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offence," the Chinese have for long concerned themselves with the question of how to defend their territory against aggression rather than how to invade the Soviet Union, their main enemy.

Chinese military strategy, as dictated by Mao, calls for luring the enemy into a war of attrition on unfriendly soil. In such a war, China's poor communications become a defensive asset. In his brief book on Basic Tactics, Mao gave the following advice: "We must not attack strong positions; Do not fight hand battles; Surprise attacks on isolated units; Cause an uproar in the East, attack in the West; Meeting a superior enemy. When the enemy advances, we retreat. When the enemy retreats we pursue."

After weighing China's numerical superiority against Russia's military arsenal, Alexander Solzhenitsyn in one of his writings advised the Kremlin never to think of going to war with China. He warned that if Russia ever went to war with China, the outcome would be so disastrous for Russia that the Chinese would probably erase it from the face of the earth.

Whoever doubts this must understand that in such a war there will be four determined Chinese to every repressed Russian. The casualties of the border clashes between China and the Soviet Union on the Ussuri river in 1969, although light, are sufficient to show how Peking can offset any military inferiority by its numerical superiority in any war, nuclear or non-nuclear. By the time the 1969 border clashes ended, at least ten "better-armed" Russian troops had involuntarily gone into their graves "in defence of their fatherland."

Although China looks with suspicion at the United States, it does not regard its presence in Europe and Asia or elsewhere a threat to its own security. China regards the U.S. as a limited ally against the Soviet Union. To demonstrate Peking's wish for the survival of NATO, one of its radio broadcasts echoes the requirement for a strong U.S. military support in Europe by excerpting some paragraphs from the West German Defence Ministry's 1973-74 White Book on National Security.

Peking is fully prepared to continued to support a strong U.S. presence in Europe to divert Soviet attention to the force capabilities on their Western flank. A reduction of West European and U.S.

forces on the Soviets Western flank could lend to an increase of Soviet military strength along the Sino-Soviet border. Despite Chou's remark that "distant water (the EEC) cannot put out fire", Europe remains a great weight in the world balance of power.

The United States on the other hand is happy about the co-operation it is receiving from China. In its trade with China, the U.S. has so far been the gainer as it has exported more to Peking than it bought from there. Besides trade, Peking's diplomatic shift to the West is a great blessing to Washington. While this shift is making Moscow feel uneasy, it assures Washington that the Russians will never like to start a war in which they will have to fight against 1 billion well-armed people. But apart from this, the United States cannot even think of going to war with China.

What will be the fate of the U.S. in such a war? Who does not know that the extreme democracy which led to the loss of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and which will sooner or later lead to the fall of South Korea will continue to play a great role in that country? Whoever wants to know what I mean by extreme democracy should put me to task.

When President Ford ordered his marines to strike into Cambodia and rescue the great Mayaguez after its capture by communist troops, I was one of those who hailed his action as courageous and timely. But what happened in that "war"? The battle for the rescue of the Mayaguez ended in a pyrrhic victory for Washington. The Americans failed to set a precedent for the 1976 rescue by Israeli Commandos of more than 100 hostages at Entebbe Airport.

My conclusion here is that if for any reason the United States has to go to war with the Peoples Republic of China, things may not go well for the Super power. Extreme democracy will likely keep the war machines in Washington silent after the initial stage of the war. For their own safety, the blessed astronauts will race down to Houston, Texas, to board one of their already fly-tested Apollos and make for the moon. Back on the moon, they will not have any cause for alarm. And journalists will find their way to the colourful Washington to report the new dramatic move. Who can go to war with China then; my country Nigeria?

