

IN
THE
MERCURY'S
OPINION



***Our Korean Defeat
Will Be Historic***

SOME FUTURE GIBBON, reflecting on the decline of the United States of America, may write:

“The Eighth of July, 1951, was a pivotal date in the history of the

great republic. Up to that date, for one hundred seventy-five years, America had known grandeur and victory. In all its wars the nation had forced its enemies — the enemies of mankind — to sue for peace. A white flag had never been substituted for the Stars-and-Stripes. The American people had always demanded victory: as late as 1945 they had taken pride when Hitler’s emissaries surrendered to Eisenhower; they had evidenced satisfaction when a little man in a top hat scaled the steel side of the battleship *Missouri* to surrender to MacArthur.

“Yet, in a scant six years after 1945, so vitiated had been the nation by Communist propaganda, and so inept had its leadership become, that the republic was willing to accept its first defeat. After an expenditure of twenty thousand lives and twenty billion dollars, after

reducing Korea to dust, Americans were willing to send white-flag-carrying emissaries into an enemy-held city seeking peace terms. The nation which had become the responsible custodian of the Western heritage, the nation whose cause had been the cause of mankind, this nation was now willing to withdraw before the barbarians.

"The weak and unwise American government, of course, did not admit a defeat; through propaganda it tried to claim a victory. And the people, confused and depressed by their leadership, chose to believe that perhaps it had been a victory . . . a great victory.

"But it was not a victory. And from that date on — from the day when the American people were willing to accept defeat for victory — America, like Carthage after Hannibal had failed to sack Rome, knew nothing else but defeat."

The foregoing is likely to be the verdict of history unless enough Americans come to understand the enormity of the mistakes in Korea. These are the mistakes of leadership, not of the people or of the fighting forces; so, if there is to be hope for the future, the leadership must be discredited and jettisoned.

Mistake Number One: Ground War in Korea

ON JUNE 24, 1950, this nation had a plan for dealing with probable Red aggression in Korea. According

to this plan, if and when the Reds crossed the 38th Parallel, American troops would not oppose them on the ground. Leaders of the Republic of Korea, loyal to the West, would set up a government-in-exile in Japan. Then, since responsible custodians cannot let aggression go unpunished, we would begin punishing the aggressors.

But again, according to plan, we would inflict punishment by the means with which we were strongest: with our sea and air power. Our Navy would blockade the Korean ports, and our Air Force would begin the systematic destruction of *North* Korean industry and transport.

Note the advantages of this plan. South Korea, largely agricultural, would have been occupied by the enemy but it would not have been devastated. The Communists would have begun to suffer from our sea and air blows from the first day, yet neither our American forces nor South Korea would have suffered comparably.

This plan would have left America in the position of power. It was a smart plan, a cunning plan, a wise plan. We could have killed Communists — the President said that was the objective of the war — without being killed. We could have employed all of our modern methods to kill Communists: we no longer insist that locusts must be killed only by catching them between a

rock and a hammer. We could have increased our blows until the Communists were ready to climb aboard the *Missouri* and ask for peace. Then the Communists could have withdrawn from a relatively intact South Korea to their own wasteland.

But this crafty plan was never implemented. Instead, it was changed, impulsively, by three men: the President, General Marshall, and Secretary Acheson.

All our lives and dollars were expended in Korea on a *sudden* decision made, not by the American people or their Congress, but by three men, two of whom have never been elected to any office. All the blood and devastation in Korea are, as a matter of fact, on the heads of Truman, Marshall, and Acheson.

The results of this impulsive decision by Truman, Marshall, and Acheson are now evident: 100,000 American casualties; uncounted billions of inflationary dollars; a completely devastated Korea bringing us thirty million new relief clients; and Admiral Joy carrying his white flag into Kaesong to beseech the Communists to accept the *status quo ante*.

Mistake Number Two: Not Winning a Victory

ONCE WE HAD accepted ground warfare in Korea; once we had solemnly declared our intention to "unify the Korean nation"; once we had buried twenty thousand

young men in Korean soil and invested their lives in victory for freedom; how could we afford to accept less than that victory?

It was at this point that Truman, Marshall, and Acheson became contemptible. If they had committed this nation to ground war out of deep conviction, then where was the courage to match their convictions? Instead of turning yellow, why didn't they cry a crusade and commit all the force necessary to give the free world a victory? Instead of cowering before reluctant allies, why didn't they *lead* and let the allies follow?

Despite their initial error, Truman, Marshall, and Acheson might yet have merited the admiration of free men had they displayed the courage to free Korea. Instead, they displayed fear before both our enemies and our allies, so they merit only the contempt which brave men and history will surely accord them.

Mistake Number Three: Humiliation at Kaesong

THROUGHOUT THE developing Korean disaster, thoughtful Americans have felt about like passengers would feel if, on the *Queen Mary* during a storm in the Atlantic, the passengers learned that the ship was being controlled by three amateurs who were operating without charts or planned course. We have known that we were in dangerous waters without competent pilots.

When General Marshall flew to Korea in June, 1951, we should have guessed that another humiliating mistake was in the offing. For Marshall, on his record, is our ablest architect of mistakes. In every conference which Marshall has ever arranged or attended, the cause of freedom has suffered. Senator McCarthy has gone off half-cocked again; Marshall is not subversive; he is a sincere patriot with an unchallenged capacity for being wrong.

With Marshall in charge of arrangements for the cease-fire talks, the humiliation at Kaesong was inevitable. Marshall is an old China hand at arranging cease-fires: he has now arranged three, and at all three the Communists have taken his pants. While the Communist cameras ground away, our officers were forced to come unarmed into an armed city and, for the record, sue for peace.

