

Perspective

By L. Jim Tuck

April 18, 2024

Space, the Ultimate High Ground?

Every student of history is familiar with the 5th century BC famous Chinese military strategist and philosopher, Sun Tzu, who wrote *The Art of War*. *The Art of War* has since become hugely influential in Eastern and Western military schools as instruction in field tactics. His book is about the military strategy of ancient China. Sun Tzu discusses how the high ground is an advantage in battle. Being up high, means your enemy has the disadvantage of fighting against both you and gravity.

The world today is vastly different than ancient times. Military leaders must think many moves far in advance of what the enemy might be thinking; it is much like playing a game of chess. One of the strategic pieces in the game in our time is the last frontier, space. What is likely happening out there? Is it yet another theater of war?

Perspective

Ever since Sputnik was launched on October 4, 1957, we have been sending aerospace technology into space around the earth. Satellites orbiting Earth make many things possible in the realm of communication. Satellite phones can be used anywhere on the planet without towers. Our Global Positioning System (GPS) is used by the airline industry, the military, police, agriculture, scientific projects, and a host of other critical services. The west is heavily invested in the use of these technologies.

However, space technology in our military preparation is becoming more desirable. It allows for Sun Tzu's strategy of seeking the advantage of the high ground. The United States is investing heavily in this new theater of war, and we are not the only ones; China and Russia are doing the same.

Space has a Bigger Story

The U.S. Space Force was founded December 20, 2019. It has 8,600 military personnel and 77 spacecraft. The U.S. Space Force ostensibly is to protect the country and allows us freedom to operate in space. It keeps space secure, stable, and accessible for military space power and innovation. It organizes, trains, and equips personnel to protect U.S. and allied interests in space. It manages space launch operations. It operates various spacecraft and systems, including GPS, military satellite communications, and missile warning systems.

The story of what is happening in the space around the earth is a far bigger story than many might imagine. In an article titled, "Space: The Ultimate High Ground," which appeared in spacenews.com on February 24, 2014, it states: "Some examples of counterspace programs include using radio frequencies to interfere with satellite communications, laser systems capable of degrading or destroying satellite subsystems, electromagnetic pulse weapons capable of degrading or destroying satellite and/or ground system electronics, kinetic anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons capable of disabling or destroying spacecraft, and advanced cyberwarfare programs."

The article also says, "In February 2012, Gen. Ronald Burgess, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, warned of the Chinese threat, stating, 'The space program, including ostensible civil projects, supports China's growing ability to deny or degrade the space assets of potential adversaries and enhances China's conventional military capabilities.' The alarm was sounded again this year when Dr. Ashley Tellis, a senior associate with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, told members of the House Armed Services Committee on Jan. 28 that 'the dangers emanating from China's counterspace investments are real and growing.' Dr. Tellis went on to warn that 'the diversity of Chinese counterspace activities ensures that almost every U.S. space component — the systems in orbit, the links that control them and channel their data, and their associated ground facilities — will face grave perils as current Chinese counterspace programs mature and their technologies are integrated into the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) warfighting arsenal.' Many are quick to dismiss or downplay such comments as mere hyperbole, or the stuff of a Tom Clancy novel. But they are well founded in recent examples of China's counterspace activities, and we ignore this reality at our own peril. In September 2006, U.S. satellite operators began noticing that some U.S. satellites were not functioning properly

over China. These anomalies were also detected by satellite tracking sensors and were subsequently determined to be caused by lasers directed from China.”

Voice of America News published an article on April 18, 2024, “NASA Chief Warns of Chinese Military Presence in Space.” It stated, “China is bolstering its space capabilities and is using its civilian program to mask its military objectives, the head of the U.S. space agency said Wednesday, warning that Washington must remain vigilant. ‘China has made extraordinary strides especially in the last 10 years, but they are very, very secretive,’ NASA administrator Bill Nelson told lawmakers on Capitol Hill. ‘We believe that a lot of their so-called civilian space program is a military program. And I think, in effect, we are in a race,’ Nelson said.”

We will no doubt invest billions if not trillions of dollars to maintain the military advantage of the higher ground. It seems the rule, given enough time, with every advance in military armaments, they will eventually be used in an active war. Is this the way to peace or just the beginning of another vicious cycle which leads to more war?

Where Is the True High Ground?

The prophet Isaiah speaks to our time: *“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace.”* (Isaiah 59:7-8)

Jesus implores us to come and follow Him: *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* (Matthew 11:28-30)

The world needs a way out of this awful cycle. A cycle which ends up costing millions of lives and maiming millions more in war after war. Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* (John 14:6)

Sun Tzu was wrong about all warfare. God the Father and Jesus occupy the true high ground in heaven above, and Jesus Christ is the way leading to peace. He is the real high ground, the Way and true advantage.