

Pathfinder

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What Have We Learned From Satellite War?

Korea's Lessons Jolt the United States in a Soul-Search of its Preparedness and Policies

On June 24 Soviet Russia dug deep into her bag of tricks and came up with a new one—war by proxy. Today, still sadly unprepared for satellite warfare, the U.S. may yet profit by tragic experiences—so that even possible defeat in Korea will not be totally without gain. What has been learned and how this knowledge might be used in future satellite wars is discussed here.



Spotter. *Ex-artilleryman Truman has two targets—votes and victory . . .*

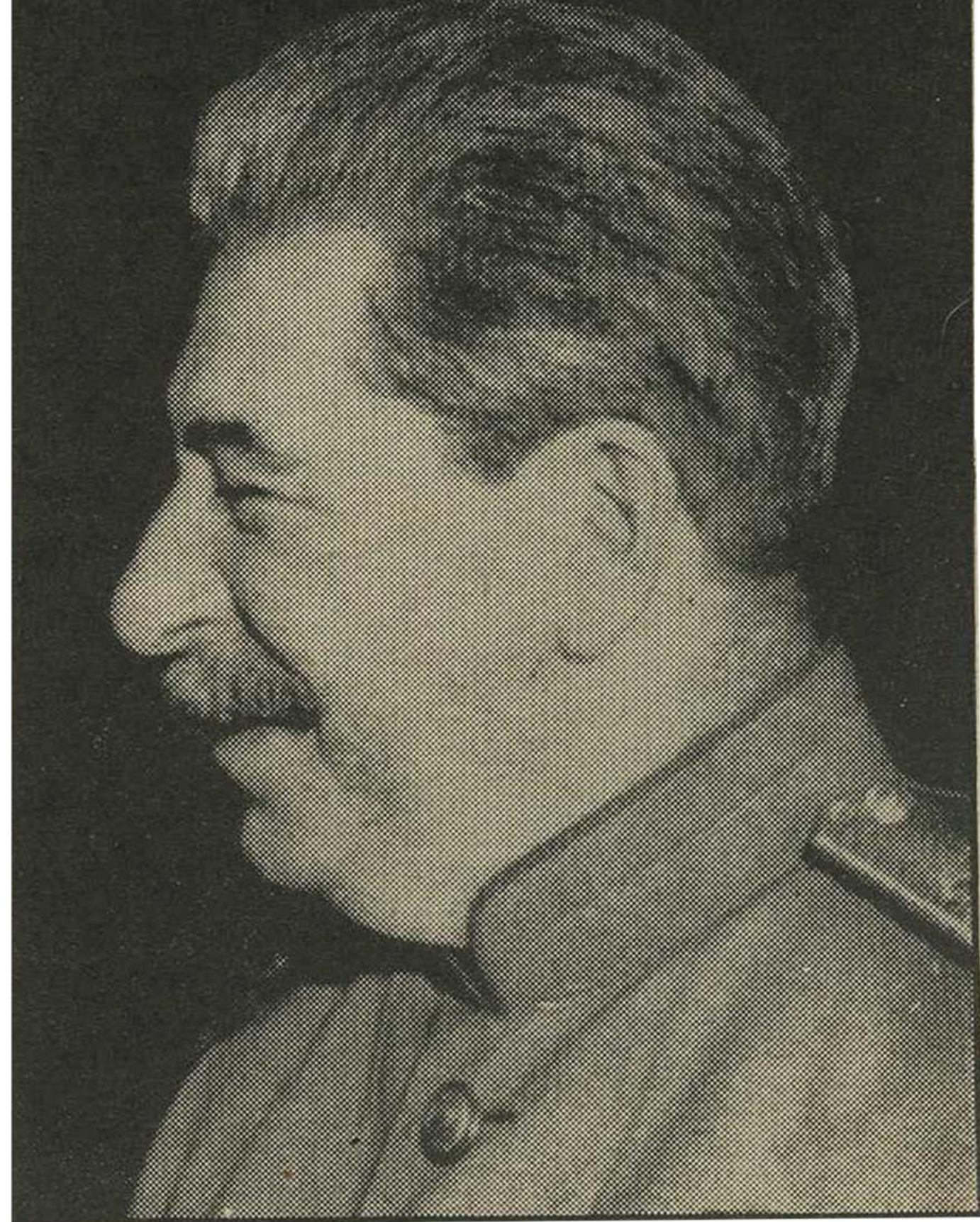
Nothing could be more fallacious than assuming Russia's switch in tactics means she has also switched objectives. She still intends to dominate the world. Nor has the U.S. swerved from its aims—the "containment of communism." And the failure of the U.S. to contain communism, most recently in Korea, does not necessarily disprove the wisdom of that policy. It simply proves that the techniques of containment so far have often been cumbersome, costly in men and money and unsuccessful.

