

**U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE  
GUIDE TO NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY AND STRATEGY**

**2nd Edition**

**Revised and Expanded**

**Edited by  
J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.  
Department of National Security and Strategy**

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## INTRODUCTION

**J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.**

This edition of the *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy* reflects to some extent recent changes in the structure of the core curriculum at the War College. The college broke its traditional core course, “War, National Policy and Strategy,” into two courses: “Theory of War and Strategy” and “National Security Policy and Strategy.” The result for this book is the expansion of the block on strategic theory and the introduction of a block on specific strategic issues. Because little time has passed since the publication of the most recent version of this book, this edition is largely an expansion of its predecessor rather than a major rewriting. The authors, all current or former members of the faculty, represent each of the four primary teaching departments of the college. Several chapters are new, and others have undergone significant rewrites or updates, but about two-thirds of the book remains unchanged. The appendix on the USAWC strategy formulation guidelines reflects the alterations in that fundamental document made for the 2006 academic year. Although the Department of National Security and Strategy uses several of the chapters in this volume as readings for its core courses and at least one other department uses chapters in its core instruction, this is not a textbook. It does reflect, however, both the method and manner we use to teach strategy formulation to America’s future senior leaders. As we continue to refine and update the *Guide*, we intend to increase course-oriented essays, and several of the new chapters were written specifically to support our instruction. The book also is not a comprehensive or exhaustive treatment of either strategy or the policymaking process.

The *Guide* is organized in broad groups of chapters addressing general subject areas. We begin with a look at some specific issues about the general security environment—largely international. The section on strategic thought and formulation includes chapters on broad issues of strategy formulation, as well as some basic strategic theory. The third section is about the elements of national power. A section on the national security policymaking process in the United States precedes the final section that deals with selected strategic issues.





## **PART I**

### **THE NATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT**



# CHAPTER 1

## THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Alan G. Stolberg

For strategic leaders of the 21st century primarily concerned with the issues of foreign policy and national security, the international system with which they will be dealing is likely to reflect only partially the traditional international system. While the nation-state, first codified by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, remains the dominant political body in international politics, its ability to influence events and people is being challenged by an assortment of nonstate actors, failed or failing states, and ungoverned regions. This is occurring in combination with the transnational threats posed by terror, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), crime, drugs, pandemics, and environmental degradation, as well as by elements of the system that also have potentially positive impacts such as globalization and the information revolution.

The international system refers to the structure of relationships that exist at the international level. These include the roles and interaction of both state and nonstate actors, along with international organizations (IO), multinational corporations (MNC), and nongovernment organizations (NGO).<sup>1</sup> States make foreign and national security policy against this external environment. Opportunities for both conflict and cooperation arise within this framework. The international community has tried for years to maintain order and prevent conflict using international institutions like the United Nations (UN) and international legal regimes like the Geneva Conventions.<sup>2</sup>

The international system frames the forces and trends in the global environment; it also frames the workspace of national security policy and strategy makers. As they work through the formulation process, with an understanding for the interests and objectives of any actors in a given situation, those involved in the business of policy and strategy making must be able to account for the associated state and nonstate actors present in the international system. In addition, it has become particularly important that they be able to assess the competing values associated with the global actors, both state and nonstate, especially in relation to the Global War on Terror. Also, given the criticality of being able to call upon other nation states and international or multinational organizations for support, the strategist or policymaker must know which alliances and coalitions are stakeholders in the issue in question. Another related element of the international system is the economic condition, as influenced by both the positive and negative components of globalization that helps determine the amount of power actors can wield in the system. It is also important to be able to identify the international legal tenets and regimes that bear on the situation. Finally, the 21st century policy and strategy maker must be able to understand the threats to order in the international system represented by both conventional and transnational entities. If the policymaker or strategist can accurately assess all these factors, he might be able to determine friends and enemies, threats and opportunities, and capabilities and constraints inherent in the contemporary world.

Threats, challenges, and opportunities can come in many shapes and sizes. A traditional threat might take the shape of a nation-state in possession of WMD and a hostile attitude. This is also true for a nonstate actor, potentially going down to the individual level, if he is willing to fly an airplane into a building. Less direct but also significant in the 21st century world are the threats that can be made to the successful execution of a nation-state's policies, if other nation-states are unwilling to provide support in a given situation. This lack of support can manifest itself in an opposing vote in an international organization like the United Nations (UN), a multinational organization like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), or an international regime such as the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA). It can equally be demonstrated by the refusal of a state to grant transit or over flight rights to the forces of another state.

The international system also affords the strategy or policymaker numerous opportunities for advantage. If a nation-state can come to the assistance of another nation-state or region in time of need like a natural disaster or failing economy, the opportunity exists to demonstrate concern and ultimately gain some level of influence with the entity in need. The same may be true when cooperating with other states as they transition toward democratic forms of government or market economies, or when accepting an international regime like an arms control treaty. In all cases, these are opportunities to gain acceptance and influence through and with other actors in the international system.

## **Who Are the Actors?**

Nations and states are not the same. Nations represent groupings of a people that claim certain common bonds, such as descent, language, history, or culture. Collectively, such an aggregation would constitute a national entity.<sup>3</sup> States, also known as nation-states, have a legal character and possess certain rights and duties under the tenets of international law. The 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States, considered the classic legal definition for states, indicates that states possess the following characteristics: permanent population, defined territory, and a government capable of maintaining effective control over its territory and conducting international relations with other states.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the government must possess a monopoly on the legitimate use of force in the state, and other states in the international system must recognize the sovereignty of that government.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of sovereignty came into existence with the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia ending the Thirty Years War in Europe, when, for the first time, the authority of state governments became officially recognized as greater than the authority of organized religion in formal state affairs. In contemporary international law, sovereign states are treated as equals, every recognized state can participate in the international system on the same plane. This sovereign equality possesses the following elements:

1. States are legally equal.
2. Every state enjoys the rights inherent in full sovereignty.
3. Every state is obligated to respect the fact of the legal entity of other states.
4. The territorial integrity and political independence of a state are inviolable.
5. Each state has the right to freely choose and develop its own political, social, economic, and cultural systems.
6. Each state is obligated to carry out its international obligations fully and conscientiously and to live in peace with other states.<sup>6</sup>

Since the 17th century, the nation-state has been the dominant entity in the international system, in part because of the power the concept of sovereignty gave the recognized states – both in terms of absolute domestic control and independence on the international level.

But nation-states have never been alone in the international system. A variety of nonstate actors always have challenged their influence. The term nonstate actor typically refers to any participant in the international system that is not a government. It is an entity or group that may have an impact on the internationally related decisions or policies of one or more states. Examples of nonstate actors would be IOs, NGOs, MNCs, the international media, armed elements attempting to free their territory from external rule, or terrorist groups. An individual may also be a nonstate actor.<sup>7</sup>

An IO is a formal institutional structure that transcends national boundaries. States create them by multilateral agreement or treaty. IOs normally function as an association of states that wields state-like power through governmental-like organs. The founding treaty defines the limits of the IO's legal

competence. This is the primary difference between a state and an IO. The IO only possesses the powers granted to it in its originating document by the states that created it, and cannot legally act beyond those powers. A state possesses the rights and duties recognized by international law, subject to the provisions of that law, and can involve itself in almost any activity of its choosing. IOs are completely dependent on member states for support and resources, both political and practical (like money and personnel). The result is that every IO is dependent on a sufficient number of member states believing that it is in their national interest to support the IO and its activities. Without member state support, the IO will not be able to function. Examples of IOs include the UN, NATO, and the European Union (EU).<sup>8</sup>

Different from IOs that are state based, NGOs are voluntary organizations of private individuals, both paid and unpaid, who are committed to a wide range of issues not on the behalf of any specific state government. Owing to increased interconnectedness partly associated with improvements in communications technology and transportation, specialized NGO organizations, agencies, and groups have risen around the globe, and have an unprecedented level of influence in the modern international system. NGOs typically fall in one of two categories: those that have a universal noncommercial (nonprofit), and nonpartisan focus; and those that are primarily motivated by self-interest. The former are likely to involve humanitarian aid organizations, human rights groups, environmentalists, or new social movements. Representative organizations of this first type are Amnesty International, Greenpeace, the Red Cross, and Save the Children.<sup>9</sup>

The second NGO grouping, those that are directed by self-interest, is usually best represented by MNCs. Sometimes called transnational corporations, MNCs are global actors that execute commercial activities for profit in more than one country. Estimates are that the largest 500 MNCs control more than two-thirds of world trade. While not a new concept, given that predecessors like the Hudson Bay Company and the British East India Company were operational over 300 years ago, contemporary MNCs such as General Motors or IBM have been able to take advantage of advances in technology and communication to become truly global in nature, with only a corporate headquarters in a single given country. Production no longer has to be located at the headquarters. With their enormous wealth, the impact of MNCs on the global economy is immense. Much of this influence comes in the arena of international commerce. In addition to being credited as a modernizing force in the international system through the establishment of hospitals, schools, and other valuable infrastructure in the Third World, MNCs are also charged with exploiting underdeveloped states in their conduct of free trade.<sup>10</sup>

To combat violations of the world order, the international community has created a number of regimes to ensure that widely accepted principles, procedures, norms, and rules are in place to govern particular issues in the international system. The intent is to create opportunity for states to use these regimes as fora to cooperate to achieve beneficial outcomes. Membership in these special purpose organizations generally is open to all relevant state actors. The success or failure of regimes is based on the level of coordination and cooperation of policies among the member states.<sup>11</sup>

International regimes can take the form of legal conventions, international agreements, treaties, or international institutions. Special issue areas that they occupy include economics, the environment, human rights, policing, and arms control. Contemporary regimes like the World Trade Organization (WTO), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Kyoto Protocol on the Environment, Geneva Conventions, International Criminal Court (ICC), UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START) I and II are all intended to specify general standards of behavior and identify the rights and obligations of signatory states.<sup>12</sup>

The checks and balances created for the international system by the primary state actors and regimes have still been unable to assure global stability and good governance. This has been particularly manifest in the increase in the number of failed states and ungoverned spaces as well as the appearance of rogue states in the later part of the 20th century.

The problem of failed states has emerged since the end of the Cold War. It indicates that a breakdown of law, order, and basic services, such as education and health for the population, has occurred. This situation arises when a state is no longer able to maintain itself as a workable political and economic entity. A failed state is ungovernable and has lost its legitimacy from the perspective of the international community. In some cases, power lies in the hands of criminals, warlords, armed gangs, or religious fanatics. Other failed states have been enmeshed in civil war for many years. In essence, the government of the state has ceased to function (if it exists) inside the territorial borders of the original sovereign state. The end of the Cold War catalyzed the state failure process because the rival powers no longer provided economic and military assistance to former client regimes in the underdeveloped world. The governments of the failed states in countries like Haiti, Somalia, Liberia, Cambodia, and Rwanda were unable to survive without that assistance.<sup>13</sup>

While not necessarily a component of a failed state, ungoverned spaces feature rugged, remote, maritime, or littoral areas not governed effectively by a sovereign state. The state that theoretically should control the territory either lacks the willingness or ability to exercise authority over part or all of a country. Ungoverned spaces are areas where nonstate actors that threaten domestic or international order can exploit the lack of legal norms and processes. Examples include northern parts of sub-Saharan Africa and the Northwest Territories in Pakistan.<sup>14</sup>

An additional failure to maintain complete order in the international system is associated with the development of the rogue state. A rogue state is a state that frequently violates international standards of acceptable behavior. This is a sovereign entity that is openly aggressive, highly repressive, and intolerant with little or no regard for the norms of the international system. As such, it is a threat to international peace. The rogue state may attempt to exert influence over other states by several means. It might threaten to or actually develop, test, and field WMD or ballistic missile systems. It might traffic in drugs, break international treaties, or sponsor terrorism. It is likely to be aggressive toward other states. Current example rogue states are North Korea and Iran.<sup>15</sup>

Transnational threats are threats to the international system that cross state borders. Such threats emerged or increased dramatically in the latter part of the last century. While the term transnational relates to any activity that cross state boundaries, transnational threats is a technical term that usually refers to activities with minimal or no governmental control. Three types of movement can be associated with transnational behavior: movement of physical objects, to include human beings; movement of information and ideas; and movement of money and credit.<sup>16</sup>

The combination of the cross border movement with illicit or dangerous activities has resulted in the identification of an emerging set of threats to human security, the ability of states to govern themselves, and ultimately the stability of the international system at large. These transnational threats fall into two broad categories:

1. Direct threats from human beings (terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, illegal alien smuggling, and smuggling of WMD), and
2. Threats from impersonal forces (disease and international pandemics, population growth and migration, resource shortages, global environmental degradation and climate change).<sup>17</sup>

Transnational threats have been expanding since the end of the Cold War for a number of reasons. These include the premise that many emerging democracies are the vestiges of former authoritarian states where there has been a long tradition of coercion, violence, and corruption. Such states relied more on roles and relations than on rules and regulations. Thus, many governments have been constrained by political norms that place factional loyalties above commitment to public policies. Also, as was the case with failing states and ungoverned spaces, diminished assistance from the developed world helped reduce the ability of governments to police their borders.<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, transnational threats, along with other traditional state-to-state threats, have created a number of significant challenges for the maintenance of stability in the international system. These threats and the problems associated with failed and rogue states, ungoverned spaces, and potential competition and conflict among the state and nonstate actors also present some opportunities. Some states and nonstate actors can advance their individual causes in support of their national, organizational, or group interests by exploiting instability in the system. This interaction among the actors represents the international system at work.

## **How Does the International System Function?**

As players on the international stage, both state and nonstate actors either work alone or attempt to work with other elements of the system. Such relationships might be with other states or nonstate actors on a bilateral basis; formal groupings of states, IOs, NGOs, or other nonstate actors; or informal, even unacknowledged cooperation with other system members. States can opt to form or join existing alliances or coalitions. An alliance is a formal security agreement between two or more states. Typically, states enter into alliances to protect themselves against a common threat. By consolidating resources and acting in unison, members of an alliance believe they can improve their overall position in the international system and their security relative to states that are not members of their alliance. Additional benefits to alliance membership might include the ability to offset the cost of defense. Unless an alliance partner is an actual liability, membership in an alliance allows states to supplement their military capability with those of their alliance partners. The alliance is thus, at least theoretically, less expensive than a unilateral approach to security. Also, economically related alliances can provide expanded economic benefits through increased trade, assistance, and loans between allies.<sup>19</sup> Alliance examples include NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Coalitions are normally less formal than alliances. Normally, they represent a broad grouping of often very diverse states temporarily united for a specific purpose, typically military action.<sup>20</sup> States often agree to participate in a coalition strictly as a matter of convenience. Coalitions are likely to be temporary, while alliances frequently can endure for lengthy periods. Examples would be the American-led coalitions during the first Persian Gulf War (Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM) and the second conflict (Operation IRAQI FREEDOM).

Two ways states might use alliances or coalitions are to balance or to bandwagon. Both refer to decisions, conscious or subconscious, about relations with other system members. A state is balancing when it joins a weaker alliance or coalition to counter the influence or power of a stronger state or group of states. "Balancing happens when weaker states decide that the dominance and influence of a stronger state is unacceptable and that the cost of allowing the stronger state to continue their policies unchecked is greater than the cost of action against the stronger state."<sup>21</sup> Balancing can be either external or internal in origin. In the external case, weaker states form a coalition against a stronger state, shifting the balance of power in their favor. A weaker state can also balance internally by deciding to undertake a military build up to increase its power with respect to the stronger state. Balancing in the international system also can be either a hard or soft action. It would be hard when it is intended to increase or threaten the use of military power of one state relative to another. A soft usage would be when a weaker state or states want to balance a stronger opponent but believe use of military power is infeasible. In that situation, states employ nonmilitary elements of power to help neutralize the stronger states.<sup>22</sup>

Bandwagoning is different from balancing because it will always refer to the act of a weaker state or states joining a stronger state, alliance, or coalition. Bandwagoning occurs when weaker states determine that the cost of opposing a stronger state exceeds the benefits to be gained from supporting it. The stronger power may offer incentives like territorial gain or trade agreements to entice the weaker actor to join with it.<sup>23</sup>



Actors on the global stage, both state and nonstate, decide to participate in alliances and coalitions and to conduct policies in support of balancing and bandwagoning based on their assessment of their relative power in the international system. This reflects one of the pervasive concepts about the system—that it represents or responds to a balance of power. It is important to distinguish between balance of power as a policy (a deliberate attempt to prevent predominance on the part of another actor in the international system) and balance of power as a description of how the international system works (where the interaction between actors tends to limit or restrict any attempt at hegemony and results in a general status of stability). The most widely accepted usage of the balance of power term is related to the latter concept: the process that prevents or opposes the emergence of a single dominant actor. Theoretically, the international system works to prevent any actor from dictating to any other actor—that is, the balance of power concept actually works to maintain the system of independent and sovereign states.<sup>24</sup> In effect, balance of power describes the distribution of power in the international system in both equal and unequal portions. Given an assumption that unbalanced power is dangerous for the maintenance of stability, actors attempt to conduct policy that produces equilibrium of power in the system. This helps form the rationale for actors to bandwagon or balance as they form alliances or coalitions against potentially dominant competitors.<sup>25</sup>

Belief that equilibrium protects the sovereignty of the states, perceived inequality of power, and the threat of violence combine to give both dominant and subordinate actors a shared (if unequal) interest in maintaining order in the international system. Balance of power becomes a type of compromise among actors that find stability preferable to anarchy, although it results in a system that favors the strong and wealthy over the weak and poor. More powerful actors, like the great power states, play leading roles in a balance of power international system because they have superior military force and the ability to wield key technology.<sup>26</sup>

Ultimately, the balance of power concept fulfills three functions in the international system:

1. It prevents the system from being transformed by conquest into a universal empire.
2. Localized balances of power serve to protect actors from absorption by a dominant regional actor.
3. Most important, the balance of power has helped create the conditions in which other elements or characteristics of the international system can develop (i.e., diplomacy, stability, anarchy, war).<sup>27</sup>

Above all, this third function ensures the importance of the balance of power concept to the international system for the foreseeable future.

For those actors in the international system less comfortable with operating in alliances and coalitions, collective security provides an alternative. In formal terms, collective security is a framework or institution designed to prevent or neutralize aggression by a state against any member state. All state members are jointly responsible for the physical security of every other member. Membership in such an institution permits states to renounce the unilateral use of force because the institution guarantees to come to the assistance of the aggrieved state and sanction the aggressor. The overall intent of collective security is the maintenance of peace among members of the framework or institution (i.e., the UN, League of Nations), not between the system and external elements, as in the case of an alliance.<sup>28</sup>

The search for security is the most significant concern in some manner, shape, or form for the vast majority of actors in the international system. Security implies the absence of threats to one's interests. In absolute terms, complete security would mean freedom from all threats. Historically, the term security equated to the military dimension of security. Thus, security meant security from war or violent conflict. But the 20th century witnessed an expansion of the concept to include other security issues such as those relating to the economy or environment. Economic security is the need to ensure that a hostile actor cannot control the supply of goods and services, or the prices for those goods and

services.<sup>29</sup> Examples are access to water, oil, or natural gas. Environmental security implies protection from environmental dangers caused by natural or human processes due to ignorance, accident, mismanagement, or design and originating within or across national borders.<sup>30</sup> Example issues are air and water quality, global warming, famine, or health pandemics.

How an actor in the international system chooses to interpret the concept of security helps determine participation in alliances or coalitions, involvement in collective security frameworks or institutions, and balancing or bandwagoning behaviors. In all cases, these actors consider their ability to wield all the elements of power they have available, whether or not to use force, and – most significantly – what interests their ultimate policies will support.

Power in the international system is the ability of an actor or actors to influence the behavior of other actors – usually to influence them to take action in accordance with the interests of the power-wielding state. Power does not have to be used to be effective. It is enough that the other actors acknowledge it, either implicitly or explicitly, since the potential exercise of acknowledged power can be as intimidating as its actual use. Historically, some international actors have sought power for power's sake; however, states normally use power to achieve or defend goals that could include prestige, territory, or security.<sup>31</sup>

There are two general components of power: hard and soft. Hard power refers to the influence that comes from direct military and economic means. This is in contrast to soft power, which refers to power that originates with the more indirect means of diplomacy, culture, and history. Hard power describes an actor's ability to induce another actor to perform or stop performing an action. This can be done using military power through threats or force. It can also be achieved using economic power – relying on assistance, bribes, or economic sanctions. Soft power is a term used to describe the ability of an actor to indirectly influence the behavior of other actors through cultural or ideological means.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast with the primary tools of hard power – the ability to threaten with sticks or pay with carrots – soft power attracts others or co-opts them so that they want what you want. If a state can attract another state to want what it wants, it can conserve its carrots and sticks. The sources of soft power are culture (when it is attractive to others), values (when there is no hypocrisy in their application), and foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others). Soft power uses an attraction to shared values and the perceived justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values.<sup>33</sup> It is much more difficult to systematically or consciously develop, manage, control, or apply than hard power.

Whether it is hard or soft, an actor's power is measured in terms of the elements of power that it actually possesses. Such measurement is always done in relation to another actor or actors and in the context of the specific situation in which the power might be wielded. Are the available elements of power appropriate given the potential foe or the nature of the conflict?<sup>34</sup> American security professionals traditionally have categorized the elements of power in terms of the acronym DIME for the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic elements. This concept has been expanded in the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism to MIDLIFE: military, information, diplomacy, law enforcement, intelligence, finance, and economic.<sup>35</sup>

Regardless of which specific elements of power are available for potential use, the most important consideration for an actor's ability to transform potential power into operational power is political will. Effectiveness of the actor's government and depth of domestic support (or leadership effectiveness and stakeholder support for nonstate actors) are crucial for developing and sustaining political will.<sup>36</sup> Without either of those components, the likelihood for the successful use of power is reduced significantly.

One of the most visible uses of power is in the application of force. There are a number of reasons given for its employment. In 1966, the classic analyst of the use of force and influence, Thomas

Schelling, described the use, or threat of use, of force as a kind of “vicious diplomacy.” He described four different ways in which force might be used: deterrence, compellence, coercion, and brute force. Deterrence seeks to prevent another actor from doing something that it might otherwise have done. This is implemented over an indefinite period of time by convincing the deteree that he cannot achieve the aim he seeks successfully, sometimes by demonstrating sufficient force to prevent achievement and sometimes by promising a punishing response should the target engage in the action. An actor chooses to use compellence when it desires to make an enemy do something by a specific time deadline. It might have the positive effect of persuading an adversary to cease unacceptable behavior, or it might cause him to retreat from seized positions or surrender assets illicitly taken. Compellence usually is used after deterrence has failed, although that condition is not a prerequisite. It can carry the promise of inflicting an escalating level of damage to a foe until it meets demands. It might also provide some type of reward for meeting the demands. For both deterrence and compellence to be successful, both the threatened penalty and promised reward (if applicable) must be credible.<sup>37</sup>

Coercion is the intent to inflict pain if an opponent does not do what you want. It is normally most successful when held in reserve as a credible threat. Signaling the credibility and intensity of the threat are keys to success. Different from compellence, coercion only offers a threat for noncompliance without a reward for compliance. Brute force is directly taking what the actor wants. It is not dependent on signaling intent to the opponent and succeeds when used based simply on the success of the application of force. Brute force is ultimately not about asking, but taking whatever the actor wants through the direct use of force.<sup>38</sup>

Virtually any action taken by an actor in the international system, whether it be peaceful or forceful, likely will be done for the purpose of supporting the interests of the executing actor. The national interest is intended to identify what is most important to the actor. Until the 17th century, the national interest usually was viewed as secondary to that of religion or morality. To engage in war, rulers typically needed to justify their action in these contexts. This changed with the coming of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. For a state, the national interest is likely to be multifaceted and can be oriented on political, economic, military, or cultural objectives. The most significant interest is state survival and security. The term “vital” frequently is applied to this interest, with the “implication being that the stake is so fundamental to the well-being of the state that it cannot be compromised” and may require the use of military force to sustain it. Other types of interests considered to be important are the pursuit of wealth and economic growth, the promotion of ideological principles, and the establishment of a favorable world order. In addition, many states believe the preservation of the national culture in the state to be of great significance.<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, it is the state’s assessment of the importance of its national interests that will determine much or all of what it will do or not do within the international system.

## **Why Does the International System Behave the Way It Does?**

Given a belief that the international system is composed of a structure and associated interacting units, political scientists in the late 1950s developed the concept known as levels of analysis to help analyze all the dynamics of interaction in the system. They believed examining problems in international relations from different perspectives on the actors would help determine why different units and structures in the international system behave as they do. They developed the term “levels” for the perspective units and structures. Levels represent locations where both outcomes and sources of explanation can be identified. The five most frequently used levels of analysis are:

1. International systems – largest grouping of interacting or interdependent units with no system above them; encompasses the entire planet.
2. International subsystems – groups or units within the international system that can be distinguished from the entire system by the nature or intensity of their interactions with or interdependence

on each other. (Examples: Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], Organization of African Unity [OAU], and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC].)

3. Units—actors consisting of various subgroups, organizations, communities, and many individuals, all with standing at higher levels. (Examples: states, nations, and MNC.)
4. Subunits—organized groups of individuals within units that are able or try to affect the behavior of the unit as a whole. (Examples: bureaucracies and lobbies.)
5. Individuals.<sup>40</sup>

Making use of the levels of analysis, international relations theory attempts to provide a conceptual model with which to analyze the international system. Each theory relies on different sets of assumptions and often a different level of analysis. The respective theories act as lenses, allowing the wearer to only view the key events relevant to a particular theory. An adherent of one theory may disregard completely an event that another could view as crucial, and vice versa.<sup>41</sup>

International relations (IR) theories can be divided into theories that focus primarily on a state-level analysis and those that orient on an overall systemic approach. Many, often conflicting, ways of thinking exist in international relations theory. The two most prevalent schools of thought are Realism and Liberalism; though increasingly, Idealism, also known as Constructivism, is becoming a competing concept.<sup>42</sup>

Realism has been a major, if not the dominant, theory of international relations since the end of World War II. From the realist perspective, struggle, conflict, and competition are inevitable in the international system. Mankind is not benevolent and kind, but self-centered and competitive. Realism assumes that the international system is anarchic because there is no authority above states capable of regulating their interactions; states must arrive at relations with other states on their own rather than by obeying the dictates of some higher entity. States, and not international institutions, NGOs, or MNCs, are the primary actors in the international system. For states to thrive and survive, they must orient on security as their most fundamental national interest. Without security, no other goals are possible. States must struggle for power in that system; this produces the constant competition and conflict.<sup>43</sup> Military force is the ultimate arbiter in the struggle for power. Each state is a rational actor that always acts in accordance with its own self-interest. The primary goal is always ensuring its own security. Strong leaders are key to success in this environment and will be required to exhibit realistic vice morally idealistic based positions.

Realism asserts that states are inherently aggressive, and territorial expansion is only constrained by opposing state(s). This aggressive orientation, however, leads to a security dilemma because increasing one's own security produces greater instability as opponents build up their forces to balance. Thus, with realism, security is a zero-sum game where states make only relative gains.<sup>44</sup>

A variation of realism is called neorealism. Rather than the realist view of the influence of human nature, neorealists believe that the structure of the international system controls and impacts all actors. In effect, it is the system itself that is in charge. States, with their orientation on survival, have a primary, if not sole, focus on war and peace. For a neorealist, state interests shape behavior. In neorealism, the success of regimes is totally dependent on the support of strong powers.<sup>45</sup>

The international system constrains states. The system comprises both the states and the structure within which they exist and interact. From a neorealist point of view, cooperation is more likely than a pure realist claims because states are more interested in relative than absolute gains. States are often willing to bargain to give something up.<sup>46</sup>

Several principal notions, especially since Immanuel Kant drafted "Perpetual Peace" in 1795, have characterized liberalism as another fundamental theoretical basis for international relations:

Peace can best be secured through the spread of democratic institutions on a worldwide basis. Governments, not people cause wars . . . Free Markets and human nature's perfectibility would encourage interdependence and demonstrate conclusively that war does not pay . . . Disputes would be settled by established judicial procedures . . . Security would be a collective, communal responsibility rather than an individual one.<sup>47</sup>

Liberalism, which in this context differs from liberalism as used in the liberal-conservative political paradigm, maintains that interaction between states goes beyond the political to the economic components of the international system—to include commercial firms, organizations, and individuals. Thus, instead of the realist anarchic international system, liberals see plenty of opportunities for cooperation and broader notions of power like cultural capital. Liberals also assume that states can make absolute gains through cooperation and interdependence—thus peace and stability are possible in the system.<sup>48</sup>

One primary hope of liberals for stability is the democratic peace concept. The main propositions of this concept are: peace through the expansion of democratic institutions; populations of states focus naturally on their economic and social welfare as opposed to imperialistic militarism; the subordination of states to an international legal system; and commitment to collective security enhances stability. Perhaps the most important element of the democratic peace concept is the belief that liberal democratic states are likely to remain at peace with one another. The international judicial system, combined with the perceived economic and social success of liberal states, normally dictates avoidance of external conflict, especially with another liberal democratic state.<sup>49</sup>

As with classic realism, liberalism has a related alternative called neoliberalism. This postulates that the system is not in charge of everything; states make their own decisions. States are not only interested in survival, but also in cooperation. International institutions can promote cooperation; there are options beyond war and peace. Rules, principles, ideas, social norms, and conventions must be considered. With neoliberalism, there is a much greater degree of cooperation in the international system than neorealism is willing to acknowledge. To a great degree, this is as a result of the success of international regimes.<sup>50</sup>

Regimes as a framework of rules, expectations, and prescriptions between actors can change state behavior, particularly in the arena of cooperation.<sup>51</sup> Regimes often develop their own interests and become actors in the system.<sup>52</sup> Regimes come about for many reasons. They can benefit all actors in the system and do not require a hegemonic state for support. The more times states cooperate in a regime, the more opportunity exists to change the behavior of a particular state. In effect, regimes can change state behavior. There is a shared interest that ultimately can benefit both parties. Institutional incentives can motivate states to cooperate peacefully even in situations when force might be considered. A regime's intervention in state behavior can lead to cooperation. The result is that the existence of regimes makes cooperation more likely—which, in turn, could help drive change.<sup>53</sup>

Idealism, also known as constructivism, rejects standard realist and liberal views of the international system, arguing that states derive interests from ideas and norms. Idealists believe that the effects of anarchy in the system are not all defining, but “anarchy is what states make of it.”<sup>54</sup> For an idealist, the state's identity shapes its interests. To understand change, an idealist must assess a state's identity. States are social beings, and much of their identity is a social construct. If a state identifies itself as a hegemonic global policeman, it will shape its interests accordingly. States that self-identify as peace-loving economic powers emphasize different interests. Who a state is—primarily in the form of culture—will shape that state's identity. States understand other states through their actions. Key for an idealist, one state's reaction will affect the way another state behaves.<sup>55</sup>

## Summary.

In the end, there is no single answer for why any actor in the 21st century international system behaves the way that it does. There is also no single description for all the actors in the system, as well as no predictable method that any of them will use to interact. In effect, even considering the complexities of the 20th century, the 21st century international system is highly likely to be more complex than ever. Clearly the nationstate will continue to be the primary actor, but it will have increasing competition from the nonstate actors that have emerged in the later part of the last century. Advances in communication and transportation, along with the information revolution's contribution to globalization have provided both emerging states and nonstate actors a degree of international influence never previously imagined. From the perspective of a 21st century strategic leader, these emerging state and nonstate actors and emerging transnational threats will create numerous challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities will force leaders to address issues like determining the exact threat, assessing the intensity of national interests at stake, deciding whether to employ hard or soft power, and opting to work with alliances or coalitions or to go it alone. Ultimately, understanding these issues, and many others dependent on the situation, will be critical for the success of any actor in the 21st century international system.

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## CHAPTER 2

### MULTILATERALISM AND UNILATERALISM

James A. Helis

Our best hope for safety in such times, as in difficult times past, is in American strength and will – the strength and will to lead a unipolar world, unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Krauthammer

The paradox of American power at the end of this millennium is that it is too great to be challenged by any other state, yet not great enough to solve problems such as global terrorism and nuclear proliferation. America needs the help and respect of other nations.<sup>2</sup>

Sebastian Mallaby

At the beginning of the 21st century, the United States enjoys an historically unprecedented accumulation of national power. The American economy is the largest in the world and, even in a slowdown, far outstrips that of any other nation.<sup>3</sup> The prowess of America's armed forces has been demonstrated again and again, from Kosovo to Afghanistan to Iraq. In 2002, the United States accounted for 43 percent of the world's military spending, more than the total of the next 14 together.<sup>4</sup> Projected increases in American military spending will likely lead to the United States spending more on defense than the rest of the world combined, and the training and technological superiority of America's armed forces provide a quantum advantage that no nation is likely to even approach in the near to medium term. The combination of overwhelming economic and military power gives the United States enormous political influence throughout the world. There are few, if any, global issues that can be addressed or resolved without U.S. support and cooperation.

