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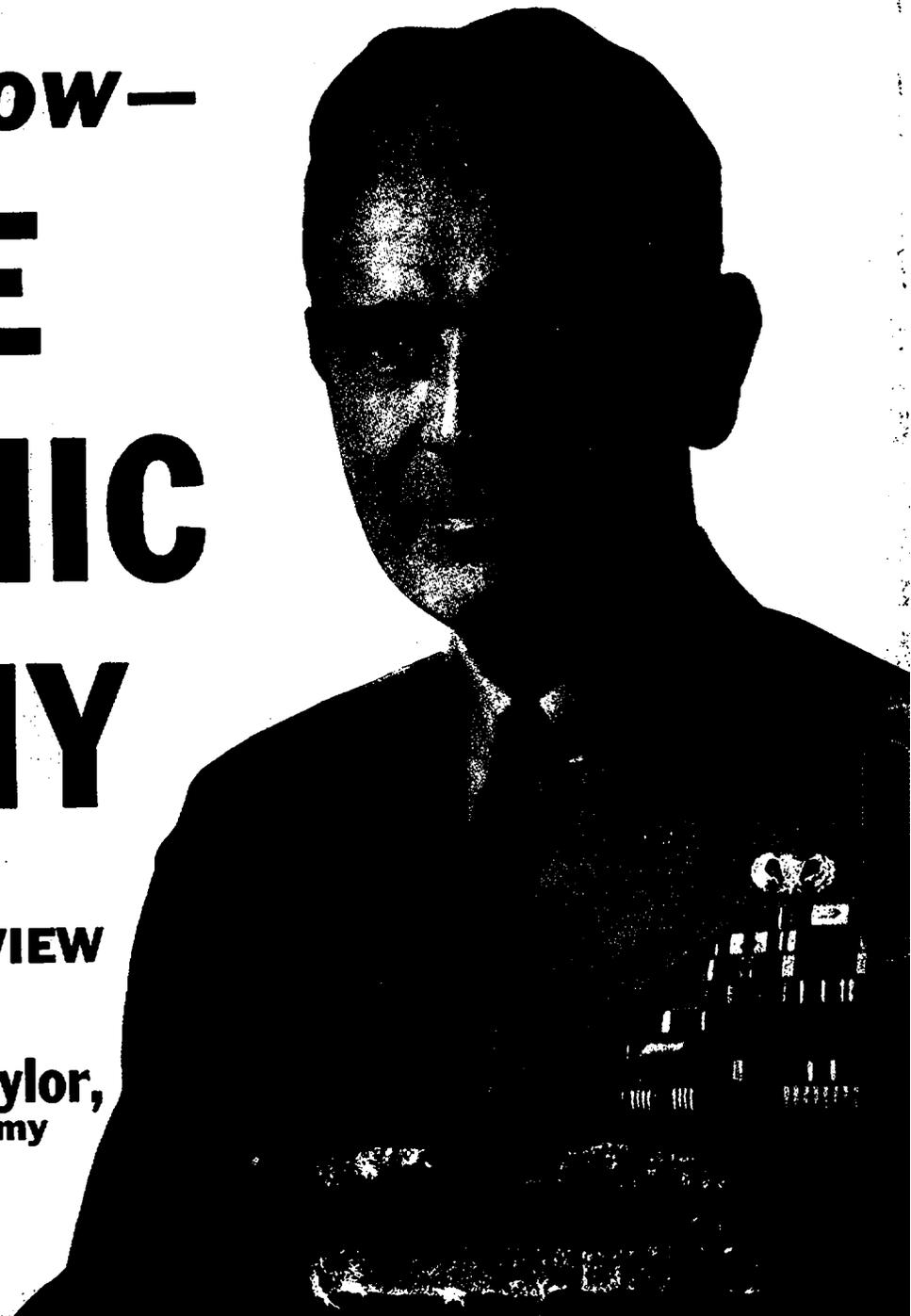
## EASE UP OR TIGHTEN CREDIT?