Since March 1947, when President Truman pledged this nation to the doctrine of "helping free and independent nations to maintain their freedom," our Cold War strategy had been based on these assumptions:

1. The one country which might endanger the freedom of other nations was Russia.

2. The greatest war prize is Western Europe; while Russia might absorb nations elsewhere in the world, her conquest would never be complete until she had captured Western Europe.

3. When Russia did decide to take the richest booty, she would do so in the traditional pattern of moving vast armies overland from Eastern Europe to the English Channel and then to Great Britain.



. . . while crafty Josef Stalin has only one—world conquest.

4. Since the domestic economy of the U.S. could not sustain the burden of defending the entire world, it was smart to defend the most desirable part of it.

In the postwar battle between the giants, those convictions have been reflected in every positive move: vast independent loans to Great Britain, France, Greece and Turkey; Marshall Plan aid to 17 European nations, and military aid under the North Atlantic Treaty to 9 European nations, Iceland and Canada. Even negative moves, such as scrapping the super aircraft carrier in April 1949 and abandoning China's Chiang Kai-shek at about the same time, pointed up this cardinal belief of America's diplomatic and military warriors against communism: When the big push came it would move across the Polish plains, westward through France and Germany; few or no naval engagements would take place and the surest way of stopping the Russian advances was by strategic bombing with atom bombs.

Then came June 24. Her skirts legally clean, Russia hit upon a way to fight the U.S. without technically using a single bullet or soldier of her own. It mattered little if Korean mercenaries, not identifiable nationally with the USSR, were doing the fighting. A satellite war was just as good a way to weaken the U.S. as a direct war—or better.

Why President Truman chose to draw the line at Korea has never been satisfactorily explained. He and his aides give the Truman Doctrine—helping free nations keep their freedom—as the answer. But this can hardly be all of the answer, or else why didn't the U.S. intervene in February 1948 to save the free people of Czechoslovakia?

It is now academic whether the real answer stems from domestic politics, undisclosed knowledge of other imminent aggressions, or a desire to recapture some of the nation's face, so miserably lost before in Asia. What is not academic is that Russia has discovered a way to fight which we are unprepared to resist; that new "local" wars may break out at any moment, and that these lessons learned in Korea must be speedily applied to avoid ultimate and complete defeat:



Tank-buster. *A five-year-old weapon takes slow trip to Korea.*

1. *The United States is not invincible.*

No nation in the history of the world has remained supreme, certainly no nation which has deliberately set about destroying its own means of defense while a known enemy was preparing an attack—of some kind. To see how the U.S. has weakened itself, it is only necessary to recall that near-primitive forces like the 200,000 North Koreans have pushed the U.S. around for nearly three months. Furthermore, it had been planned to continue the weakening process. A few days before the Korean outbreak Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson submitted his proposed military budget for 1951–1952—\$11 billion—\$2.5 billion less than the highly inadequate \$13.5 he asked for and got last year. The Joint Chiefs of Staff rejected his proposal as preposterous.

2. *Since Russia intends to use power diplomacy on a global basis, the U.S. must resist power with power—globally.*

This does not mean that the U.S. must match Russia man for man, gun for gun or tank for tank. But it does mean we cannot coast along on the false security of supposed superiority in atom bombs. The U.S. now needs, according to the JCS, an army of at least 2.6 million men, sufficiently elastic in command, weapons and strategy to fight a slow, tortuous jungle war one week and an ultra-modern blitz war the next.

3. *No political office holder, includ-*



Big flattop. *Secretary Johnson called aircraft dead dodos.*

ing the President, can with impunity jeopardize national security to improve his own political well-being.

The charge has been made that President Truman withheld the full story of the pitiful state of the nation's defenses because telling it would weaken Democratic chances of winning the congressional elections this November. Truman did try to soften the blows by doling out the news piecemeal. For example, on July 6 the President indicated that no draftees would be called up under the new standby draft law; four days later 20,000 men were ordered drafted. Also on July 6 the President said no reserves were needed; 14 days later 84,000 Navy and Marine reservists were called up.