One central debate in United States foreign policy has been the degree to which the United States should be involved in the affairs of the world. World War II and the Cold War seemed to settle the question of isolationism or engagement in favor of the latter. After the Cold War, the issue of isolationism rose again, but only briefly. The real post-Cold War debate was, and remains, over the degree to which the United States should pursue its foreign policy alone or in partnership with other states. The debate has been framed in terms of multilateralism versus unilateralism and is heavily influenced by competing views on what the United States should do with its position of preeminent international power and influence. In one sense, "the differences [between the two views] are a matter of degree, and there are few pure unilateralists or multilateralists."<sup>5</sup> However, there are clear differences between the two schools of thought on when and to what extent the United States should work with others. We should keep in mind that unilateralism and multilateralism are not strategies. Strategy is about matching ends, means, and ways. Unilateralism and multilateralism are competing ways to approach problems. This monograph will examine the advantages and disadvantages offered by each approach. The goal is to identify those conditions under which it is better to work with others through coalitions and alliances and when it is might be best go it alone.

#### **Unilateralism.**

People who advocate unilateralism tend to believe that the post-Cold War world is unpredictable and dangerous. They believe America must use its power to protect, and in many cases propagate,



its interests and values. America no longer need constrain itself in the assertion and expansion of its influence out of fear of provoking a confrontation with the Soviet Union. The end of the Cold War stand-off with its threat of nuclear war created an opportunity for the United States to apply its overwhelming military, economic, and political power to build an international order that will perpetuate America's preeminent position in the world.

Unilateralists contend that an assertive approach to foreign policy is justified on both pragmatic and ideological grounds. Charles Krauthammer concisely summarizes the unilateralist philosophy: "The essence of unilateralism is that we do not allow others, no matter how well-meaning, to deter us from pursuing the fundamental security interests of the United States and the free world."<sup>6</sup> In other words, as a practical matter, the United States should not compromise when pursuing national security interests. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and America's subsequent pursuit of a global war on terrorism strengthened the belief that the United States was vulnerable to threats and needed to act aggressively to defeat those threats, irrespective of how the strategy played on the global stage. Ideologically, unilateralists argue that American values and ideals essentially are universal. Policies and actions intended to advance them are in the interest of not only the United States, but people throughout the world. The 2002 National Security Strategy states that "the United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere . . . America must stand firmly for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity."<sup>7</sup> The non-negotiability of interests and values calls for their uncompromising pursuit, preferably with the support of others, but alone if necessary. The United States, with its overwhelming aggregation of national power, can be a decisive player anywhere in the world on virtually any issue it desires. "It is hard for the world to ignore or work around the United States regardless of the issue—trade, finance, security, proliferation, or the environment."<sup>8</sup> The United States should not squander its position and capabilities by compromising and diluting its objectives in order to attract allies and partners. If the cause is right and just, the United States should pursue it without compromise. Other states can either accept America's arguments and follow her lead or be left behind as the United States does what it should and must to advance its interests and values.

One of the main advantages of unilateral approaches to problems is that they provide maximum freedom of action. While allies and partners can bring extra capabilities to the table, they often bring constraints on how their tools can be used. Those who contribute to an enterprise normally expect to have a say in how it will operate. A common problem in United Nations (UN) military operations in the 1990s was the "phone home syndrome," under which commanders of forces assigned to UN operations had to seek approval from authorities in their home capital before accepting orders from the coalition commander. Unilateralists also point to the limitations that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies placed on air operations during the Kosovo campaign as an example of how multilateral approaches can be inefficient and reduce the effectiveness of American capabilities by restricting how they will be used. Because foreign militaries cannot approximate American capabilities, their military contributions are seldom worth the inevitable constraints they add.

## **Multilateralism.**

Multilateralists acknowledge that there are circumstances in which the United States should not rule out acting unilaterally, particularly when "vital survival interests" are at stake.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, multilateralists argue that most important issues facing the United States in the 21st century are not amenable to unilateral solutions. Transnational issues requiring multilateral approaches include terrorism; the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons; illegal drugs; and organized crime. Globalization has made management of international trade and finance even more important, as economic crises are susceptible to contagion that can have global impact, as was seen in the Asian

financial crisis of 1997. And environmental and health problems, to include the spread of infectious diseases, can only be dealt with on a global basis.<sup>10</sup>

The reality is that American power, while overwhelmingly superior to that of any other state or present coalition of states, is not unlimited. Allies and coalition partners allow the consolidation and pooling of capabilities. A group of nations almost always can bring more tools of power to bear against a problem than one state can alone. While NATO allies did place constraints on air operations over Yugoslavia, they provided the majority of the peacekeeping forces deployed to Kosovo following the air campaign. The price of their participation in post-conflict operations was a say over how the war was fought. While air planners may have chafed under the politically imposed limitations on their freedom of action, those limits were seen as an acceptable price to pay for cooperation in the peacekeeping effort. The United States certainly had the capacity to conduct the air campaign itself (in fact, the overwhelming majority of missions were flown by American aircraft). However, it was not in the interests of the United States to be the sole or main provider of ground troops for what was bound to be a protracted peacekeeping mission that would follow the air campaign. Going it alone may offer short term efficiency, but sometimes long-term interests call for multilateral approaches and making concessions in order to have committed partners. And measuring allies' worth only in terms of their military capabilities ignores the importance of their political and diplomatic contributions.

Multilateralists agree that the United States should seek to protect and extend its status as the soul superpower. However, they believe that exercising power unilaterally could actually be counterproductive. Historically, dominant powers have faced efforts by other states to counterbalance their accumulation of power. "Balance of power theory makes a clear prediction: weaker states will resist and balance against the predominant state."<sup>11</sup> For the United States to maintain its position in the international system, it should endeavor to secure the cooperation of other states in addressing global problems. Such a cooperative approach might negate or lessen any perceived need to counterbalance U.S. power. Multilateralists reflect a liberal institutionalist point of view in arguing that it is easier to gain the support and cooperation of others by working within a system of norms, rules, and institutions that assure others of America's intention to act in good faith as a partner, not a hegemon. While unilateralists contend that the United States should use its power to impose an international order favorable to maintaining America's long-term supremacy, multilateralists counter that eventually that approach will generate resistance and backlash. A system developed through cooperation is more likely to stand the test of time. Given America's predominance of power, it would take a remarkable effort and investment of resources for any state or group of states to challenge America's position. If America behaves as a cooperative member of the international community and does not create the impression that it threatens international stability, there is no reason for other states to seek to balance against American power. No one doubts American capabilities. What America does with its capabilities will determine how others will react and if America's position will be accepted or challenged.

### **Alone or with Others?**

The rhetoric in the dispute between multilateralist and unilateralist approaches obscures that there are few foreign policy decisions that are purely one or the other. Advocates for both positions agree that it is better to have allies in support of a cause than to go it alone. They disagree over what the United States should be willing to give up to recruit partners. Unilateralists favor staking out one's position and moving forward with whomever is willing to go along. Multilateralists favor rallying other nations to our cause and are more willing to accept trade-offs in building coalitions. Unilateralists and multilateralists agree that there is little room for compromise on such fundamental issues as survival interests. Time constraints also may limit the ability of the United States to drum up allies. Threats that are immediate and pose a serious threat to survival or vital interests may force America's hand.

Finally, both unilateralists and multilateralists agree that the United States should seek to build an international order that will favor the expansion of American values and help preserve America's dominant position in the world. The United States has a unique opportunity to establish international rules and standards that protect American interests. They differ on how the United States should attempt to build that order. Unilateralists tend to favor more assertive, even coercive approaches. They fall more into the realist school of international relations theory and argue that ultimately power is what matters, and reliance on agreements or treaties in lieu of real power is dangerous. On the other hand, multilateralists favor moving ahead in a framework of international institutions and treaties that will bind all states, America included, to rules and commitments. They feel that restrictions on the United States will assuage concerns "about a global order dominated by American power—power unprecedented, unrestrained, and unpredictable."<sup>12</sup> And even within the constraints of a rules-based system, America will continue to enjoy a preponderance of power.

### **The Case of Iraq.**

The U.S.-Iraq War of 2003 was a showcase for the different approaches to foreign policy. The American position was clear: Iraq would comply with UN Security Council resolutions requiring it to divest itself of all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and medium-range missiles, or the United States, with whomever was willing to assist, would enforce the resolutions by force. Advocates for unilateral American action argued that the UN had been ineffective in enforcing its own resolutions. Iraq posed an imminent threat to the United States, and the United States could no longer tolerate the international community's unwillingness to force Iraq to comply and disarm. While the United States welcomed other states that were willing to support the forcible disarmament of Iraq, the positions of other states, including key allies and the UN Security Council, would not influence the course of American foreign policy. The United States saw a need to act and was going to do so. And by acting alone, the United States actually could enhance stability in the Middle East and the globe. An America willing to use its power without the support of the international community would have greater credibility in dealing with other threats. No longer could potential adversaries hope the UN or America's allies could dissuade it from major military action. When the United States said it would act, that would be a credible threat. Knowing the consequences of defying America would deter states from doing so in the future, which could only contribute to stability and to American security.

Multilateralists approached the issue differently. While acknowledging Iraq's failure to comply with UN resolutions and the likelihood that Iraq was in possession of significant quantities of banned weapons, they questioned whether it was in America's best interest to take military action without broad support within the international community. While it would be faster and militarily more expedient for the United States to forge ahead with a unilateralist Iraq policy, the costs of such a policy likely would be prohibitive in the long run. By acting largely alone and without broad international support, the United States risked weakening the international norm against unilateral use of military power to resolve political disputes. A war with Iraq had potentially global consequences, both political and economic. By undertaking such a war and assuming these risks for the international community without its approval, the United States would reinforce fears of unconstrained American power and increase the potential for a future backlash. Finally, the United States risked finding itself burdened with a lengthy and expensive occupation of post-war Iraq. There would be no guarantee of significant international support for post-conflict efforts following a war the United States started and waged largely on its own. Leaving the United States saddled with post-war Iraq would serve as something of a balancing tool. An America committed to a major military presence in Iraq would not find it as easy to exercise military operations in other parts of the world without support from allies. Also, a lengthy and costly overseas commitment could undermine domestic support for future actions.

In summer 2003, it was too early to assess how the Iraq war will affect America's position in the world or how the world will react to American power. However, the unilateralist and multilateralist camps used the lead up to the war to make their cases for acting more or less unilaterally or within broader international coalitions. While the war and early phases of the occupation of Iraq have not settled the debate, both have established some measures by which to determine if, in this case, a generally unilateral approach to foreign policy and war helped or hurt America's long-term standing in the world. The end of the war may have opened the door for progress in the Israel-Palestine conflict, but there has been relatively little international support for post-war occupation, which may leave a substantial portion of America's ground forces committed to Iraq for some time to come.

### **Conclusion: Recent Trends in U.S. Foreign Policy.**

There is a growing view that American foreign policy has tended to be more assertively unilateral in recent years. America's refusal to join the international ban on antipersonnel land mines, its rejections of the Kyoto treaty on global warming, an inspection and verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention, and its withdrawal from the International Criminal Court and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty are offered as evidence of a policy of avoiding international commitments that might constrain America's freedom of action. Critics argue that the United States pursues its own international agenda without regard for the interests, views, or concerns of the rest of the world. The response is that the United States is acting, as all states should and must, in its own self-interests.

In spite of its overwhelming power, in the spring of 2003 the United States found itself embarking on a war with Iraq. While Saddam Hussein undoubtedly was one of the world's great villains, the United States found itself diplomatically at odds with important traditional allies, politically outmaneuvered and stymied at the UN, and opposed by public majorities in virtually every nation in the world. How did the United States, with all its advantages, become so politically isolated? One answer lies in the perception that the United States is using its national power more unilaterally than in the past. International opposition did not prevent the United States from going to war. However, the absence of allies has caused the United States to bear the overwhelming burden of post-conflict operations in Iraq. In contrast, in Bosnia and Kosovo NATO allies and other partners provided the bulk of peacekeeping troops following U.S.-led campaigns.

The perceptions and reality of the extent to which the United States pursues unilateralist policies undoubtedly will affect America's strategic choices in the future. There are clear trade-offs between sacrificing freedom of action and lowering costs and adding the capabilities of other nations. Considering these trade-offs should be part of the strategic decisionmaking process for the United States as it wages a global war on terrorism and confronts a range of critical global interests and issues. The United States cannot limit its options by clinging to notions about whether it should act unilaterally or multilaterally. There are times and circumstances for both approaches. The art is to recognize them and select the proper tool.

### **ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 2**

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## CHAPTER 3

### ETHICAL ISSUES IN WAR: AN OVERVIEW

**Martin L. Cook**

Violent conflict among human beings is, unfortunately, one of the great constants in our history as a species. As far back as we can see, the human species has engaged in war and other forms of organized violence. But it is equally true that, as far back as human culture and thought have left written records, humans have thought about morality and ethics. Although cultures vary widely in how they interpret death and killing from a moral and religious perspective, every human culture has recognized that taking human life is a morally grave matter; every human culture has felt the need to justify taking of life in moral and religious terms.

In the modern world, a large body of ethical and legal thought attempts to limit, to constrain, and to establish criteria that sanction the use of violence in the name of the state and society. Through the mechanisms of the Hague and Geneva Conventions, the Charter of the United Nations (UN), military manuals such as the U.S. Army's "Law of Land Warfare" and similar documents, modern governments and militaries attempt to distinguish "just war" and just conduct in war from other types of killing of human beings. Morally conscientious military personnel need to understand and frame their actions in moral terms so as to maintain moral integrity in the midst of the actions and stress of combat. They do so in order to explain to themselves and others how the killing of human beings they do is distinguishable from the criminal act of murder.

Attempts to conduct warfare within moral limits have met with uneven success. Many cultures and militaries fail to recognize these restraints, or do so in name only. The realities of combat, even for the best trained and disciplined military forces, place severe strains on respect for those limits and sometimes cause military leaders to grow impatient with them in the midst of their need to "get the job done." In the history of the U.S. Army, events like My Lai in Vietnam show that even forces officially committed to just conduct in war are still capable of atrocities in combat—and are slow to discipline such violations.

Despite these limitations, the idea of just war is one to which the well-led and disciplined military forces of the world remain committed. That the constraints of just war are routinely overridden is no more a proof of their falsity and irrelevance than are similar points about morality: we know the standard, and we also know human beings fall short of that standard with depressing regularity. Moral failure, rather than proving the falsity of morality, points instead to the source of our disappointment in such failures: our abiding knowledge of the morally right.

Because of the importance of just war thinking, the general history, key provisions, and moral underpinnings of just war are things which every military person, and especially every senior leader, must understand and be able to communicate to subordinates and the public. It is important that senior leaders understand just war more deeply and see that the positive laws of war emerge from a long moral tradition which rests on fundamental moral principles. This chapter will provide that history, background, and moral context of ethics and war.

#### **Background of Just War Theory.**

Most cultures of antiquity attempted to place some restraints on war. All recognized that there are some causes of war which are justifiable and others that are not. All recognized that some persons are

legitimate objects of attack in war and others are not. All recognized that there were times, seasons, and religious festivals during which warfare would be morally wrong or religiously inappropriate.

The roots of modern international law come from one specific strand of thought emerging out of antiquity: the Christian Roman Empire that took shape after the conversion to Christianity of the Emperor Constantine in the year 312 AD. Although there were important ideas of restraint in war in pre-Christian Greek and Roman thought and indeed in cultures all over the world, it is the blend of Christian and Greco-Roman thought that set the context of the development of full-blown just war thinking over a period of centuries.

Christianity before this time had been suspicious of entanglement in the affairs of the Empire. For the first several centuries of the movement, Christians interpreted the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and other places quite literally, and saw themselves as committed to pacifism (the refusal to use force or violence in all circumstances). Although many appreciated the relative peace, prosperity, and ease of travel the Empire's military force made possible, Christians felt prayer on behalf of the Emperor was the limit of their direct support for it.

Much changed with Constantine. For many, war fought on behalf of a "Christian Empire" was a very different thing than war on behalf of a pagan one. Further, during the century following Constantine's conversion, the Empire began to experience wave after wave of invasion from the north, culminating in the fall of the city of Rome itself in 410 AD—a mere 100 years after Constantine.

It was in that context that Christian thinkers, most notably St. Augustine, a doctor of the church and bishop of Hippo in North Africa, first worked out the foundations of Christian just war thought. History, Augustine argued, is morally ambiguous. Human beings hope for pure justice and absolute righteousness. Augustine firmly believed that the faithful will experience such purity only at the end of time when God's kingdom comes. But until that happens, we will experience only justice of a sort, righteousness of a sort.

What passes for justice will require force and coercion, since there will always be people who strive to take more than their share, to harm and steal from others. In that world, the peacemakers who are blessed are those who use force appropriately and mournfully to keep as much order and peace as possible under these conditions. The military officer is that peacemaker when he or she accepts this sad necessity. Out of genuine care and concern with the weak and helpless, the soldier shoulders the burden of fighting to maintain an order and system of justice which, while far short of the deepest hopes of human beings, keeps the world from sliding into complete anarchy and chaos. It is a sad necessity imposed on the soldier by an aggressor. It inevitably is tinged with guilt and mournfulness. The conscientious soldier longs for a world where conflict is unnecessary, but sees that the order of well-ordered states must be defended lest chaos rule.

For Augustine and the tradition that develops after him, just war is an attempt to balance two competing moral principles. It attempts to maintain the Christian concern with nonviolence and to honor the principle that taking human life is a grave moral evil. But it attempts to balance that concern with the recognition that, the world being what it is, important moral principles and that protection of innocent human life requires the willingness to use force and violence.

As it wends its way through history, the tradition of just war thought grows and becomes more precise and more elaborate. In that development, it faces new challenges and makes new accommodations.

The Spanish in the New World, for example, were challenged to rethink the tradition as they encountered and warred against indigenous populations. Are such wars, too, governed by moral principles? Are all things permitted against such people? Or, it was seriously debated, are they even people, as opposed to some new kind of animal? Through that discussion came an expansion of the scope of just war principles to populations that did not share common cultures.

After the Protestant Reformation, as wars raged throughout Europe in the attempt to restore religious unity to "Christendom," some thinkers (most notably Hugo Grotius) argued that just war must be

severed from a distinctively Christian religious foundation. Human reason, instead, must provide a system for the restraint of war that will be valid despite religious difference, valid *etsi deus non daretur*, even if God did not exist! In other words, for Grotius and others, human reason is a commonality all people share, regardless of religious, ethnic, and cultural differences. That rationality, rather than revealed religion or religious authority, could suffice to ground moral thinking about war.

As a result of that “secularization” of just war thinking in Europe, the foundation was laid for the universal international law of the present international system. As a result, the foundation was laid for that system in natural law (moral rules believed to be known by reason alone, apart from particular religious ideas and institutions) and in the *jus Gentium*, the “law of peoples,” those customary practices which are widely shared across cultures. In current international law, these accepted practices are called “customary international law” and set the standard of practices of “civilized nations.”

Since virtually all modern states have committed themselves by treaty and by membership in the UN to the principles of international law, in one sense there is no question of their universal applicability around the globe. But the fact that the tradition has roots in the West and in the Christian tradition does raise important multicultural questions about it.

How does one deal with the important fact that Muslims have their own ways of framing moral issues of war and conflict and even of the national state itself which track imperfectly at best with the just war framework? How does one factor into one’s thinking the idea of “Asian values” which differ in their interpretation of the rights of individuals and the meaning of the society and state from this supposedly universal framework? What weight should the fact that much of the world, while nominally nation-states on the model established by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 in Europe, in reality are described better as “tribes with flags”? How does one deal with the fact that, in much of the world, membership in a particular ethnic group within an internationally recognized border is more an indicator of one’s identity than the name of the country on one’s passport?

All of these questions are subjects of intense scholarly debate and practical importance. All have very real-world applications when we think about the roots of conflict around the modern world and attempt to think about those conflicts in the ways many of the participants do. But for our purposes, we will need to set them aside in favor of making sure we understand the just war criteria as they frame United States military policy and the existing framework of international law.

This limitation of focus is justified not only by the limitations of time, but also by legal reality. Whatever one might want to say about the important cross-cultural issues posed above, it remains true that the United States and its allies around the world are committed by treaty, policy, and moral commitment to conduct military operations within the framework of the existing just war criteria. That fact alone makes it important that strategic leaders possess a good working knowledge of those criteria and some facility in using them to reason about war.

Ideally, however, strategic leaders also will have some grasp of the ongoing debate about cultural diversity and the understanding of war in fundamentally differing cultural contexts as well.

## **The Purposes of the Just War Framework.**

The framework of principles, commonly called “Just War Criteria,” provide an organized schema for determining whether a particular conflict is justified morally. As one might imagine, any such framework inevitably will fall short of providing moral certainty. When applied to the real world in all its complexity, inevitably persons of intelligence and good will, can, and do disagree whether those criteria are met in a given case.

Furthermore, some governments and leaders lie. No matter how heinous their deeds, they will strive to cast their actions in just war terms to provide at least the appearance of justification for what they do. If hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue, it is testimony to the moral weight of the



just war principles that even the most extreme lies follow the shape of just war principles. Just war language provides the shape of the lie even the greatest war criminals must tell. Rare indeed is the aggressor or tyrant willing to declare forthrightly the real causes and motives of their actions.

The twin realities of real-world complexity and the prevalence of lying about these matters suggest the importance not only of *knowing* the just war criteria as a kind of list, but also of skillful and careful reasoning using the just war framework as a strategic leader competency. Only if a leader is capable of careful and judicious application of just war thinking can he or she distinguish valid application of just war thinking from specious and self-serving attempts to cloak unjust action in its terms.

## **The Just War Framework.**

Moral judgments about war fall into two discrete areas: the reasons for going to war in first place, and the way the war is conducted. The first traditionally is called *jus ad bellum*, or justice of going to war; and the second *jus in bello*, or law during war. Two interesting features of this two-part division are that different agents are primarily responsible for each, and that they are, to a large degree, logically independent of each other.

Judgments about going to war are, in the American context, made by the National Command Authority and the Congress. Except at the highest levels where military officers advise those decisionmakers, military leaders are not involved in those discussions and bear no moral responsibility for the decisions that result. Still, military personnel and ordinary citizens can and do judge the reasons given for entering into military conflict by those decisionmakers and make their own determinations whether the reasons given make sense or not. A morally interesting but difficult question arises concerning one's obligations and responsibilities when one is convinced that recourse to war is not justified in a particular case.

Just conduct in war concerns the rules of engagement, choice of weapons and targets, treatment of civilian populations and prisoners of war, and so forth. These concern the "nuts and bolts" of how the war actually is conducted. Here the primary responsibility shifts from the civilian policymakers to the military leadership at all levels. Of course, political leaders and ordinary citizens have an interest in and make judgments about how their troops conduct themselves in war. Militaries conduct themselves in light of national values and must be seen as behaving in war in ways citizens at home can accept morally.

Modern war, usually fought in plain sight of CNN and other media, is for good and for ill, especially subject to immediate scrutiny. Political leaders and ordinary citizens react to virtually every event and require of their leaders explanations for why they do what they do and conduct war as they do. This, too, indicates why strategic leaders must be adept in explaining clearly and honestly the conduct of their forces within the framework of the just war criteria.

I turn now to a discussion of the criteria of just war in some detail. These are the "tests" one uses to determine the justification of recourse to war in particular circumstances.

We begin with the criteria for judging a war just *ad bellum* (in terms of going to war in the first place). In detail, lists of these criteria vary somewhat, but the following captures the essential elements:

- Just Cause,
- Legitimate Authority,
- Public Declaration,
- Just Intent,
- Proportionality,
- Last Resort,
- Reasonable Hope of Success.

Recall that the moral impulse behind just war thinking is a strong sense of the moral evils involved in taking human life. Consequently, the *ad bellum* tests of just war are meant to set a high bar to a too-easy recourse to force and violence to resolve conflict. Each of the “tests” is meant to impose a restraint on the decision to go to war.

**Just Cause** asks for a legitimate and morally weighty reason to go to war. Once, causes like “offended honor” or religious difference were considered good reasons for war. As it has developed, just war tradition and international law have restricted greatly the kinds of reasons deemed acceptable for entering into military confrontation. The baseline standard in modern just war thinking is *aggression*. States are justified in going to war to respond to aggression received. Classically, this means borders have been crossed in force. Such direct attacks on the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of an internationally recognized state provide the clear case of just cause, recognized in just war and in international law (for example, in the Charter of the UN).

Of course, there are a number of justifications for war which do not fit this classic model. Humanitarian interventions, preemptive strikes, assistance to a wronged party in an internal military conflict in a state, just to name some examples, can in some circumstances also justify use of military force, even though they do not fit the classic model of response to aggression. But the farther one departs from the baseline model of response to aggression, the more difficult and confusing the arguments become.

As one moves into these justifications, the scope for states to lie and try to justify meddling in each others affairs grows. For that reason, international law and ethics gives an especially hard look at claims of just cause other than response to aggression already received. To do otherwise risks opening too permissive a door for states to interfere with each other’s territory and sovereignty.

**Legitimate authority** restricts the number of agents who may authorize use of force. In the Middle Ages, for example, there was the very real problem that local lords and their private armies would engage in warfare without consulting with, let alone receiving authorization from, the national sovereign.

In the modern context, different countries will vary in their internal political structure and assign legitimate authority for issues of war and peace of different functionaries and groups. In the American context, there is the unresolved tension between the President as Commander-in-Chief and the authority of Congress to declare war. The present War Powers Act (viewed by all presidents since it was enacted as unconstitutional, but not yet subjected to judicial review) still has not clarified that issue. But while one can invent a scenario where this lack of clarity would raise very real problems, in practice so far the National Command Authority and the Congress have found pragmatic solutions in every deployment of American forces so far.

The **public declaration** requirement has both a moral purpose and (in the American context) a legal one. The legal one refers to the issue we were just discussing: the role of Congress in declaring war. As we all know, few 20th century military conflicts in American history have been authorized by a formal congressional declaration of war. While this is an important and unresolved constitutional issue for the United States, it is not the moral point of the requirement.

The moral point perhaps is captured better as a requirement for delivery of an ultimatum before initiation of hostilities. Recall that the moral concern of just war is to make recourse to armed conflict as infrequent as possible. The requirement of a declaration or ultimatum gives a potential adversary formal notice that the issue at hand is judged serious enough to warrant the use of military force, and that the nation is prepared to do so unless that issue is resolved successfully and peacefully immediately.

The **just intent** requirement serves to keep the war aims limited and within the context of the just cause used to authorize the war. Every conflict is subject to “mission creep.” Once hostilities commence, there is always the temptation to forget what cause warranted the use of force and to press on to achieve other purposes – purposes that, had they been offered as justifications for the use of force prior to the conflict, clearly would have been seen as unjustifiable. The just intent requirement limits war

aims by keeping the mind focused on the purpose of the war. Although there are justified exceptions, the general rule is that the purpose of war is to restore the *status quo ante bellum*, the state of affairs that existed before the violation that provided the war's just cause.

**Proportionality** is a common sense requirement that the damage done in the war should be worth it. That is to say, even if one has a just cause, it might be so costly in lives and property damage that it is better to accept the loss rather than to pay highly disproportionately to redress the issue. In practice, of course, this is a hard criterion to apply. It is a commonplace that leaders and nations notoriously are inaccurate at predicting the costs of conflict as things snowball out of control.

But here, too, the moral point of just war criteria is to restrain war. And one important implication of that requirement is the demand for a good faith and well-informed estimate of the costs and feasibility of redressing grievances through the use of military force.

The requirement that war be the *ultima ratio*, the **last resort**, also stems from a commitment to restrict the use of force to cases of sad necessity. No matter how just the cause and no matter how well the other criteria may be met, the last resort requirement acknowledges that the actual commencement of armed conflict crosses a decisive line. Diplomatic solutions to end conflicts, even if they are less than perfect, are to be preferred to military ones in most, if not all, cases. This is because the costs of armed conflict in terms of money and lives are so high and because armed conflict, once begun, is inherently unpredictable.

In practical reality, judging that this criterion has been met is particularly difficult. Obviously, it cannot require that one has done every conceivable thing short of use of force: there is *always* more one could think to do. It has to mean doing everything that seems to a reasonable person promising. But reasonable people disagree about this. In the First Gulf War, for example, many (including Colin Powell) argued that more time for sanctions and diplomacy would be preferable to initiation of armed conflict.

The last requirement *ad bellum* is **reasonable hope of success**. Because use of force inevitably entails loss of human life, civilian and military, it is a morally grave decision to use it. The reasonable hope criterion simply focuses thinking on the practical question: if you are going to do all that damage and cause death, are you likely to get what you want as a result? If you are not, if, despite your best efforts, it is unlikely that you will succeed in reversing the cause that brings you to war, then you are causing death and destruction to no purpose.

An interesting question does arise whether heroic but futile resistance is ever justified. Some have argued that the long-term welfare of a state or group may well require a memory of resistance and noble struggle, even in the face of overwhelming odds. Since the alternative is acquiescence to conquest and injustice, might it be justifiable for a group's long-term self-understanding to be able look back and say, "at least we didn't die like sheep"?

This completes the overview of the *jus ad bellum* requirements of just war. Recall that the categories and distinctions of the theory are not simple and clear. Neither individually nor together do they provide an algorithm that can generate a clear-cut and obvious judgment about a particular war in the minds of all fair-minded people.

On the other hand, it is important not to overemphasize the difficulty here. Although the language of just war is used by virtually all states and leaders in the attempt to justify their actions, not all uses are valid equally. Often it is not that difficult to identify uses that are inaccurate, dishonest, or self-serving. While there certainly are a range of cases where individuals of good will and intelligence will disagree in their judgments, there is also a good range where the misuse is transparent.

Recall, for example, Iraq's initial (and brief) attempt to justify its invasion of Kuwait on grounds that there had been a revolution in the Kuwaiti government and the new legitimate government of Kuwait had requested Iraq's fraternal assistance in stabilizing the new government. Had this story been true,

of course, Iraq would have been acting in conformity with international law and just war tradition by being in Kuwait. It is important to note that Iraq apparently did feel obliged to tell a tale like this, since that itself is a perverse testimony to the need of states to attempt to justify their actions in the court of world opinion in just war terms. Of course, the story was so obviously false that even Iraq stopped telling it in a matter of hours (how many of you even recall that they told it?).

My point in citing this example is to forestall an easy relativism. It is simple intellectual laziness to conclude that, because these judgments are hard and people disagree about them in particular cases, that the principles have no moral force or, worse, that all uses of them are mere window-dressing. In all moral matters, as Aristotle pointed out, it is a mark of an educated person not to expect more precision than the matter at hand permits. And in complex moral judgments of matters of international relations, one cannot expect more than thoughtful, well-informed and good-faith judgments.

## Jus in Bello.

I turn now to the *jus in bello* side of just war thinking. As I noted above, except at the highest levels of the military command structure, officers do not make the decision to commit forces to conflict. The moral weight of those judgments lies with the political leadership and its military advisors. On the other hand, strategic military leaders, whether they are technically responsible for decisions to go to war or not, often will be placed in the position of justifying military action to the press and the people. Further, thoughtful officers often will feel a need to justify a particular use of force in which they participate to themselves. For all these reasons, therefore, facility with just war reasoning in both its dimensions (*jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*) is a strategic leader competency.

The practical conduct of war *is*, however, the primary responsibility of military officers. They bear the responsibility for the training and discipline of military personnel. They issue the orders that determine what is attacked and with what weapons and tactics. They set the tone for how civilians are treated and how prisoners of war are captured, confined, and cared for. They determine how soldiers who violate order and the laws of war are disciplined, and what examples they allow to be set for acceptable conduct in their commands.

Because of this weight of responsibility, the officer at all levels must incorporate thoroughly thought about the *jus in bello* side of just war into standard operating procedure. It is an integral part of military planning at all levels, from the tactical issues of employing small units to the highest levels of grand strategy. U.S. policy, national and universal values, and political prudence combine to require officers at all levels to plan and execute military operations with a clear understanding of just war requirements.

The major moral requirements of just war *in bello* boil down to two: discrimination and proportionality. Together, they set limits in the conduct of war—limits on *who* can be deliberately attacked and on *how* war can legitimately be conducted.

Although we use the term “**discrimination**” almost wholly negatively (as in racial discrimination) the core meaning of the word is neutral morally. It refers to distinguishing between groups or people or things on the basis of some characteristic that distinguishes one group from another.

