action. As Secretary Acheson phrased the military purpose: "Our objective is to stop the attack, end the aggression on that Government, restore peace, providing against the renewal of aggression...The political objective of the United Nations, in regard to Korea, ever since 1947, has been to bring about a unified, free and democratic Korea."⁸² Now it is quite clear that General MacArthur interpreted the penetration of North Korea by his forces as the

81. MacArthur Hearings, op. cit., pp. 1449, 1471, 1717-1718.

82. Ibid., pp. 1729, 1734.

implementation of the second, political program, and not merely the first: "My mission was to clear out all North Korea, to unify it, and to liberalize it."⁸³ The resolution of that difficulty is critical to the MacArthur controversy, but insignificant to this study except that the very existence of a misunderstanding indicates faulty analysis on some one's part. (There is no such thing as a political mission for a military body. All its missions, those that it executes by the use of force at any rate, are military missions.) But what is important is that the JCS agreed with MacArthur's presence in North Korea and in general with his plans for the disposition of his forces. The military consequences of that action in the event that China entered the war were apparently evident prior to that event; they were certainly understood afterwards.

In this knowledge the JCS permitted MacArthur to press forward from the Chongchon on the 24th of November, despite the fact that on that date they knew that the Yalu was to be the limit of UN action. When the Chinese participation in the war became painfully prominent, they did not object to the limitations which prevented him from accomplishing his purpose there, or preserving his command from heavy loss. Knowing what the Yalu restriction entailed, and aware that China was already in the war by early in November, the action of the JCS should have been to change MacArthur's mission to conform with the changed situation. On the face of the military fact of the situation, it was impossible to occupy all of North Korea up to Manchurian sanctuary. The military mission should have been altered to cope with the military reality. General Wedemeyer in testifying before the Committee stated this proposition very aptly:⁸⁴

83. Ibid., p. 19.

84. Hearings, Ibid., pp. 2515-2516.

SENATOR CAIN....General Wedemeyer, you believe that no military restriction should be imposed upon a theater commander once a mission has been given to him?

GENERAL WEDEMEYER. That is correct, sir. There should be no restriction because he is responsible for the lives of human beings, and he must conduct his operations with the view to economizing force, accomplishing his mission with the minimum loss in lives, and he cannot do that with restrictions such as are sometimes imposed....If it is found that military operations have to be conducted that would embarrass our Government politically or otherwise, then the mission should be changed, clearly changed, and then the restrictions will no longer have effect or be applicable.

No such action was forthcoming from the JCS by the end of 1950. There is no record of such action ever being indicated as a matter of strong military necessity to the President or to the National Security Council in 1950. Instead, at a level lower than that, the JCS and the State Department agreed upon a policy which was at definite variance with the military requirements of the moment, and which precluded logical and necessary action by the JCS.

The conclusion which follows from this argument is brief:

JCS action in November and December of 1950 should have been either:

- a. to seek a redefinition of MacArthur's mission and order withdrawal to a realistic battle position.
- b. to protest vigorously the territorial limitation, and to seek at the highest level of Government permission to execute the military action called for by the exigencies of the situation, i.e., extension of the war to Manchuria.

This conclusion, together with the previous observations and conclusions, will now permit evaluation of the overall aspects of the limitations on UN force in Korea.

Summary and Conclusions on Limited War in Korea

- A. The political strategy of the West necessitated UN entry into the Korean War, with consequent involvement of the United States.
- B. The military weakness of the West made it imperative that the political objectives of the UN in Korea be attained without the commitment of major American or other Western force. Therefore, the campaign in Korea, as a matter of military necessity, was limited from the start.
- C. The global nature of the threat to the West made it essential that control over the action be retained by a central command. Hence, the JCS exercised close supervision over the amount of force that it could permit CINCFE to employ. In doing so, ^{it} ~~they~~ reversed the dominant trend in modern war, and redefined the American concept of warfare.
- D. As limited war was fought in Korea, the only military recourse is an artificially stabilized line, that is, a front selected and fortified at such a distance from the territorial limit on military action as to assure air power attrition of enemy lines of communication sufficient to offset enemy advantages in numbers.
- E. With a territorial limitation, the JCS should not have assigned the field command a mission which was clearly not consonant with the security of his command. Alternatively, they should have sought to obtain permission to disregard the territorial limitation from the President or from the National Security Council. / good
- F. It is now possible, on the basis of all the preceding analysis, to suggest an American policy for similar future contingencies.