In the Orient, where "face" is more precious than life, this loss of American "face" was equivalent to the loss of many battles.

Whatever happens in Korea from this point on, Americans should remember two significant actions of the President. He discharged an Annapolis graduate from the Navy because the young Naval officer had written a letter critical of our triumvirate of disaster: Truman, Marshall, and Acheson. The President, through Marshall, then officially reminded the Army, Navy, and

Air Force that "any member of the armed services who expresses contempt for the President or any member of his cabinet must be courtmartialled and imprisoned up to fifteen years."

Americans can remember the Korean War as the one in which, even during the course of battle, Truman, Marshall, and Acheson felt compelled to take time out to try to protect themselves from the contempt of the men whose lives were being risked and given.

There is hope left for America and for the cause of mankind. But this hope can be realized only if Americans understand that this nation is much too grand and great to be controlled by an unsuccessful necktie salesman, a tailor's dummy, and the best lieutenant-colonel who ever yessed enough Presidents to become a five-star general.

If America is to know grandeur again; if free men are to find hope again; then we Americans must empower a leadership to match our responsibilities, our resources, and our opportunities.

* * *

On Marshall And The Red Cross

IN AN ARTICLE, *The Tragedy of George Marshall*, March, 1951, THE MERCURY revealed that during his fourteen-month tenure as titular head of the American Red Cross, General Marshall had drawn in

excess of \$30,000 from the Red Cross, in addition to his \$23,000 income, together with aides, automobiles, medical service, etc., which he commands from the government.

This revelation caused some embarrassment and loss of funds to the Red Cross. Radio programs which solicit funds were deluged with letters asking how many five-dollar contributions would it take from inflation-ridden housewives to make up for the \$30,000 which General Marshall had "accepted."

We had no desire to hurt the Red Cross; we only wanted to print a fact, and perhaps to demonstrate how even the general had been affected by the grab-all-you-can atmosphere in Washington.

Accordingly, we conferred at some length with Red Cross officials at the national headquarters in search of some information which might reassure reluctant contributors. Here are the reassurances:

1. The recompense drawn by General Marshall was by far the largest ever taken by any head of the Red Cross. All other Americans who have served the Red Cross in this honorary capacity have either taken no salary at all, or just as little as necessary to pay actual out-of-pocket expenses.

2. The titular head of the Red Cross is appointed by the President, and we gathered that the White House may have had some hand in specifying what General

Marshall was to receive. The President is noted for his "loyalty" to his friends; he likes to reward them out of public or semi-public funds. He once rewarded himself out of the school funds of Jackson County, Missouri.

3. We also gathered that the actual heads of the Red Cross were somewhat less than wildly enthusiastic over the arrangement with General Marshall. There were no expressions of profound regret when the President called him to higher responsibilities at the Defense Department.

4. Mr. Roland Harriman, who succeeded General Marshall, accepts no salary at all from the Red Cross; so Americans can once again contribute without any fear of an unreasonable salary for a front man.

* * *

The Quakers: Friends of Whom?

HAD we been riding in a covered wagon with a preacher friend when the wagon was attacked by redskins; and had the preacher, while we were trying to make a few redskins bite the dust, kept spoiling our aim by reminding us that all men should be brothers, it's entirely possible that we might have become irritated with said preacher. We might have advised him to knock off the chatter for a few minutes and pass the ammunition.

As we see it, the free men of the

earth are now locked in combat with the new barbarians. A man or a nation can get killed in this battle. So we don't take kindly to the propaganda with which the Quakers are now flooding this country. This is not because we don't value Quakers; we do, indeed, value them. But the Quakers are giving comfort to the barbarians; and they are only

confusing and spoiling the aim of the forces of freedom and decency.

We suggest that our readers ponder and circulate among their neighbors and friends Mr. Steinberg's timely warning in this issue. If we are to continue to recognize the Quakers as The Friends, we'd like to be reassured on this point: Friends of Whom?

*Do you laugh when you see men in women's clothes?
This critic says it isn't funny*

THE NEW TASTE IN HUMOR

ALFRED TOWNE

WHEN MILLIONS OF people laugh at the same thing the national funny-bone has obviously been tickled. For comedy to be popular in a mass culture, such as America's, it must stay away from the regional, the special, the local. Therefore only those experiences with which everyone is familiar find repeated expression in our humor. Witness the traveling salesman joke with its thousands of variations, the irrepressibly ingenious boy from Tom Sawyer to Henry Aldrich, and that stock butt of gags, the mother-in-law. The mass culture media of today have contributed an addition to this gallery of humorous types: the Male American in Skirts.

In Shakespeare's day, the popular stage exhibited a bevy of young men dressed up as women, and no one laughed. The absence of female actors, and the necessity for men to play their parts, was not the only reason why the audience went along with the illusion. Homosexuality, and its concomitant transvestism, were too little known in those days to provide the foundation of the

ludicrous needed for laughter. Somehow the audience managed to forget that the demure, giggling Juliet was really a beardless boy.

The advent of women (playing women) on the stage, did not bring the masquerade to an end. It merely brought into existence that highly specialized character actor, the female impersonator. For a long time, it was thought to be at least one height of dramatic art for a man to successfully convince the audience that he was a woman. But his blonde wig, his falsies and his carefully pitched voice were all meant to foster an illusion. If people laughed, it was at the jokes in the monologue, not at the spectacle he created.

Today, however, the female impersonator is unable to compete with a new army of men dressed up like women which is invading the movie and television screens. His meticulously detailed illusion amuses nobody. The new imitators seem crude, even vulgar; but they are getting the laughs, raking in the dough, and being rewarded with long-term contracts. Apparently audiences do not