In the context of thought about war, the relevant characteristic upon which just war requires us to discriminate is **combatant status**. In any conflict, there are individuals who are combatants—actively engaged in prosecuting the war efforts—and there are noncombatants. The central moral idea of just war is that only the first, the combatants, are legitimate objects of deliberate attack. By virtue of their “choosing” to be combatants, they have made themselves objects of attack and have lost that immunity from deliberate attack all human beings have in normal life, and which civilians retain even in wartime. I put “choosing” in quotes, of course, because we all know soldiers become soldiers in lots of ways, many of which are highly coerced. But they are at least voluntary in this sense: they did not run away. They allow themselves to be in harm’s way as combatants.

Of course, in modern war, there are lots of borderline cases between combatant and noncombatant. The definition of the war conventions is straightforward: combatants wear a fixed distinct sign, visible at a distance and carry arms openly. But in guerilla war, to take the extreme case, combatants go to great lengths to blend in to the civilian population. In such a war, discrimination poses very real practical and moral problems.

But the presence of contractors on a battlefield, or combat in urban environments where fighters (whether uniformed or not) are mixed in with civilian populations and property (to point to only two examples) also make discrimination between combatants and noncombatants challenging both morally and practically.

It is less critical to focus on the hard case than on the central moral point. War only can be conducted justly insofar as a sustained and good faith commitment is made to discriminate between combatants and noncombatants and to target only the combatants deliberately.

Of course, civilians die in war. And sometimes those deaths are the unavoidable byproduct of even the most careful and conscientious planning and execution of military operations. Intelligence may be mistaken and identify as a military target something that turns out in the end to be occupied by civilians or dedicated only to civilian use. Weapons and guidance systems may malfunction; placing weapons in places they were not intended to go.

Just war recognizes these realities. It has long used the “principle of double effect” to sort through the morality of such events and justifies those which, no matter how terrible, do not result from *deliberate* attacks on civilians. Such accidents in the context of an overall discriminate campaign conducted with weapons that are not inherently indiscriminate are acceptable as “collateral damage.”

What is *not* acceptable in just war thinking is the deliberate targeting of civilians, their use as “human shields,” or use of indiscriminate warfare on populations. In practice, this means choosing weapons, tactics, and plans which strive to the limit of the possible to protect innocent civilian populations, even if they place soldiers at (acceptably) greater risk.

The other major requirement of *jus in bello* is **proportionality**. It, too, attempts to place limits on war by the apparently commonsense requirement that attacks be proportionate to the military value of the target. Judgments about these matters are highly contextual and depend on many dimensions of practical military reality. But a massive bombardment of a town, for example, would be disproportionate if the military object of the attack is a single sniper.

It is true, of course, that all sides violated these rules in World War II, especially in the uses of airpower. But the development of precision munitions and platforms for their delivery have, since that conflict, allowed the U.S. military to return to more careful respect for the laws of war, even in air war. Furthermore, it is a testimony to the moral need to do so that, at least in part, drove that development — along with the obvious point that munitions that hit what they are aimed at with consistency and regularity are more militarily effective as well.

### **Contemporary Challenges to the Westphalian Model of Just War.**

Recent history has put considerable pressure on the understanding of just war described above. From World War II forward, a growing body of human rights and humanitarian law has evolved which, at least on paper, restrains the sovereignty of states in the name of protecting the rights of individual citizens. The Genocide Convention, for example, sets limits to what states may do to their own citizens and creates the right (and perhaps the obligation) of states to intervene to protect the rights of individuals when their violation rises to an unacceptable (and unfortunately, somewhat vaguely specified) degree.

The conflict in Kosovo was clearly an example of intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) into the “internal affairs” of Serbia (recall that Kosovo was an integral part of

Serbia in the policy of all the states involved). Very little of the national interest of the NATO powers, narrowly conceived, was involved in Kosovo. It was a case where humanitarian causes and human rights were cited to “trump” Serbian sovereignty. Further, it was not authorized by resolution of the UN Security Council, to a large degree because the Chinese and the Russians feared the “porous sovereignty” precedent it would set.

Conversely, the failure to intervene in Rwanda was widely cited as a case where humanitarian concerns ought to have overridden sovereignty and national interest questions.

These examples point to one large and unresolved issue in contemporary international ethics and law: the harmonization of state sovereignty with issues of human rights and humanitarian intervention.

Another even deeper challenge is posed by the Global “War” against Terrorism. The terms “war” is in quotations, of course, because in many respects the nature of the conflict with *al Qaeda* and similar terrorist groups of global reach departs markedly from the model of war between Westphalian sovereign states. Most obviously, terrorist groups are not state actors, so many of the conventions governing conflict between states imply imperfectly at best.

Of course, unless terrorist groups are in international waters or in space, they necessarily exist in some relationship to states. Some states deliberately and consciously sponsor and encourage them; others harbor them unknowingly and perhaps even unwillingly; still others would like nothing better than to be rid of them, but have weak or nonexistent governments with the capability to dislodge them.

For states that deliberately harbor them, no great stretch is required to extend the Westphalian paradigm to cover such cases. At some point, the existence of a threat within the border of such states that the government is disinclined to rein in constitutes a just cause of war between the United States and its allies and the harboring state. One way of construing the conflict in Afghanistan is precisely this: that the Taliban government wished to shelter and protect *al Qaeda* on its territory and, after sufficient warning, placed its own continued existence in jeopardy.

For states that lack the power to dislodge terrorist groups, if they can be persuaded to request assistance from the United States or other powers to dislodge them, even if that “persuasion” results from considerable pressure, the formalities of the current international system are maintained.

But other possibilities present themselves. On one interpretation of the Bush administration’s National Security Strategy, the nature of the terrorist threat, combined with the possible destructive power of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), warrants abandoning the “just cause” restriction to aggression received in favor of a more aggressive “preemptive” (or, perhaps better, “preventative”) use of military force. If this, indeed, becomes policy and customary international law, it might take one of two forms. It might be a simple assertion of U.S. military supremacy and lead to a fundamental recasting of the Westphalian assumption of the equality of sovereign states.

On the other hand, the nature of the threat also might lead to a reformulation of a common understanding of “terrorism” among the major powers that generates a multilateral agreement, implicit or explicit, that some threats warrant interventions that might not pass the inherited “just war” tests of recent centuries. In that respect, just war would be returning to its origins: rather than seeing war as a conflict among sovereign states in response to aggression, the international community might see itself once again (as Augustine did in the 5th century) as defending a “tranquility of order” in the international system against incursions of alien systems and ideologies whose sole purpose is a disruption and displacement of that order. In other words, the globalized civilization grounded in democracy, human rights, free trade and communication, technology, and science may be defending its civilization itself against forces that seek its complete destruction.

These aspects of the contemporary scene more than any others point to the need to think about just war in deeper historical terms than simply international law, precisely because existing international law has been formed almost entirely in the European, post-Reformation and Enlightenment, Westphalian

system. If the second interpretation of the global war on terrorism (GWOT) has some validity, the central point is precisely that those shared assumptions of the past several centuries may have less and less relevance, and the original concerns of defending the stability of a system of civilization against fundamental attack may be the better analog to present circumstances.

## **Conclusion.**

The moral tradition of just war, and its partial embodiment in the laws of war at any moment are part of on-going evolution. They represent a drive to make practical restraints on war that honor the moral claim of individuals not to be attacked unjustly, while at the same time recognizing that use of military force in defense of individuals and values is sometimes a necessity.

All military officers charged with the grave moral responsibility of commanding and controlling military units and weapons must, if they are to conduct war morally, have a good working knowledge of the just war tradition and of the moral principles it strives to enshrine.

Above all, strategic leaders who set large-scale military policy, control training and organizational culture, and supervise the preparation of operational plans for national militaries need to understand and think in ways deeply conditioned by just war principles. Because their responsibility is so great and because the weapons and personnel under their control are capable of causing such destruction, they above all bear the responsibility to ensure that those forces observe the greatest possible moral responsibility in their actions.

No amount of knowledge of the terms and concepts of just war will make morally complex decisions miraculously clear. But clear understanding of the concepts of just war theory and of the moral principles that underlie them can provide clarity of thought and a way to sharpen one's thinking about those choices. And in the rapidly changing international scene characterized by American military supremacy and nonstate actor attack, it may be that we are entering into a rare fundamental shift in the understanding of the international system such as we have not seen in four centuries.

If our military is to conduct itself in war in ways compatible with American national values, and if individual soldiers and officers are to be able to see themselves and their activities as morally acceptable, they must be able to understand the moral structure of just conduct in war. Further, it is imperative that they integrate that understanding into the routines of decisionmaking in military operations.

In the Gulf War, and in major operations since then, the language and concerns of just war are integrated increasingly into planning and execution of military operations. Military lawyers are integrated fully into modern targeting and operations planning cells of the U.S. military. In light of those realities, facility in just war thinking is, indeed, a strategic leader competency. This chapter is only an introduction to the terms and grammar of that thought. True facility in just war thinking will come from careful and critical application of its categories to the complexities of real life and real military operations.

## CHAPTER 4

### ETHICS AND WAR IN COMPARATIVE RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

David L. Perry

This chapter highlights a wide range of ethical views on killing and war in the world's major religious traditions.<sup>1</sup> One can learn a lot about a religion or culture simply by paying attention to how it answers the question, Is it ever right to kill?<sup>2</sup> People raised within particular religious faiths are sometimes led to believe that their tradition always has held a consistent set of ethical principles. But what we find when we look closely at virtually any religious tradition are teachings that are at least paradoxical, and in some cases downright contradictory. Every major religious faith regards life (especially human life) as sacred in some sense, and affirms mercy and compassion as basic human obligations. But sacred scriptures and influential religious authorities also have taught that it is sometimes right to kill other human beings. Some have gone so far as to rationalize wars of annihilation against heretics and infidels.

Religion clearly is not the only catalyst of total war and other forms of indiscriminate violence. People seem to be able to invent all sorts of rationales for mass killing without feeling the need to cite the will of God. Some of the most appalling atrocities in history have been rooted not in religion *per se* but rather in racial or class hatred. (Think of the 20th century victims of Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot.) There may even be a genetic tendency in our species, like that of our chimpanzee relatives, to attack and kill others for no reason except that they are not "one of us."<sup>3</sup>

But religious violence can take on a particularly intense and ruthless character, if the objects of that violence are seen as blaspheming or insulting God, and thus as enemies of God who must be humbled or destroyed.<sup>4</sup> This way of thinking continues to spark violence in countries as diverse as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Ireland, Indonesia, and the former Yugoslavia. I am confident, though, that some ethical principles can be affirmed by all of the world's major religions to limit violence, even when it cannot—or should not—be prohibited completely.

Senior military, diplomatic and intelligence officials may profit from this chapter in at least the following ways:

- 1) in recognizing the diversity of teachings within their own religion, especially its moments of violent intolerance of other faiths, they ought to be less likely to proclaim their country's wars as divinely ordained crusades or jihads against enemies who might thus be denied basic rights;
- 2) in learning to appreciate certain ethical values and precepts in other traditions as similar to those of their own, they will be better able to support diplomatic initiatives between countries and cultures to reduce the likelihood of war and lessen its severity; and,
- 3) specifically in "the battle for hearts and minds" in places like Afghanistan and Iraq today, they may learn ways to ally with moderate Muslims against the murderous ideologies of Al Qaeda, etc.

#### Eastern Traditions.

One of the oldest living religions is **Hinduism**. The Hindu tradition reveres all of life, and affirms an ethical principle of *ahimsa* or avoiding injury to any sentient creature.<sup>5</sup> This ethic has often led Hindus to adopt vegetarianism and strict pacifism, and has been especially strong in **Buddhism** and **Jainism**, both offshoots of Hinduism. The pacifist ethic nurtured by these faiths lives today among the followers of Mahatma Gandhi and renowned Buddhist teachers like the Dalai Lama of Tibet, Thich Nhat Hanh of Vietnam, and Maha Ghosananda of Cambodia.<sup>6</sup>

Buddhism stresses the need for people to be aware constantly of how hateful and greedy emotions can arise in order to avoid being controlled by them and lashing out violently against others. Buddhism



seeks to undermine social divisions like the Hindu caste system, while at the same time reinforcing its virtue of compassion and the obligation of noninjury. As a result, the duty not to kill people or other sentient animals applies to all Buddhists, though as an absolute duty, it often has been restricted in practice to Buddhist monks and nuns.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, a sacred Jain text says, "One may not kill, ill-use, insult, torment, or persecute any kind of living being. . . ."<sup>8</sup> Former Burmese prime minister U Nu even renounced the use of force by the state, claiming that Buddhism "cannot sanction even such acts of violence as are necessary for the preservation of public order and society."<sup>9</sup>

How would pacifists within these faiths respond to a concern that nonviolence might have little or no persuasive effect on a violent enemy and could result in the destruction of one's community? Some contend that violence only seems to be effective but usually ends up merely producing more violence. Others would admit that nonviolence sometimes does not succeed in deterring or ending violence but claim that success is not as important as doing the right thing. (The Christian pacifist John Howard Yoder made the same point in many of his books.)

Hindus and Buddhists believe in the Law of Karma which rigorously enforces justice through an indefinite series of rebirths. So even if evil people succeed in their present lives, Karma will ensure that they will pay for it in their next life. Trusting in the Law of Karma can help to motivate adherents of these faiths to overcome selfishness and hostility and resist succumbing to violence. (This functions similarly to the Western belief in a heavenly reward for living a devout and moral life, even if one suffers great injustice during one's earthly life at the hands of evil people.)

In practice, though, Eastern traditions often permit some exceptions to the general rule against killing. In mainstream Hinduism, there is an entire caste of warriors, the *Ksatrias*, whose role in defending the community with force is considered to be just as important as that of the Brahmin or priestly caste. If a Hindu man is born into the warrior caste, he is obligated to kill enemy soldiers in defense of the community; his social role does not permit him to be a pacifist. He must kill with the proper disposition, though, without greed or anger. (Read the "pep talk" given by the god, Krishna, to the reluctant warrior, Arjuna, in the *Bhagavad Gita*.) Some Hindu gods like Indra are believed to have warlike characteristics themselves, and are praised for destroying the enemies of orthodox Hindu teachings and practices.<sup>10</sup> So holy war is not entirely foreign to Hinduism.

On the other hand, *total* war in the sense of indiscriminate killing typically has been forbidden. Hindu soldiers are not to kill unarmed prisoners or civilians, apparently due to a sense of chivalry: it would be considered unprofessional for a Hindu soldier to harm defenseless people.<sup>11</sup> (Similar values of chivalry in the West helped to ground the modern principle of noncombatant immunity.)

Some Buddhists have argued that killing can be justified in rare cases as the lesser of evils, if the Buddhist community or other innocent people are threatened by violent attackers, and if nonviolent means of persuasion and protest have not succeeded. Interestingly, even when war might be waged with just cause and as a last resort, Buddhists still regard it as inherently sinful.<sup>12</sup> (Medieval Christians held a similar view; see below.)

We should not infer, though, that Hindus and Buddhists have never engaged in total war or other indiscriminate killing. Many of their leaders openly have advocated aggressive violence against people of competing religions. Zen Buddhism was distorted in Japan to support a ruthless warrior ethic before and during World War II. Some Buddhists in Sri Lanka have promoted the "ethnic cleansing" of Hindu Tamils from the island. An influential Thai monk claimed in the 1970s that killing communists actually would produce karmic merit.<sup>13</sup> And the man who assassinated Gandhi in 1948 was a member of a radical Hindu sect that opposed any political compromise with Islam or other faiths. But of course it is very difficult to see how such things can be justified in light of their religions' core values.

In the Western monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, we also encounter a mixture of moral values—some restraining war, others promoting it. I think it is fair to say, though,

that the problem of total war has been more frequent in these faiths than in Eastern traditions, due to a more intense fear of unorthodox beliefs and idolatry (i.e., the worship of false gods).

## Judaism.

Frequently in the Hebrew Bible<sup>14</sup> (or what Christians call the Old Testament), love of one's neighbor is said to be a fundamental duty; in fact, love is to extend beyond one's religious or ethnic kin to include resident aliens as well (Leviticus 19:17-18, 33-34). Murder and other forms of unjust violence are forbidden (Exodus 20:13).

The primary moral arguments underlying or reflected in those commandments appear to be: 1) God is loving; so imitate God's love; 2) God has shown compassion and mercy to you; so show gratitude to God by being merciful to others; and 3) human beings are created in God's image; so treat them as such. (See Psalm 145:8-9, Micah 6:8, and Genesis 1:26-27, 9:6). If we considered those ideas in isolation from some other biblical values and commandments, we might infer an ethic of strict pacifism toward human beings, an absolute duty not to kill people, since killing even a murderous attacker might be regarded as a kind of sacrilege as well as contradicting love.

But that apparently is not what the ancient Hebrews believed, since murder and other serious offenses (Exodus 21-22) were subject to capital punishment, i.e., a form of intentional killing. Genesis 9:6 says, "Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed; for in his own image God made humankind." I would interpret that to mean, "All persons have a basic right not to be killed, rooted in their having been created in God's image; but they can forfeit that right if they commit a serious enough offense."

So far, this would only permit those who are guilty of certain crimes to be executed, i.e., strict retributive justice. Deuteronomy 24:16 states, "Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children for their parents; each one may be put to death only for his own sin." In addition, if this ethic permitted war at all, it would seem to limit it to the defense of the innocent against unjust invaders, or in punishment of their atrocities.

But collective punishment and indiscriminate war were also commanded or approved in the Hebrew Bible, especially in cases of idolatry. The first of the Mosaic commandments prohibited the Israelites from worshipping anyone but Yahweh. God demanded purity and strict obedience; idolatry and blasphemy were punishable by death (Exodus 20:3, 5). Non-Israelites who lived within the area believed by the Hebrews to have been promised to them by God were seen to pose a great temptation to them to abandon their faith. This led them to rationalize the slaughter of entire communities, in some of the most chilling passages in the Bible. Deuteronomy 20:16-18 says, "[In] the towns of the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you as your holding, you must not leave a soul alive. . . . [Y]ou must destroy them . . . so that they may not teach you to imitate the abominable practices they have carried on for their gods. . . ." Joshua 6:21 and 10:40 claim that "[Joshua's army killed everyone in Jericho], both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys. . . . Joshua defeated the whole land . . . he left no one remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded."<sup>15</sup>

Israel's external enemies were to be treated somewhat more leniently: they were first to be presented with peace terms, and, if those were accepted, then the people would be subjugated, not killed. But if they rejected the terms, the men would be slaughtered and the women and children enslaved (Deuteronomy 20:10-15). In those respects, the Hebrews were little different from other ancient cultures.

The later rabbinic commentators who compiled the Talmud relegated wars of annihilation and other indiscriminate killing solely to the specific divine commands connected with the ancient conquest of the Promised Land.<sup>16</sup> But the Talmud also gave explicit permission for individuals to kill murderous

pursuers, either in self-defense or in defense of others, based primarily on Genesis 9:6 (though that verse seems to apply only to a murder that already has occurred). Maimonides even thought that killing could be required, in light of his reading of Leviticus 19:16, "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor." Defensive war was permitted on those grounds as well, and required if the survival of a Jewish state were threatened. Pacifism was only recommended as a prudential option, when using force against oppression or invasion would likely result in significantly more harm to the community.<sup>17</sup>

Even when just cause for war exists, though, Maimonides and most other rabbis urged that nonviolent efforts to achieve justice and maintain peace be pursued first. If war begins, destruction should not exceed what is minimally necessary to achieve important military objectives. And innocent lives should be spared whenever possible.<sup>18</sup>

Drawing in part on those elements in the Jewish tradition, the contemporary Code of Ethics of the Israeli Defense Forces<sup>19</sup> requires soldiers to use minimal force and to spare civilian lives, and also affirms the importance of respecting their dignity, property, values, and sacred sites. Clearly a war of annihilation like Joshua's would not be permitted under the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) Code. But in practice the Code has not always been upheld in Palestinian areas occupied by Israel, nor during Israel's invasion of Lebanon during the 1980s. Israeli military force is not always discriminate or proportionate; whole families of individual terrorists often are punished collectively (e.g., their houses are bulldozed); and Palestinian civilians are intimidated and humiliated on a daily basis. Of course, many Jewish people in Israel and elsewhere have criticized these tactics on moral grounds, drawing upon centuries of Talmudic affirmations of compassion and respect for human dignity.

## **Christianity.**

One question that has been the subject of considerable debate is whether Jesus was a pacifist, in other words, whether he prohibited violence absolutely. Some passages in the Gospels seem to clearly imply that, but others are more ambiguous.

Matthew, Chapter 5 reports Jesus as saying:

You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. [I]f anyone strikes [or slaps] you on the right cheek, turn [and offer him] the other also. . . . You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

These sayings seem to imply a strict rule of nonviolence.

By contrast, when Jesus spoke with Roman soldiers, he did not recommend that they abandon their profession in order to serve God (Luke 7). Now an argument from silence is logically weak, but it is puzzling how Jesus would have reconciled the military profession with nonresistance to evil and love of enemies. Also, the Gospels portray Jesus as using some degree of intimidation or force to eject the merchants from the Temple in Jerusalem (John 2:13-16). There is even a story where Jesus seems explicitly to permit his disciples to carry swords, and by implication to use them in self-defense, though that passage appears only in Luke 22 and is very mysterious.

Similar puzzles emerge from the stories of Jesus' arrest. The four Gospels agree that when Jesus was arrested by an armed group, one of his disciples drew a sword and wounded a servant of the high priest. But the Gospels differ about what was said during that incident. In Mark's version of the story (14:43-52), Jesus says nothing to the disciple who inflicts the wound. Mark's gospel is thought by scholars to be the earliest of the four, and probably familiar at least to the writers of Matthew and Luke. But only Mark's gospel suggests that Jesus was silent at this point. Perhaps Mark meant to imply that Jesus was speechless seeing one of his disciples lash out violently, but we cannot know for sure.

In Luke's account (22:47-51), alone among the gospels, Jesus' disciples first ask him, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" But Jesus does not respond before one of them cuts the servant's ear off. (Perhaps he was not given enough time to reply.) Then Jesus says simply, "Stop! No more of that!" In Luke's version, there is only that brief command, with no supporting reasons given. It might reflect an abhorrence of violence in general. But we might wonder why Luke's Jesus would permit his disciples to carry swords just a few verses earlier, yet forbid their use here in his defense.

In John's version of the arrest (18:3-11), the disciple who uses his sword is identified as Simon Peter, and the servant's name is said to be Malchus. (In the other Gospels, they are nameless.) John quotes Jesus as saying to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" So John's focus is on the need to permit Jesus' divine mission to continue (which includes his arrest and crucifixion), not a specific opposition to violence per se. The contrast with Luke's version is remarkable.

Matthew's version of Jesus' statement is lengthier and more complex than the others (26:51-54):

Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?"

Note that Jesus gives at least two rationales in Matthew against the disciple's use of his sword. One sounds like a piece of prudential advice: if you do not want to be killed yourself, do not use lethal weapons. (But then, would not the disciple respond, "I am perfectly willing to die to protect you"?) But the other rationale, like John's, might be restricted to this situation only: the disciple must not interfere with Jesus' mission. (We might wonder, though, how the legions of angel "reserves" are consistent with pacifism!)

In light of this puzzling combination of texts, how did the early Christian community answer the question of whether force could ever be justified morally? Many of them seem to have constructed a dual ethic, one for Christians and another for the state. I will use Paul, Tertullian of Carthage, and Origen of Alexandria to illustrate this. Those three influential Christians interpreted Jesus' teaching and example to prohibit *all* uses of force by *Christians*, not only in self-defense but apparently even in defense of other innocent people.

Paul wrote to Roman Christians (ch. 12): "Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all . . . Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God." Over a century later, Tertullian wrote that when Jesus rebuked the disciple who defended him at his arrest, in effect he disarmed every soldier.<sup>20</sup> Tertullian explained to Roman rulers that Christians believe it is better for them to be killed than to kill.<sup>21</sup> And he stipulated that when soldiers convert to Christianity, they must leave the military.<sup>22</sup> His contemporary, Origen, also claimed that Jesus prohibited homicide, so Christians may never kill or use violence for any reason.<sup>23</sup>

But all three of those early Christians, in spite of their apparently pacifist stances, also seemed to think that God authorized the *state* to use lethal force for certain purposes. Paul wrote in Romans 13:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists authority, resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, Tertullian said, "We [Christians] pray . . . for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies. . . ." <sup>25</sup> And Origen claimed that although Christians will not serve in

the military, they offer “prayers to God on behalf of those who are fighting in a righteous cause . . . that whatever is opposed to those who act righteously may be destroyed.”<sup>26</sup>

Note that the combination of views I have cited from Paul, Tertullian, and Origen is internally inconsistent: It is not possible to rule out killing entirely, and then permit it on the part of the state. But it is important to recognize that those authors – and possibly most early Christians – thought strict pacifism to be the only acceptable ethic for followers of Jesus. In light of that, no contemporary Christian should assume that Jesus clearly approved of the use of violence, even in defense of the innocent. Killing enemies to protect one’s family, community, or nation may be justified morally (perhaps on nonreligious grounds), but doing so may well contradict the ethic of Jesus.<sup>27</sup>

A significant shift in Christian thinking about war occurred in the 4th and 5th centuries, after Emperor Constantine began to use the Roman state to support the Church. According to an influential bishop named Eusebius, absolute nonviolence was from then on to apply solely to clergy, monks, and nuns; lay Christians now could be obligated to defend the empire with force.<sup>28</sup> Ambrose, another important bishop of that era, thought that Christian love entailed a duty to use force to defend innocent third parties.<sup>29</sup> He also shifted the focus of Christian moral concern from the act of violence to the attitude of the agent: Christian soldiers should love their enemies – *while* using deadly force against them!<sup>30</sup>

Augustine, who was influenced by Ambrose in many ways, recognized that Jesus had taught things that seemed to entail strict nonviolence; but like Ambrose, he believed that they applied to dispositions rather than to actions. Christians in his view are not only permitted to use force in defense of the community, they are obligated to obey such orders from higher authorities. Augustine also came to accept the use of force against heresy, believing it to be consistent with a benevolent desire of the Church to correct its wayward children!<sup>31</sup>

However, Ambrose<sup>32</sup> and Augustine<sup>33</sup> also believed that there should be moral limits on Christian uses of violence. Even in cases where Augustine considered war to be the lesser of evils, he regarded all killing as ultimately tragic, always requiring an attitude of mourning and regret on the part of Christians. Partly due to his influence, throughout most of the medieval period, killing in war was considered a very serious sin. If a Christian soldier killed an enemy soldier, even in a war that was considered just, he would have to do penance for the killing, often by fasting and prayer for a year or more.<sup>34</sup>

We can also see Christian roots of the modern principle of noncombatant immunity develop in the medieval period, when secular military ideals of chivalry combined with Christian decrees of protection for clergy, peasants, women, and others who usually did not take part in combat.<sup>35</sup> Thomas Aquinas added another important ethical consideration in stipulating that Christians may only use the minimal force needed to save lives from unjust attack,<sup>36</sup> an early version of the just war principle of proportionality.

But the medieval period also witnessed the emergence of total war in the name of Christianity. First, there was increasing glorification of the Christian knight, and identification of military courage and honor with Christian virtue. Consider how this German poem draws on John’s story of Jesus’ arrest:

Then boiled with wrath  
The swift sword wielder  
Simon Peter.  
Speechless he,  
Grieved his heart that any sought to bind his Master,  
Grim the knight faced boldly the servants,  
Shielding his Suzerain,  
Not craven his heart,  
Lightning swift unsheathed his sword,

Strode to the first foe,  
Smote a strong stroke,  
Clave with the sharp blade  
On the right side the ear from Malchus.<sup>37</sup>

(The glorification of Peter here is rather ironic, in that Jesus rebuked him for using his sword! But the poem no doubt stirred its audience to imagine that if they had been with Jesus at his arrest, they might have hoped to have the disciple's courage and sense of moral outrage.)

Now by themselves, military courage and honor might help to reinforce limits on war conduct, e.g., in protecting noncombatants from gratuitous harm. But many of the traditional restraints on war advocated by the Church started to erode in the medieval period.

In the 9th century, the Vatican declared that death in battle could be beneficial for Christian soldiers spiritually: their sins could be erased if they died in defense of the Church, and they would be guaranteed entry into heaven.<sup>38</sup> (This is not unlike the assurances given to contemporary Muslim suicide bombers by recruiters from Al Qaeda, Hamas, etc.)

In the year 1095, Pope Urban II launched what later came to be called the First Crusade, urging European leaders to rescue the Holy Land from its Muslim occupiers. The Pope referred to Muslims as a "vile race" and an "unclean nation" that had polluted Christian holy places, and called for their destruction. Killing Muslims became, in effect, a way for Christians to obtain remission of their sins.<sup>39</sup> Moral rules governing the conduct of war were abandoned. No one was immune from attack by Christian crusaders; whole cities were slaughtered. Even Jews in Germany were massacred by crusaders on their way to Palestine.<sup>40</sup> Thus, ironically and tragically, a religion that began with the largely nonviolent teachings and example of Jesus evolved in its first millennium to the point where Christians were waging total, indiscriminate war against heretics and "infidels."

In the wake of a series of devastating wars in Europe between Catholics and Protestants, some Christians like Francisco de Vitoria concluded that mere difference of religion should no longer be considered just cause for war.<sup>41</sup> Most Christians today would find total war morally repugnant, of course, especially if waged in the name of God. Some even continue in the ancient path of pacifism in obedience to Jesus' sayings on love of enemies and nonretaliation against evil. But total holy war against infidels also remains a continuing temptation for Christians, as suggested by the popularity of the bloodthirsty *Left Behind* series of novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.<sup>42</sup>

## Islam.

The Qur'an, the most sacred Muslim text, repeatedly refers to God as compassionate and just. It also insists that "there is no compulsion in religion" (2:256), meaning that authentic submission to God must be freely and sincerely chosen, not forced.<sup>43</sup> (The word "Islam" means submission.) The Qur'an urges Muslims to use "beautiful preaching" to persuade people to accept Islam, and to "argue nicely" with Jews and Christians who are seen as worshipping the same God as their own (16:125, 29:46).<sup>44</sup>

Those ideas taken in isolation might tend to preclude holy war, and perhaps even ground some form of pacifism. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad was said to have practiced nonviolence during the first 12 years of his prophetic career, even in the face of serious persecution by polytheists in Mecca.<sup>45</sup> The Prophet's stance during that early Meccan period eventually served as the model for a nonviolent Islamic movement in 20th century Afghanistan led by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a friend and admirer of Gandhi.<sup>46</sup>

But after the Prophet's escape to Medina in 622, he came to believe that God permitted and even commanded the use of force in defense of his growing religious community. Qur'an 22:39-40 says, "Permission is given to those who fight because they have been wronged . . . unjustly expelled from

their homes only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.'<sup>47</sup> Like the Hebrew Bible, the Qur'an mandates capital punishment for certain offenses, though it also urges mercy and forgiveness in other cases. Muhammad often urged diplomacy rather than war to resolve disputes.<sup>48</sup>

But some scholars believe that certain verses in the Qur'an (9:5 and 73) and other sayings of the Prophet go beyond defensive and retributive uses of force to permit offensive jihad to expand the territory of Islam. The word *jihad*, by the way, means struggle or effort. Jihad can refer to the struggle of the individual Muslim to conform his or her will to Allah's, or to a peaceful effort to persuade others to accept Islam. But jihad also can mean holy war. In fact, there is a sense in which the only completely just war in Islamic terms is a holy war, since it has to be approved by proper religious authorities and waged to defend or promote Islam or the Muslim community.<sup>49</sup>

So in spite of the Qur'anic statement against forcing religion on others, Muslim leaders sometimes have threatened to kill unbelievers if they did not accept Islam. Muhammad himself was said to condemn Muslims to death if they abandoned their faith. Some of the early Muslim raids out of Medina against trading caravans would be hard to interpret as strictly defensive. And although Islam spread to some parts of the world like Indonesia mainly by means of "beautiful preaching," much of its expansion elsewhere was due to offensive war, first by Muhammad to unify Arabia, then by his followers in conquering the Middle East and North Africa. In fact, for many years the caliphs (Muslim political leaders) were expected to wage offensive jihad at least once a year!<sup>50</sup>

However, Muhammad and his successors did establish some important moral rules for fighting holy wars: women, children, and the elderly were not to be killed intentionally, though they could be enslaved. Monks, nuns, and the disabled also were to be spared from execution after a battle. Muslim military leaders were able to draw upon some pre-Islamic principles of Arab chivalry against killing defenseless people.<sup>51</sup> In other words, Islamic holy wars were never supposed to be total wars involving indiscriminate killing and scorched-earth tactics, in spite of what the leaders of Al Qaeda, Hamas, or Hizbollah might say to the contrary.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, Muslim leaders explicitly were permitted by Muhammad to kill all captured soldiers, and most adult male civilians if they were polytheists, or even if they were Jews or Christians but had fought instead of paying the poll tax. So Islam traditionally did not uphold a *comprehensive* principle of noncombatant immunity. Also, if civilians were likely to be killed in attacks on military areas, Muslim ethics permitted that as regrettable but necessary "collateral damage" — in fact, the moral blame rested entirely on the enemy leaders for putting their citizens in harm's way.<sup>53</sup>

But many contemporary Muslim leaders strongly advocate noncombatant immunity, as well as a duty to minimize harms to civilians in otherwise legitimate military attacks, i.e., *in-bello* proportionality. Such leaders also have condemned terrorism committed in the name of Allah, including the September 11, 2001, attacks against the United States.<sup>54</sup> However, the contemporary challenge facing moderate Muslims to counter the misguided ethic of Muslim extremists can hardly be overestimated.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusions.