# And Now— THE ATOMIC ARMY

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**

with

**Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor,**  
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army



# Interview

—with **GEN. MAXWELL D. TAYLOR**  
Chief of Staff, U. S. Army

And Now—

## THE ATOMIC ARMY

Is the U. S. Army big enough at this time to provide for an adequate ground defense? Does it have enough manpower? Is it getting enough money? Can it afford, on its present budget, to buy the weapons it requires? Here are up-to-date answers, as given by the Army's Chief of Staff, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor.

General Taylor, interviewed in the confer-

ence room of U. S. News & World Report, presents his views in detail about the present "Army in transition"—its needed strength, its role in the atomic age, its plans for adapting itself to fight tomorrow's war with revolutionary new weapons and tactics.

This interview with the Army's No. 1 soldier shows how ground-force planning is being revised now.

**Q** With all the talk there is of nuclear war, General Taylor, some people are asking: "Is there any use having an Army?"

**A** You certainly have quite a question there—one that seems to assume that any future war is certain to be a nuclear war. I wouldn't necessarily agree with that assumption. The atomic weapon has existed since 1945, and during this period several wars have been fought, but no atomic weapons have been used at all, anywhere.

Of course, we in the Army recognize that the greatest catastrophe to humanity would be a great nuclear war; and we, in common with the other services, are making every provision to deter such a war; or, if it comes, to play our role in it.

Whether the war would be nuclear or nonnuclear, big or little, fought in jungles, deserts or mountains, we believe that a land force—the Army—is indispensable.

We are convinced that, since the objective of even a nuclear war is to take over ground areas, it is of first importance that we have ground forces in place, in the field, capable of holding back enemy ground forces while other forces and weapons are brought to bear to defeat the attack.

**Q** You mean that a decision might come quickly in the nuclear war, and then the Army's part would be to hold what had been obtained—

**A** A decision might or might not come quickly. Either way, the Army has a vital role to perform.

**Q** The ground forces still may play a part in the decision?

**A** Certainly. At the outset, the role of the ground forces will be to hold back the enemy, who would like to close quickly and overrun friendly areas, thus making it hard for us in using our nuclear air weapons in those areas.

**Q** In which they would have used the weapons beforehand—nuclear weapons—

**A** I don't think that the enemy would use his atomic weapons at the outset necessarily against Western Europe, which our forces are helping to defend. We would be holding the enemy back from this area where we may not be able to attack him with our nuclear air weapons without at the same time hurting our friends.

It's clear to me that from the beginning, even in that extreme situation, the Army would have a vital defensive role in an atomic war. And, in the end, a cleanup of any war is going to be on the ground, because the final objectives of all warfare are ground objectives. The warmaking resources of any enemy, as well as our own, are rooted in the ground, so that the final acts of any war, regardless of what may have occurred beforehand, will inevitably be those of the ground forces.

**Q** Is it possible that the enemy's forces may overrun these areas to such an extent that it would be difficult, if you used nuclear weapons, to tell where you were heading?

**A** That's a very good point, one which I made at the outset: We must keep them back out of our friendly territory; otherwise, we would be hampered in our ability to use nuclear weapons.

I often recall one aspect of my experience in Korea, how the Red Chinese tried to avoid the power of our weapons. We could blast them off the map if we could get them in the open where we could hit them. But they'd close in, crawling within yards of our positions, just to get the protection of proximity to us. I think that, on the atomic battlefield, that same tactic may be used.

Now, getting back again to your original question—the role of the Army in nuclear war. I don't accept for a moment that that's the only kind of war there will be. It seems to me that, as the day of atomic parity approaches, no sane leader of any country will ever embark intentionally on this kind of

... "We have not abandoned our conventional weapons"

**Q** Are you building new weapons?

**A** Oh, yes. We're able to fire with several types of atomic weapons, and we're developing other new weapons as well.

**Q** Are we prepared to fight a war without nuclear weapons?

**A** Yes. We have not disarmed ourselves; we have not abandoned our conventional weapons. Certainly, we're not putting as much money into them as formerly. But we are trying to keep a balanced capability to fight either the atomic or the nonatomic war.

**Q** Is your organization sufficiently flexible to enable you to fight either type of war at any time?

**A** It is at the present time. There may be some point later when we will have to commit ourselves for keeps. We haven't done so yet.

**Q** Going to another phase of the same problem, the little wars: Assuming they have to be fought all over the world, doesn't this put the largest burden on the Army?