PART IV

A United States Policy for Limited War of the Future

Strategy

It may be that the United States will never again be forced to fight a military action analogous to the circumstances which obtained in Korea in 1950. Speaking in New York on the 12th of January 1954, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated that President Eisenhower and his advisers had taken a basic decision to change our military planning. The decision is to "depend primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate instantly by means and at places of our own choosing." He said that the US cannot rely solely on a policy of "meeting aggression by direct and local opposition." That might mean tying down American power in Asia, the Arctic, the tropics, or the Near East. "Local defense will always be important, but there is no local defense which alone can contain the mighty land power of the Communist world."⁸⁵ From the man who had pledged the US to the defense of Indo-China, these are momentous words, and should give the Kremlin overlords considerable food for thought before they essay another venture like Korea. However, it is clear that at the moment the possibility of "local" war has not yet been dismissed by US policy planners. The lessons of Korea will still have meaning for them for at least the immediate future.

It is hoped that if another Korea type emergency develop anywheres in the world, that the United Nations, and the United States, will be as quick to recognize and act for their principles and best interests as they were on the 25th of June, 1950. It is to be hoped that the principle of collective United Nations action will be invoked then as it was in Korea. However, future American leadership must be responsive to its position in

85. "New Defense Policy", New York Herald Tribune, 17 January 1954, Section 2, page 1.

the West, and act surely to implement collective action without tying the hands of the force in the field with indecision and dissent among the members of the coalition. It should, in the event the UN again designates it its agent, carefully reckon the size of the contribution of each ally to the force in the field, and calculate before hand the role that each ally will play in the making of major decisions relative to the conduct of the war. If the US will then find it expedient to abrogate its leadership responsibilities in favor of allies' good will, it should hesitate to accept forces from a friendly nation unless they are of such size as to make a contribution to the combined effort commensurate with the voice which will be given to that nation in the military councils of the United States.

Once the coalition is formed, control over it should be carefully exercised from Washington, so as to assure that the expenditure of effort against the local threat does not compromise the world-wide struggle of the West against Communism. As in Korea, any limitations on military force should be permissive, and should be so utilized as to admit of reasonable estimate of enemy counteraction to each forward step of UN forces. In that way the enemy will not be panicked into overt, total reaction, but strategic initiative will remain with the UN.

Tactics

It is to be hoped, however, that Mr. Dulles' use of the term "local" does not imply a continued adherence to the policy of territorial limitations that persisted throughout the war in Korea. It has been demonstrated that such a policy is a variance with sound military principles, and in operation seriously inhibits the effective strength and capabilities of any force the UN might field. US policy of the future should make it explicit to Communist nations adjacent to an area of "local" war that their direct participation in the war will expose them to attack into their territory for as far as is necessary to admit of the accomplishment of the UN mission

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or provide for the security of UN troops. The Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States, pursuant to their statutory functions, should zealously guard the military interests of the field forces, at least, ^{to} the point of insuring that major decisions--as any decision on territorial limitations is bound to be--are decided in the National Security Council or by the Commander-in-Chief himself, and not on a level where other considerations may exert too pervasive an influence.

Granted freedom from territorial restraint, the UN forces can be assured of freedom of movement and strategic initiative. The full advantage of Western superiority in air and sea power will be realized, and the land forces of the US, equipped with tactical atomic weapons,⁸⁶ will be able to inflict crushing defeat upon numbers of enemy many times the force they held at bay in Korea. The deterrent power of small, highly mobile US ground forces against local aggressions will be enhanced many times, and the West can look forward confidently to a future in which the freedom of all peoples not now under the Communist heel will be assured.

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