Tragically, some advocates of aggressive religious war can still be found today in all of the world's major religions. What they cannot legitimately claim, though, is that their position is *the* authentic expression of their faith. Indeed, each of the traditions I have discussed contains ethical principles that are incompatible with total war. Furthermore, in order for members of those faith communities to continue to believe that God is *compassionate and just*, I think they must repudiate claims and values in their own scriptures and traditions that are incompatible with those ideas. It does not blaspheme or insult God to believe that God's actions are limited by objective moral principles. To say that God would never condone or command total war, cruelty, or the intentional killing of innocent people does not represent a significant limit on God's power.

Moreover, I think that people of many different faiths, as well as those of no religious faith, might concur with the following ethical principles and rules, though some will not be acceptable to strict pacifists:

- 1) All people have a *prima facie* right not to be killed. This right can only be forfeited if they intentionally try to kill innocent people, or while they are combatants in war.<sup>56</sup>
- 2) Given the immense destruction and loss of life that war usually brings, all nonviolent means of realistically achieving just objectives should be tried first.
- 3) War should only be waged when necessary to protect the rights and welfare of the innocent.
- 4) Innocent civilians should not be directly targeted.
- 5) Weapons and tactics should not be used against military targets in ways that are certain to cause civilian casualties, unless that is the only way to protect one's own soldiers or civilians. Even then, harms to enemy civilians should be minimized.
- 6) Captured soldiers should not be tortured or summarily executed, but treated humanely.
- 7) Each side should be held accountable for any atrocities committed by its military forces.

Similar principles and rules arose out of the western just-war tradition and have been incorporated into international treaties like the Hague and Geneva conventions. But as I have tried to suggest in this chapter, such principles are not unique to the West or to Christianity in particular: every major religious tradition has developed comparable ones. It ought to be possible for people of all faiths to work in concert to implement such principles, without first having to agree on which views of God are best.

The just-war tradition rejects strict pacifism as insufficient to protect the innocent from unjust attack. But just-war rules, at least when applied in a careful and honest way, also guard against total war waged in the name of religion or any other cause. Religious communities can help to ensure that political and military leaders abide by these rules and inculcate respect for them in the training and management of soldiers. But just as importantly, faith communities can nurture firmly rooted habits and dispositions of compassion and nonviolence, reducing the likelihood and severity of war by dispelling the ignorance, fear and hatred that too often inspire and escalate it.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 4

1. John Ferguson, *War and Peace in the World's Religions*, New York: Oxford U. Press, 1978, is an excellent overview of this topic, and covers more traditions than I am able to address in this chapter. Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1960, focuses primarily on one tradition but in considerably greater historical detail.

2. Although this question is foundational to the ethics of war in that if the answer were a categorical "No," then war would be absolutely forbidden. The scope of the question clearly goes well beyond war. A comprehensive treatment of it would necessitate exploring capital punishment, euthanasia, abortion, meat-eating vs. vegetarianism, and so on.

3. Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson, *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

4. J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, ch. 5, "Images of the Enemy," offers many important insights along those lines.

5. Klaus Klostermaier, "Himsa and Ahimsa Traditions in Hinduism," in Harvey Dyck, ed., *The Pacifist Impulse in Historical Perspective*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996, pp. 227-239.

6. As the ethic and example of each of those men suggests, pacifism should not be equated with passivity. Ferguson, pp. 36-40, helpfully summarizes Gandhi's philosophy and practice of nonviolent civil disobedience. For a more extensive analysis, see Manfred Steger, *Gandhi's Dilemma: Nonviolent Principles and Nationalist Power*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Gandhi also had a strong influence on Martin Luther King, Jr. Many influential Buddhist leaders are described in Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

7. Harvey, ch. 6.



8. *Ayaramgasutta*, cited in Ferguson, p. 32.
9. Cited in Ferguson, p. 58.
10. Klostermaier.
11. *Ibid.*; Ferguson, p. 31.
12. Harvey, pp. 135-138.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 255-270. For further details on militant forms of Japanese Buddhism, see Brian Victoria, *Zen at War*, New York: Weatherhill, 1997.
14. Biblical quotes in this chapter are from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised English Bible with the Apocrypha*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001; and *The Oxford Study Bible: Revised English Bible with the Apocrypha*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
15. Many historians doubt that the ancient Hebrews actually engaged in many wars of annihilation against their neighbors; the book of Judges suggests that they tended more toward peaceful coexistence.
16. Theological questions about their consistency with God's compassion remained, of course: how could a loving and just God ever order the annihilation of whole communities? Even if adults were guilty of "abominable practices," why would that justify killing their children and livestock as well?
17. Michael Broyde, "Fighting the War and the Peace: Battlefield Ethics, Peace Talks, Treaties, and Pacifism in the Jewish Tradition," in J. Patout Burns, ed., *War and Its Discontents*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1996, pp. 1-30.
18. *Ibid.*
19. [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Society\\_&\\_Culture/IDF\\_ethics.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Society_&_Culture/IDF_ethics.html).
20. On Idolatry, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/0302.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0302.htm).
21. Apology, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/0301.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0301.htm).
22. On the Crown, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/0304.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0304.htm). Compare another contemporary, Hippolytus of Rome: "A soldier in the lower ranks shall kill no one. If ordered to do so, he shall not obey . . . . A catechumen or a member of the faithful who wants to join the army should be dismissed because he has shown contempt for God." Cited in Louis Swift, *The Early Fathers on War and Military Service*, Wilmington: Michael Glazer, 1983, p. 47.
23. Against Celsus, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/0416.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0416.htm); and Commentary on Matthew 26:47ff., [www.newadvent.org/fathers/1016.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1016.htm). Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* VI/20, claimed that "it is always unlawful to put to death a man, whom God willed to be a sacred animal." Thus from the creation story in Genesis 1, Lactantius inferred a conclusion at odds with capital punishment mandated in Genesis 9:6.
24. It is hard to conceive of a more conservative political philosophy than the one suggested here by Paul. Indeed, since he was himself persecuted by Roman authorities and knew that Jesus was executed by them, it is difficult to imagine that he really believed rulers were never "a terror to good conduct." However, later Christians like Augustine who cited Romans 13 approvingly did not ponder such questions.
25. Apology.
26. Against Celsus.
27. For more on this subject, consult C. John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude toward War*, London: Headly Bros., 1919; New York: Seabury, 1982; and Willard Swartly, ed., *The Love of Enemy and Nonretaliation in the New Testament*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
28. *Demonstration of the Gospel*, cited in Swift, pp. 88-89.
29. Duties of the Clergy, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/34011.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/34011.htm).
30. Swift, pp. 96-110. I doubt that the attitude expected of Christian soldiers by Ambrose and Augustine is psychologically possible in close combat.
31. See his *Letter to Publicola*, *Against Faustus*, *Letter to Marcellinus*, and *Letter to Vincentius*, all at [www.newadvent.org/fathers/](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/).
32. Duties of the Clergy.
33. Letter to Boniface.
34. Bernard Verkamp, *The Moral Treatment of Returning Warriors in Early Medieval and Modern Times*, Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1993, chs. 1-2.

35. James Turner Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions*, University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 1997, pp. 102-111; Maurice Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, ch. 11; Robert Stacey, "The Age of Chivalry," in Michael Howard, et al., eds., *The Laws of War: Constraints on Warfare in the Western World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, pp. 27-39.
36. Thomas Aquinas, "Whether It Is Lawful to Kill a Man in Self-Defense," *Summa Theologica*, [newadvent.org/summa/306407.htm](http://newadvent.org/summa/306407.htm).
37. Quoted in Bainton, pp. 103-104.
38. Pope Leo IV, "Forgiveness of Sins for Those Who Die in Battle with the Heathen," and Pope John VIII, "Indulgence for Fighting the Heathen," at [www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html).
39. James Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969, pp. 149-154.
40. Multiple accounts of Urban's speech and the First Crusade are at [www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html).
41. Francisco de Vitoria, *On the Law of War*, 1539, in Anthony Pagden and Jeremy Lawrance, *Vitoria: Political Writings*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 293-327.
42. David Kirkpatrick, "Wrath and Mercy: The Return of the Warrior Jesus," *New York Times*, April 4, 2004.
43. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, Beltsville, MD: Amana, 1989.
44. Reuven Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
45. Sohail Hashmi, "Interpreting the Islamic Ethics of War and Peace," in Terry Nardin, ed., *The Ethics of War and Peace: Religious and Secular Perspectives*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, pp. 146-166; John Kelsay, *Islam and War*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993, p. 21.
46. Eknath Easwaran, *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam*, Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1999.
47. Firestone.
48. Hashmi.
49. Kelsay, ch. 3.
50. Johnson, p. 91.
51. Hashmi.
52. Kelsay, chs. 4-5; Michael Knapp, "The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam," *Parameters*, Spring 2003, pp. 82-94.
53. Ibn Rushd and Ibn Tamiya, cited in Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam*, Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1996, pp. 31, 33, 49-50; Kelsay, ch. 4; Hashmi. Non-Muslims are not immune to such rationalizations, either: senior Pentagon officials frequently have asserted that the responsibility for civilian deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq lies *entirely* with Al Qaeda, the Taliban, Iraqi insurgents, terrorists, et al., FAIR [Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting], "Action Alert: How Many Dead? Major Networks Aren't Counting," [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org), December 12, 2001; Marian Wilkinson, "Pentagon Pins All Deaths on Saddam," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 28, 2003. But we cannot completely excuse our killing of civilians simply by claiming that we never targeted them intentionally. We must hold ourselves (as well as our enemies) accountable.
54. For example, Abdulaziz Al-Ashaykh, the chief religious leader of Saudi Arabia, declared on September 15, 2001: "[T]he recent developments in the United States, including hijacking planes, terrorizing innocent people and shedding blood, constitute a form of injustice that cannot be tolerated by Islam, which views them as gross crimes and sinful acts." Similarly, Muhammad al-Sabil, a member of the Saudi Council of Senior Religious Scholars, stated a few months later: "Any attack on innocent people is unlawful and contrary to *shari'a*, Islamic law) . . . Muslims must safeguard the lives, honor, and property of Christians and Jews. Attacking them contradicts *shari'a*." See Charles Kurzman, "Islamic Statements against Terrorism in the Wake of the September 11 Mass Murders," [www.unc.edu/~kurzman/terror.htm](http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/terror.htm).
55. See Neil MacFarquhar, "Muslim Scholars Increasingly Debate Unholy War," *New York Times*, December 10, 2004.
56. W. D. Ross, *The Right and the Good*, 1930; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, argued that there is a cluster of *prima facie* moral duties, none of which is absolute, but all of which are binding on rational persons across cultures. James Childress, "Just War Criteria," in Thomas Shannon, ed., *War or Peace? The Search for New Answers*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1980, pp. 40-58, applied Ross's theory to the just-war tradition.



## CHAPTER 5

# INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER: REDEFINING SOVEREIGNTY

**Thomas W. McShane**

We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order, a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations.

President George H. Bush

World events since 1648 have reflected the political, social, economic, and military aspirations of people organized into sovereign states. Increasingly, they reflect the influence and authority, both real and perceived, of international law, a development which has become evident since the end of the Cold War, but whose roots go back much further. Recent international interventions in places as diverse as Kuwait, Somalia, East Timor, Haiti, and Kosovo, conducted under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), regional organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), or by ad hoc coalitions, are shaped by a large and growing body of treaties, practices, and customs collectively referred to as international law.

Americans traditionally respect and support international law and, in fact, have been instrumental in its development for more than a century.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, they become frustrated when international law restrains or limits the pursuit of national interests. This was illustrated vividly in the debates and reactions surrounding American-led efforts to compel disarmament or regime change in Iraq throughout 2002 and 2003. Regardless, it is essential that strategic leaders understand the global environment as it exists today. International law constitutes an important element of the geopolitical environment, one we ignore at our peril.

This chapter traces the development and evolution of international law, its principal components and characteristics, and its relative influence on international politics and events over time. It proposes that international law has evolved to a level where it competes with sovereignty as an organizing principal of international relations. Although sovereignty is likely to remain a critical component of the international system, it faces a growing threat from international organizations and institutions that pursue international order and individual rights at the expense of traditional rights enjoyed by sovereign states.

Conventional wisdom would hold that this phenomenon sprung to life after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in 1990. To the contrary, as this chapter will demonstrate, the “recent” ascendancy of international law represents major developments in religion, philosophy, and law over centuries, and is shaped by the cataclysmic wars and associated excesses of the 20th century. Critical components of today’s international system matured in relative obscurity during the Cold War as groups and nations sought self-determination, peace, democracy, and individual freedoms. While it is easy for scholars and statesmen alike to overlook historical trends, we must examine how developments in international law have subtly but certainly redefined sovereignty and how states have adapted, or not adapted, to this reality.

# FOUNDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

## The Search for Order.

Humans seek order in life. Religion traditionally reflects our search for meaning and purpose, but social institutions also reflect this desire. In ancient times, families organized themselves into tribes, then cities, states, and empires. Social order implies security and a sense of predictability. Order promotes prosperity and growth—both individual and collective. At the same time, order discourages destructive social behavior and competition for scarce resources.<sup>2</sup> Order requires a degree of cooperation and sacrifice and, by definition, some inherent limitation on individual freedom. The political process is the means usually used to create order and determine social rules and mores. Laws are crafted to facilitate and support this process.

Order may be imposed within groups or nations or states. On occasion, international order may be imposed by hegemonic powers, for example the Roman Empire, the British Empire at its height in the 19th century, and by American power since 1945. But scholars typically describe the international system as unstructured, or anarchic, in nature. States strive for supremacy, or hegemony, over other states. International politics is a “ruthless and dangerous business . . . [t]his situation, which no one consciously designed or intended, is genuinely tragic.”<sup>3</sup> Others analyze the international system in different terms: the dynamic of how states establish international order, e.g., balance of power, bipolar, or hegemonic systems; the nature of state actors as determining state behavior, e.g., democracies act one way, revolutionary states another, etc.; and the influence of individual decisionmakers, e.g., great men drive events—Churchill, Hitler, etc.<sup>4</sup>

Rule of law is widely regarded as an independent basis of international order. The National Security Strategy of the United States tells us that the “nonnegotiable demands of human dignity” include “the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women, religious tolerance; and respect for private property.”<sup>5</sup> Establishing the rule of law was a stated objective of international efforts in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, among others. Efforts to establish rule of law in places such as Kosovo, and more recently, Iraq, illustrate the tensions between international law and sovereignty which we will examine in detail later.

## Defining International Law.

Law prescribes norms of proper behavior, or as Blackstone says in his *Commentaries*, “a rule of civil conduct, commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong.”<sup>6</sup> These rules may be prescribed by the sovereign, but they are usually based on religious, cultural, and moral values. As such, the law often depends upon voluntary compliance, or more precisely on social pressure to conform. Sanctions may be imposed in cases where individuals will not or cannot comply.

Others feel that laws by definition require sanctions:

It is essential to the idea of a law that it be attended with a sanction; or, in other words, a penalty or punishment for disobedience. If there be no penalty annexed to disobedience, the resolutions or commands, which pretend to be laws will, in fact, amount to nothing more than advice. . . .<sup>7</sup>

Regardless, law provides a foundation for order, stability, predictability, and enjoys general acceptance by the population at large. Laws not generally accepted, perhaps because they do not reflect widely-held beliefs or morals, or serve no constructive purpose, often are ignored and prove particularly difficult to enforce.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, law evolves; it is not static. Laws change regularly, and considerably over long periods of time. While all this is true with respect to municipal, or domestic, law, does it apply equally to international law?

International law has been defined as “the body of rules and principles of action which are binding upon civilized states in their relations with one another.”<sup>9</sup> Critics question, and we will examine later, whether international law can be “binding,” and the efficacy of its application outside its Western European incubator—the so-called “civilized” states. Yet a closer look reveals that international law plays an essential role in global trade and commerce, regulating disputes, compensation, banking, and laws applying to a given transaction. It is indispensable to international transportation, regulating sea and air routes, privileges and immunities, and claims for loss or damage.<sup>10</sup> International treaties establish standards for the sciences, health, and the environment.<sup>11</sup>

The law of war is most familiar to us as that branch of public international law regulating armed conflict between states, and increasingly within states suffering from civil war, or intrastate conflict. This body of law provided the foundation for the war crimes tribunals at Nuremberg and Tokyo following World War II, and later for the international tribunals organized to adjudicate war crimes and crimes against humanity in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Even more recently, the Rome Statute established the International Criminal Court, a standing, rather than ad hoc, tribunal which recently became operational and whose jurisdiction may be unlimited.<sup>12</sup>

In most aspects, international law serves the same purposes as and shares common attributes with municipal law: it provides a foundation for order, is founded on religious, cultural, and moral values, serves to provide stability and predictability, and enjoys general acceptance among the international community. International law protects rights of states and individuals alike. In one important particular, however, the international legal system differs from municipal systems—there is no sanction for noncompliance, if by sanction is meant imposition of penalty by a higher authority. This theme recurs in any discussion of international law, although its relevance is often overstated.<sup>13</sup>

## **SOURCES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

### **Classical Antecedents.**

Historians refer to the “laws” of ancient Greece and Rome and their influence on modern western institutions. Although recognizing that a sophisticated system of laws provided a foundation for order and stability, as well as for a wide-ranging commercial system that stretched from Britain to Asia Minor and ringed the Mediterranean, neither civilization understood the concept of international law as we apply the term today.<sup>14</sup> Ancient Greeks, Romans, and Chinese customarily did not treat outsiders as their equals in an international system of equals. Greeks regarded non-Greeks as uncivilized; the Roman Empire did not negotiate acquisitions, it simply took them. The Chinese considered any group of peoples outside the “Middle Kingdom” as barbarians not worthy of their full attention.<sup>15</sup>

### **Natural Law, Feudalism, and Westphalia.**

Elements of modern international law existed before creation of the Westphalian system in 1648. Ancient philosophers, the Romans, and their heirs believed in “natural law,” a higher law of nature that controlled all human endeavors, and to which all are bound, even kings and rulers. An expression of this concept is found in the term *ius gentium*, meaning a principle of universal application that all follow because it has been discovered independently by application of reason, a “natural law.” Our contemporary use of the phrase “human rights,” examined in this context, becomes for us a form of natural law or *ius gentium*, and a fundamental principle of international order.<sup>16</sup>

Other elements of international order evolved during the Middle Ages, particularly concepts of property rights and loyalty to the sovereign, key elements of modern nation-states. Under feudalism, property rights of the ruler shaped feudal society and dictated a network of complicated but well-

understood relationships that provided stability and order. Feudalism depended upon loyalty up and loyalty down the social hierarchy. All were bound by reciprocal responsibilities. While the Catholic Church provided legitimacy and support of feudal institutions, these principles survived the Reformation. The idea that states enjoy sovereignty and the right to control territory is a feudal legacy.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, following the self-destructive upheaval of the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 provided needed order, stabilizing borders and relationships. Kings could dictate any religion they wished within their borders, but foreswore any rights to interfere in the religious affairs of other sovereign states. This principle was violated frequently for political, if not religious, reasons, but the Treaty achieved its purpose.

Once states became sovereign, a way had to be found for them to interact on a nominal basis of equality. Guiding principles of relations between sovereign states rested on five basic assumptions. States had the right to: make laws; act independently in international affairs; control their territory and people; issue currency; and utilize the resources of the state. Sovereignty thus became the organizing element of modern history.

## **INTERNATIONAL LAW HIERARCHY**

The sources of international law are divided into four categories, arranged in a hierarchy.<sup>18</sup> At the top are conventions, treaties, and agreements, such as the UN Charter, or the Law of the Sea Treaty. These represent contractual relationships between sovereign states, and states are bound by their obligations freely undertaken.<sup>19</sup>

The second source of international law is the practice of states, referred to as customary international law. No hard and fast rule governs customary international law. It reflects the behavior of states over time, acting in accordance with what they believe to be the dominant rules of international order. Customary law exists independently of treaty law, although treaty law may help to shape customary law.<sup>20</sup>

The third source is principles of law recognized by the leading, or so-called “civilized” nations. International politics help to define these principles, which are also shaped by the municipal law of states.<sup>21</sup>

The fourth and final source of international law represents judicial decisions and the writings of jurists and scholars. These include the opinions issued by the International Court of Justice, its predecessor the Permanent Court of International Justice, the European Court of Human Rights, and the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda (ICTR). Writings of scholars supplement these decisions, illustrating and explaining the state of the law based on their experience and study. Changes in the law are often preceded by debate among jurists and scholars over what the law should be. Their authority is persuasive and influential, not substantive.<sup>22</sup>

## **INTERNATIONAL LAW AND SOVEREIGNTY—AN EVOLUTIONARY RELATIONSHIP**

### **A Marriage of Convenience.**

International law has never existed in a vacuum. It reflects existing norms and mores, and illustrates the difficulty of constructing international order in a disordered world. The Westphalian system has provided the fundamental framework for order for over 3 centuries and has greatly influenced the development of international law. Over time sovereignty has ebbed and flowed, as prevailing practices and international politics shaped the behavior of the leading states. To the extent these practices and politics establish binding precedent, they help to define international law.

This portion of the chapter examines how recognized principles of international law and sovereignty developed simultaneously over time. Although sovereignty has provided the dominant basis for international order, it has consistently adapted to accommodate evolving concepts of government, freedom, human rights, and the quest for predictability and stability,<sup>23</sup> the historical attributes of international law.

### **Sovereignty and the Divine Rights of Kings.**

Early models of sovereignty were based on the prevailing form of government in 17th Century Europe—monarchies ruled by hereditary dynasties of kings or emperors. Consistent with historical political and religious practice, individuals were subordinate to the state, represented by the king. Other precedents existed, going back to classical Greece and its democratic ideals,<sup>24</sup> but prevailing norms made kings absolute rulers of their states, and they exercised their authority with little regard for the sensibilities of their subjects.

Contemporary writers described the nature of this relationship. Jean Bodin wrote in 1576 that law comes from the king who, although not bound by his own laws, was not above the law of nature, an important exception bearing on future developments.<sup>25</sup> Thomas Hobbes wrote in *Leviathan*: “It appeareth plainly that the sovereign power . . . is as great as possibly men can be imagined to make it.”<sup>26</sup> Louis XIV of France, the “Sun King,” epitomized the classical sovereign—not merely the head of the state, but its very embodiment, anointed by God to rule. Subjects owed unquestioningly loyalty to the king, who might or might not act in their best interests. More precisely, the king’s interests were the state’s interests. Hence the dynastic wars of Louis XIV, waged to expand the glory of France and of Louis XIV, were the business of the King and his advisors, not the people of France. As characterized in popular culture: “It’s good to be the King!”<sup>27</sup>

Not everyone regarded sovereignty this way. Hugo de Groot, also known as Grotius, is referred to as the father of international law for his treatises on international law and the law of war. He was also a proponent of the law of nature and reason. He saw excesses in unbridled sovereignty:

I saw prevailing throughout the Christian world a license in making war of which even barbarous nations should be ashamed; men resorting to arms for trivial or for no reasons at all, and . . . no reverence left for divine or human law, exactly as if a single edict had released a madness driving men to all kinds of crime.<sup>28</sup>

As the culminating act of the English Civil War and the Thirty Years’ War, the British throne of Charles I fell to the reformist Protestant armies of Oliver Cromwell. In 1649, one year after Westphalia, Cromwell had King Charles beheaded. Sovereignty was no longer coexistent with monarchy.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Enlightenment and Age of Reason.**

During the 18th century, philosophers, scholars, and popular writers rediscovered the writings of the ancient Greeks, combining them with Christian philosophy and natural law into a doctrine of Enlightenment. Locke, Rousseau, and Jefferson, among others, emphasized individual rights and the obligations of sovereigns toward their citizens.<sup>30</sup> Their beliefs were incorporated into the Declaration of Independence and the American and French Revolutions.

The established order elsewhere did not change, but regime change in America and France, replacing monarchies with democratically-based governments, was a harbinger of things to come. It advanced the idea that sovereignty vested in the people, rather than in the government or the ruler, and demonstrated the efficacy of a higher law, themes that would resurface periodically in the 19th century and erupt in the latter half of the 20th century. International agreements and treaties began to recognize that individuals as well as states have rights.<sup>31</sup>



## **The Concert of Europe, Industrialism, and Colonialism.**

Following the 25-year struggle to suppress Revolutionary France and Napoleon Bonaparte, the major powers of Europe in 1815 sought to reestablish order, stability, and a balance of power. In response to Napoleon's imperial ambitions, the political leaders who met in Vienna created a system firmly grounded in sovereignty and balanced so as to preclude a return to revolution. Under the leadership of Prince Metternich of Austria and Lord Castlereigh of Great Britain, they succeeded in establishing a framework for peace that would survive essentially intact for 100 years.<sup>32</sup>

Other influences shaped the 19th century. Charles Darwin's scientific work on evolution stimulated development of a social philosophy known as social Darwinism, extrapolating Darwin's theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest species into international relations and politics. Those nations which were strongest were most likely and best suited to survive. Social Darwinism heavily influenced political leaders such as Bismarck and Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>33</sup> Sovereign states exerted a sort of muscular self-interest in their international relations, demonstrating their superiority by economic growth and territorial acquisition. The last great era of Colonialism was the result, as France, Great Britain, and Germany competed to acquire overseas colonies. The United States, too, succumbed to temptation at the end of the century, acquiring overseas interests in the Hawaii, the Philippines, Cuba, and Panama, among others.<sup>34</sup> The sovereign rights of underdeveloped, militarily weak states counted for little in this environment.

Facilitating economic expansion in an era of relative peace were the modern technologies of steamships, railroads, and telegraphs. The speed of communication and transportation caused the world to "shrink," as trade, commerce, and banking connected the continents, creating the first era of "globalization." The modern unified industrial state came into its own as the United States, Germany, and Italy consolidated their territorial boundaries and joined the ranks of the great powers.<sup>35</sup> In many regards, it was the apogee of sovereignty.

At the same time other, largely unseen developments reflected the dark side of unbridled sovereignty and hinted at issues that would rise to prominence in the 20th century. The industrial revolution prompted upward mobility and increased the size of the middle class in most western nations, yet it also created a new urban underclass, with associated problems of disease, family breakup, and child labor. Visible disparity in wealth and power in developed states caused socialism to flourish, creating revolutionary pressures that threatened the established order. Karl Marx promulgated his economic theories preaching class warfare. Modest political reform helped to defuse tensions and postpone the final accounting for at least another generation.

Public international law played an important role in international affairs, particularly through treaties regulating trade, communication, and finance. Henri Dunant founded the International Red Cross in Geneva in 1863 to mitigate the destructive effect of modern war.<sup>36</sup> The first Geneva Convention covering treatment of sick and wounded on the battlefield was signed in 1864.<sup>37</sup> Based largely on the Lieber Code of 1863,<sup>38</sup> promulgating laws of war for Union armies in the American Civil War, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907<sup>39</sup> attempted to prescribe means and methods of warfare consistent with existing humanitarian principles. Concerns over certain acts in the recent war with Iraq—use of civilian hostages, fighting from protected places such as hospitals or mosques, combatants not wearing military uniforms—can be traced directly to the Hague Conventions.<sup>40</sup>

## **The 20th Century – Age of Conflict and Ideology.**

The 20th century was marked by tremendous highs and abysmal lows. The best and the worst of human nature were on public display, often at the same time. The era was marked by three major world wars, two hot and one cold, and the clash of powerful ideologies. Socialism, Communism,

Nazism, and Fascism emerged fully-grown on the world stage, competing with democracy for primacy in the hearts and minds of nations. Tentative steps to form world government were taken. Natural law resurfaced in the guise of anti-colonialism, self-determination of peoples, the human rights movement, and demands for equality by the non-Western world. Change accelerated development, redefining political and cultural priorities. The second great era of globalization and progress brought the world closer, yet left others even farther behind. The similarities between 1903 and 2003 are striking, as are the differences. The maturation of international law and sovereignty's accommodation to change is one major highlight of the century that we will examine more closely.

## **The Great War – Changing of the Guard.**

The period immediately following World War I is essential to understanding the rest of the 20th century. The issues facing the allied powers in Versailles, and the choices made then and over the next decade dictated the course of events for the remainder of the century. International law emerged as a critical component of international order and would play a major role in international politics.

World War I, The Great War, caused tremendous upheaval in the established order. The victorious allies attempted to address these problems at Versailles in 1919. First was the unexpected scope of violence and destruction, prompting calls for vengeance—war reparations to be paid by the losers and trials of those responsible for the conflict. Second was the collapse of major empires—the German, Austrian-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires on the losing side, and the Russian Empire in 1917 on the allied side—and the emergence of the United States as the predominant military and economic power.<sup>41</sup> The third problem was the creation of new nation-states out of the former empires. Lastly, lack of consensus concerning the goals of the war and what the allies had won plagued the peace and designs for international order.

Revolutionary efforts to create a world government fell short—the League of Nations was a start, but not a sufficient one. President Woodrow Wilson's visions for the postwar order clashed with the national interests of the allies and frustrated effective, unified action. The Versailles Treaty became a compromise. Complicating matters, Wilson failed to persuade the American public or the U.S. Senate to ratify the treaty creating the League of Nations, and without American participation the League proved too weak to enforce Wilson's vision of collective security—peace through the rule of law supported by military force when necessary.<sup>42</sup> Wilson's vision would be revived in 1945 and again in 1990 with relatively greater success.

Attempts to try the Kaiser and others for War Crimes encountered similar problems. The allies could not agree, and the Germans would not cooperate. Ambitious plans drawn up at the Paris Peace Conference in 1920 called for some 900 war criminals to be tried, but allied disunity and German recalcitrance prevailed. As a compromise, 12 German soldiers ranging from private to lieutenant general were tried in German courts; six were convicted, with the most severe sentence being 4 years.<sup>43</sup>

One encouraging development at Versailles was public debate over rule of law and ethics superseding national interests and international politics. The conflict between these poles of international order would continue throughout the 20th century and still exists. As Kissinger characterizes it:

At the end of the First World War, the age-old debate about the relative roles of morality and interest in international affairs seemed to have been resolved in favor of the dominance of law and ethics. Under the shock of the cataclysm, many hoped for a better world as free as possible from the kind of *Realpolitik* which, in their view, had decimated the youth of a generation.<sup>44</sup>

Efforts to enforce peace through rule of law continued for over a decade following Versailles. Arms control agreements took the place of serious collective security enforcement. Examples include the Naval Conferences at Washington in 1922 and London in 1930, regulating the number and size of

battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines, then considered the major strategic weapons of the great powers.<sup>45</sup> In the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 the signatory parties agreed to renounce war as an instrument of national policy.<sup>46</sup>

In the end, sovereignty and national interests proved too strong for the Wilsonians. International law became just another diplomatic tool as the great states rearmed themselves for World War II. Former President Theodore Roosevelt, still a keen observer of world events, captured the essence of power politics when he said: "As yet there is no likelihood of establishing any kind of international power . . . which can effectively check wrong-doing . . . I regard . . . trusting to fantastic peace treaties, to impossible promises, to all kinds of scraps of paper without any backing in efficient force, as abhorrent."<sup>47</sup>

## **SOVEREIGNTY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE**

### **World War II and the Search for International Order.**

The world got a second chance in 1945 to recreate international order. The unprecedented destruction of the second major war in a generation dwarfed that of 1914-18 and brought modern war to the home front with a vengeance. Millions of noncombatants became casualties of war. The discovery of nuclear fission at the end of the war threatened even greater destruction in any future conflict. Sovereignty had to be checked, and international law was applied to the task. The problem was neatly defined by one study:

A sovereign state at the present time claims the power to judge its own controversies, to enforce its own conception of its rights, to increase its armaments without limit, to treat its own nationals as it sees fit, and to regulate its economic life without regard to the effect of such regulations upon its neighbors. These attributes of sovereignty must be limited.<sup>48</sup>

The creation of the UN in 1945 and the proceedings of the Nuremberg Tribunal immediately following were watershed events that permanently altered the nature of the debate regarding a state's right to wage war and its treatment of its citizens. Together they announced to the world that aggressive war would no longer be tolerated and that individuals who commit aggression and crimes against humanity will be held criminally responsible for their acts. It was a sincere effort and a good start, enjoying almost universal support.