**A** It certainly places the requirement on the Army for forces in being, instantly ready, to a degree that never existed before. To resist aggression wherever it occurs means we must either be already there, or we must be capable of getting there very fast.

**ALLIES: 200 DIVISIONS—**

**Q** Or else we have to have allies who will be there—

**A** Or we have to have allies do it. It is for that reason the Army today is helping to train more than 200 foreign divisions.

**Q** Two hundred divisions—

**A** More than 200 foreign divisions are either in training or being assisted in their development by the United States Army around the world. Of course, these divisions represent varying degrees of effectiveness.

**Q** How are weapons changing? Are they changing materially? Even compared to the Korean-war period?

**A** Oh, yes. I think history will record this as the period of greatest, most rapid change in weapon systems.

**Q** What kind of change? What is the trend?

**A** Largely, toward the utilization of atomic weapons and missiles. We have firepower available now which was beyond the imagination of any of us 10 or 15 years ago.

**Q** Is that localized?

**A** No, it can be applied globally.

**Q** I mean for the Army. As far as the Army is concerned, is the use of atomic weapons just for the artillery?

**A** For any weapons that can perform artillery roles. The missile is the artillery of the future.

**Q** Would you have command of that, the missile, for use as artillery within a certain range?

**A** Yes, of course. The role of the Army is to destroy enemy ground forces, wherever found. And "wherever found" isn't restrictive.

**Q** You'd like some air power too, wouldn't you?

**A** Well, not in the sense that I want to take over the Air Force.

**Q** I mean, some planes that will do that—

**A** No. I want missiles, the modern artillery, to do that job.

**Q** Do you want airborne troops?

**A** We need the airborne troops to exploit the effect of our long-range weapons. It doesn't do much good to let off

the big bang if you're not prepared to capitalize on it at once by a follow-up of ground troops.

**Q** Then you're changing your tactics partly?

**A** I would say "extending" the tactics which we developed during World War II. We learned then that airborne troops had a shaking effect wherever they were put down. We can well visualize the tremendous morale effect of atomic weapons going off in enemy territory, and we need to have our troops quickly there in order to intensify that effect, take over and never allow the enemy to recover.

**Q** Can you supply them in those forward areas?

**A** You'd have to study the actual situation; it depends partly on control of the air. If we have the lift capacity, it all depends on what the military situation is at the time. In many situations, yes, we can supply them.

**Q** Are you training more and more paratroopers?

**A** We're constantly training them. We always have more qualified paratroopers than we have units in which to put them.

**Q** Is the trend going to be toward airborne troops?

**A** I would say not in the sense of forming a large number of additional airborne divisions, but rather in lightening the equipment of all divisions so that all essential combat equipment can be air-transported.

The distinguishing characteristic of an airborne division is that it can go into battle by parachute, or by special aircraft which can land on unprepared fields. Air-transportability, on the other hand, is the characteristic which allows you to load up any division on large, commercial-type aircraft and take it anywhere there's a big airfield. That kind of mobility I want for all divisions.

**Q** Is there enough air transport to do that now?

**A** Well, you'd have to qualify any reply to that question. If everybody decided to do at the same time all the things they might want to do in the air, there won't be. But, given aircraft priorities, we can move sizable bodies of troops.

This past summer, the Air Force flew an Army regimental combat unit of about 3,500 men from Kentucky to Japan, and then picked up another one there and brought it back to the United States, all in a period of 10 days.

**A SMALL, CRACK ARMY—**

**Q** Has the Army been cut back too far, in your opinion?

**A** Well, of course, a Chief of Staff never is and never should be entirely satisfied with his Army. He should be a perfectionist and, as such, will probably always want a few more men to do the job better.

But I much prefer a good Army, an Army in which I'm sure of every officer and man, to a bigger one of less reliability. I think that if I can have the means to insure quality in the 1,025,000 men now authorized, the Army can do its present job.

