

Capt Gorman  
CAL

7 March 1957

Dear Mr. Lichterman:

I have enjoyed reading your "March to the Yalu" paper? It is a clear narrative and I think your judgments have a restraint more laudable than those in some other accounts I have read.

It is an unfortunate truth that, at the stage at which your paper rests, the helpful comments are often critical ones. I have not delved into some of the important aspects of your problem enough to be absolutely certain on a few points that I feel you must explore. I do, however, suggest that you obtain from the Littauer School (Professor William Y. Elliott) the thesis of Paul F. Gorman entitled "Limited War: Korea, 1950", which was prepared for the Government 285 course in the fall of 1953. I have suggested to Gorman, who has now developed analysis beyond this thesis, that he might communicate with you directly, perhaps having one of our people now at Harvard who has worked in this field talk with you. You may know Captain Gard, who has been very active in the Defense Policies Program, I do urge that you examine more incisively the matter of intelligence and the flow thereof. I tend to agree with Gorman that you will find that under the realities of the situation not much more could have been expected from Washington, and that CINCFE had the responsibility to those critical days of November. As you know, strategic intelligence cannot carry out a mission with timings applicable to tactical situations, I notice that on page 51 of your paper you begin to get into this intelligence point, some people would say awry. Just before this, you do note a stiffness in command relationships.

I do not recall that you have referred to General Ridgway's views which he set forth quite forthrightly in his articles in the Saturday Evening Post. Nor have you referred to Bill Kaufmann's paper delivered at the American Political Science Association meeting last September. I suggest in your further work that you consider whether you shouldn't put considerably more weight on the views of the Marshalls (George and S.L.A.).

It is, of course, apparent to you that your paper does not fit your title. You have to expand one or contract the other.

A few minor points:

a. On page 2, I question most of the statements in the top eight lines. Perhaps you have original documentation on these and, if so, you are right. I can, however, vouch that most of the secondary materials, on this Korean business are wrong in degree or in toto. Do you mean by your top two lines the Hopkins' conversations with Stalin in Moscow?

My first reading interpreted your statement as having these things occur at San Francisco. Where is your documentation for Potsdam? I was there, and looked in vain for something about Korea. There was, of course, no such agreement at Potsdam about troops. I am conscious that quite a few people have misunderstood the bomb line agreement and this misunderstanding is recorded in the so-called scholarship of more than one learned article. If the preceding sentence is correct, there was nothing to keep secret in the sense that you record it.

b. Reference your discussion at the top of page 5, I recall Dean Rusk asserting that the majority of the U.S. government operated at its best during the period when you suggest it was operating on an ad hoc basis. It may be that your concept of the National Security Council is somewhat different from the general conception thereof. For instance, you imply that it makes "decisions" which it, of course, does not. It advises the President, who does the deciding.

I hope the foregoing comments are of some assistance. Please recognize that they are made without having too clearly in my mind exactly what final disposition is to be made of the studies underway.

Sincerely yours.

Mr. Martin Lichterman  
Asst. Professor of History  
Department of Humanities  
Mass. Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

G. A. LINCOLN  
Colonel, USA  
Professor and  
Head of the department

cc: Professor Harold Stein  
Captain R.G. Gard, Jr

7 March 1957

Dear Harold:

I inclose a copy of my letter to Lichterman, who sent me a copy of his paper directly. Frankly, I do not care, at this time, to pursue the line of thought of some of our people who have done graduate work at Harvard and who feel there is a good deal more to be done in analysis of the subject matter than Lichterman or anyone else have achieved thus far, If Lichterman wants to get together with these people, he might come up with something very useful.

Due to press of work, coupled with an injunction not to work too hard, I have not gone too far into the other papers you have sent. One of my people has gone over Adams' paper and finds it useful but like Lichterman's, it has the wrong title in that it does not deal with the missions of the armed services but only with the B-36 controversy. I am hoping that Greenleaf will have time to go over it since he plans to do some additional work in this field, I believe.

After we get our thoughts squared away on these things, we must try and arrange to have you come along and visit West Point. Greenleaf tells me that he has already pressed a general invitation on you.

I seem to recall that we have a meeting coming up. With best regards,

Sincerely,

Incl,

Professor Harold Stein  
Research Director  
Study of Civil-Military Relations  
The Twentieth Century Fund  
311 Woodrow Wilson Hall, Princeton U.  
Princeton, N.J.

G.A.LINCOLN  
Colonel, USA  
Professor

PFG

8 March 1957

Captain Robert G. Gard, Jr.  
264 South Road  
Bedford, Mass.

Dear Bob:

Col. Lincoln was asked recently to comment upon a paper by Martin Lichterman of MIT. Disdaining any expertise in this area, he tossed it to me.