Similarly, the charge has been made that Secretary Johnson arbitrarily cut military budgets to establish himself as a master economist and thus further his own political fortunes. Today the Joint Chiefs are splitting hairs; they endorse some of Johnson's economies but claim that others, such as an overemphasis on strategic bombing at the expense of ground-troop strength, are a prime cause of the Korean losses. Also it is fairly apparent today that the U.S. was not able to "retaliate" for an attack from "Uncle Joe" in one month, much less one hour.

4. *The United States can afford only one "President" as spokesman for the people on major domestic and international policies.*

For a year and a half, machinery has been available to eliminate embarrassing and confusing situations like those arising from Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Formosa statement, Navy Secretary Francis J. Matthews' "preventive war" speech and Air Force Maj. Gen. Orvil Anderson's "hit first" speech. That long ago the Hoover Commission proposed naming a Secretary of the Cabinet to tell every maker or interpreter of policy just what policy was. Such a liaison officer could not choke off spiteful criticism of Administration aims from within but he would at least stop unintended contradictions.

5. *Military and economic preparedness must be supplemented by a realistic propaganda program.*

Best proof that our puny efforts to sell the world the concept of freedom are only a cut above dismal failure came shortly after the first Korean attack. In France, Belgium, Great Britain, The Netherlands and Scandinavia, where some \$22 billion for material aid and \$158 million for propaganda have been spent, statesmen and common citizens alike walked on eggs for days, trying to decide which was the best bet: Russia or the U.S. If four years of open-handed generosity and polished salestalk have failed to "sell" America to friendly nations, the prospects in unfriendly or neutral states are dim.

6. *An efficient intelligence and counterespionage system must be set up immediately.*

Best proof that the U.S. is—and has been—an innocent babe so far as finding out what the enemy is up to came on the

night of June 25, some eight hours after the war started. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, chairman of the JCS and the nation's first soldier, got the news from a United Press reporter. No one has ever explained what the Central Intelligence Agency happened to be doing at the time.

Some effort has been made to shake up the CIA by replacing Adm. Roscoe N. Hillenkoetter with Lt. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith and installing William H. Jackson, an intelligence expert, as his deputy. But Smith's attitude on the need for high-quality intelligence is still in doubt, since he himself told a congressional committee he was quite interested in the possible presidency of an unnamed college. Moreover, the CIA, while busily building up its staff, still requires its "experts" to pass ordinary mental tests.

7. *As new weapons are developed and standardized, production of obsolete weapons should stop, and the new ones must be made in sufficient numbers to do the job they were designed to do.*

Weeks before the Korean attack, Army Secretary Frank Pace Jr. and Army Chief of Staff Gen. J. Lawton Collins spoke proudly of the new 3.5-in. "bazooka" which could "stop any Russian tank." The 3.5 bazooka had been standardized in 1945, completely tested and every bug eliminated. On June 24—five years after it was perfected—the U.S. arsenal could boast of 20, *not one of which was in Korea or in Germany with U.S. occupation forces.* Of the slightly more than 5,000 rounds of ammunition on hand, *not one was in any critical area.* To get *one* bazooka to Korea, plus ammunition, plus a handful of trained men to fire it, the Defense Department had to send them out *by private commercial airline.* Production has now been stepped up and both bazookas and ammunition are moving steadily to the battle areas.

8. *Military strategy gravely needs a major overhauling to make it more flexible.*

About six months ago General Bradley told reporters in Washington that we would "never again see an amphibious operation—particularly one similar to Normandy." Bradley's statement was based primarily on the military's faith in the atom bomb as a defensive weapon. Strategists argued that no Russian attack could be made without the massing of huge armies and equipment—a prime target for an atom attack.

The Korean affair not only required some amphibious operations but also confirmed many a belief that strategic bombing was not a sure-fire defense against any attacker. Admitting that the emphasis on strategic bombing was their biggest boner, the JCS have ordered the rebuilding, within present budget limits, of the close ground-support air forces—including Marine, Navy and Air Force.

Moreover, the military planners made one other important error. Most of the war plans for the future were based on guided missiles, super rockets and super-bombs and fuses which in many cases have not left the drawing tables. The U.S. must produce and employ in quantity its

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weapons of proven utility—no matter how obsolete compared with the envisaged arms of push-button war—until tomorrow's weapons are ready for tomorrow's war.

There may be other lessons besides these eight. Perhaps the greatest lies in the fact that there is a war in Korea today. If World War III is to be fought on a satellite basis—or in any other way—it proves that no real thought of peace was present in the conduct of World War II. If peace-after-war is ignored now, no one will be able to speak from the shadows to point out the mistakes.