**Q** Do you feel that you have that means?

**A** I'd rather wait for the 1957 appropriations before answering that.

**Q** Is that Army you want largely a professional Army?

**A** At the present time it's a little more than half professional.

**Q** The present Army is half professional?

**A** That's right. That is, the enlisted part of the Army.

**Q** Regulars—more than half?

**A** Yes, sir. We've been having increasing success in our recruiting program.

... "It's time we acknowledged our own military stature"

**Q** Are we in South America?

**A** We're in South America in many places.

**Q** We're in Asia?

**A** We're in Asia—in Pakistan, Thailand, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and elsewhere.

**Q** Well, in some of these countries we have air bases, but in most of them we do not—is that correct?

**A** In most of them we do not.

**Q** Wherever we have air bases you have troops as well as training missions—

**A** No, we don't always have tactical troops. You see, the job takes two or three forms. We may have a training mission which does nothing except work with the local forces, or we may have armed forces that have no training mission, or we can have both.

Take Korea, for example: We have the U. S. Eighth Army and we also have a big training mission training the ROK Army.

In Formosa, however, we have no U. S. Army troops, but we do have an Army mission training Chiang Kai-shek's troops.

**Q** So that, really, in many countries, the only symbol of American military power is the Army that's there—the Army representatives who are there?

**A** Yes, in many cases. But the Navy and the Air Force are in many of these places, too.

**Q** In many of them you don't have Air Force at all—

**A** That's right, they're not as numerous. But in many countries all three services are represented. And they are the symbol of America. Our very presence there, apart from the increased military strength, is a great encouragement to our friends—to see that we're on the ground with them.

**Q** If trouble did come, would the fact that our troops are there involve us automatically?

**A** No, not necessarily, if we were there only on a training basis. For example, we had two lieutenant colonels killed in the Quemoy island group a little over a year ago. So even our training personnel run some hazard; it is inherent in the job. During the Korean conflict, our training people lived with the Korean Army during the fighting and suffered casualties there.

**HELP FROM ALLIES—**

**Q** Why can't the British and the French help us on a thing like this? They have armies, they have officers—

**A** They have helped, in certain areas. Britain, for a long while, was in Greece. French troops are in Vietnam.

**Q** Do you think our military tradition is strong enough now to train others in the world?

**A** I've often had occasion to remark that we seldom recognize the fact that we're the No. 1 military nation in the free world. We think of ourselves as antimilitaristic, and we are; but force of circumstance and history has made us the focal point of military activity outside of the Iron Curtain.

At Fort Leavenworth, for example—where our Command and General Staff College is—look into the cloak room outside a lecture hall. There you'll see the coats of 40 nations belonging to foreign officers studying there. It should remind us that Leavenworth is the military Athens of the world, where all these countries come to study our military methods.

**Q** We've had military experience, certainly, in three wars now—

**A** Well, the Army has been accumulating its experience for more than 180 years now. When you consider the numbers of men commanded, the campaigns waged, and the distances traversed by our Army, you must agree, I think, that it's time we acknowledged our own military stature.

**Q** How many countries are sending people to be trained?

**A** I would say more than 50. Almost all of our allies will have one or two officers; some will have hundreds scattered through our school system. Korea, for example, now has approximately 350 in Army schools in the United States and sends about 900 officers and men each year to this country to attend these schools. In addition, the Koreans are training increasing numbers in the 17 schools we helped them establish in their own country.

**Q** Haven't we just about replaced Germany as the teacher of military tactics to the rest of the world?

**A** We have.

**Q** Is there a distinct difference between our approach to this thing and the old German approach?

**A** In many ways, there is a difference—as it should be. Every nation should undertake, and does undertake, to adapt its military methods to its national genius.

Certainly, the methods that we use in leading American soldiers are often different from those that prevail in the German Army. But insofar as the broad principles are concerned—the fundamentals of training and tactics—I would say that they're pretty standard throughout the world.

**MORE MEN FOR COMBAT—**

**Q** General, in a million-man Army, how many men are actually combat men? What's the overhead in manpower?

**A** Our current proportion of operating forces out of our total strength is 72 per cent. We have the highest ratio now of combat to noncombat strength that we've ever had, because we're making a big drive on that point.

**Q** Well, I asked that mainly because two or three years back there was some complaint from Congressmen and other people that we were wasting manpower, that we had too big an overhead of manpower and that the Russians had a lot bigger slice of ground power—

**A** You refer to the famous "division slice" argument. We should never be complacent about the way we use manpower; it's something that has to be watched constantly, and it receives a lot of my attention.