One of the early UN proclamations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>49</sup> outlined fundamental human rights in terms reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. It was intended as common standard for "all peoples and all nations."<sup>50</sup> Although aspirational in tone and lacking an enforcement mechanism, it has served for more than 50 years as a beacon for people in search of freedom and justice. Over the following decades, International agreements outlawing genocide, recognizing the rights of minorities, and emphasizing humanitarian concerns consistently advanced individual rights at the expense of state sovereignty.<sup>51</sup>

Collective security acquired new life after World War II with the creation of the UN, NATO, the Organization of American States (OAS), and other international and regional organizations. Although the Cold War provided the initial impetus for NATO, it survives as a viable, productive organization. With expanded membership and new missions, NATO today provides collective security while extending democracy and prosperity to the nations of Eastern Europe, a development unimagined a generation ago.

### **The Rule of Law and Human Rights Center Stage.**

The rule of law in international affairs is manifest in many ways: by actions of the UN Security Council and other UN organizations;<sup>52</sup> by nongovernment organizations (NGOs) advancing collective

western values and international humanitarian law; by treaties regulating strategic nuclear weapons, conventional weapons, and chemical/biological weapons;<sup>53</sup> by international agreement on global warming; by creation of an international criminal court;<sup>54</sup> and by the number of “coalitions of the willing” contributing forces to intervene in intrastate conflicts.

A common misperception is that these developments emerged all at once in 1990 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.<sup>55</sup> The incorporation of international law and human rights into international relations since 1945 stems from historical trends and events. It reflects timeless values, classical and modern philosophy, and the common experiences of mankind over centuries. Although it is true that the bipolar system and threat of great power veto limited the ability of the United Nations Security Council to take effective action throughout the Cold War, the quest for international order based on rule of law consistently influenced political developments and discourse.

The struggle to end colonialism and promote self-determination of peoples following World War II is illustrative. The UN Charter, firmly rooted in sovereignty, contemplated the end of Western colonialism.<sup>56</sup> The United States advocated renunciation of overseas imperial holdings and supported self-determination.<sup>57</sup> During World War II, in fact, our stance on this issue periodically created rifts within the Anglo-French-U.S. partnership.<sup>58</sup> After the war, at the same time we were developing a Containment Policy against Communism, we were calling for an end to British and French rule in Africa and Asia. When newly independent colonial states lapsed into Communism, as happened in Vietnam, we suddenly found ourselves with a new problem on our hands, one as much political as military in nature.<sup>59</sup> The search for order, justice, and democracy stumbled on the rock of great power politics. International law alone could not preserve the peace.

Cold War arms control agreements<sup>60</sup> reflected not so much American and Soviet optimism as they did global public opinion, uneasy over the prospect of annihilation at the hands of the two superpowers. With the advent of intercontinental ballistic missiles, mutual assured destruction became a fact. With satellite technology, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) acquired the capacity to place nuclear weapons in earth orbit.<sup>61</sup> Many states became fervent practitioners of international law for purely parochial reasons, but the success of the international community, particularly nonaligned states, in framing global debate demonstrated the force of western values and the rule of law. These trends emerged in the 1950s, and acquired prominence in the 1960s and 1970s. Neither the UN nor the international community could force the great powers to take specific actions against their interests, but this does not mean that the great powers, including the United States and USSR, were free to do as they pleased. Pressures to comply with world opinion were subtle and often invisible, but real nonetheless.

Contributing to the force of international law was the proliferation of NGOs in the decades following World War II. NGOs pursued their own special interests, but most had an underlying humanitarian agenda, advancing the cause of human rights and promoting “International Humanitarian Law.”<sup>62</sup> The International Committee of the Red Cross is the oldest and best-known of the NGOs.<sup>63</sup> Human Rights Watch, Doctors without Border, CARE, and thousands of others effectively precipitated international intervention in what had been considered previously the internal affairs of sovereign states.<sup>64</sup>

Two examples illustrate the power and influence NGOs have acquired. The first is the UN intervention in Somalia in 1992, under American leadership, to ensure delivery of relief supplies and avert a humanitarian disaster forecast by NGOs and highlighted on television screens around the world. UN intervention alleviated the immediate problem, but failed to address the underlying problem of stability. When it did, too little and too late, it led to the battle of Mogadishu and eventual withdrawal of U.S. forces.

The second example of NGO influence is the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines.<sup>65</sup> The preamble to the Treaty states in part:

*Stressing* the role of public conscience in furthering the principles of humanity as evidenced by the call for a total ban of anti-personnel mines and recognizing the efforts to that end undertaken by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the International Campaign to Ban landmines, and numerous other nongovernmental organizations around the world, *Basing* themselves on the principle of international humanitarian law that the right of the parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited, . . .<sup>66</sup>

NGOs and international celebrities like Princess Diana of Britain actively participated in the Conference process, dismissing security concerns raised by the United States. Humanitarian concerns over civilians killed or maimed by abandoned land mines preoccupied the Conference and carried the day. While not a party to the treaty, the United States has conceded substantial compliance by policy.<sup>67</sup>

## **THE STATE OF THE STATE – SOVEREIGNTY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM**

### **Trends and Developments.**

Trends evident in 2003 reflect the foregoing discussion. In advanced states, post-industrial society has replaced basic industry and manufacturing, which has migrated to less-developed countries with lower labor costs. Globalization draws nations and peoples closer, despite recent economic setbacks. The World Trade Organization is a powerful international force that influences decisions of the leading economic powers, including the United States.<sup>68</sup> International labor organizations demand basic standards and benefits for workers and workplaces. These trends undermine sovereignty and reflect a tightly structured international environment that constrains even the strongest states to behave in ways promoting international order.

Human rights influence international agendas and domestic actions. International humanitarian intervention, evident in Kosovo, East Timor, and possibly Iraq, is an emerging precedent that demands attention. It is not yet customary international law, but lively debate on the subject tends to redefine how we view sovereignty.<sup>69</sup> This represents, ironically, the triumph of values advanced by Wilson at Versailles almost a century ago. The principles of the American and French revolutions have become universal, though not all states concede that individual rights supersede the welfare of the state, most notably China, the world's most populous state.

### **Themes for the 21st Century.**

International law will play an important role in addressing issues and trends likely to persist for decades to come. The most important of these include: a globalized economy; urbanization; intrastate conflict; clash of cultures; unequal distribution of wealth; environmental degradation; transnational crime; collective security; multilateralism; and humanitarian intervention. Global problems require global solutions; sovereign states cannot solve them, although they can address symptoms within their borders. Most, eventually, will require international cooperation.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC LEADERS**

International law challenges strategic leaders to think globally, not nationally. The positivist approach to international law expressed in the S.S. Lotus case: "Restrictions upon the independence of States cannot therefore be presumed,"<sup>70</sup> is threatened by a new paradigm: "a law more readily seen as the reflection of a collective juridical conscience and as a response to the social necessities of States organized as a community."<sup>71</sup> UN Secretary General Kofi Annan articulated this new paradigm as follows:

State sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined—not least by the forces of globalization and international cooperation. States are now widely understood to be instruments at the service of their peoples, and not vice versa.<sup>72</sup>

The implications of this principle are staggering. Yet Kofi Annan is no revolutionary; his language is reminiscent of Thomas Jefferson's in the Declaration of Independence: "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just power from the consent of the governed." States exist to promote and protect individual rights and freedoms. The challenge for international leaders is what action the international community should take in those cases where states deliberately and systematically violate the human rights of their citizens.<sup>73</sup>

None of this implies that sovereign states cannot guarantee, promote, and advance human rights. To the contrary, the American experience teaches us that individual rights and rule of law are mutually supportive and thrive in a strongly nationalistic, democratic environment. Ironically, the American experience also encourages internationalism in the promotion of democratic values. As President George Bush has stated in his National Security Strategy: "We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. We will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent."<sup>74</sup> This sentiment resembles Wilson's and, indeed, those of most presidents since 1918. Henry Kissinger portrays this as an essential element of American altruism motivating our actions abroad: "Wilson put forward the unprecedented doctrine that the security of America was inseparable from the security of *all* the rest of mankind. This implied that it was henceforth America's duty to oppose aggression *everywhere* . . ."<sup>75</sup>

The current world situation encourages debate over the scope and authority of international law. Recent American actions in Iraq, taken contrary to international public opinion, without the endorsement of the UN Security Council, and against the wishes of longstanding allies such as France, Germany, and Turkey, support Mersheimer's proposition that great powers behave as their interests dictate.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps sovereignty is alive and well after all. Unilateral action can, at least in certain cases, achieve the same results as multilateral efforts.

Proponents of international order and rule of law argue that lasting order cannot be imposed unilaterally. The Congress of Vienna in 1815, which created the "Concert of Europe," was a collective, multilateral effort, albeit predicated on sovereignty. But it took enormous cooperation to maintain international order for 100 years. Even the British Empire at its height in the 19th century realized its limitations and attempted to construct a favorable balance of power. John Ikenberry, in *After Victory*, analyzes the rebuilding of international order after major wars. He says the diplomats of 1815 created a "constitutional order," which are "political orders organized around agreed-upon legal and political institutions that operate to allocate rights and limit the exercise of power."<sup>77</sup>

Ikenberry's concept of "constitutional order" helps to explain how the current international system evolved after World War II, and how it operates today. At its heart was the sharing of power by the United States, by far the most powerful state in the world in 1945. The framework was an extensive system of multilateral institutions, including alliances, which bound the United States and its primary partners in Europe together.<sup>78</sup> The Cold War may have accelerated this process, but it did not create it.<sup>79</sup>

If this theory is correct, then the primacy of international law and institutions is no accident, but instead the direct and expected result of efforts to create a framework of mutually supporting and binding ties. As we have seen, these international institutions have performed as designed. It should come as no surprise, viewing the international system in this way, that international organizations and politics restrain the choices and actions of sovereign states. From this perspective, international order displays many of the characteristics of municipal order.<sup>80</sup> Ikenberry explains this: "if institutions—wielded by democracies—play a restraining role . . . it is possible to argue that international orders under particular circumstances can indeed exhibit constitutional characteristics."<sup>81</sup>

## THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND AMERICAN HEGEMONY

### Who Owns International Law?

What is America's role as the sole superpower in the current environment? How will the international system respond to the threat of global terrorism? Can it maintain the security and prosperity created by American leadership since 1945? Can the rule of law accommodate the national interests of the great powers and protect the interests of weaker states threatened by demagogues, genocide, civil war, and internal armed conflict? The remainder of this chapter will attempt to suggest answers to these questions.

Dynamic, disparate forces challenge the international order. Globalization promises prosperity and freedom, but failed states, disease, pollution, and rising birthrates hold large segments of the world's population hostage. Furthering individual rights and enforcing collective security requires international cooperation, but depends at present upon the good will and determination of powerful sovereign states.

A brief look at two recent developments illustrates the nature of the challenge and provides insights as to possible courses of action. The first of these is the creation of the International Criminal Court; the second is the American-led war on terrorism.

The International Criminal Court is an idea whose time has come. It fulfills the hopes and aspirations of a majority of the world's nations. Eighty years in the making, from Versailles in 1919 to the Rome Statute in 1997, it reflects a new consensus on international justice and the rule of law. Recognizing that sovereignty protected rulers and their agents from accountability for crimes ranging from aggressive war to democide,<sup>82</sup> the ICC provides a permanent forum for prosecution when state courts cannot or will not act. As of this writing, 139 nations have signed the treaty, and 89 have ratified it. The Court commenced operations on July 1, 2002, and according to its charter enjoys almost universal jurisdiction.<sup>83</sup> Its potential impact is enormous, even without U.S. participation.<sup>84</sup>

At the same time, the United States leads international efforts to locate, isolate, and destroy international terrorist groups with global reach. These groups threaten international order and prosperity. They promote extremist views and promise false hopes to states and individuals left behind on the road of progress. While most states support and encourage American efforts to eradicate this plague, the international system is not well-suited for the struggle. There is no international agreement on terrorism, and none that even attempts to define the term. Several treaties address individual terrorist acts—hijacking, murder, money laundering, illegal crossing of borders, etc., but their solutions require state action—apprehension, extradition, and prosecution of individual terrorists.<sup>85</sup>

To date, therefore, the international response to terrorism depends upon American leadership, moral and physical. Coalitions are formed to fight terrorism, but they form and reform constantly depending on where American efforts are focused. In Afghanistan a multilateral effort enjoyed broad international support;<sup>86</sup> in Iraq, another theater in this global war, the coalition fell short of expectations, and the intervention remains controversial.<sup>87</sup> The search for order and the rule of law means different things to different states. America may lead, but others need not follow.

These events are related closely. They represent opposite poles of debate over how we are to pursue Ikenberry's "constitutional order" on a global scale. While most states agree in theory with multilateral institutions, the utility of the UN, and the need for rule of law within and among states, international law must contend with the "friction" of sovereignty.<sup>88</sup> This uneasy relationship is likely to continue. Ironically, some states and prominent individuals have called for the ICC to investigate American intervention in Iraq as an "illegal" use of force in violation of treaty law and customary law.<sup>89</sup>

## Unilateralism: What Price Sovereignty?

This situation is unhealthy for international order. The new world order described in preceding sections of this chapter is real, and it is here to stay. The ties that bind the international community are strong and enduring, and international institutions enjoy unprecedented support and influence. Perhaps the most amazing point of all is that American values and leadership were instrumental in creating this environment. We are reminded once again that we have to be careful what we wish for.

American actions are well-intended, although many people sympathetic to American interests do not accept this proposition at face value. To the extent that American national interests must be served, we can continue to make unpopular decisions and execute American grand strategy without broad international support. But we cannot do so indefinitely. America may act unilaterally on a case-by-case basis, weighing costs and benefits. We need to be honest with ourselves when we do so, however. Others may perceive our actions as excessive and bullying.

The cost of military intervention can be high: proponents must establish a legal basis, a *jus ad bellum*, for action; they must apply force consistent with the laws of armed conflict and possible mandates of the UN Security Council; the fighting must be controlled both in time and in space; fallout and political reactions must be anticipated; and, lastly, those advocating intervention must expect the unexpected. Murphy's Law applies to all human endeavors. Given the national interest in defeating terrorism and preserving international order, some degree of risk is normal and expected.

## THE ROAD AHEAD: SURVIVING IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

We do not operate in a vacuum. The international environment outlined in this chapter demands our attention, if not our cooperation. It provides several useful lessons to guide our conduct in the 21st century.

First, multilateral action is preferred in most cases. America lacks the political and military strength to go it alone in every instance. U.S. economic and military power provides the mobility and ability to go anywhere, but coalitions provide additional resources, political support, and legal justification and legitimacy for international operations. If international relations theorists are correct, states that pursue hegemonic order motivate other powers to combine to frustrate their efforts. Although such a backlash against American hegemony is not evident at present, no one can guarantee that further unilateral adventures will not produce one.

Second, the United States has tremendous capabilities at its disposal without employing the military element of power. Diplomatic, economic and informational tools provide enormous flexibility in formulating strategy and handling complicated problems as they arise. Infrequent demonstration of American military power will suffice to remind opponents of military capabilities while diplomats pursue peaceful resolution of disputes by other means. This approach also will reassure friends, allies, and critics alike of American intentions and demonstrates a willingness to exhaust all reasonable alternatives before applying force. It will preserve valuable goodwill.

Third, every crisis does not require international intervention or the use of military forces. Acknowledging the threat posed by global terrorist networks, most international crises are local and have little impact on terrorism or global security. Many of them, we need to remind ourselves, may be safely ignored and left to others to solve. Unless international stability is threatened seriously, mobilizing the international community and its resources might prove counterproductive. We have learned, since the heady days of 1991, of the great Gulf War Coalition forged by Bush, that the new world order promised by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War has not come to pass, at least not in the way we imagined it. But there is a new world order, and states have to live in it.



The fourth and final lesson we can draw from this analysis of international law and sovereignty is that the international system as it exists (and as it was designed) reflects American values and American visions for the future. It is a legitimate part of our heritage. When we presume that all institutions oppose our interests because some do, or presume that all treaties are suspect because some are, we deny that heritage. More often than not, international institutions and agreements further American interests.

It is important for us to remember that democracies tolerate differences, and, in fact, thrive on them. If the core of “constitutional order” in the world is Western democracy, then we must expect that there will be disagreements and heated debate among states. We will not always agree on everything. But in a constitutional system everyone must play, the rules do not allow a state to simply take its ball and go home whenever it does not get its way. True, no referee will step in, blow a whistle, and impose a penalty, but true international order, just like domestic order, depends upon mutual respect and cooperation and responsible behavior. Those who claim global leadership within the system have the greatest responsibility to ensure the system works. It is time to reassess America’s role and reclaim our rightful position as the leader of the world community. Struggling against the ties that bind us, like a modern Gulliver, is counterproductive.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 5

1. U.S. War Department, General Orders No. 100, *Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field*, April 24, 1863. The first comprehensive summary and codification of the humanitarian rules governing land warfare. Frequently called the “Lieber Code” after its author, Dr. Francis Lieber, G.O. No. 100 furnished inspiration for the Geneva Conventions of 1864 and 1929 and the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907.

2. Werner Levi, *Contemporary International Law*, Boulder:CO, Westview, 1991, p. 14.

3. John J. Mersheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001, pp. 2-3.

4. John W. Spanier and Robert L. Wendzel, *Games Nations Play*, 9th ed., Washington, DC: *Congressional Quarterly, Inc.*, 1996, p. 22.

5. George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002, p. 3.

6. Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Book One, Chapter One, p. 118, available from The Avalon Project, Yale Law School at [www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/blackstone](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/blackstone), accessed April 11, 2003.

7. Alexander Hamilton, “The Federalist, No. 15,” *The Federalist*, New York, The Modern Library, 1941, p. 86.

8. E.g., “The Prohibition of Alcohol,” U.S. Constitution, amendment 18. It was repealed by the Twenty-First Amendment 14 years later.

9. J. L. Brierly, *The Law of Nations*, 6th ed., Oxford, Oxford Press, 1991, p. 1.

10. E.g., Convention on International Civil Aviation Chicago Convention 1944; UN Convention on the Law of the Sea UNCLOS III 1982.

11. E.g., *The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, May 9, 1992; *Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, December 11, 1997.

12. *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, UN Diplomatic conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, July 17, 1998.

13. Horace B. Robertson, Jr., “Contemporary International Law: Relevant to Today’s World?” *U.S. Naval War College International Law Studies*, Vol. 68, John Norton Moore and Robert F. Turner, eds., Newport: Naval War College Press, 1995, p. 3.

14. Brierly, p. 17.

15. Levi, p. 6.

16. Brierly, p. 17.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 3. See also Levi, pp. 6-9.

18. Statute of the International Court of Justice, Article 38.
19. The *SS Lotus Case*, Fr. v. Turk., 1927, Permanent Court of International Justice, 1927, Ser. A, No. 10, September 7, pp. 18-19: "The rules of law binding upon States therefore emanate from their own free will as expressed in conventions or by usages generally accepted as expressing principles of law . . ." International law scholars disagree on the fundamental nature of law. There are two distinct schools of thought. The Monist view holds that international law and municipal state law are simply parts of an integrated system. The focus is on the individual. Dualists believe that international law and municipal law are two distinct systems. The focus of domestic law is the individual; the focus of international law is on states. These views influence contemporary debate. See Levi, pp. 22-23.
20. Levi, p. 35. Levi cites as an example the launching of Sputnik by the Soviet Union, which claimed that artificial satellites could fly unimpeded over state territory, and the general acceptance of this proposition.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
22. Brierly, p. 66.
23. Although both predictability and stability are encompassed in the phrase "rule of law," the phrase is itself of fairly recent origins, representing the triumph of the western democracies since World War II. Historically, international law has concerned itself more with creating a stable, predictable world, rather than with a particular technique used to accomplish these ends.
24. Democracy in ancient Greece, notably Athens, was real and vibrant but limited in modern terms: only citizens could exercise political rights or hold land; women had few rights; slavery was an essential institution. None of this, however, diminishes the power and influence of Greek thought on leaders of the Enlightenment. See William Y. Elliott and Neil A. McDonald, *Western Political Heritage*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1955, pp. 63-74.
25. Brierly, p. 7.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
27. Mel Brooks, Director, *History of the World, Part I*, Fox Films, 1981.
28. Levi, p. 10.
29. Bernard Grun, *The Timetables of History*, 3rd ed., New York, Touchstone, 1991, p. 294.
30. Levi, p. 8.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
32. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York, Touchstone, 1994, p. 78.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 127.
34. See Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1998, Chapter 5: "The New Diplomacy, 1889-1908."
35. *Ibid.*
36. Eric S. Krauss and Mike O. Lacey: "Utilitarian vs. Humanitarian: The Battle Over the Law of War," *Parameters*, Vol. 32, Summer 2002, pp. 73, 76.
37. *Ibid.*
38. General Orders No. 100, *supra* note 1.
39. The Hague Conventions of 1899 were largely incorporated in the Conventions of 1907, of which five are important: 1 Convention Relative to the Opening of Hostilities, October 18, 1907, 36 Stat. 2259; 2 Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and Annex, October 18, 1907, 36 Stat. 2277; 3 Convention Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land, October 18, 1907, 36 Stat. 2310; 4 Convention Concerning Bombardment by Naval Forces in Time of War, October 18, 1907, 36 Stat. 2351; and 5 Convention for the Adaptation to Maritime Warfare of the Principles of the Geneva Convention of July 6, 1906, October 18, 1907, 36 Stat. 2371.
40. Kenneth Anderson, "Who Owns the Rules of War?" *New York Times Magazine*, April 13, 2003, p. 38.
41. Kissinger, p. 259.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
43. Department of the Army, *Pamphlet 27-161-2, International Law, Volume II* Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1962, p. 221. These trials, known as the Leipzig trials, demonstrated the problem obtaining jurisdiction over war criminals—Germany was not defeated and occupied as in World War II. The Leipzig trials did motivate the allies in 1945 to establish an international tribunal at Nuremberg.

44. Kissinger, p. 247.
45. *Ibid.*, 373. The Washington Conference of 1922 attempted to regulate capital ships; the London Conference of 1930 attempted to regulate submarines as well. See Department of Army Pamphlet 27-161-2, *supra*, p. 16. For a detailed study of the Naval Treaties, see W. Hays Parks, "Making Law of War Treaties: Lessons from Submarine Warfare Regulation," *U.S. Naval War College International Law Studies*, Vol. 75, Michael N. Schmitt, ed., Newport: Naval War College Press, 2000, p. 339.
46. The Kellogg-Briand Pact, or Pact of Paris, is formally known as The General Treaty for the Renunciation of War, August 27, 1928, 46 Stat. 2343.
47. Kissinger, p. 40.
48. Brierly, p. 47, quoting from the International Conciliation Pamphlet, 1941.
49. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN General Assembly, December 10, 1948.
50. *Ibid.*, Preamble.
51. See the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, December 9, 1948, p. 78, U.N.T.S. 277, Art. VI; the Geneva Conventions of 1949 four separate conventions—on the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, on the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, and the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War; and Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 1977. These conventions form the nucleus of what is commonly called "International Humanitarian Law."
52. E.g., The Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labor Organization, and the International Monetary Fund, to name only a few.
53. E.g., the START and SALT strategic arms negotiations and Anti Ballistic Missile ABM treaties with the USSR, and multilateral international agreements, including the Conventional Weapons Treaty, 1980; the Chemical Weapons Convention, 1993; and the Ottawa Treaty on Anti-Personnel Land Mines, 1997.
54. Notes 11 and 12, *supra*.
55. E.g., Ivo H. Daalder, "The United States and Military Intervention in Internal Conflict," in *International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Michael E. Brown, ed., Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996, p. 461.
56. UN Charter, Chapter I, Article 2, para. 1 and Chapter XI.
57. Eric Larabee, *Commander in Chief*, New York: Touchstone, 1987, p. 632.
58. *Ibid.*
59. E.g., Vietnam. Our efforts to combat aggressive communist expansion encountered international opposition both at the UN and in other international forums. Agreements such as Protocols I and II to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea displayed a distinct anti-Western and anti-American bias, yet reflected the considered opinion and practice of many states. International law was no longer the sole province of the great powers and the "civilized" states, and traditional American leadership in international law began to fade.
60. SALT, START, ABM, START II, etc.
61. Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction have been banned from space, although space has not been "demilitarized." Treaty on Principles governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies Outer Space Treaty, 1967.
62. International Humanitarian Law essentially encompasses the principles enunciated in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocols I and II of 1977.
63. See Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*, Vol. II, October 9, 1996, Appendix B, for a detailed listing of NGOs and countries in which they operate.
64. There are many examples. International support of the Palestinians is one; international efforts to remove white racist governments in Rhodesia and South Africa are others.
65. The Ottawa Treaty, formally known as the "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction," December 1997. The Ottawa process featured active participation by NGOs and international celebrities. Their priorities were humanitarian, not utilitarian in nature. See Krauss and Lacey, *supra*, note 36, p. 81.

66. Preface to the Ottawa Treaty, *ibid.*

67. On September 17, 1997, President Clinton announced that the United States would develop alternatives to anti-personnel land mines by 2003, and would replace all “dumb” land mines in South Korea by 2006. The principle U.S. objection to the Ottawa Process was its failure to acknowledge U.S. fielding of “smart” or self-destructing land mines. The Conventional Weapons Convention of 1980 prohibits indiscriminate laying of mine fields and requires mapping, marking, and removal, among other requirements. The Ottawa Process is unlikely to stop rogue states and revolutionary movements from indiscriminately laying and abandoning mines.

68. World Trade Organization sessions have attracted enormous demonstrations by diverse groups ranging from environmentalists to religious organizations to unrepentant communists.

69. See, e.g., George K. Walker, “Principles for Collective Humanitarian Intervention to Succor Other Countries’ Imperiled Indigenous Nationals,” *American University International Law Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 35; John C. Yoo, “The Dogs That Didn’t Bark: Why Were International Legal Scholars MIA on Kosovo?” *Chicago Journal of International Law*, Spring 2000, p. 149, accessed on line at [www.proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?TS](http://www.proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?TS), January 27, 2003.

70. *Supra*, note 19.

71. *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, International Court of Justice, July 8, 1996, Declaration of President Bedjaoui at para. 13., quoted in Robert F. Turner, “Nuclear Weapons and the World Court: The ICJ’s Advisory Opinion and Its Significance for U.S. Strategic Doctrine,” *U.S. Naval War College International Law Studies*, Vol. 72, Michael N. Schmitt Newport, ed., Annapolis: Naval War College Press, 1998, pp. 309, 312.

72. Kofi A. Annan, “Two Concepts of Sovereignty,” *The Economist*, September 18, 1999, p. 49.

73. See Thomas W. McShane, “Blame it on the Romans: Pax Americana and the Rule of Law,” *Parameters*, Vol. 32, Summer 2002, p. 57.

74. Bush, National Security Strategy, *supra*, note 5, Preface.

75. Kissinger, p. 47.

76. Mersheimer, *supra*, note 3.

77. G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and The Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 29.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 163. These institutions included the United Nations, NATO, The Marshall Plan, and the World Bank, among others.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

82. Democide refers to the torture and killing of citizens by their own governments, generally despotic and totalitarian in form. One figure attributes 170 million deaths to democide over the course of the 20th century, a number two to four times greater than the total number killed in war. See John Norton Moore, “Opening Comments,” *Military Law Review*, Vol. 149, 1955, pp. 7, 10. Professor Moore, Director of the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia School of Law, made these comments in a symposium on “Nuremberg and the Rule of Law: A Fifty year Verdict” at the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s School, November 17, 1995.

83. Universal Jurisdiction is based upon the principle that certain crimes violate international interests and norms and that states may take action regardless of the location of the crime or the nationality of the perpetrator or the victim. At present international law recognizes universal jurisdiction for certain offenses, e.g., crimes against humanity, war crimes covered by the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The apprehension of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Argentina and his trial in Israel in 1961 often is used to illustrate the concept. Others would extend the principle further, to cover domestic crimes that violate humanitarian principles not formally recognized in international law. See *The Princeton Principles on Universal Jurisdiction*, the Princeton Project on Universal Jurisdiction, Princeton, Program in Law and Public Affairs, 2001.

84. President Clinton signed the treaty on behalf of the United States on December 31, 2000. It was never sent to the Senate for ratification, and on May 6, 2002, the United States officially notified the UN of its intention not to become a party. See U.S. Department of State Press Statement containing the official notice, accessed on line at [www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/9968pf.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/9968pf.htm) on October 29, 2002.

85. See, e.g., Convention on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, September 14, 1963, 20 U.S.T. 2941; Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft Hijacking, December 16, 1970, 22 U.S.T. 1641;

Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation Sabotage, September 23, 1971, 24 U.S.T. 564.

86. The UN Security Council endorsed, although it did not direct, efforts to remove the Taliban and destroy Al Qaeda bases in Afghanistan.

87. The UN Security Council did not support intervention in Iraq beyond weapons inspectors. With at least two of the permanent members, France and Russia, likely to veto any Security Council Resolution sanctioning invasion, the United States led a "coalition of the willing."

88. As Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman stated on May 6, 2002, as he explained why the United States withdrew from the ICC Treaty: "We believe that states, not international institutions are primarily responsible for ensuring justice in the international system." Remarks at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, distributed via email by *Listmgr@PD.STATE.GOV* on May 6, 2002.

89. This represents politics as much as law. UN Security Council sanction is not a prerequisite for intervention. Article 51 of the Charter permits state action in self defense, and customary law provides an independent basis for action. The Kosovo precedent of international humanitarian intervention without Security Council approval also supports American intervention to remove the rogue regime of Saddam Hussein. International law scholars do not agree on these points.

## CHAPTER 6 REGIONAL STUDIES IN A GLOBAL AGE

R. Craig Nation

### THE NEW REGIONALISM

Twentieth Century strategy was dominated by global conflict. The First and Second World Wars were implacable struggles waged on the world stage, and they were followed by the Cold War, a militarized contest between superpower rivals described by Colin Gray as “a virtual World War III.”<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, interstate rivalry propelled by Fritz Fischer’s *Griff nach der Weltmacht* (Strike for World Power) gave rise to theoretical perspectives concerning the dynamic of international relations dominated by globalist perspectives.<sup>2</sup> From the founding of the first university department devoted to the formal study of International Relations at the University of Aberystwyth (Wales) in 1919 to the present, globalist and universalizing theoretical models have been at the core of the profession.

Such models also have defined the practice of American foreign and security policy. The venerable traditions of American isolationism and exceptionalism, integral to the founding of the republic and through most of the 19th century the inspiration for a cautious and discrete U.S. world role, were pushed aside gradually against the background of the Great War by the liberal tradition of benign engagement under the aegis of international law, international organization, and collective security. Though President Woodrow Wilson’s project for a U.S.-led League of Nations was frustrated by congressional opposition, in the larger picture there would be no return from “over there.” America was a dominant world power from at least 1916 (when the United States became a creditor for the major European powers), and the range of its interests no longer permitted the luxury of an exclusively national or even hemispheric policy focus.

