

LeMay Assails 'Military Blindness,' Urges Escalation in Vietnam Bombing

United Press International
Former Air Force Chief of Staff Curtis E. LeMay yesterday denounced U.S. Vietnam strategy as the "ultimate in military blindness" and called for stepped-up bombing of the North.

"The only way to win a war is to escalate it one way or another. Above what the enemy can take," the retired general said in a copyright article for U.S. News & World Report.

As to the "outside risk" that escalation would bring Communist China into the war, LeMay declared that South Korea and Nationalist China, with U.S. air, naval and logistic support, "should provide

more than enough force to bring an unstable Red China to her knees."

LeMay retired in February, 1963, with four stars and a glowing tribute from President Johnson. But his criticism yesterday was among some of the harshest sounded by military men who have openly attacked the Johnson Administration's strategy.

"The present philosophy that we can, by cautious and timid military tactics, keep the war from escalating into a larger conflict is the ultimate in military blindness," LeMay said. "If we can't win without unacceptable risk, we have no business fighting in the first place."

The kind of bombing we have attempted against trails, roads, railroads and — since June — petroleum has not appreciably slowed up the flow of men and supplies from the North. This has led me to assert that the bombing is ineffective," LeMay said.

"The truth is, of course, that we have not been bombing the strength of the enemy's arms."

LeMay suggested that North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh would "opt for peace" if the United States would "progressively bomb command and control centers, airfields, power systems, principal transportation centers, and harbor facilities at Haiphong."