However, I would point out that you can't compare the Russian division slice with the American division slice until you include in your comparison the logistical factors. The farther you are from home, the longer the back-up line of depots, pipelines and personnel replacements is going to be. If the U. S. Army division slice is large, it is largely because our divisions overseas are far from home and their bases.

**Q** Well, aren't our divisions spread around the world?

**A** We have five divisions in Europe and three in the Far East.

**Q** What's the size of some of the other countries—we've got a million now, roughly—what's the next-largest army on our side that we can count on?

**A** The Korean Army.

**Q** How big is that?

**A** More than 600,000.

... "We've got more effective firepower than any Army has"

proud to have the First Marine Division under my command in the Eighth Army in Korea.

**Q** Have you the means of moving your strategic units to any part of the world?

**A** Not organic within the Army. You recall that, when unification came, the Army was the only service that gave up any element of mobility. We had had ground mobility and air mobility, but we surrendered our air mobility to the Air Force.

**Q** Was that a mistake?

**A** No, I don't think so; or, rather, I hope not. It created problems which are still with us, but I was loyal to the principle at the time and I still am. But the result is we have to look to the Air Force for the air transport we require for air mobility, and to the Navy for sea mobility.

**Q** Well, can we do it today—can we move one division today by air?

**A** The Army has the troops ready and trained if the airlift is provided.

**Q** Do you have to ask the Air Force to do it?

**A** Yes. The Army doesn't control any airplanes, except the little liaison-type puddle jumpers and helicopters we use for our own internal purposes.

## HOW NATO FITS IN—

**Q** What is your situation with respect to things like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization? When you spoke a little while ago of training missions abroad, you didn't mean what we are doing within NATO, did you?

**A** Yes, we have missions in most of the European countries of NATO. The missions have varying kinds of responsibility. Some places—in a country like France, for example—we don't train the troops. We are there to show them how to use our equipment correctly, how to maintain it, and that kind of thing. In other countries we go beyond that "technician" type of aid and help in unit training, verifying that the tactics are sound and that the leadership methods are correct.

**Q** General, is there any way of comparing the quality of the United States Army with that of the Russians—the training methods and what the end product of the soldier—what's the quality of the soldier?

**A** Well, I don't know how you can compare them directly, because we've never met the Russians, except at parties on the Elbe.

**Q** There were reports four years ago that the Russians had greater firepower per man than the Americans—

**A** Well, you can estimate firepower in a lot of ways. But, whatever way you measure it, that claim just isn't so. We've got more effective firepower in our divisions for the people involved than any Army has. It's not just a matter of counting guns. You must give due weight to the quality of the weapons, their mobility, the signal communications controlling their fire—lots of things. We've got them all.

**Q** Getting back to our original point: I don't know whether you've been aware of it, but some of us on the outside have been wondering if the Army has been gradually fading out of the picture in the American mind; less interest in the Army and less feeling, in the last few years, that it's essential—

**A** I'm sure I'm not aware of any reason for it. It's hard for me to believe that it's true, with the lesson of Korea fresh

behind us. Despite the assurances that other means would prevent or win all wars, Korea was saved by the Army, thrown unprepared into battle under enemy fire. There, the Eighth Army bore the brunt of stopping and defeating the Communist aggression and paid 96 per cent of the casualties. What does a service have to do to deserve respect?

**Q** Well, it's partly due to the emphasis given in recent months and years to the belief that the next war will be nuclear, be over in a few days, and that the Army will just be there to do a lot of the work that the Seabees used to do in the Navy—some of the civilian jobs—

**A** That's a great fallacy. First, nobody knows whether that's the kind of war it'll be or not. I say it's just one possible form that war may take, and not the most likely form, at that.

War may take many forms. Having worked on many war plans for the last 20 years, I know of no war plan ever executed the way it was written. No one can say infallibly what awaits us. We ought to be ready for all the major possibilities.

**Q** Do you think the Russians have got any such concept of the dwindling importance of an Army?

**A** I see nothing like that. On the contrary, there is every indication that the Army is their arm *par excellence* and the one of which all other services are largely in supporting roles.