Already on the eve of World War II, in his seminal work, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*, E. H. Carr argued that a relative neglect of the role of power and coercion in international affairs had paved the way for the rise of fascism.<sup>3</sup> Carr’s “realist” perspective lent theoretical substance in the United States by transplanted Europeans such as Hans Morgenthau, Arnold Wolfers, and Stanley Hoffman, who viewed themselves as tutors for powerful but naive American elites, became the dominant conceptual framework for postwar U.S. policy.<sup>4</sup> The classical realism of postwar theorists was never a vulgar philosophy of might makes right, though it is sometimes interpreted in that way. Its most prominent promulgators, often European Jews like Morgenthau who had fled the holocaust and were lucidly aware of what unchecked power set to evil ends could affect, were preoccupied with ethical concerns and the need to constrain the inherent violence of anarchic interstate competition.<sup>5</sup> But the realist tradition made no bones about the need to place power, the global balance of power, and strategic rivalry between competing sovereignties at the center of a globalist worldview. During World War II, State Department planners carefully prepared for policy of engagement based upon the purposeful use of U.S. power to shape a congenial international environment.<sup>6</sup> George Kennan’s containment doctrine, the backbone of U.S. security policy through most of the cold war decades, was little more than an astute application of realist premises to the management of U.S.-Soviet relations.<sup>7</sup>

Regional conflict was a significant part of cold war competition, but it, too, usually was interpreted in a global perspective, as a projection of superpower rivalry into peripheral regions. Architects of U.S. cold war strategy like Henry Kissinger could opine publicly about the marginality of third world regions, and assert a great power orientation that perceived the essence of foreign policy as an elegant

game of balance between power centers in Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, Moscow, and Beijing.<sup>8</sup> Nuclear competition between the superpowers, and the theory of strategic deterrence that was crafted to direct it, encouraged ever more abstract modeling of interstate rivalry. These trends culminated in the 1980s with the emergence of “neo” versions of traditional theoretical paradigms that consciously sought to void international theory of its historicist and humanistic foundations. Kenneth Waltz’s neo-realist argument used austere logic in interpreting interstate competition as an abstract calculus of power.<sup>9</sup> The related schools of game and rational choice theory sought to use mathematical modeling to reproduce the dynamics of foreign policy decisionmaking. Neo-liberal institutionalist models built alternatives to realism upon the universalizing trends of interdependence and globalization, sometimes built upon a simplistic Benthamite utilitarianism.<sup>10</sup> By the end of the Cold War, much of the rationale for U.S. foreign and security policy rested upon assumptions integral to these approaches—the centrality of great power rivalry, the balance of power as the axis of interstate competition, the changing nature of power in an age of globalization where economic strength and various soft power options have accrued in importance, and the need for a competitive strategy to maintain and extend U.S. advantage.

Part of the reigning confusion surrounding the nature of post-Cold War world order derives from the fact that it is no longer defined by an all-consuming rivalry between peer competitors. With a Gross Domestic Product far outdistancing the nearest competitor, levels of defense spending superior to any imaginable combination of rivals, a clear-cut technological advantage, and a strong and stable domestic order, the United States stands head and shoulders above any real or potential rival. The current distribution of world power is objectively hegemonic, and American leadership is less a goal than a fact. In the absence, now and for the foreseeable future, of an authentic peer competitor capable of posing a serious challenge to U.S. dominance, balancing strategies such as that promulgated by Russia’s former Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov, seeking to regenerate a “multipolar” world order in which America would be limited to the status of first among equals, must remain essentially rhetorical.<sup>11</sup> Maintaining U.S. status and using the advantages of preeminence to good ends have become primary responsibilities for U.S. security planners.<sup>12</sup> These are tasks that demand different kinds of perceptions and priorities than those motivating policy during the Cold War.

Analyses of new directions in global security policy tend to similar conclusions concerning the kinds of threats to which the United States will be required to respond. In contrast with the focused strategic environment of the cold war years, these threats will be dispersed rather than concentrated, unpredictable and often unexpected, and significantly derived from regional and state-centered contingencies. The threat of global terrorism, in particular driven forward by widely dispersed terror networks, is rooted in failed states and marginalized regions denied the benefits of balanced modernization and development. These conclusions rest upon shared assumptions about the emerging 21st century world order, the changing contours of global security, and the evolving U.S. world role. The new configuration of global power, which combines U.S. preeminence with considerable regional fragmentation and turbulence, ensures that major world regions will be an ever more important target for U.S. engagement—as sources of critical strategic resources, as platforms for geostrategic leverage, as breeding grounds for terrorism, as integral parts of an increasingly interdependent global economy, and as testing grounds for great power will and determination to impose rules of the game. Preeminence does not imply total control. Influence in key world regions will be a significant apple of discord between the hegemonic leader, great power rivals, and influential local powers. Regions and subregions will remain the primary forums for armed conflict and instability, with a variety of small wars and protracted stabilization operations posing the greatest demands upon a U.S. military committed to engagement and shaping strategies. Aspiring regional hegemons, sometimes tempted by hopes of gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, will continue to promote disorder and pose direct threats to important U.S. interests. To navigate effectively under these circumstances, U.S.

strategists will have to base international engagement upon a sophisticated understanding of major world regions, viewed not only in regard to their place within an overarching structure of world power, but as entities in their own right, including the underlying social, political, and cultural processes that make the national and regional context unique.

For all of these reasons, regional studies will remain a necessary foundation for an integrated curriculum in national security policy and planning. If the 20th century has been the century of global conflagration, the 21st century seems poised to become the century of regional disaggregation. New directions in international relations theory, cast around concepts such as turbulence and chaos theory, have been honed to highlight these trends.<sup>13</sup> For U.S. policymakers, the challenge will be to integrate regional perspectives, and sensitivities to national and regional dynamics, into a realistic and balanced approach to the pursuit of global security; not to question the relevance of regional perspectives (which should be self-evident), but to better understand the ways in which they need to be joined to a comprehensive strategy for the pursuit of national interest.

## WHAT IS A REGION?

Regions may be defined and distinguished according to an approximate combination of geographic, social, cultural, and political variables. Unambiguous distinctions, however, will always be elusive. As an analytical category in international relations, the "region" is fated to remain contingent and contentious. Geographical contiguity is clearly a prerequisite for regional identity, but drawing uncontested boundaries is usually an impossible task.<sup>14</sup> The concept of "eastern Europe" once had a fairly high degree of integrity, but since 1989, it has virtually disappeared from the political lexicon. The phrase "Middle East," which was originally the product of colonialist and Eurocentric world views, continues to be used (often rendered as a "Greater Middle East") to describe an extremely diverse area stretching from the Maghreb into distant Central Asia. Meanwhile, the designation of an eastern Mediterranean Levant has fallen out of fashion. The Balkans has been regarded as a distinctive European subregion for well over a century, but almost any Balkan state with elsewhere to turn rejects the designation unambiguously.<sup>15</sup> "All regions," writes Andrew Hurrell with some justification, "are socially constructed and hence politically contested."<sup>16</sup>

One of the more influential recent attempts to delineate regions according to cultural criteria has been Samuel Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis. Huntington identifies nine world civilizational zones based significantly, though not entirely, upon confessional affiliation.<sup>17</sup> The argument that geostrategy will be dominated increasingly by civilizational conflict waged along the "faultlines" dividing these zones has been used widely to explain the apparent upsurge in ethnic conflict of the recent past. Huntington's argument, however, is neither entirely novel nor altogether convincing. Geopolitical analysis long has used the idea of the "shatterbelt," defined as a politically fragmented and ethnically divided zone that serves as a field of competition between continental and maritime powers.<sup>18</sup> Great civilizations cannot be bounded precisely spatially, and they are rarely either entirely homogenous or mutually exclusive. Huntington's attempt to designate geographically bounded civilizational zones, and to use these zones as the foundation for a theory of geostrategy, rests on suspect premises.

Barry Buzan has developed the concept of the "regional security complex" in an effort "to offset the tendency of power theorists to underplay the importance of the regional level in international security affairs."<sup>19</sup> He makes the assertion that in security terms, "'region' means that a distinct and significant subsystem of security relations exists among a set of states whose fate is that they have been locked into geographical proximity with each other."<sup>20</sup> The existence of a "subsystem" of security relations presumes high levels of interdependence, multiple interactions, and shared sensitivities and vulnerabilities. Any attempt to identify such complexes empirically, however, poses obvious problems.<sup>21</sup> Regional security



complexes are rarely, if ever, defined exclusively by geographical proximity; they are often dominated by external powers, and they sometimes are held hostage by national-cultural variables or systemic dynamics. The United States is the focus of functioning security complexes in both Europe and Asia. Turkey and Israel lie within different security complexes according to most of Buzan's criteria, but they have developed a close bilateral relationship that impacts significantly upon their relations with contiguous states. Transnational threats such as terrorism, international crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration, or environmental disintegration also overlap regions and create dynamics of association that prevent security complexes from becoming significantly self-contained.

The United States makes an approximate distinction between geographic regions in the Unified Command Plan that lies at the basis of its warfighting strategy, by fixing the contours of unified command areas assigned to combatant commanders. This approach originally evolved from the division of responsibilities adapted by the United States to fight World War II, and was formalized by the National Security Act of 1947. Over the years, the geographic division of responsibility has been adapted repeatedly, on the basis of changes in the international security structure, technological advances, and strategic calculation, but also bureaucratic infighting over areas of responsibility and access to resources. Combatant commanders recently have been required to draw up an annual Theater Engagement Plan defining regional shaping priorities, but they are primarily warfighters, and the division of responsibility which the current unified command plan structure embodies is geared to position the United States to prevail in armed confrontations. Contemporary U.S. national security strategy, mandating readiness to fight two nearly simultaneous major theater wars, has concentrated the attention of the combatant commanders on the areas where such conflicts are presumed to be most likely—in the Middle East/Southwest Asian and Western Pacific/Northeast Asian theaters. The regional distinctions built into the Unified Command Plan are arbitrary, but they are geared to the performance of the functional tasks of warriors and do not always rest upon careful conceptual distinctions.

David Lake and Patrick Morgan define region minimally, as “a set of countries linked by geography and one or more common trends, such as level of development, culture, or political institutions.”<sup>22</sup> Their definition has the advantages of simplicity, but it is potentially too broad to be really useful, and also possibly misleading. The nation-state is sometimes an inadequate building bloc for regional complexes. Any viable definition of the post-Soviet Central Asian region would have to include China's Xinjiang province, whose population is composed of 60 percent Turkic Muslims. Russia's far eastern provinces are an integral part of the Asia-Pacific region, while the core of historic Russia is an extension, both geographically and culturally, of a greater Europe. Ukraine's population is divided politically along the line of the Dnipro River, with the western provinces affiliating with an enlarged central Europe and the eastern provinces oriented toward the Russian Federation and Eurasia. Northern Mexico and southern California have become intimately associated as a result of high levels of economic interaction and cross-border movement of peoples.<sup>23</sup> The European Union has even sought to institutionalize transnational communities, by creating multistate districts designated as “Euro-regions.”<sup>24</sup> The commonalities used to distinguish regions cannot be terminated artificially at national boundaries, and “one or more common trends” is too weak a foundation for association to give regional designations analytical substance.

In its regional studies curriculum, the U.S. Army War College designates six major world regions on the basis of broad geographical criteria—Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Russia and Eurasia, the Asia-Pacific region, and the Americas. These are designations of convenience intended primarily for pedagogical purposes. Our working definition of what constitutes a region is, of necessity, broad and multidimensional. Geographical propinquity; a sense of identity and self-awareness based upon shared experience, ascribed traits, or language; a degree of autonomy within the international state system; relatively high levels of transactions; economic interdependencies; and political and cultural affinity may all be cited as relevant criteria. It is presumed that there will be gray areas and significant overlap

between regions, however, they are defined. The Turkish Republic, for example, is simultaneously part of a wider Europe, a greater Middle East, and post-Soviet Eurasia. No single set of associations is essential, and, in the best of cases, fixing the contours of major world regions and subregions will remain a problematic exercise.

## **WORLD REGIONS AND WORLD ORDER**

However regions are defined and differentiated, the impact of local, national, and regional dynamics upon world politics is substantial and destined to grow larger. For the foreseeable future, effective strategy will require sensitivity to the various ways in which regional affairs condition the global security agenda, channel and constrain U.S. priorities, and affect a changing world order.

### **Regional Instability, Regional Conflict, and Embedded Terrorism.**

Regional instability poses diverse kinds of challenges to U.S. interests. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in 1990 placed a critical mass of Middle Eastern oil reserves in the hands of an ambitious and hostile regional power, thus posing a clear threat to vital interests. Such dramatic scenarios will not occur very often, but the potential consequences are so great as to demand high degrees of readiness. "Rogue states," which aspire to regional hegemony and whose leaders often are defiant of international norms, are now acknowledged as a distinct threat in their own right. The most persistent challenges of recent years have been the chronic instability born of flawed regional orders marked by severe impoverishment, unequal development, frustrated nationalism, ethnic rivalry, and the "failed state" phenomenon, where weak polities lose the capacity to carry out the basic tasks of governance. Embedded terrorism, exploiting failed regional systems as sanctuaries for the pursuit of global agendas, has been a dramatic consequence.

In the post-Cold War period, the U.S. armed forces have been called upon to participate in an unprecedented number of complex contingency operations ranging from simple noncombatant evacuations to extensive, protracted, and dangerous peace enforcement and peacekeeping duties. The logic of U.S. engagement usually is impeccable. Unchecked regional or civil conflicts risk escalation with broadening consequences; threaten the credibility of the United States, its allies, and major international instances as guarantors of world order; and confront decisionmakers with horrendous and morally intolerable humanitarian abuses. But the United States should not feel obligated, nor can it afford, to take on the role of global policeman. Protracted and open-ended peacekeeping deployments risk to undermine combat readiness by disrupting training routines, erode the morale of the volunteer force, and pose the constant possibility of deeper and higher-risk engagement. *Shaping* regional complexes to head off resorts to coercive conflict behavior, and *responding* to regional challenges, if possible preemptively and under the aegis of international organizations or multinational coalitions, have as a result become pillars of U.S. security policy.

The challenges of civil war and low-intensity regional conflict will not go away or diminish. In a larger historical perspective, it seems clear that the total wars of the 20th century have been exceptional events rather than typical ones. Prior to our century, technological limitations made the concept of "world" war unthinkable—warfare, of necessity, was waged within physically constrained theaters on the regional level. Ironically, the technological possibilities unveiled with the creation of massive nuclear arsenals during the Cold War have once again made the outbreak of hegemonic warfare between great power rivals highly unlikely, as well as eminently undesirable. The increasing lethality (and expense) of modern conventional armaments only further raises the threshold of total war. While the Kantian thesis—that great power warfare has become obsolete—may or may not be credible, it rests

upon substantial foundations.<sup>25</sup> If for no other reasons than those imposed by the evolving technology of violence, wars and armed confrontations are once again being contested almost exclusively as low and medium intensity conflicts on the local and regional level. "In the foreseeable future," write Lake and Morgan, "violent conflict will mostly arise out of regional concerns and will be viewed by political actors through a regional, rather than global, lens."<sup>26</sup>

In some ways, cold war bipolarity worked to constrain regional conflict. Neither superpower could afford to tolerate an uncontrolled escalation of regional rivalry that risked to draw it into a direct confrontation, and regional allies were consistently pressured to limit their aspirations and bend to the will of their great power sponsors.<sup>27</sup> It is difficult to imagine that the anarchic disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation would have been allowed to proceed unchecked in 1991 had the fragile European balance of terror of the cold war system still been at risk. The extent of such constraint nonetheless may be exaggerated. Many of the regional conflicts of the cold war era – in southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, the Middle East, or southern Asia – have perpetuated themselves into the post-Cold War period. Cumulatively, post-World War II regional conflicts have occasioned the deaths of over 25 million individuals, and the incidence and intensity of such conflicts continue to increase.

A composite portrait of post-Cold War regional conflict calls attention to the difficulties involved in programming effective responses. The large majority of contemporary "limited" wars are civil wars or wars of secession waged with the ferocity that is typical of such contests. Combat operations often include the significant engagement of poorly controlled and disciplined irregular forces. The bulk of casualties are imposed upon innocent civilians, sometimes including genocidal massacre and forced population transfers (ethnic cleansing). While often obscure in terms of their origins, such conflicts are usually highly visible. The modern mass media, commercially driven and chronically in search of sensation, brings regional chaos "into the living room" and generates popular pressure to respond that political leaders often find difficult to ignore. Limited and often frustrated or only partly successful intervention by the international community in the role of would-be peacemaker is another shared trait that gives many contemporary regional conflicts a fairly uniform contour. Wayne Burt notes correctly that, in comparison with the structured context of cold war bipolarity, the "post-Cold War world is a much 'messier' world where limited conflict will be fought for limited and often shifting objectives, and with strategies that are difficult to formulate, costs that are uncertain, and entrance and exit points that are not obvious."<sup>28</sup>

As undisputed world leader, and the only major power with significant global power projection capacity, the United States often is compelled to react to such conflicts whether or not it has truly vital interests at stake. America's ability to manage and shape the conflict process nonetheless is limited severely. A decade of struggling with regional conflict in post-communist Yugoslavia, including intensive diplomatic efforts, punitive air strikes, large and open-ended peacekeeping deployments, and a full-scale war over Kosovo have led to what at best may be described as a mixed result.<sup>29</sup> Peace enforcement and peacekeeping responsibilities have been carried out with impressive efficiency, but the much more problematic and politically charged task of post-conflict peace building has proven to be something close to a mission impossible.<sup>30</sup>

Since the terrorist attacks against New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, the phenomenon of embedded terrorism has become another manifestation of how regional instability may provoke intense political violence. U.S. military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq have been designed to strike at terror nests, but it quickly has become apparent that defeating designated enemies is only part of the challenge. Post-conflict reconstruction efforts have demanded an increasingly sophisticated awareness of local norms and values and heightened sensitivities to the cultural context within which stability operations are being pursued. Army Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan have striven to develop closer working relations with local populations and build a foundation of trust based upon mutual understanding that will make it more difficult for terrorist cells to relocate in the areas in the future.

The United States has made the maintenance of regional stability a pillar of its security strategy, but the forces of disintegration at work within many world regions are daunting. Effective responses, first of all, will require some selectivity in choosing targets for intervention. When we do elect to become involved, our efforts should be based upon a much greater awareness of regional realities than has been manifested in the recent past. We also will need to make better use of friends and allies. Regional instability often is addressed best by local actors, who usually have the largest vested interest in blocking escalation, and, in some cases, regionally based conflict management initiatives can become a significant stimulus to broader patterns of regional cooperation. Engaging allies and relevant multilateral forums in managing regional conflict, as the United States has sought to do with the African Crisis Response Initiative, should be a high national priority.

## Geopolitics.

Many currently fashionable approaches to international relations assume the decline of territoriality as a motive for state behavior. The dominant trend in world politics is persistently, albeit vaguely, described as globalization, implying a rapid increase in interactions fueled by revolutions in communications and information management, the emergence of a truly global market and world economy, the primacy of economic competition as a mode of interstate rivalry, and an unprecedented space-time compression that places unique demands upon decisionmakers.<sup>31</sup> The globalization scenario is built on overarching generalizations about world order and rests upon universalizing premises that leave little space for sticky concern with the intricacies of regional affairs. There are alternatives to theoretical perspectives cast on so high a level of abstraction, however, and they bring regional issues into the forefront of international discourse. Most important among them is the tradition of geopolitics.

The core challenge of geopolitical analysis is to link the systematic study of spatial and geographical relations with the dynamic of interstate politics. As a formal discipline, geopolitics dates from the late 19th century work of the Leipzig professor Friedrich Ratzel. His 1897 study, *Politische Geographie* (Political Geography), presents states as organisms with a quasi-biological character, rooted in their native soil, embedded in a distinctive spatial context or *Lebensraum* (living space), and condemned to either grow and expand or wither away.<sup>32</sup> In the works of various contemporaries and successors, including Alfred Thayer Mahan, Rudolf Kjellén, Halford Mackinder, Alfred de Severing, Klaus Haushofer, and Nicholas John Spykman, these insights have been pushed in a number of directions. The strong influence of geopolitical categories, especially as transmitted through the work of Haushofer, upon Adolf Hitler's strategic program during the 1930s has brought enduring discredit upon the discipline, widely but unfairly regarded as a vulgar amalgam of social Darwinism and military expansionism. In fact, in its manifold and not always consistent manifestations, geopolitical analysis presents a range of alternative strategic perceptions whose common ground is a sense of the permanent and enduring relevance of spatial, cultural, and environmental factors in world politics.<sup>33</sup> These are also the factors that stand at the foundation of regional studies.

Geopolitics is rooted in the study of geography, broadly but relevantly defined by Saul Cohen as "spatial patterns and relations that reflect dynamic physical and human processes."<sup>34</sup> Geography is a rich and complex construct that provides a context for weighing the impact of a number of significant but often neglected variables. These include ethnicity, nationalism, and the politics of identity; access to natural and strategic resources; geostrategy and the role of lines of communication and strategic choke points; relations between human communities and their natural environment; and the strategic implications of increasing environmental stress. It encompasses demographic issues such as population growth, cycles of migration and changing patterns of population distribution, and "decisionmaking milieus" including Huntingtonian civilizational zones, political systems and political cultures, as well as the spatial distribution of power within the world system.

Geopolitical analysis is known best in the West as refracted by Halford Mackinder's heartland concept, which defines control of the Eurasian landmass as the key to world power. Mackinder distinguished between a *World-Island* encompassing the joined continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the *Eurasian Heartland* approximately equivalent to Russia and Central Asia, and the *Rimlands* (including east-central Europe) along the Eurasian periphery. "Who rules East Europe," he wrote in a famous passage, "controls the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the World."<sup>35</sup> Mackinder was not a fascist militarist, but a moderate professor and civil servant, whose thinking lay at the foundation of British strategy through much of the 20th century. By calling attention to the spatial dimensions of grand strategy, his work points out the extent to which geostrategic concepts have been and continue to be at the heart of modern statecraft.

A striking contemporary illustration of the continuing impact of geopolitical perspectives is provided by the heartland power *par excellence*, the Russian Federation, where disillusionment with the gilded promises of globalization and integration with the U.S.-led world economy have led to a rapid and broadly influential revival of geopolitical theory.<sup>36</sup> The new Russian geopolitics has been dismissed in the West as a manifestation of radical extremism, a sort of Russian fascism born of the post-communist malaise.<sup>37</sup> In fact, core geopolitical perceptions (the need to maintain the integrity of the Russian Federation, the call to reassert a strong sphere of influence in the territories of the former Soviet Union, the cultural distinctiveness of the Russian Idea and its historical role as a force for integration in the expanses of Eurasia, the need for alliances to balance and contest American hegemony) have moved into the mainstream of Russian strategic thought and enjoy strong support.

Haushofer has written that "geopolitics is the science of the conditioning of political processes by the earth," and that "the essence of regions as comprehended from the geopolitical point of view provides the framework for geopolitics."<sup>38</sup> This is a *plaidoyer* for the concrete and substantial, for a theory of world politics built from the ground up. Effective geopolitical reasoning leads us back to the earth, to the distinctive political communities nested upon it, to the patterns of association that develop between them, and to the conflicts that emerge from their interactions. It is not the only school of thought that prioritizes the relevance of geography and regional studies, but it provides a particularly good example of the relevance of the textured study of peoples and places as a foundation for effective strategy.

## **The Cultural Dimension of Warfare.**

The maxim "know thy enemy" often is counted as the acme of strategic wisdom. It is unfortunately a maxim that has not always been highly respected in the U.S. military and security communities. War has organizational and technological dimensions which make it a rigorous, practical, and precise enterprise, but wars also are waged between calculating rivals in a domain of uncertainty, and by distinctive political communities in ways that reflect deeply rooted, culturally conditioned preferences.

During the Cold War, the United States made an intense effort to understand the societal and cultural dynamics shaping the perceptions of its Soviet rival, arguably to good effect. In general, however, in-depth knowledge of national and regional cultural dynamics has not been a strong point for U.S. strategy, which has tended to rest upon the sturdy pillars of relative invulnerability and the capacity to mobilize overwhelming force.<sup>39</sup> In the volatile and uncertain security environment of the years to come, however, the assumption of technological and material advantage may not be a safe one, nor will these advantages always suffice to ensure superiority in every possible contingency. The People's Republic of China represents a potential long-term rival with considerable assets and great self-confidence, derived in part from a highly distinctive and ancient culture.<sup>40</sup> Russia's current Time of Troubles has temporarily brought her low, but eventually the inherent strengths that made the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) so formidable a rival during the cold war decades will reassert

themselves. We confront a long-term struggle to manage the dilemmas of modernization in the Arab and Muslim worlds, and the associated dynamic of terrorism, that will demand sophisticated cultural awareness. The United States will need to know “what makes them tick” if it wants to manage its relations with potential peer competitors and troubled world regions successfully. Effective intervention in complex contingencies likewise will demand in-depth knowledge of real or potential rivals. Strategy is not uniquely the product of culture, and culture itself is not a lucid or unambiguous construct. But all strategy unfolds in a cultural context and cannot be fully or properly understood outside it.

Colin Gray defines strategic culture as “the socially constructed and transmitted assumptions, habits of mind, traditions, and preferred methods of operation . . . that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community.”<sup>41</sup> The foundations of strategic culture are the fundamentals of culture itself; shared experience, language, common governance, and values. The cultural orientation that derives from these commonalities, it can be argued, affects the ways in which polities conduct diplomacy, define and pursue interests, and wage war. In his controversial *History of Warfare*, John Keegan suggests that throughout history war has always been an essentially cultural phenomenon, an atavism derived from patterns of group identification and interaction rather than the purposeful activity implied in Clausewitz’s famous dictum that “war is the continuation of politics by other means.”<sup>42</sup> Victor Hanson argues that the ancient Greek preference for physical confrontation and quick decision has created a “Western way of war,” dominated by a search for decisive battle and strategies of annihilation, a tradition that remains alive to this day.<sup>43</sup> Such conclusions are extreme, but they are useful in underlining that wars are conceived, plotted, and waged by socially conditioned human agents.

As a dominant global power, the United States will be called upon to wage war in a variety of contexts in the years to come. A better understanding of the strategic cultures of real or potential adversaries will place another weapon in its arsenal and strengthen prospects for success. In Bernard Brodie’s classic formulation, “good strategy presumes good anthropology and sociology. Some of the greatest military blunders of all time have resulted from juvenile evaluations in this department.”<sup>44</sup> Knowing the enemy goes well beyond order of battle, to the sources of strategic preference and military operational codes that are grounded in the social and cultural context of distinctive nations and regions.<sup>45</sup>

### **Espaces de Sens: Regional Alliance and Association.**

The Cold War was a phase of intense global competition manifested in ideological polarization, arms racing, and militarized regional rivalry. It nonetheless offered a structure of purposeful endeavor for its leading protagonists, as well as for critics who sought alternatives to what they perceived as the dead-end of belligerent bipolarity. The USSR justified its international policy on the basis of a distinctively Soviet variant of Marxism-Leninism. The United States consciously developed its cold war strategy as a defense of the values of freedom and democracy. Various nonaligned alternatives called for a plague upon both houses, and sought to develop a third way independent of either power bloc. Regardless of where one stood, world politics took on the contours of a moral tale infused with meaning.

The end of the Cold War was accompanied by a certain euphoria, captured by Francis Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis, according to which the demise of the communist challenge meant “the end of history as such: that is, the end point in mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”<sup>46</sup> Fukuyama’s sweepingly optimistic argument promised an era of global harmony in which interstate strategic rivalry would give way to cooperation under the impetus of democratization, development, and consumerism, promoted by a benign American hegemony. In place of a contest of values, Fukuyama’s Hegelian vision looked forward to the unchallenged primacy of the culture of the West.

Needless to say, nothing of the kind has transpired. The post-Cold War period has been marked by regional turbulence, torturous and sometimes unsuccessful post-communist transitions, violent ethnic conflict, the rise of global terrorism as a major challenge to the premises of world order, and continued, if sometimes muted, great power rivalry. Western values are contested rather than embraced, and the absence of a compelling sense of overall direction, of a larger domestic or international project, of a source of signification and meaning, arguably has become a problem in its own right. Uncertainty about direction also has contributed to strategic confusion. The suspicion or rejection of large civilizational projects that has become so prominent a part of contemporary post-structuralist and social constructivist approaches to international theory, often accompanied by quasi-indifference to any kind of strategic analysis whatsoever, reflects the state of affairs with great clarity.<sup>47</sup>

The United Nations, symbol of an earlier generation's aspirations for a more peaceful world order, has languished during the post-Cold War decade. In contrast, projects for regional association have flourished. Realist theory portrays the formation of alliances and regional blocs as an "outside-in" phenomenon, occurring as a response to real or perceived external challenges, whether via "balancing" efforts to correct a maldistribution of power, or "bandwagoning," whereby weak polities seek to dilute threats through association with a hegemonic leader.<sup>48</sup> Neo-mercantilist approaches follow an identical pattern in explaining regional association as a logical response to enhanced international economic competition. But regional association also may be understood as a function of "inside-out" dynamics driven by social and cultural trends. Zaki Laïdi has argued that, in the face of the universalizing tendencies of globalization, meaningful civilizational projects can be constructed only on a regional basis, as *espaces de sens* (spaces of meaning) bound together by a complex of historical, social, cultural, political, and economic associations.<sup>49</sup> These are contrasting arguments, but they are not mutually exclusive. Both "outside-in" and "inside-out" approaches to regional association need to be combined in an effort to come to terms with a phenomenon that has the potential to transform world politics root and branch.<sup>50</sup>

The "new regionalism" is manifested both by the revitalization of traditional regional organizations and the creation of new forms of regional association. Large regional or subregional blocs with a history of institutionalization, such as the European Union (EU), the African Union, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), often have a strong security orientation, though today their focus more often is placed upon internal conflict management than external threats.<sup>51</sup> The proliferation of regional projects for economic integration, including some of the organizations listed above as well as others such as the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Arab Magreb Union (AMU), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Andean Pact, the Central America Common Market (CACM), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), has an obvious economic logic, but also a strong cultural foundation; within these broadly drawn and sometimes overlapping zones of association one may observe a powerful revival of regional and subregional awareness and identity. In other cases, functionalist logic prevails. Regional associations sometimes are appropriate forums for approaching large global problems such as environmental disintegration, occasioned on the systemic level, but not always effectively addressed on that level.

Regional alliances and associations play a critical role in U.S. strategy. The most important by far is the Atlantic alliance, or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), uniquely successful as a formal security association over many decades, but an organization whose *raison d'être* has been called into question in the new circumstances of the post-Cold War. NATO originally was built up and maintained as an organization for collective defense against a clear and present external threat. The collapse of the

USSR and the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact have made this aspect of its identity considerably less important, if not altogether irrelevant, but the Alliance has adapted by restructuring itself as a “new NATO,” including commitments to enlargement, out of area peace operations, and gradual movement toward a broader collective security orientation. Former Secretary General Javier Solana describes the process extravagantly, as a “root and branch transformation” aimed to create “a new Alliance, far removed in purpose and structure from its Cold War ancestor,” inspired by the premise of “cooperative security.”<sup>52</sup> This “new” NATO is arguably more important than ever in the broader context of U.S. security policy, as a platform for power projection, as a forum for managing relations with key allies, as an instrument for reaching out to the emerging democracies of eastern Europe, as the foundation for a new European security order, and as a context for engaging the Russian Federation in a cooperative security effort.

The Atlantic Alliance is also a regional pact, whose stability always HAS been presumed to rest in part upon close historical and cultural associations between the United States and its European partners. Unfortunately, the new NATO will not have the luxury of assuming that a close cultural affinity will continue to link both sides of the Atlantic indefinitely. Changing demographic balances in the United States are reducing the proportion of citizens with European roots and heritage. Enlargement has made NATO itself a politically and culturally more diverse organization, where decision by consensus will be harder to achieve. Most of all, the project for European unification is moving slowly but steadily toward the goal of a more autonomous European subject possessed of the capacity to pursue an independent foreign and security policy. Managing regional conflict in the Balkans placed strains upon Alliance mechanisms. The Kosovo conflict generated considerable tension between the United States and its European allies, key allies were disappointed by the U.S. decision not to leverage the Alliance in a more significant way during its initial campaign in Afghanistan, and differences over the choice of a military option against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in 2003 brought alliance partners to the brink of an overt break. NATO continues to rest upon secure foundations, but friction in trans-Atlantic relations persists, and it likely to grow stronger as the European project continues to unfold and efforts to bolster a European defense identity progress. Alliance management, based upon a careful appreciation of changing European realities and awareness of the cultural specificities of key European partners, will be an ever more important strategic task.

Other forms of regional association represent potential dangers. At least since the Iranian revolution of 1979, concern for an emerging “Islamic threat” has been prominent in U.S. policy circles. These concerns, to some extent understandably, have become considerably more prominent since the attacks of September 11, 2001. Somewhat less prominent, unfortunately, has been an informed understanding of what Islam is and is not, as a religion, as a philosophy of governance, and a way of life.<sup>53</sup> The possible solidification of a Russian-Chinese strategic axis, which would rest in large measure upon mutual alienation from the West, has the potential to effect global power balances significantly, and the European Union clearly aspires to challenge the U.S. economically. Contesting, co-opting, and counteracting these kinds of patterns will remain an important priority for U.S. planners.

There is an unmistakable momentum pushing in the direction of stronger local and regional identities, and more robust regional association. For some analysts, the trend is part and parcel of a “retreat from the state” occasioned by changes in the locus of power in the global political economy, whose logical endpoint will be a “new medievalism” in which alternative forms of political association, with a more pronounced regional character, eventually will come to prevail.<sup>54</sup> Whether or not such forecasts are correct, shifting patterns of association and the heightened visibility of a variety of regional forums are clear manifestations of the increased relevance of regional perspectives in global security affairs.



