

Total war: a strategy for snatching victory from the jaws of defeat

by Allen Douglas

Turning Defeat into Victory: A Total War Strategy Against Peking

by Gen. Teng Chieh

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In the first week of September 1988, the American statesman Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and his wife Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the West German chairman of the European Labor Party, paid their first visit to the Republic of China (Taiwan). The high point of the several days of meetings with legislators, military figures, academics, and others, was the extended dialogue the LaRouches conducted with 84-year-old Gen. Teng Chieh, one of the leading theoreticians of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) Party, and a decades-long adviser to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

Throughout the discussions, General Teng emphasized that Moscow and Beijing were waging a different kind of warfare against sovereign states in both the West and in Asia than is usually understood. This kind of warfare, which General Teng calls "total war" (and which the Communists call "People's War"), is vastly broader than military conflict per se and subsumes offensives in politics, economics, culture, and religion. The general's point was immediately appreciated by the LaRouches, since Mr. LaRouche had long stressed that Moscow, under cover of *détente* and *glasnost*, was waging precisely this sort of irregular warfare against the West.

Not long after the discussions on Taiwan, this irregular warfare entered a new domain, when the Soviets and their Western assets forced the resignation on Nov. 11, 1988 of the President of the West German Bundestag (lower house of Parliament), Philip Jenninger (see *EIR*, Nov. 25, 1988). LaRouche responded to this new assault with a call for the creation of a "new worldwide anti-Bolshevik resistance movement" against the Communists and their accomplices. Harkening back to the Taiwan discussions, LaRouche em-

phasized that the form of the resistance struggle must be all-encompassing People's War. This present volume by General Teng, to which LaRouche contributed a preface, is an indispensable handbook for any statesman or ordinary citizen who participates in that anti-Bolshevik resistance movement.

General Teng's career

Gen. Teng Chieh was born in 1904 in the mainland province of Kiangsu. During the 1920s he was sent by Gen. Chiang Kai-shek to study, first at Shanghai University, and then at the renowned Whampoa Military Academy, where his classmates included some of those who later became leading Communists, like Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. By the early 1930s, General Teng had become one of the most trusted advisers to Chiang Kai-shek.

Following the Mukden incident on Sept. 18, 1931, in which the Japanese made their first incursion into China, General Teng presented Chiang with a plan to reorganize the Kuomintang political and military forces to defeat the anticipated all-out invasion. The centerpiece of General Teng's reorganization was the Society for the Realization of the Three Principles of the People, a society so secret that not much is known about it even today. The "three principles of the people" were an elaboration of Abraham Lincoln's concepts: "of the people" (national sovereignty), "by the people" (a democratic republic), and "for the people" (economic development) in the work of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who founded of the Republic of China in 1911. The society is credited with giving the KMT forces the strength necessary to forestall a Japanese *blitzkrieg* conquest of China, and then to prepare the ultimate defeat of the Chinese.

General Teng has held a series of top posts in the government and the KMT. He is now a member of the KMT Central Evaluation and Discipline Committee and a member of the R.O.C. National Assembly. His new book is the latest in a long series of training manuals (most of which are unpublished) written to educate KMT party, government, and military officials, and many of his students now hold positions in the KMT, the R.O.C. government, and the military. As



Rolf Panis

Gen. Teng Chieh

the publisher of the present work notes, "Once again he is proposing a bold plan, this time for resisting communism and snatching victory from the jaws of defeat."

General Teng's concept of total war

The cornerstone of General Teng's strategy, and therefore of this book, is the concept of "total war." Before anything can be done, the populations targeted for conquest by the Communists must understand the nature of the conflict in which they find themselves. "We should be capable of differentiating clearly between total war and traditional forms of warfare," General Teng says, "without confusing the two. We must realize that total war is very different in nature and scope from other forms of warfare, and that it is employed in quite a different way. . . . Regarding its nature, total war is thoroughgoing, maximum warfare. It overturns historical traditions, existing systems, customs and habits, even religious beliefs . . . this kind of total war is of worldwide scope. . . . Regarding its application, total war is applied in a multi-centered, multi-formed way. That is to say, it is not solely centered on military warfare as such, but can be focused on other forms of warfare according to changes in the strategic situation. When the focus has been decided, the political, economic, military, cultural and social sectors can

each play their own part in coordination, resulting in a centralized war within a total war."

In the total war against the Communists, the general argues, "revolutionary spirit is the decisive factor." "This kind of war demands constant mobilization, and in particular constant spiritual mobilization, so that everybody will understand the war and carry out their proper part in it. . . . Constant spiritual mobilization actually means constant spiritual construction," which is carried out by means of education, with the aim of "transforming the national spirit." This is the sort of spirit developed at the Whampoa Academy in the 1920s, the same spirit later responsible for defeating the Japanese invasion.

Though constant education is the key to constant spiritual construction, there is a previous indispensable concept, which lays the basis for igniting the spiritual mobilization, and that is the unwavering determination to *win* the total war. "In the course of our anti-communist war, the principle of 'putting victory first' is essential. The war against Communism is an all-out war in which there is no room for compromise. If you do not win, you lose; there is no third way. If you win, you keep everything. If you lose, then everything is lost, even life itself. That is how it is; if you do not put victory first then you are blindly courting destruction." The general specifically contrasts this to U.S. behavior in recent "limited wars." "In any war, the aim is to seek victory. After all, if you do not seek to win, why bother to fight at all? In the Korean War and the Vietnam War, the United States adopted a policy of not seeking all-out victory, and that was really something very remarkable."