**Q** General, going back to this question of prestige: I don't hear about any Army parades any more. Don't you ever have any parades in the Army?

**A** Come with me up to West Point. I'll show you one.

**Q** Well, I mean all over the United States—

**A** Not as much, probably, as we should. We turn out, of course, on the Fourth of July, Armed Forces Day, and occasions of that sort. The answer is we're living largely removed from civilian centers, and we work hard. Everybody is racing to meet a schedule, usually to get ready to send a unit or a man overseas.

## RESERVES: A PROBLEM—

**Q** How are you working out with the National Guard in this country? Are you working closely with it?

**A** We're very anxious as always to develop our Reserve; that's an area in which we've never been satisfied with progress.

In the case of the Guard, they are particularly fortunate now in having a lot of experience represented by World War II officers and noncoms. They have not, however, solved the problem of giving all Guardsmen that thorough basic training which we think is the starting point of military service. And we're anxious to work out with the Guard ways and means of correcting that, so that every Guardsman in every unit will be basically trained by the standards which are common throughout the Army.

**Q** What about the six-month training for the boys who want to go in? That program seems not to be working too well—

**A** We aren't getting enough volunteers.

**Q** Why not?

**A** The mathematical probability of being drafted now is very low, so there's no great incentive to volunteer. That's one point. Moreover, this Reserve program is something new. And while we're making every effort to carry the word out to the families, to the schools, to the grass roots of Ameri-

... "We still have no push-button method of waging war"

**Q** To what extent do Army men now have to be technicians, as distinguished from just fighting men?

**A** You really can't distinguish accurately because every fighting man, to a degree, is a technician; and every technician must know something about fighting. It is a fact that our equipment becomes more complicated year after year, and the need for technicians with broad background training is constantly increasing.

On the other hand, we still have no push-button method of waging war, and the man who closes with the enemy and lives under the gun for a long period of time is still the man who wins the battle in the end.

I often reflected in Korea that we had behind us thousands of people running a vast supply system; we had the greatest Navy in the world in the waters around Korea; we had the greatest Air Force in the sky overhead—the purpose of all of which was to help a few men to seize an objective on the ground. The cutting edge of the military machine is formed by those men up forward, those whom James Michener called "the few who actually storm the block-houses."

**Q** Back of them were billions of dollars that we spent—

**A** Billions of dollars—and all the other resources of the United States.

**Q** Do you have many of those people up front?

**A** Well, the Eighth Army faced the Communists along a 125-mile front. The forward elements added up to a sizable figure; nevertheless, the proportion of men actually in contact with the enemy is always a minority of those in a theater of war.

**Q** You told us about the noncoms and the enlisted rate. What success are you having in keeping officers in the Army?

**A** Generally speaking, we have no great problem there, except in certain sensitive areas. It is true that we're always losing some able people to industry. We've got men who have skills and talents which have a high market value, and they get plenty of chances to go into civil life. Numerically, they are not very great, but this loss is felt particularly in the medical profession, where we're losing medical officers all the time because of civilian attractions.

But I would say that, by and large, the officer corps is more stable than we have a right to expect it to be. I say that because of the difficulties of living in an Army which is more than 40 per cent overseas. We're always moving overseas and back home again, and in many places we can't take our families, because of lack of housing. So there's the problem of separation from one's family for long periods of time, which certainly is a morale factor of great importance.

### TRAINING FUTURE GENERALS—

**Q** What's presently the size of West Point? Has it increased for many generations?

**A** Not very much. There are limited possibilities of expansion because of physical limitations of the real estate there. Also, we are afraid of the effect of bigness on the quality of the West Point product.

**Q** Why couldn't they have one on the West Coast and one on the East Coast?

**A** They could put one on the West Coast if the Government wanted to put up money comparable to the cost of the new Air Force Academy.

**Q** If they need the officers, it seems to me that's logical, isn't it?

**A** We have never felt that we wanted all Army officers to be from West Point.

**Q** Why?

**A** Personally, I feel that the Army gains a great deal by having its officer corps drawn from more than one source. I have the highest regard for West Point, which sets the standards for the Army. But it's not the only way to produce a good officer. We've got many fine non-West Pointers to prove it.