## CONCLUSIONS

The foundations of regional studies have changed remarkably little over time. Substantive understanding of major world regions demands a thorough mastery of the relevant specialized literature, careful and persistent monitoring of events and trends, appropriate language skills, and a period of sustained residence allowing for immersion in regional realities, accompanied by periodic visits to keep perceptions up-to-date. Regionalists need refined skills that demand a considerable investment of time and resources to create and maintain. If the argument presented in this chapter is correct, however, and regional dynamics, in fact, will become an increasingly important part of the international security agenda in the years to come, the investment will be well worth making.

Although the confines of major world regions and subregions are difficult to fix with a great deal of consistency and rigor, the relevance of local, national, and regional perspectives in international political analysis is more or less uncontested. For U.S. strategists in the post-Cold War period the importance of such perspectives is particularly great. In the absence of a peer competitor, significant challenges to U.S. interests are most likely to emerge from various kinds of regional instability, including threatened access to critical strategic resources, the emergence of “rogue” states with revisionist agendas, embedded terrorism, and persistent low and medium intensity conflict. In an increasingly integrated world system, geographic, cultural, and environmental factors that are importantly or uniquely manifested in the regional context will play an increasingly important role in shaping national priorities and international realities. Strategic culture is a vital context for warfighting, as relevant to contests with peer competitors as it is to clashes with less imposing adversaries in regional contingencies. Shifting patterns of regional association, often motivated by a heightened sense of regional identity and a search for meaning and relative security in the face of the impersonal and sometimes dehumanizing forces of globalization, is an important worldwide trend. None of these dynamics can be incorporated properly into U.S. security strategy without a solid understanding of regional decisionmaking milieus and cultural proclivities.

To assert the importance of regional approaches in a balanced strategic studies curriculum is not to deny the relevance of alternative perspectives. Universalizing theory is essential and unavoidable. The formal and technical specializations necessary to make sense of political and military affairs are ineluctable. And there is the ever-present danger of regionalists falling into a narrow preoccupation with local problems and personalities, while missing the larger, structural forces at work in the background. In context, however, and approached with appropriate modesty, regional perspectives have an essential place in strategy formulation.

The U.S. Army War College builds a regional studies component into its core curriculum, structured around the six major world regions mentioned above and focused on the effort to define and understand U.S. interests at stake on the regional level. Students are exposed to an in-depth study of a particular region, and to an overview of all six world regions, as a foundation for the school’s capstone exercise, which tests their ability to manage a series of overlapping regional crises in an integrated political-military framework. Students are expected to become familiar with the general historical, cultural, political, military, and economic characteristics of the six major world regions; to evaluate U.S. national and security interests in these regions, and to identify the kinds of challenges that are most likely to emerge; and to develop a regional strategic assessment that identifies alternative courses of action that can lead toward the achievement of U.S. national security objectives. The skills and expertise garnered during this bloc of instruction should make a vital contribution to the cultivation of future strategic leaders.

Regional strategic analysis is also of particular relevance to Army leaders. Though we live in the age of jointness, the Army remains the service branch primarily charged with placing boots on the ground in regional contingencies. Its operational environment is the land, where people live and societies are

rooted, and it, at a minimum, must come to terms with the geographical realities of the places where it is constrained to operate and the cultural characteristics of the peoples it is charged to fight or to protect. The emphasis on regional studies in the U.S. Army War College strategy curriculum stands out among our senior service schools. Experience, as well as common sense, shows that it is an emphasis well-placed.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 6

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15. Elena Zamfirescu, "The 'Flight' From the Balkans," *Südosteuropa*, Nos. 1-2 1995, pp. 51-62.
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18. Philip Kelly, "Escalation of Regional Conflict: Testing the Shatterbelt Concept," *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1986, pp. 161-180.
19. Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed., New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, p. 186.
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## **PART II**

### **STRATEGIC THEORY AND FORMULATION**



## CHAPTER 7

### A SURVEY OF THE THEORY OF STRATEGY

**J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.**

A common language is both the product of and basis of any effective theory; people conversant in the theory habitually use words in the same way to mean the same thing. Such meanings may be unique to the theoretical context, even if the word has other nontheoretical usages. Thus, the word *passion* used in a Christian context has an entirely different meaning than in secular usage. Similarly, doctrinal military terms, while hopefully used consistently by military individuals and organizations, may differ slightly (or even radically) in common usage. Strategy is such a word. Defining it is not as easy as one would think, and the definition is critical.

Part of the problem is that our understanding of strategy has changed over the years. The word has a military heritage, and classic theory considered it a purely wartime military activity—how generals employed their forces to win wars. In the classic usage, strategy was military maneuvers to get to a battlefield, and tactics took over once the forces were engaged. That purely military concept has given way to a more inclusive interpretation. The result is at least threefold: 1) Strategists generally insist that their art includes not only the traditional military element of power but also other elements of power like politics and economics. Most would also accept a peacetime as well as a wartime role for strategy. 2) With increased inclusiveness, the word strategy became available outside the military context and is now used in a variety of disciplines ranging from business to medicine and even sports. 3) As the concept mutated, the military had to invent another term—the United States settled on operations or operational art—to describe the high-level military art that had once been strategy.<sup>1</sup> All this, of course, effects any survey of strategy. Thus, this chapter acknowledges that strategy is now commonly used in nonmilitary fields, and both the definition and overall theory must be compatible with such usage. Nevertheless, this discussion focuses on the national security arena and particularly on grand strategy and military strategy. In that context, we also follow the modern interpretation that strategy involves both military and nonmilitary elements of power and has equal applicability for peace and war, although much of the existing theory we discuss deals exclusively with war.

Surprisingly for such a significant term, there is no consensus on the definition of strategy, even in the national security arena. The military community has an approved definition, but it is not well-known and is not accepted by nonmilitary national security professionals. As a consequence, every writer must either develop his or her own definition or pick from the numerous extant alternatives. We begin by surveying some of those alternatives.

Clausewitz wrote,

Strategy is the use of the engagement for the purpose of the war. The strategist must therefore define an aim for the entire operational side of the war that will be in accordance with its purpose. In other words, he will draft the plan of the war, and the aim will determine the series of actions intended to achieve it: he will, in fact, shape the individual campaigns and, within these, decide on the individual engagements.<sup>2</sup>

Because this is a classic definition, it is not satisfactory—it deals only with the military element and is at the operational level rather than the strategic. What Clausewitz described is really the development of a theater or campaign strategy. Historian Jay Luvaas used to say that because Clausewitz said something did not necessarily make it true, but did make it worth considering. In this case, we can consider and then ignore Clausewitz.



The 19th century Swiss soldier and theorist Antoine Henri Jomini had his own definition.

Strategy is the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theater of war. Grand Tactics is the art of posting troops upon the battlefield according to the accidents of the ground, of bringing them into action, and the art of fighting upon the ground, in contradiction to planning upon a map. Its operations may extend over a field of ten or twelve miles in extent. Logistics comprises the means and arrangements which work out the plans of strategy and tactics. Strategy decides where to act; logistics brings the troops to this point; grand tactics decides the manner of execution and the employment of the troops.<sup>3</sup>

This, again, is military only and theater-specific.

Civil War era soldier and author Henry Lee Scott had an interesting definition derived from the basic Jominian concept: “. . . the art of concerting a plan of campaign, combining a system of military operations determined by the end to be attained, the character of the enemy, the nature and resources of the country, and the means of attack and defence [sic].”<sup>4</sup> This actually has all the elements we look for and states them as a relationship that is more conceptually complex and satisfying than Jomini’s. However, reflecting the classic paradigm Scott still limited strategy to military endeavors and to theaters.

Military historian Basil H. Liddell Hart had another unique approach to the subject. Because he wrote as the concept of strategy was expanding to include more nonmilitary aspects, his definition is more modern. Liddell Hart defined strategy as: “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy.” Also,

Strategy depends for success, first and most, on a sound *calculation and co-ordination of the ends and the means*. The end must be proportioned to the total means, and the means used in gaining each intermediate end which contributes to the ultimate must be proportioned to the value and needs of that intermediate end – whether it be to gain an object of to fulfill a contributory purpose. An excess may be as harmful as a deficiency.”

He was talking specifically about military strategy, and he thought strategy was something akin to, but different from, the more expansive concept of grand strategy.

As tactics is an application of strategy on a lower plane, so strategy is an application on a lower plane of ‘grand strategy’ . . . . While practically synonymous with the policy which guides the conduct of war, as distinct from the more fundamental policy which should govern its objective, the term “grand strategy” serves to bring out the sense of “policy in execution.” For the role of grand strategy – higher strategy – is to co-ordinate all the resources of a nation, or a band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war – the goal defined by fundamental policy.

Liddell Hart went on to say,

Grand strategy should both calculate and develop the economic resources and man-power of nations in order to sustain the fighting services. Also the moral resources—for to foster the people’s willing spirit is often as important as to possess the more concrete forms of power. Grand strategy, too, should regulate the distribution of power between the services, and between the services and industry. Moreover, fighting power is but one of the instruments of grand strategy—which should take account of and apply the power of financial pressure, of diplomatic pressure, of commercial pressure, and, not the least of ethical pressure, to weaken the opponent’s will. . . . Furthermore, while the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace. It should not only combine the various instruments, but so regulate their use as to avoid damage to the future state of peace—for its security and prosperity. The sorry state of peace, for both sides, that has followed most wars can be traced to the fact that, unlike strategy, the realm of grand strategy is for the most part *terra incognita*—still awaiting exploration, and understanding.<sup>5</sup>

That is very close to modern doctrine, although the use of words is different. But Liddell Hart’s entire exposition was really a means to get past all this uninteresting grand strategic stuff and on to his pet theory of the indirect approach—a technique of implementation that we will consider later.

Contemporary strategist Colin Gray has a more comprehensive definition. “By strategy, I mean *the use that is made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy* [emphasis in original].”<sup>6</sup> The problem with that definition is that Gray ties himself down when he links the definition of strategy to force—in actuality, he is mixing definitions of war and strategy.

The U.S. military has an approved joint definition of strategy: “The art and science of developing and employing instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.” Unfortunately, that definition only recognizes strategy as a national security function, and, although it is significantly better than earlier definitions, it remains fairly broad. The explanation in the Joint Encyclopedia goes a little further: “These strategies integrate national and military objectives (ends), national policies and military concepts (ways), and national resources and military forces and supplies (means).” That is more satisfactory, although still focused exclusively on national security issues, which is understandable considering the source. However, the joint definition of national military strategy shows that the joint community is divided or at least inconsistent on this subject. “National Military Strategy. The art and science of distributing and applying military power to attain national objectives in peace or war.” That is a pure “how to” definition—at best a correlation of objectives with methods with the emphasis on methods. There is no consideration of or recognition of the importance of developing means; there is also no consideration of developing military objectives to accomplish national objectives. The encyclopedia’s further explanation on that term goes into the formal document of the National Military Strategy rather than the concept.<sup>7</sup>

The U.S. Army War College defines strategy in two ways: “Conceptually, we define strategy as the relationship among ends, ways, and means.” Alternatively, “Strategic art, broadly defined, is therefore: The skillful formulation, coordination, and application of ends (objectives), ways (courses of action), and means (supporting resources) to promote and defend the national interests.” The second definition is really closer to a definition of grand strategic art, but if one cut it off after “means,” it would be essentially the same as the first definition.<sup>8</sup>

In my own view, strategy is simply a problem solving process. It is a common and logical way to approach any problem—military, national security, personal, business, or any other category one might determine. Strategy asks three basic questions: what is it I want to do, What do I have or what can I reasonably get that might help me do what I want to do, and What is the best way to use what I have to do what I want to do? Thus, I agree with the War College that strategy is the considered relationship among ends, ways, and means. That sounds deceptively simple—even simplistic. Is it actually more than that relationship? Is there some deeper secret? I do not believe there is; however, the relationship is not as simple as it appears at first blush. First, a true strategy must consider all three components to be complete. For example, if one thinks about strategy as a relationship of variables (almost an equation but there is no equal sign) one can “solve” for different variables. Ends, which hopefully come from a different process and serve as the basis for strategy, generally will be given. If we assume a strategist wants to achieve those ends by specific ways, he can determine the necessary means by one of the traditional exercises of strategic art—force development. If a strategist knows both the ends to be achieved and means available, he can determine the possible ways. People, particularly military writers, often define strategy in exactly that way—as a relation between ends and means—essentially equating strategy with ways or at least converting strategy into an exercise of determining ways. That was the traditional approach of classic strategists like Jomini and Liddell Hart, who unabashedly thought of strategy as ways. That is also the typical short-term planning process that a theater commander might do. He cannot quickly change the means available, so he has to determine how to best use what is on hand to accomplish the mission.

Before we proceed, it is useful to address the issue of whether strategy really is necessary. It is certainly possible to conduct a war without a strategy. One can imagine very fierce combat divorced from any coherent (or even incoherent) plan for how that fighting would achieve the aims of the war—

fighting for the sake of fighting. Alternatively, preemptive surrender is always an option for the state interested in avoiding strategic decisions; the only drawback is that preemptive surrender is incapable of achieving positive political objectives other than avoidance of conflict. Rational states, however, will always attempt to address their interests by relating ends with ways and means. Given that they are fighting for some reason—that is, they have an end—there will be some (even if unconscious) design of how to use the available means to achieve it. Thus, while strategy may not technically be necessary, it is almost always present—even if poorly conceived and executed.

## TESTS FOR STRATEGY

One can test a possible strategy by examining it for suitability, acceptability, and feasibility. Those three nouns test each of the three components of strategy. Suitability tests whether the proposed strategy achieves the desired end—if it does not, it is not a potential strategy. Acceptability tests ways. Does the proposed course of action or concept produce results without excessive expenditure of resources and within accepted modes of conduct? Feasibility tests means. Are the means at hand or reasonably available sufficient to execute the proposed concept? A strategy must meet or at least have a reasonable expectation of meeting all three tests to be valid, but there is no upper limit on the number of possible solutions. The art becomes the analysis necessary to select the best or most efficient or least risky.

Of the three tests, suitability and feasibility are fairly straightforward and require no further explication. Acceptability, however, has some complicating features. The morality and legality of strategies is an obvious case in point—morality and legality vary widely by nation, culture, and even individual. But those are not the only complicating features of acceptability. For example, Colin Gray talks about what he calls the social dimension of strategy “. . . strategy is made and executed by the institutions of particular societies in ways that express cultural preferences.”<sup>9</sup> That is really an expression of the relation of the acceptability of a strategy to the Clausewitzian trinity. Beyond morality and legality, a truly acceptable strategy must fit the norms of the military, government, and people. Strategies that only meet the norms of one or two of the legs are possible if they are not in major conflict with deeply held norms of the other legs, but they must be achievable very quickly to avoid possibly disastrous conflict over acceptability.

The U.S. invasion of Panama in 1989 is an example of this phenomenon. It was an invasion of a sovereign foreign nation justified by fairly innocuous (certainly not vital) political issues. That was against the norms of all three legs of the American trinity; however, the government had convinced itself that action was necessary, and the military agreed or at least obeyed orders. The potential glitch was the response of the American people. Initial reaction was the predictable support for troops being deployed in harm's way. That support could have quickly turned into opposition had the operation not been extremely rapid and relatively casualty-free.

Even though one might occasionally get away with violating norms, one cannot safely violate deeply-held norms even briefly. Thus, the United States has a norm against assassination (reinforced by a self-imposed presidential directive that adds a legal dimension). Our current mode of declaring that the people of an adversarial country are good but their leader is evil screams for a decapitation strategy executed by assassination. That will not happen. Beyond the question of legality, it would never pass the acceptability test of any of the trinitarian elements.

It is also important to note that these tests are not designed to determine if a strategy is either good or will work. The tests are for appropriateness, and they are not even conclusive in that respect. Although failure to meet the requirements of suitability, acceptability, and feasibility is often obvious, passing those same requirements is a matter both subjective, open to interpretation, and inconclusive. The best analysis may suggest that a strategy is suitable, feasible, and acceptable, but that absolutely does not guarantee success. There will always be risk and unforeseen consequences of action with which the strategist must cope. The best the tests can do is weed out inappropriate strategies.

## CATEGORIZING STRATEGY

There are several ways to categorize strategies. One has a conceptual basis: strategy can be declaratory, actual, or ideal. Declaratory strategy is what a nation says its strategy is. Declaratory strategy may or may not be the nation's true strategy, and the nation may or may not actually believe it. A good example is America's two Major Theater of War (MTW) strategy. For years the official (declared) strategy of the United States was to be able to fight two near-simultaneous MTWs; however, most analysts and many military personnel were convinced such a strategy was impossible to execute with existing means. Regardless, the United States must maintain some form of two MTW strategy, despite recent modifications and adjustments, as its declared strategy, even if the administration in power determines that it does not have and is unwilling to buy the resources to execute the strategy. A nation with pretensions to world power cannot easily change or back down from long-declared strategies, and a declared two MTW capability provides useful deterrent effect. Actual strategy addresses the difference between the declared strategy and reality. It asks the question, "Assuming the United States cannot execute its declared two MTW strategy, what is its real strategy?" That real strategy would be an actual strategy. An ideal strategy is what a strategist would prefer to do if he had unlimited access to all the necessary resources (both quantitative and qualitative). It is a textbook strategy and may or may not correspond to reality.

A second method of categorization is based on the pattern of execution: sequential, simultaneous, and cumulative. This paradigm attempts to make distinctions between strategies based on whether the strategist is attacking objectives progressively, simultaneously, or in essentially random order. Thus, a typical sequential campaign would involve actions to gain control of the air, followed by efforts to defeat the enemy's fielded forces, and culminate in the attack on or occupation of political objectives. A simultaneous campaign would include near-simultaneous attacks on each of those target sets. A cumulative strategy produces results not by any single action or sequence of actions, but by the cumulative effect of numerous actions over time. A commerce raiding strategy is a classic example. The loss of a single ship is not especially significant; there is no need to sink ships in any order; while specific types of ships (like tankers) might be more valuable than others, the loss of any ship contributes directly to victory. The effectiveness of the strategy comes from cumulative losses over time. Although cumulative strategies have never taken on the luster that Admiral J. C. Wylie, the man who first recognized them as a separate category of strategy, hoped, they do allow conceptualization or categorization of strategy based on the pattern of execution.<sup>10</sup>

Attrition, exhaustion, and annihilation are standard strategic categories, although Joint Pub 1-02 does not mention them. The late 19th century German military historian Hans Delbrück made the distinction between exhaustion and annihilation. Attrition sometimes is used synonymously with exhaustion, but they are actually different concepts. Annihilation seeks political victory through the complete destruction (often in a single battle or short campaign) of the enemy armed forces. Attrition seeks victory through the gradual destruction (by a long campaign or series of campaigns) of the enemy's armed forces. Exhaustion seeks to erode the will and resources of the enemy nation/state rather than the armed forces. Recently, Russell Weigley has opined that, at least in his classic book *The American Way of War*, he should have replaced attrition with erosion as a characterization of U.S. strategy. He believes the term is less confusing and actually better portrays certain aspects of American strategy. Erosion would be closer in meaning to exhaustion than attrition, except that – and this is only a tentative interpretation of Weigley's brief and incomplete explanation of the concept – it would aim more directly at the political or governmental will than at popular support or resources.<sup>11</sup> It is not clear how the term erosion fits into the paradigm, but it would seem to be either a new category or a sub-set of exhaustion. Regardless, Professor Weigley's modification to the traditional categories of attrition, exhaustion, and annihilation is neither widely known nor accepted.

The historian Michael Howard postulated a strategic paradigm based on deterrence, compellence, and reassurance. Military power can deter other states from doing something, or it can compel them to do something. "Reassurance provides a general sense of security that is not specific to any particular threat or scenario." Pax Britannia is the best example. The British navy provided world-wide security through its control of the seas. That security translated into general peace.<sup>12</sup> Howard proposes these as the broad categories of the ways in which military force can be used. Although deterrence and compellence are widely accepted concepts, the addition of reassurance to create a general paradigm is not widely known or accepted.

Another way, as mentioned briefly above, to categorize strategy is organizational or hierarchical. That is the method that talks about grand or national strategy at one level and theater, campaign, or operational strategy at another level. The term operational strategy is one that theorist Andre Beaufré and historian Alan T. Nolan use, but it is confusing, unnecessarily mixes terms, and is uncommon at best in the literature. We will omit it from further discussions, but it does highlight one significant issue. There is a basic theoretical question about the legitimacy of strategy at the operational level – we are purposefully mixing apples and oranges for no discernable gain in clarity, utility, or comprehension. This confusion only expands as operational art edges more into the strategic realm. While I personally oppose calling theater plans strategic, current U.S. joint doctrine accepts it, and I will follow that doctrine.

Grand or national strategy is associated with actions at the state/national level. The U.S. Army War College defines it as ". . . a country's broadest approach to the pursuit of its national objectives in the international system."<sup>13</sup> Good grand strategies include or at least consider all elements of national power. These are the means of grand strategy. One could develop a lopsided grand strategy that was purely military or purely economic, but that is not ideal even if some elements contribute only minimally to the final product. This broaches the subject of elements of power – a simple but useful way to classify or categorize power.

Current U.S. military doctrine recognizes four categories of power available to a nation or strategist: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic (often referred to using the shorthand DIME). Other potential candidates include social/psychological, which was an accepted category until recently, and political. While political and diplomatic appear to be similar and frequently are used synonymously, I believe they actually are different. To me, political refers to the power generated internally or domestically, while diplomatic refers exclusively to power in the international arena – the ability to influence adversaries, allies, and neutrals. Political power is important for generating or sustaining support for the policy/strategy or popular will. Regimes with little domestic support (and thus little political power) have difficulty executing their international policies. Social/psychological power was very similar to political power in some respects, but also contained elements of informational power. Since its major components were subsumed in other terms, social/psychological power fell into disuse.

In a war, the other elements of power (and the strategies developed for their employment) tend to support the military element; however, there is always a symbiotic relationship between the elements. Thus diplomatic strategy may support military strategy, but military success may be an essential precursor for diplomatic success. Similarly, economic strategy may be designed to provide military means, but the military capture or loss of economic assets may directly influence the effectiveness of the economic strategy. Additionally, different types of warfare emphasize different elements of power. For example, in a civil war, the political element becomes especially important. It is for just this reason that the Washington community dealing with the War on Terrorism (WOT) has adopted a new model to think about power. Besides the traditional DIME elements, the counterterrorist community has added intelligence, legal or law enforcement, and financial to their list of elements of power – giving the acronym MIDLIFE. Those are useful tools to consider in the WOT, although it remains to be seen if the expanded categories of national power will gain broad acceptance.

## STRATEGY AND THE TYPE OF THE WAR

Does (or should) one's strategy necessarily change based on the type of war he is fighting? If strategy is a function of ends, then it ought to change or be different as the political ends change. The alternative view, however, is that destroying the enemy's military force is always the best (to some theorists the only legitimate) objective for the military regardless of political goals. This gets to what Clausewitz called the supreme judgment about a war – its nature.

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.<sup>14</sup>

Based on the characteristics of the war, the military's objective may or may not have anything to do with destroying the enemy's military force. For example, one might have political goals that make avoiding battle at all costs and instead maneuvering to seize specific locations not only a viable but a desirable strategy. The strategist will only recognize this if he or she understands the kind of the war they are waging, recognizes when that changes, and adapts strategy accordingly.

The inclusion of potential changes in the nature of a war during its conduct raises another important question. If the nature of a war can change, then is not trying to shape that nature into a form that suits the strategist a legitimate strategic exercise? Is Clausewitz overlooking a useful strategic tool when he warns against trying to turn a war into something alien to its nature? Strategists should certainly try to control or influence the nature of a war as much as possible. The problem is when they do not recognize that their efforts have failed and persist in fighting the wrong kind of war. Thus, in the 1960s, the United States legitimately might have tried to turn the Vietnam war into a conventional international war between North and South Vietnam – that was the war the U.S. military was best prepared to win. However, when that effort failed, the strategists should have recognized that fact and adapted to the true nature of the war they were fighting. Unfortunately, that did not occur until it was too late to win that war, and paradoxically, the nature of the war changed again in 1975, and the war became precisely the conventional international war the United States had wanted initially.

## EXECUTING STRATEGY

Next we need to consider a few theories on potential ways to execute strategy. Knowing that strategy is a considered relation among ends, ways, and means is a necessary first step, but it does not help one actually do anything. Fortunately, hundreds of authors have given their thoughts on how to conduct strategy. Some are better than others. Most are "ways" determinations rather than comprehensive ends-ways-means analyses. Still, they are worth consideration. As a minimum a competent strategist should be aware of each.

### Sun Tzu.

The ancient Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu did not define strategy, but he offered pointers on its practice. At times, Sun Tzu can be so straightforward, he is simplistic. For example, the statement, "Victory is the main object of war" is not especially informative. One can make all the tortuous interpretations one likes, but the statement is blunt and obvious in its intent. That is not to say it is trivial – in fact, it is well for anyone involved with war to remember that the object is to win – it is just wrong as an absolute. The object of war is not victory, but as Liddell Hart says, "a better peace – even of only from your own point of view." One can strive so hard for victory that he destroys the subsequent peace. Liddell Hart again says,

A State which expends its strength to the point of exhaustion bankrupts its own policy, and future. If you concentrate exclusively on victory, with no thought for the after-effect, you may be too exhausted to profit by the peace, while it is almost certain that the peace will be a bad one, containing the germs of another war.

Victory is certainly better than the alternative, but it cannot be the exclusive aim of war. I expound on that for two reasons. First, Sun Tzu should be treated like Jay Luvass recommended using Clausewitz – the fact that he said something only makes it worthy of consideration. Second, the fact that Sun Tzu is both an ancient and an Asian author does not mean automatically he had all the answers or even addressed all the questions. There is a tendency to read volumes into fairly straightforward passages of Sun Tzu on the assumption that there must be something of deep significance behind each phrase of the book. In many (if not most) cases, the phrases actually mean exactly what they say. Sun Tzu was not saying that war is a political act when he said, “War is a matter of vital importance to the State” – reading the rest of the quote makes it quite apparent he was simply saying war is important and must be studied.<sup>15</sup> That does not need tortured interpretation to be significant.

It is commonplace to acknowledge that Sun Tzu advocated deception and winning without fighting. For example, he wrote, “For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.” Sun Tzu has become the intellectual father of a school of warfare that advocates winning by maneuver or by psychologically dislocating the opponent. Although undesirable, the ancient Chinese soldier might not be as pleased about that paternity as his advocates believe. Sun Tzu expended lots of effort explaining how to maneuver and fight. In some respects, he is very like Jomini (of all people). For example, Sun Tzu advocated attacking portions of the enemy with your whole force: “If I am able to determine the enemy’s dispositions while at the same time I conceal my own, then I can concentrate and he must divide. And if I concentrate while he divides, I can use my entire strength to attack a fraction of his.” Sun Tzu thought that the defense was the stronger form of warfare, but that offensive action was necessary for victory. “Invincibility lies in the defence [*sic*]; the possibility of victory in the attack. . . . One defends when his strength is inadequate; he attacks when it is abundant.” He sometimes did incomplete analysis and thus provided advice that might be wrong, depending on the circumstances. For example, Sun Tzu said, “To be certain to take what you attack is to attack a place the enemy does not protect.” It is easy to use that quote as an advocacy for Liddell Hart’s indirect approach. That is, attack where the enemy does not expect. The problem is that there is almost always a reason why the enemy does not defend a place, and it usually has to do with the limited value of that place. However, Sun Tzu was not setting up Liddell Hart. The line after the original quote changes the meaning of the entire passage: “To be certain to hold what you defend is to defend a place the enemy does not attack.”<sup>16</sup> We now have a statement on chance and uncertainty in war – that is, the only certain way to take a place is if the enemy is not there – not advice on the indirect approach. Nevertheless, Sun Tzu is known as the advocate of deception, surprise, intelligence, and maneuver to win without fighting. He is mandatory reading for the strategist.

## Clausewitz.

Clausewitz is generally more useful for his philosophical musings on the nature of war than his “how to” strategic advice. In that arena, much of what he preached was either commonplace or 19th century specific. The exceptions are three. First was his advocacy of seeking battle. This obviously sets him apart from Sun Tzu and many others, and Clausewitz is quite specific about his expectations of decisive battle. He wrote,

. . . the importance of the victory is chiefly determined by the vigor with which the immediate pursuit is carried out. In other words, pursuit makes up the second act of the victory and in many cases is more important than the first. Strategy at this point draws near to tactics in order to receive the completed assignment from it; and its first exercise of authority is to demand that the victory should really be complete.<sup>17</sup>

Next, Clausewitz originated the concept of attacking what he called the enemy's center of gravity. The center of gravity comes from the characteristics of the belligerents and is "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed."<sup>18</sup> He offered several possibilities but decided that attacking the enemy's army was usually the best way to start a campaign, followed by seizing his capital and attacking his alliances. The concept, which the U.S. military adopted almost verbatim until the most recent doctrinal publications, has caused interminable debate both in the active force and the schoolhouses. Tactically, the U.S. military has always identified and attacked vulnerabilities—now, some dead Prussian is telling us that strategically we should attack strengths (for whatever else one might believe, it is clear that a center of gravity is a strength, not a weakness). We thus see attempts to mix the two concepts and essentially do both—usually described as attacking strengths through vulnerabilities.

Clausewitz's final significant "how to" idea is the concept of the culminating point. "There are strategic attacks that have led directly to peace, but these are the minority. Most of them only lead up to the point where their remaining strength is just enough to maintain a defense and wait for peace. Beyond that point, the scale turns, and the reaction follows with a small force that is usually much stronger than that of the original attack. This is what we mean by the culminating point of the attack."<sup>19</sup> Although Clausewitz only discusses culmination in terms of the attack (his later discussion of the culminating point of victory is a different concept), modern U.S. doctrine also identifies a culminating point for the defense—essentially a breaking point.

## **Jomini.**

The Baron Antoine Jomini, a contemporary of Clausewitz with service in the French and Russian armies during the Napoleonic wars, also gave modern U.S. theory and doctrine several terms. He was much more specific in his "how to" analysis than Clausewitz. Jomini believed war was a science, and consequently one could discover, by careful study, rules about how it should be conducted. He offered the results of his study. Jomini often is criticized for being geometric—although such a depiction overlooks some aspects of his work, it is not totally unfair. Jomini was specific about how to plan a campaign. First one selected the theater of war. Next, he determined the decisive points in the theater. Selection of bases and zones of operation followed. Then one designated the objective point. The line of operations was then the line from the base through the decisive points to the objective point. Thus, the great principle of war "which must be followed in all good combinations" was contained in four maxims:

1. To throw by strategic movements the mass of an army, successively, upon the decisive points of a theater of war, and also upon the communications of the enemy as much as possible without compromising one's own.
2. To maneuver to engage fractions of the hostile army with the bulk of one's forces.
3. On the battlefield, to throw the mass of the forces upon the decisive point, or upon that portion of the hostile line which it is of first importance to overthrow.
4. To so arrange that these masses shall not only be thrown upon the decisive point, but that they shall engage at the proper time and with energy.<sup>20</sup>

Jomini's maxims remain good advice if not elevated to dogma, and his terms, such as lines of operations, decisive points, etc., form the basis of much of the language of modern operational art.



## Liddell Hart.

B. H. Liddell Hart had his own approach to strategy that has become famous as the indirect approach.

Strategy has not to overcome resistance, except from nature. *Its purpose is to diminish the possibility of resistance*, and it seeks to fulfill this purpose by exploiting the elements of *movement* and *surprise*. . . . Although strategy may aim more at exploiting movement than at exploiting surprise, or conversely, the two elements react on each other. Movement generates surprise, and surprise gives impetus to movement.<sup>21</sup>

Just as the military means is only one of the means of grand strategy—one of the instruments in the surgeon's case—so battle is only one of the means to the end of strategy. If the conditions are suitable, it is usually the quickest in effect, but if the conditions are unfavorable it is folly to use it. . . . His [a military strategist's] responsibility is to seek it [a military decision] under the most advantageous circumstances in order to produce the most profitable results. Hence *his true aim is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this*. In other words, dislocation is the aim of strategy."<sup>22</sup>

The strategist produces dislocation physically by forcing the enemy to change front or by threatening his forces or lines of communication. Dislocation also is achieved psychologically in the enemy commander's mind as a result of the physical dislocation. "In studying the physical aspect, we must never lose sight of the psychological, and only when both are combined is the strategy truly an indirect approach, calculated to dislocate the opponent's balance." Although Liddell Hart would be appalled at being compared with Clausewitz, this statement is similar to the Prussian's comment, "Military activity is never directed against material force alone; it is always aimed simultaneously at the moral forces which give it life, and the two cannot be separated."<sup>23</sup>

Liddell Hart and his indirect approach have won a wide following among strategists. However, the issue of direct versus indirect is actually a smoke screen. The indirect approach is a tactical concept elevated to the strategic level, and it loses some of its validity in the transition. Strategically, it is sometimes (if not often) advantageous to take a direct approach. This is particularly true in cases when the contending parties have disproportionate power—that is, when one side possesses overwhelming force. In such cases, the stronger side invariably benefits from direct action. The concept of the indirect approach is also a downright silly notion when talking about simultaneous operations across the spectrum of conflict. Advocates will cry that I have missed the point. Liddell Hart seeks an indirect approach only because what he really wants is the mental dislocation it produces. I would counter that his real point was the avoidance of battle and winning without fighting. Surprise, which Liddell Hart acknowledges is how an indirect approach produces mental dislocation, is a tremendous advantage; however, designing strategies purely or even primarily to achieve surprise overlooks the rest of the equation—surprise to do what? Surprise for what purpose? If a strategist can accomplish his purpose in a direct manner, it might be more desirable than contending with the disadvantages inherent in achieving surprise. Nevertheless, the indirect approach is a recognized strategic tool that has tremendous utility if used intelligently.

