

A Look At The Next War By A Hero Of The Last One

By HAL BOYLE
NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (AP)—I want to tell you about a book that may affect your life and the lives of your children.

It is a book without a plot. It has no hero or heroine and no love interest—except maybe love of country. It has no happy ending, because it ends on the note that we are just beginning.

The book is "Airborne Warfare" and it is published by the Infantry Journal Press, whose volumes for one reason or another don't hit many drug-store book counters.

Major Gen. "Slim" Jim Gavin wrote the book. It is a kind of blueprint of World War III—if and when—which may rank in time with the historic book on armored warfare written by an obscure French captain, Charles de Gaulle, before the outbreak of World War II.

"Slim Jim" is a kind of military Horatio Alger. A steel-willed man with a pleasant grin, he enlisted in the army at 17 and at 37 became commander of the famed 82nd airborne division.

He has a great battle record and is a cool and sensible man. He was respected and liked by his troops—the hard-bitten paratrooper kids who had as their motto: "Anybody who hesitates to attack a pillbox or kiss a pretty girl is a coward."

Gavin thinks the danger of the military mind lies in spending its time now learning how to fight the last war better. On the other hand, he doesn't think war in the foreseeable future will be merely a matter of pushbuttons. He believes the man who pulls the trigger will still be needed—but he wants to put wings on all the walking soldiers.

"The future of our armed forces is in the air," he says. "All fighting men and everything they need to fight with in the future and live on as they fight must be capable of movement by air."

Gavin cites evidence to bolster his belief that airborne landings played a decisive role in saving the beachheads in Sicily, Italy and perhaps Normandy. Yet he says that as late as 1942 the faculty of a leading American military service school was teaching that it was im-

possible to land a division of airborne troops behind enemy lines because too many takeoff airfields were required.

Two years later three full divisions of airborne troops were the first allied soldiers to land in France.

"If our development of equipment for amphibious warfare were as rapid as our development for airborne warfare has been," he observes drily, "we would have made the Normandy assault in rowboats."

What will future warfare be like? Airheads Next

Well, Gavin thinks beachheads will be replaced by airheads on enemy territory—a full army landed by air and functioning in four to six days.

Guided missiles—with atom bombs as their probable warheads—will have a global range but will be accurate only on targets a few hundred miles away.

"Never again may troops concentrate as they have in the past," he says. "Never again may troops and ships contest a beach as they did after landing in the invasion of Normandy. Dispersed units govern all operations of the future."

Troops carrying concentrated rations and light-weight but terrifically powerful new weapons will fan out after landing and concentrate only to meet the ground enemy—when close contact will prevent either side from using atom bombs.

The targets of airborne landings will probably be the launching sites of enemy guided missiles or key industrial and political centers.

Gavin believes that an enemy attack would begin with a bombardment of guided missiles followed in six minutes to six hours by airborne landings. He says the Florida peninsula could be cut off by little more than one division, thus removing Miami and Palm Beach from the American scene.

"The only possible certain antidote is an airborne force prepared to counterattack and isolate or destroy enemy forces."

His sober conclusion: "The nation that in the future has the best trained and equipped airborne forces has the best chance of survival. And the nation or nations that control the air will control the peace."



HAL BOYLE

Truman To Lay Wreath On Tomb

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (AP)—President Truman will lay a wreath at the base of the Lincoln statue in the Lincoln Memorial Thursday noon.

His press secretary, Charles G. Ross, said Mr. Truman will attend a brief anniversary ceremony and lay the wreath, but will not make a speech.

The president will speak on February 17 at 10:30 a. m. (EST) at a conference of national women's organizations under the sponsorship of the women's bureau of the labor department.

Many Vets Collect Pay

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (AP)—One veteran out of every 22 has drawn his full \$1040 of unemployment checks under the GI bill.

Reporting this today, the veterans administration said more than 8,200,000 veterans, or about 55 per cent of the World War II total, have collected at least one check.

About 8 per cent of these, or 676,000, have used up all they had coming.

Payments are of two kinds: 1. To unemployed veterans, a maximum of \$20 a week for 52 weeks.

2. To self-employed veterans, usually farmers, a maximum of \$100 a month for 10 and 2 1/2 months.

Through the end of last November, total payments under the program were \$2,800,000,000. This included \$900,000,000 for the first 11 months of 1947.

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Last Gandhi Rites Held

NEW DELHI, Feb. 11 (AP)—The people of Delhi made their last obeisance Tuesday before the cremated remains of Mohandas K. Gandhi. His ashes will be consigned Thursday at noon to their last resting place, the three Indian rivers held most sacred by Hindus.

Across India somewhat similar rites will be held. Portions of Gandhi's ashes were distributed to all Indian provinces as a symbol of universal love between Gandhi and his people.

The defense ministry announced detailed plans for the ceremony as police continued their investigation into Gandhi's assassination. The Indian religious leader was shot to death January 30 as he walked to a prayer meeting. Police remained silent on their progress.

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