**Q** Do you get them through the colleges?

**A** The colleges mostly—the ROTC. And we get officers from the ranks. The Officer Candidate Schools have produced many excellent leaders for the officer corps.

**Q** How is the Reserve Officers Training Corps program working out in the colleges?

**A** Very well. It has been the source of most of our Reserve officers for a long time. We get excellent people from the ROTC.

**Q** Do you give many from the ranks an opportunity?

**A** Oh, yes. Of course, at the present time, when the Army is contracting, the opportunities are not so great; but we still run Officer Candidate Schools where the young man of leadership potential is guided into the officer corps.

### ARMY GETTING SMALLER—

**Q** Why is the demand falling for draftees? Apparently it is; I saw the calls were off to only 5,000 or 6,000 now a month—

**A** It reflects the contracting Army. The Army is going down in size, and at the same time our enlistment rate is holding up.

**Q** I just wondered if you can foresee a time when you might be able to maintain the Army without the draft—

**A** Well, as I indicated, based on previous experience, the maximum volunteer Army is an Army of about 600,000 men. As long as we have to have an Army larger than that, I wouldn't have much hope of maintaining it entirely on a volunteer basis.

**Q** Yet, you're only getting 5,000 or 6,000 draftees a month, and they're not all going to the Army, are they?

**A** The Navy has been taking a few.

**Q** That seems very low. Can you replace your present Army with that type of draft? That's only about 60,000 a year—

**A** We can until we get down to our year-end strength. As long as we're discharging people—

**Q** You're going down?

**A** We're going down, yes.

**Q** You need the draft, too, to encourage enlistments?

**A** Yes, that's always a factor. But the pressure of the draft now is so slight that it's not a real incentive to enlist.

**Q** You're not taking every boy who comes along, are you?

**A** No; as a matter of fact, about 1 out of 10—something like that—that's about the probability of being drafted.

**Q** Are you rotating your men so that some of them serve overseas part of the time?

**A** Yes, we try to equalize the burden of overseas service as much as we can. The tour in Korea, for example—an area in which we can have no families at all—is 16 months.

## ... "We're passing through a transition period in warfare"

Where we can have families, the tour overseas is normally three years.

**Q** Well, that ought to be an inducement to some of them who want to see the world. Is overseas duty considered a burden?

**A** It's a burden in some cases. It rather depends upon your family situation. And some areas are in extreme climates, or isolated—less desirable than others.

**Q** Would you say, General, it's now an Army in transition from what it used to be into something else?

**A** Yes. I would say that we're passing through a transition period in warfare, to which the Army is making every effort to adapt itself so as to fight tomorrow's war with appropriate tactics and weapons.

In developing these improved capabilities, all of us bear a heavy responsibility. I can assure you that I do not feel that I have a final answer to many of our new problems, and I doubt any other responsible leader in the Pentagon feels otherwise. We're constantly questioning the solutions and re-examining the alternatives.

**Q** General, the Army has more Negroes than the other two services. How is integration working out in the Army?

**A** No problem at all.

**Q** What about officers? Are there many Negro officers commanding white troops?

**A** We have some. I would say the number is not great.

**Q** Are there colored companies, colored platoons?

**A** No, we're entirely integrated.

**Q** How about quarters? Do they live pretty much together?

**A** Yes.

**Q** Eat together?

**A** Yes.

**Q** Travel together?

**A** Travel together.

**Q** Is the Army today physically fit?

**A** The combat troops are. Many of us who sit around the Pentagon get soft by the nature of our job.

**Q** There isn't anything you can do about that?

**A** I play squash and handball and try to get my hard-working associates occasionally away from their work benches for exercise.

**Q** Are many officers in your command having heart attacks?

**A** There's no epidemic. However, there are stresses and strains involved in Army life that take their toll. That's why I urge my people to get out of the office. I've often told them that a man's on duty if he's exercising.

One mark I left at West Point is one in which I take some pride. It is a sign on the scale in the officers' gymnasium. It reads: "This is to remind you that a potbelly cannot lead the Corps of Cadets."

It can't lead the Army, either.



—Department of Defense

GI'S WORMING THROUGH BARBED WIRE ON AN INFILTRATION COURSE  
"Our young soldiers respond very quickly to living the tough way"