Once one is committed to seeking victory, the revolutionary spirit unfolds. "If you remain passive and allow yourself to be attacked, you have no hope of emerging victorious. There is no way you can generate an active enterprising spirit. All this runs clean counter to the demands of the revolution. The revolutionary cause is an active cause. Once you lose the initiative, it is tantamount to laying aside or abandoning the revolution. If that is the case, how can we have a revolutionary spirit? If we are going to reestablish a revolutionary spirit, a superior revolutionary spirit, we must regain the initiative. In order to regain the initiative we must take the offensive."

On the surface, the form of People's War as applied by the Communists looks much like that applied by those opposing them. The difference is in what the two sides are fighting for. The "Three Principles of the People" mean, for General Teng, universal democracy, which is both the goal for which the war is fought, but also the method by which the war is conducted. "The purpose of this plan is not merely to dissolve and exterminate the enemy but also to lay the foundation during the course of the war for the realization of the ideal of universal democracy under the Three Principles of the People. That is to say, we want to use the propaganda and education connected with the war to cultivate the foundation

of the people's belief in universal democracy, to use the people's participation in the war to cultivate a basic habit of organizational life, to use the people's execution of tasks in the war to cultivate a sense of responsibility in carrying out public tasks. Hence this is a plan which covers war and development at the same time. It is a plan that stipulates ensuring that this will be a war to end all wars, that afterwards we will proceed towards realization of the ideal of universal harmony, and that we will complete the revolution passively and actively in one battle."

The Three Principles of the People are entirely founded upon the notion that every person in the nation bears individual responsibility for the outcome of the struggle. "A war of universal democracy is essentially a war in which everyone must participate and for which everyone must be responsible. Hence everyone should naturally bear full responsibility for fighting the war. In particular those who have been influenced by traditional military affairs think that war is the business of the military, and since they are themselves not soldiers, they definitely do not feel that they have any responsibility for this. Thus people generally tend to feel that the war is not their business." But in reality, it is their business, since "the war against Communism is a total war, one which must be fought by everyone, everywhere, and at all times."

Taiwan's strategic position

This exposition of total war by General Teng is undertaken, as the book's title indicates, with an urgent task in mind. Chinese Communist leader Deng Xiaoping announced already in 1980 his plans to conquer Taiwan by 1991. What General Teng—about whom Deng is reportedly obsessed—proposes, is to use the enormous instabilities inherent in the Communist system to conquer mainland China instead. Many would consider it impossible that tiny Taiwan could conquer the mainland. Yet, General Teng says, the P.R.C. only looks strong because it has been faced with no opposition. Once it is, the contradictions inherent in the system of Communism, which have produced the economic collapse, starvation, and popular upheaval now taking place on the mainland, become readily apparent, and the path to victory clear.

Much of the book is a manual for this reconquest. Yet, its concepts of "total war," "revolutionary spirit," and the "Three Principles of the People" are also those necessary to defeat the plans of the Soviet Empire to defeat the Western alliance by approximately the same time that Deng intends to conquer Taiwan. The worldwide anti-Bolshevik resistance movement can take great lessons from General Teng's book. Almost equally importantly, resistance fighters everywhere can be greatly heartened that a man like General Teng, and his faction in the Kuomintang, exists. Near the conclusion of his work, the general writes, "In his testament, Dr. Sun Yat-sen said we should unite all those in the world who regard us as equals to fight alongside us."

Books Received

Forged by Fire: Robert L. Eichelberger and the Pacific War, by John Francis Shortal, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, S.C., 1987, \$24.95 hardbound, 154pp.

Operation Babylon: The Story of the Rescue of the Jews of Iraq, by Shlomo Hillel, Doubleday and Co., 1987, \$19.95 hardbound, 301pp.

Renewal: A Novel, by Russell Shaw, Garnet Books, San Francisco, 1986, \$4.95 paper, \$11.95 hardbound, 328pp.

Pat Robertson: A Biography, by Neil Eskelin, Huntington House, Inc., Lafayette, La., 1987, \$9.95 paper, 188pp.

The Ancient Tradition of Geometric Problems, by Wilbur Knor Birkhauser, Boston, Mass., 1986, \$69.00 hardbound, 411pp.

Stolypin: Russia's Last Great Reformer, by Alexander V. Zenkovsky, The Kingston Press Inc., Princeton, N.J., 1986, 146pp.

The Perfect Failure: Kennedy, Eisenhower and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs, by Trumbull Higgins, W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1987, \$17.95 hardbound, 224pp.

Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Connoisseur, by Ernest Samuels, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1979, 477pp.

The Gorbachev Strategy: Opening The Closed Society, by Thomas H. Naylor, Lexington Books/D.C. Heath and Co., Lexington, Mass., 1988, \$19.95 hardbound, 253pp.

Stalin: The Man and His Era, by Adam B. Ulam, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1973, 1987, \$15.95 paper, 760pp.

From Brezhnev to Gorbachev: Infighting in the Kremlin, by Baruch A. Hazan, Westview Press, Boulder, Colo. 1987, \$34.95 hardbound, 260pp.

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