My critique is among the inclosed papers. As you can see, I lay into General MacArthur. Col. Lincoln agrees in general with me, but he was reluctant personally to present such sentiments to Mr. Lichterman -- Gen. MacA. is a somewhat sensitive subject with him these days.

I have been asked, therefore, to transmit to you his request: will you see Lichterman and diplomatically convey to him my estimate of his paper? I regret that inasmuch as I am about to embark on my Far East course. I can't get up to do it myself.

I hope this does not too greatly inconvenience you.

Best regards to your family. Will you be down for June Week?

Sincerely,

Incls,

PAUL F. GORMAN  
Captain, Infantry

SUBJECT: The March to the Yalu

This paper is expert and well written, but it presents no new information concerning its subject. It suffers from an analytic deficiency which may amount to over-indulgence for the military -- especially CINCFE. Mr. Lichterman has avoided altogether, or handled only obliquely, two of the more pregnant aspects of his topic. The first of these is the flow of information from CINCFE to Washington; the second, the relations between CINCFE and the public.

In my opinion, Mr. Lichterman leaves obscure the critical failure of General MacArthur to react to the entry of the Chinese into Korea. At the time of the defeat of the Chongchon there was, from CINCFE, much talk of "privileged sanctuary" which has effectively misrepresented the facts. The Chinese which dealt the Eighth Army that blow, and the Chinese which crushed the Chosin Reservoir force of X Corps, had been in the war for a month. Aside from the JCS limitation precluding violation of the Yalu border, and their strictures regarding "provocation", CINCFE had been operating with all the discretion Washington might reasonably have been expected to give a Theater Commander. While it may be, as Mr. Liehterman points out, that strategic intelligence failed to give General MacArthur any clear knowledge of Chinese intentions, the time-honored military approach to a situation of dubious intelligence is to plan for contingencies within enemy capability whatever be his intent. From early November forward, CINCFE's own tactical commanders wore fully aware that the mountains harbored a force which was capable of destroying their scattered columns. From all I know of the circumstances, strategic intelligence during November could only have confirmed a fact already established by tactical intelligence: the Chinese were in the war in overwhelming strength. Yet, CINCFE in this period never intimated to JCS that he should not of could act advance to the Yalu; indeed, when the JCS became apprehensive, as Mr. Lichterman shows (p. 46 ff.), he asserted as late as 25 November that any halt short of the Yalu would "not only fail to achieve the desired result" but provoke Chinese attack. He felt that "it was necessary to destroy all enemy forces within North Korea if unity and peace in all Korea were to be restored. Mr. Lichterman does not question this statement of military and political mission, despite the fact that the military part of it having been unattainable for a month, the political objectives were quite beyond the reach of CINCFE. It seems to me that Mr. Lichterman needs to ask a few more questions in this study:

-- In an awareness that the Chinese intervention rendered it impossible to unify Korea, why did not MacArthur seek a redefinition of his objective?

-- Why, knowing that he could no longer discharge his first obligation to his government, the security of his command, did he not convey to Washington an appraisal of his precarious position in an effort to bring his mission into consonance with his capabilities?

-- What is the lesson of this blunder: too much discretion granted by JCS to a Theater Command, or merely a failure of a commander - albeit the greatest such since McClellan's politico-military "relief."

I suggest that those are vital "political" questions as well as a military critique, but Mr. Lichterman leaves them largely unasked and certainly unanswered.

The other topic which Mr. Lichterman slights is the rather peculiar relations which CINCFE carried on with the press, the public, and Congress throughout the period. Here is an area rich in material for a student of civil-military relations, but one looks in vain for any topical treatment of it in this paper. Again, several questions pose themselves:

-- To what extent is a military commander justified in communicating with policy making agencies, or a press which might influence policy making?

-- To what extent did the publicity which surrounded CINCFE's "leaks", the President's statements, and other public pronouncements made at the time, affect the decisions of the Allies, the attitude of Congress, the advice of State?

Mr. Lichterman seems to have tapped all of the published material on this subject, with a few exceptions. I would commend to him Combat Actions in Korea for a bleak and quite accurate description of the attitudes and actions of tactical commanders prior to the "offensive" of 24 November; the section on the operations of the 32d Infantry, Seventh Division, is particularly good. I found that the Dept. of Army pamphlet entitled Korea 1950 contained some interestingly worded official statements regarding tactical dispositions and mission. Think Mr. Lichterman will be able to make better use of S.L.A. Marshall's observations on theater intelligence, and certainly his newspaper sources should support his inquiry into CINCFE's personal public relations program.

In general, I hope that Mr. Lichterman will in his interviews ask some of the questions omitted so far in his paper. If it is possible to get answers to them, he will have made a significant contribution to our understanding of civil-military relations in late 1950. Even if he gets no answers, these are questions which should be posed for future scholarships.

German  
Capt. Juf