## Beaufré.

The French general and theoretician Andre Beaufré provided another way to think about strategy. He made significant contributions to deterrence theory, especially in his skepticism of the deterrent effect of conventional forces and his advocacy of an independent French nuclear force; however, his main contribution was in the realm of general strategy. Beaufré published an influential trilogy of short books in the mid-1960s: *An Introduction to Strategy*, *Deterrence and Strategy*, and *Strategy of Action*.<sup>24</sup> He

was generally Clausewitzian in his acceptance both of the political and psychological natures of war and his characterization of war as a dialectic struggle between opposing wills. He was adamant that wars are not won by military means alone (destroying the enemy army) but only by the collapse of will.

Beaufré recognized the criticality of non-military elements of power – political, economic, etc. He also recognized that strategy was neither an exclusively wartime activity nor restricted to planning against an enemy – one might have strategies for relations with friends or allies as well. Beaufré sometimes is credited with expanding the concept of strategy beyond the purely military, although contemporaries already were doing that under the rubric of grand strategy – a term Beaufré disliked and replaced in his own writing with “total strategy.” Total strategy defined at the highest national level how the war would be fought and coordinated the application of all the elements of power. Below total strategy was a level Beaufré called overall strategy, which allocated tasks and coordinated the activities for a single element of power (essentially national-level sub- or supporting strategies like a National Military Strategy or a National Economic Strategy). Below overall strategy was operational strategy, which corresponded fairly closely to the modern concept of operational art.<sup>25</sup>

All these strategic levels directed strategies that fell into “patterns,” depending on the levels or resources available and the intensity of the interests at stake. The first pattern Beaufré called the direct threat; it occurred when the objective was only of moderate importance, and the resources available were large. A threat of action often was sufficient to achieve the objective. If the objective was of moderate importance but resources were inadequate to back a direct threat, nations usually resorted to indirect pressure operationalized as political, diplomatic, or economic pressure. If freedom of action was restricted, resources limited, and objectives important, a third pattern resulted. That pattern was the use of successive actions employing both direct threat and indirect pressure – often with a limited use of military force. The fourth pattern was another possibility if freedom of action was great but the resources inadequate and the stakes high – “*protracted struggle, but at a low level of military activity* [emphasis in original].” If military resources were sufficient, a nation might try the fifth and final pattern: “*violent military conflict aimed a military victory* [emphasis in original].” Strategic analysis based on synthesizing both material and psychological data rather than habit or “the fashion of the moment” should dictate the selection of the pattern and the specific strategies.<sup>26</sup>

According to Beaufré, there were two general principles of strategy, which he borrowed from Foch: freedom of action and economy of force. There were also two distinct but vital components to any strategy – “1. *Selection of the decisive point* to be attacked (this depends on the enemy’s vulnerable points). 2. *Selection of the preparatory maneuvers* which will enable the decisive points to be reached [italics in original].”<sup>27</sup> Beaufré then developed a list of 19 components of maneuver: eight offensive – attack, threat, surprise, feint, deceive, thrust, wear down, follow-up; six defensive – on guard, parry, riposte (counterattack), disengage, retire, break-off; and five related to force posture – concentrate, disperse, economize, increase, and reduce. All of these aim at gaining, retaining, or depriving the enemy of freedom of action. Retaining the initiative was vital in every case.<sup>28</sup>

For Beaufré, total strategy might be executed in one of two modes: direct or indirect. All elements of power played in both modes, but the direct mode emphasized the military instrument. Indirect strategy, which he carefully distinguished from Liddell Hart’s indirect approach, used primarily the nonmilitary instruments to achieve political goals. Beaufré also developed a universal formula for strategy:  $S = KF\psi t$ . S represented strategy, K was any specific factor applicable to the case, F equated to material force,  $\psi$  represented psychological factors, and t was time. That formula is too general to be useful beyond illustrating the point that in direct strategy, F is the predominant factor while in indirect strategy  $\psi$  prevails.<sup>29</sup> Fortunately, that is all Beaufré really tried to do with his formula.

Another of Beaufré’s major concepts was the strategy of action. This was a counterpart to deterrence. When deterring, the state wanted its opponent to refrain from doing something, while an action strategy

aimed at causing someone to do something. The aim of one was negative and the other positive. Other authors at the time and since have called this coercion, and Beaufré used that term, but he thought coercion too often implied use of military force and wanted action to include a broader range of options.<sup>30</sup> His broader interpretation and insistence on the high nature of total strategy actually pushed his strategic theory into potential collision or overlap with policy, which Beaufré had difficulty explaining away other than the different mindset of the practitioner of each (intuitive, philosophical, and creative for policy; pragmatic, rational, and policy subordinate for strategy).<sup>31</sup>

Beaufré's work is not well known in the United States. His books are not in modern reprint in English (a French reprint of one came out in 1998), are difficult to locate, and are not frequently consulted. He was innovative, but his ideas were not unique. His insistence on coining new language with which to discuss familiar topics probably worked against his long-term acceptance. Much of his thought has come to modern U.S. theory from, or at least through, other sources.

## **Luttwak.**

Edward Luttwak, an economist and historian who has written extensively on strategic theory talks about attrition and maneuver as the forms of strategy. For Luttwak, attrition is the application of superior firepower and material strength to eventually destroy the enemy's entire force unless he surrenders or retreats. The enemy is nothing more than a target array to be serviced by industrial methods. The opposite of attrition warfare is relational maneuver – "action related to the specifics of the objective." The goal of relational maneuver, instead of physically destroying the enemy as in attrition, is to incapacitate his systems. Those systems might be the enemy's command and control or his fielded forces or even his doctrine or perhaps the spatial deployment of his force, as in the penetration of a linear position. In some cases it might entail the attack of actual technical systems – Luttwak uses deception of radar rather than its destruction or jamming to illustrate the final category.<sup>32</sup>

Instead of seeking out the enemy's concentration of strength, since that is where the targets are to be found in bulk, the starting point of relational maneuver is the avoidance of the enemy's strengths, followed by the application of some selective superiority against presumed enemy weaknesses, physical or psychological, technical or organizational.<sup>33</sup>

Luttwak recognizes that neither attrition nor relational maneuver are ever employed alone – there is always some mix of the two, even if one or the other is decidedly dominant. Relational maneuver is more difficult to execute than attrition, although it can produce better results more quickly. Conversely, relational maneuver can fail completely if the force applied is too weak to do the task or it encounters unexpected resistance. Relational maneuver does not usually allow "free substitution of quantity for quality." There is always a basic quality floor beneath which one cannot safely pass. Only after that floor has been exceeded will quantity substitutions be possible.<sup>34</sup>

Luttwak also says that strategy is paradoxical.

The large claim I advance here is that strategy does not merely entail this or that paradoxical proposition, contradictory and yet recognized as valid, but rather that *the entire realm of strategy is pervaded by a paradoxical logic of its own*, standing against the ordinary linear logic by which we live in all other spheres of life (except for warlike games, of course).

He believes paradoxical logic pervades the five levels (technical, tactical, operational, theater strategic, and grand strategic) and two dimensions (vertical across levels and horizontal in levels) of warfare.<sup>35</sup>

At the most basic level, Luttwak demonstrates both the presence and the desirability of choices in war that defy peacetime logic. His base example is the choice of an approach road to an objective. The alternatives are a wide, straight, well-surfaced road and a narrow, winding, poorly-surfaced

road. "Only in the conflictual realm of strategy would the choice arise at all, for it is only if combat is possible that the bad road can be good *precisely because it is bad* and may therefore be less strongly held or even left unguarded by the enemy." Thus, commanders make choices contrary to normal logic because they produce valuable advantages – advantages arising directly from the nature of war. Like Clausewitz, Luttwak believes the competitive aspect of war, that it is always a competition between active opponents, is one of the defining aspects of war. "On the contrary, the paradoxical preference for inconvenient times and directions, preparations visibly and deliberately incomplete, approaches seemly too dangerous, for combat at night and in bad weather, is a common aspect of tactical ingenuity – and for a reason that derives from the essential nature of war."<sup>36</sup> Commanders make paradoxical choices primarily to gain surprise and thus reduce the risk of combat.

To have the advantage of an enemy who cannot react because he is surprised and unready, or at least who cannot react promptly and in full force, all sorts of paradoxical choices may be justified. . . . Surprise can now be recognized for what it is: not merely one factor of advantage in warfare among many others, but rather the suspension, if only briefly, if only partially, of the entire predicament of strategy, even as the struggle continues. Without a reacting enemy, or rather according to the extent and degree that surprise is achieved, the conduct of war becomes mere administration.<sup>37</sup>

Gaining surprise, therefore, becomes one of the key objectives of strategy. In fact, whole schools of strategy (Luttwak refers specifically to Liddell Hart's indirect approach) have been founded on the principle of surprise. The problem is that paradoxical choices – those necessary to achieve surprise – are never free or even necessarily safe because every "paradoxical choice made for the sake of surprise must have its cost, manifest in some loss of strength that would otherwise be available." The choice itself may make execution more difficult (it is harder to fight at night); secrecy can inhibit preparations and is almost never total; deception may contain relatively cost-free elements (like false information leaked to the enemy); but as it becomes more sophisticated, complex, and convincing, it soaks up resources (units conducting feints are not available at the main point of contact). At the theoretical extreme, one could expend so much force gaining surprise that insufficient combat power remained for the real fight.<sup>38</sup>

Obviously the paradoxical course of "least expectation" must stop short of self-defeating extremes, but beyond that the decision is a matter of calculations neither safe nor precise. Although the loss of strength potentially available is certain, success in achieving surprise can only be hoped for; and although the cost can usually be tightly calculated, the benefit must remain a matter of speculation until the deed is done.<sup>39</sup>

All of this, of course, is complicated by friction, which Luttwak calls organizational risk. Also, acting paradoxically can become predictable. Thus, by 1982 in Lebanon, the Israelis had established such a reputation for paradoxical action that they were unable to achieve surprise until they broke their established paradigm and conducted the obvious frontal attack down the Bekka Valley. Luttwak recognizes that some situations call for straightforward, logical solutions. "If the enemy is so weakened that his forces are best treated as a passive array of targets that might as well be inanimate, the normal linear logic of industrial production, with all the derived criteria of productive efficiency, is fully valid, and the paradoxical logic of strategy is irrelevant."<sup>40</sup>

While he has some interesting and valid points, especially in the details, Luttwak's insistence on the paradoxical nature of war is too broad a generalization. There is much that is paradoxical in warfare; however, if war were completely paradoxical as Luttwak asserts (his exceptions are too trivial to be significant), war would not yield to study. In fact, much of warfare – including its paradox – is very logical. In a sense, Luttwak's argument proves that proposition and refutes itself.

Martin Van Creveld's *The Transformation of War* is, at least according to the cover, "The most radical reinterpretation of armed conflict since Clausewitz." He represents a segment of modern scholars that believe Clausewitz no longer explains why, how, or by whom wars are fought. To Van Creveld, war is no longer a rational political act conducted among states – if it ever was. He points out that warfare waged by nonstate actors dominated conflict in 1991 rather than the organized, political, interstate warfare between great powers that the international community seemed to expect (and Clausewitz seemed to predict). War is no longer fought by the entities we always assumed fought wars. The combatants in modern wars no longer fight for the reasons we always believed. Finally, they do not fight in the manner we always accepted as standard.<sup>41</sup>

Modern war takes many forms – the Clausewitzian trinitarian form of war being one, but by no means the dominant one, of them. For Van Creveld, Clausewitz does not apply in any case that does not involve exclusively state-on-state warfare. Since he sees a resurgence of "Low-Intensity Conflict," he believes war will be dominated by nonstate actors. "We are entering an era, not of peaceful economic competition between trading blocks, but of warfare between ethnic and religious groups." Current fielded military forces are irrelevant to the tasks they will likely face. Should the states in question fail to recognize the changed reality, they will first become incapable of wielding appropriate force at all and eventually cease to exist as recognizable states.<sup>42</sup>

The nature of the participants dictates the nature of the reasons they fight. Because the participants are not states, they will not be fighting for state-like reasons. This follows logically from Van Creveld's assertion that politics applies only to states – not a more broadly defined interest in a more broadly defined community. Nonstate actors fight wars for abstract concepts like justice or religion. Frequently, groups feel their existence is threatened and lash out violently in response. In any case, reasons are highly individualistic and do not yield easily to analysis – especially analysis based on the inappropriate model of the Clausewitzian universe.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, Van Creveld believes that Clausewitz did not understand how wars are fought – at least his assertion that they would tend naturally toward totality is wrong. He cites international law and convention, among other factors, as major inhibitors on the drift toward totality in state-on-state war. More significant is his critique of strategy. Like Luttwak, Van Creveld sees strategy as paradoxical. He believes pairs of paradoxes define strategy. If the object of war is to beat our opponent's force with our own, then we must design maneuvers to pit strength against weakness. Because war is competitive, our enemy is doing the same thing, and we must conceal or protect our weakness from the opponent's strength. Thus, the essence of strategy is "... the ability to feint, deceive, and mislead." Eventually one can work so hard on concealing that he and his side may be deceived – where the distinction between feint and main effort is unclear. Van Creveld also discusses the paradox in time and space using the same argument as Luttwak that the shortest distance between two points may not be the straight line. Other paradoxes include that between concentration and dispersion (concentration is necessary to apply power, but concentration increases the chance of discovery) and between effectiveness and efficiency (the more economical, streamlined, or efficient a military organization becomes, the more vulnerable it is).<sup>44</sup>

Perhaps uniquely in the field of strategic theory, Martin Van Creveld has provided a critique of his own thesis. In a chapter of a book published in 2003, Van Creveld finds, not surprisingly, that on balance his earlier work, written in 1988-89, holds up very well. The Gulf War was an aberration – the outcome of which was almost preordained. Otherwise, "... the main thesis of *The Transformation of War*, namely that major armed conflict between major powers is on the way out, seems to have been borne out during the 10 years since the book's publication." Conversely, nontrinitarian wars are on the rise,

and conventional forces do not seem able to bring them to satisfactory closure. “. . . [T]he prediction that history is witnessing a major shift from trinitarian to nontrinitarian war seems to have fulfilled itself and is still fulfilling itself on an almost daily basis.” He believes information warfare might be a wild card that could disrupt his predictions; however, on balance he sees information as advantageous to (or at least an equalizing factor for) nonstate actors, and hence a confirmation of the trend toward nontrinitarianism. Thus, Van Creveld sticks with his criticism of Clausewitz and essentially every element of his original thesis.<sup>45</sup>

## MISCELLANEOUS ALTERNATIVES

There are also whole categories we can only classify as miscellaneous, alternative, possibly-strategic concepts.

### **Denial, Punishment, and Coercion.**

These are proposed replacements for attrition, exhaustion, and annihilation. They actually describe the ends of strategy (or perhaps a limited set of ways) rather than a complete strategic concept. Their utility is limited and their acceptance as a group by the strategic community is minimal at best. Coercion, of course, is a recognized strategic concept on its own; it is just not commonly grouped with denial and punishment as a paradigm.

### **Jones.**

Historian Archer Jones has a unique approach to strategy.

The object for military strategy used herein is the depletion of the military force of an adversary. The definition of political-military strategy, a companion term, is the use of military force to attain political or related objectives directly, rather than by depleting an adversary's military force. Of course, military strategy usually endeavored to implement political or comparable objectives but sought to attain them indirectly, by depleting the hostile military force sufficiently to gain an ascendancy adequate to attain the war's political goals.<sup>46</sup>

Jones does not use attrition because of its association with a particular form of military strategy. Instead, he asserts that military force can achieve its objective of depleting the enemy through one of two methods. Combat strategies deplete the enemy by directly destroying his force in the field. Logistic strategies deprive the opponent of supplies, forces, weapons, recruits, or other resources. Either of these strategies can be executed in one of two ways. One can use “a transitory presence in hostile territory to make a destructive incursion,” which Jones labels a raiding strategy, or one can conquer and permanently occupy significant segments of enemy territory, which he calls a persisting strategy. The two pairs—combat and logistics and raiding and persisting—define comprehensive strategy.<sup>47</sup>

Jones then puts the factors into a matrix and uses them for all kinds of warfare—air, land, and sea. Air war, however, can really only be raiding because of the nature of the medium. This is a military only, ways only approach to strategy that works best as Jones applies it—in retrospect to analyze historical campaigns. The separation of a purely political strategy from military strategy based on whether or not the aim is depleting the enemy force is awkward to say the least. Jones has an interesting concept of “political attrition.” This means that victory in battle raises morale and engenders optimism about winning in a reasonable time with acceptable casualties. Conversely, defeat in battle makes victory look less certain, farther away in time, and attainable only at high cost. He does not think that political attrition necessarily works in reverse—that is, you cannot store up good will during good times to tide

you over during the bad times. (Although presumably you would start the bad times at a higher overall level of morale.) Elsewhere, Jones compares popular will to win with the classic economic supply and demand theory of elastic and inelastic demand.<sup>48</sup> That is a much less satisfying explanation. While perhaps of little use to practical strategists, Archer Jones' concepts are creative and not completely without merit. His ideas show up with increasing frequency in historical works.

## **Decapitation.**

An attractive recent concept is a strategy we might characterize as decapitation where one targets specifically and selectively the enemy leader or at least a fairly limited set of upper-echelon leaders. This has most recently found expression in the expressed strategic objective of regime change, which tends to automatically focus on the enemy regime leadership regardless of the potential scope of the mission. Strategic treatises like the *Quadrennial Defense Review* and the *National Defense Strategy* that use regime change as an evaluative factor, hint at a widening acceptance of the concept. A primary assumption, generally implied or asserted without proof, is that the current leader (perhaps aided by a small group of accomplices) is the whole cause of the international dispute. A corollary assumption is that eliminating the current evil leadership will result in its replacement by a regime willing to grant the concessions demanded by the opposing state or coalition.

There are several problems with this approach—most related to the validity of the assumptions. First, the assumption that the common people of a country are good and could not possibly support the policies of their evil ruler is (as a minimum) unproven in most cases and palpably false in many. Thus, decapitation will not solve the problem. In Clausewitzian terms, taking out the government does not automatically destroy or break the will of either the people or the military. Second, a potential follow-on regime can be either better than, about the same as, or worse than the current leadership. Hence, the odds of achieving one's policy objectives by decapitation are actually fairly poor. The U.S. experience in Iraq after successfully removing Saddam Hussein's regime demonstrate these caveats. The old saw about contending with the devil one knows may be worn, but that does not make it any less worthwhile advice, and while decapitation may work, it is neither easy nor a panacea.

## **Boyd.**

U.S. Air Force Colonel John R. Boyd talks about the "OODA loop"—that is the decision cycle of observation, orientation, decision, and action. The concept is derived from a fighter pilot in a dogfight. Like the pilot, a strategist wins by out-thinking and out-maneuvering his opponent; by the time the opponent decides what to do and initiates action, it is too late since you already have anticipated and countered his move or made a countermove that makes his action meaningless. One accomplishes this by possessing sufficient agility to be able, both mental and physical, to act a step or more ahead of the enemy. Thus, the successful strategist always works inside his enemy's decision cycle.<sup>49</sup> This theory describes a way, and really is a new and unnecessarily complicated rephrasing of the ancient concept of the initiative. Initiative is not critical or essential, and alone it is not decisive. Robert E. Lee had tactical, operational, and even strategic initiative at Gettysburg and lost tactically, operationally, and strategically. However, initiative is a tremendous advantage—if Boyd's paradigm makes it more clear or obvious to the strategist, it has provided a service. The caution is that one can think and act so swiftly and outpace the enemy so dramatically as to actually create friendly vulnerability. The OODA loop concept predicts that the enemy will not be able to react effectively to an action; however, it does not postulate enemy paralysis and complete immobility. One can envision circumstances where a confused enemy reacting to information or situations hours or days behind its opponent makes a devastatingly successful move that its opponent has long since discounted or thought negated.

## **Warden.**

Another U.S. Air Force Colonel, John A. Warden III, translated his targeteering experience into a strategic theory, thus elevating the tactical process of allocating aircraft sorties to specific targets to a strategic theory. Warden views the enemy as a system of targets arrayed in five strategic rings; the innermost and most important is leadership. One can win by striking that inner ring so frequently and violently that the enemy essentially is paralyzed and never able to mount an effective defense. It is unnecessary to take on the outer and much more difficult target rings like the enemy's armed forces, although modern advances like stealth technology make simultaneous attack of the entire target array possible (instead of the traditional sequential attacks where one array had to be neutralized before proceeding to the next).<sup>50</sup> This is often considered an air power theory – and Warden used it to push the decisiveness of air power – but the conceptual approach has boarder application. Its major drawback as a general theory of strategy is that it works best (if not exclusively) when one side has or can quickly gain total dominance of its opponent's airspace.

## **UNDERDOG STRATEGIES**

There are also a number of alternative strategies that seem to be intended specifically for, or at least be most appropriate for, weaker powers or underdogs.

## **Fabian.**

Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus was a Roman general during the Second Punic War. He advocated avoiding open battle because he was convinced the Romans would lose, which they proceeded to do when they abandoned his strategy. Thus, Fabian strategy is a strategy in which one side intentionally avoids large-scale battle for fear of the outcome. Victory depends on wearing down (attriting) one's opponent over time – usually by an unrelenting campaign of skirmishes between detachments. Somewhat akin to a Fabian strategy is a strategy of survival. In that case, however, the weaker power does not necessarily avoid battle. Instead, one reacts to his opponent's moves rather than making an effort to seize the initiative. The object is to survive rather than to win in the classic sense – hopefully, sheer survival achieves (or perhaps comprises) one's political aim. This is a favorite alternative strategy of modern critics for the Confederate States of America. Scorched earth strategies are another variant of the basic Fabian strategy. The concept is to withdraw slowly before an enemy, while devastating the countryside over which he must advance so he cannot subsist his force on your terrain. Attrition eventually will halt the attack – it will reach what Clausewitz called a culminating point – and the retreating side can assume the offensive safely. This is actually the addition of a tactical technique to the basic Fabian strategy and not a major new school of strategy.

There is a whole subset of doctrine under the general heading of strategies for the weak that advocates guerrilla warfare, insurgency, and/or terrorism.

## **Lawrence.**

T. E. (Thomas Edward) Lawrence was the first of the theorist of insurgency or revolutionary warfare. His *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, originally published in 1926, recounted his experiences with Arab insurgent forces fighting the Turks in World War I.<sup>51</sup> The title – a reference to Proverbs that Lawrence carried over from an earlier incomplete book about seven Arab cities – is misleading since Lawrence did not have seven theoretical pillars of guerrilla war. Lawrence's narrative explained



the war in the desert by clearly defining the objective; carefully analyzing the Arab and Turkish forces; describing the execution of raids to maintain the initiative; and emphasizing the importance of intelligence, psychological warfare, and propaganda. The objective of the guerrilla was not the traditional objective of conventional forces—decisive battle. In fact, the guerrilla sought exactly the opposite—the longest possible defense.<sup>52</sup> Lawrence believed that successful guerillas needed safe bases and support of at least some of the populace—perhaps as little as 20 percent, although an insurgency might be successful with as little as two percent of the population in active support as long as the other 98 percent remained at least neutral. A technologically sophisticated enemy (so the guerrilla could attack his lines of communications) that was not strong enough to occupy the entire country was also advantageous. Tactically, the guerrilla relied on speed, endurance, logistic independence, and at least a minimal amount of weaponry. Lawrence compared guerillas to a gas operating around a fixed enemy and talked about them as raiders versus regulars. Their operations always were offensive and conducted in precise fashion by the smallest possible forces. The news media was their friend and tool. Lawrence thought the Arabs were ideally suited for such warfare, and that “granted mobility, security, time, and doctrine,” the guerrillas would win.<sup>53</sup> His theory got entangled in his flamboyant personality, so although he was a society darling, he had less impact on military circles.<sup>54</sup>

## **Mao.**

Mao Zedong developed the most famous and influential theory of insurgency warfare. His concepts, designed initially for the Chinese fight against the Japanese in World War II, have been expanded and adapted by himself and others to become a general theory of revolutionary warfare. Mao emphasizes the political nature of war and the reliance of the army on the civilian population, especially the Chinese peasant population. He advocated a protracted war against the Japanese; victory would come in time through attrition. He believed the Chinese should avoid large battles except in the rare instances when they had the advantage. Guerrillas normally should operate dispersed across the countryside and concentrate only to attack. Because the Chinese had a regular army contending with the Japanese, Mao had to pay particular attention to how guerrilla and regular operations complemented each other. He postulated a progressive campaign that would move slowly and deliberately from a stage when the Chinese were on the strategic defensive, through a period of strategic stalemate, to the final stage when Chinese forces assumed the strategic offensive. The ratio of forces and their tactical activities in each stage reflected the strategic realities of the environment. Thus, guerrilla forces and tactics dominated the phase of the strategic defensive. During the strategic stalemate, mobile and guerrilla warfare would compliment each other, and guerrilla and regular forces would reach approximate equilibrium (largely by guerrilla forces combining and training into progressively larger regular units). Mobile warfare conducted by regular units would dominate the period of strategic offensive. Although guerrilla units would never completely disappear, the regular forces would achieve the final victory.<sup>55</sup> Mao has had an enormous impact on the field of revolutionary warfare theory.

## **Guevara.**

Ernesto “Che” Guevara de la Serna based his theory of revolutionary warfare on the Cuban model. He offered a definition of strategy that highlighted his variation of the basic guerrilla theme—especially his divergence from the Maoist emphasis on the political nature of the conflict and reliance on the people. Che wrote,

In guerrilla terminology, strategy means the analysis of the objectives we wish to attain. First, determine how the enemy will operate, his manpower, mobility, popular support, weapons, and leadership, Then, plan a strategy to best confront these factors, always keeping in mind that the final objective is to destroy the enemy army.

To Che, the major lessons of the Cuban Revolution were that guerrillas could defeat regular armies; that it was unnecessary to wait for all the political preconditions to be met before beginning the fight—the insurrection itself would produce them; and that the countryside was the arena for conflict in underdeveloped Latin America. Gradual progress through the Maoist stages of revolution was unnecessary—the guerrilla effort could not only establish the political preconditions of revolution but also win the war on its own. Parties, doctrine, theories, and even political causes were unimportant. The armed insurgency eventually would produce them all.<sup>56</sup> That was incredibly naive and even dangerous as an insurgent strategic concept, but Che became very well-known—if unsuccessful—pursuing it.

## **Terrorism.**

Although there is no outstanding single theorist of terrorism, it is not a new strategic concept. Often used as a tactical part or preliminary stage of a larger campaign or insurgency, terrorism can in fact be a strategy, and sometimes even a goal in itself. Many ideological terrorists—perhaps the best examples are ecological terrorists—have no desire or intent to progress militarily beyond terrorism. Although political, most are not interested in overthrowing a government or seizing control of conventional political power. They simply want their espoused policies, ideologies, or political agendas adopted. Alternatively, anarchists, who traditionally have used terror, just want to destroy government without replacing it. They have no positive goal whatever.

The theory behind terrorism is fairly straightforward. A weak, usually nongovernmental actor uses violence, either random or carefully targeted and often directed against civilian targets, to produce terror. The aim is to make life so uncertain and miserable that the state against which the terror is directed concedes whatever political, social, economic, environmental, or theological point the terrorist pursues. The technique has not proven particularly effective as a stand-alone strategy in changing important policies in even marginally effective states. It is, however, comparatively cheap, easy to conceptualize and execute, requires minimal training, is relatively safe since competent terrorist groups are extremely difficult to eradicate, and is demonstrably effective in gaining the terrorist publicity for himself and his cause.

## **COUNTER UNDERDOG STRATEGIES**

If there are strategies for the weak, the strong are sure to develop counterstrategies. Opponents generally fight a Fabian strategy by trying to exert enough pressure or threaten some critical location or capability to bring about the battle the Fabian strategist is trying to avoid. There is (and needs to be) no body of theoretical work on countering Fabian strategies. The same, however, cannot be said of countering insurgencies and terrorism.

Formal modern counterinsurgency theory developed as a result of the insurgencies that sprung up after World War II in the decolonizing world. It tended to be symmetric in the sense that it analyzed insurgencies and then attempted to beat them at their own game and in their chosen arena. Modern counterinsurgency theory tends to recognize the political nature of most insurgencies and approach them holistically rather than from a primarily military point of view. That is a fairly big break with traditional counterinsurgency techniques that concentrated on locating and destroying the guerrillas and often relied heavily on punishing the local population for guerrilla activity as the sole means of separating the guerrilla from his base of support. Discussion of some representative modern counterinsurgency theorists follows.

## Caldwell.

British Colonel Charles E. Caldwell wrote *Small Wars – Their Principles and Practice* at the end of the 19th century. This was a guide for the conduct of colonial wars. Caldwell distinguished three broad categories of small wars, which he defined as any war in which one side was not a regular army. His categories were campaigns of conquest or annexation; campaigns to suppress insurgents; and campaigns to punish or overthrow dangerous enemies. Each was fundamentally different from any form of regular warfare. Small wars could take almost any shape – the most dangerous of which was guerrilla warfare. Caldwell gave sound tactical advice about fighting a colonial or guerrilla enemy, but, from a theoretical or strategic point of view, it is of limited value. He recognized that colonial enemies could be skilled and dedicated warriors and recommended treating them as such – a refreshing change from standard colonial views. However, Caldwell thought the small wars experience was both exclusively military and unique to the colonies. He thus both did not develop the multidisciplinary approach common to modern counterinsurgency strategy and did not recommend translating the colonial military lessons into lessons for the big wars of the European colonial powers. He thought the strategic aim of counterinsurgency was to fight because the counterinsurgents had the tactical advantage but were at a strategic disadvantage. Caldwell, while still touted today and worth a look for his tactical precepts, was a theoretical dead end for the strategist.<sup>57</sup>

## Trinquier.

Roger Trinquier published *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* in 1961. Trinquier served with the French paramilitary in Indochina and Algeria. Those experiences shaped his views, and his theory heavily reflects French counterinsurgency practice in the 1950s. Trinquier argued that nuclear weapons were decreasing the significance of major traditional wars and replacing them with guerrilla war, insurgency, terrorism, and subversion. He approached the study of counterinsurgency by examining how the goals and techniques of insurgents differed from traditional warfare. His conclusion was that traditional methods and organizations would not work in counterinsurgencies. Trinquier's concept of modern warfare sought to destroy the insurgent organization as a whole, not simply its military arm. For him, the central tenet of counterinsurgency was winning the support of the people. He advocated an interlocking system of political, economic, psychological, and military actions to undermine the insurgents' strategies.

Trinquier suggested three principles: separate the guerrilla from the population, occupy the zones the guerrilla previously used to deny him reentry, and coordinate actions over a wide enough area and long enough time to deny the guerrillas access to the population. Following the successful technique of quadrillage used by the French in Algeria, Trinquier advocated a gridding system to divide up the country administratively and to facilitate sweeping and controlling the nation sequentially. He also was a strong advocate of eliminating safe havens both inside and outside the national borders.<sup>58</sup> Trinquier's basic approach is found in all modern counterinsurgency theory.

## Galula.

David Galula wrote *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* in 1964. He postulated a simple construct for counterinsurgencies that emphasized the political nature of the conflict, especially the relationship between the insurgent and his cause. His definition of "[i]nsurgency is the of the policy of a party, inside a country, by every means" was designed to emphasize that insurgencies could start before the use of force. Insurgencies are by their nature asymmetric because of the disparity of

resources between the contenders. The counterinsurgent has all the tangible assets—military, police, finance, court systems, etc., while the insurgent’s advantages are intangible—the ideological power of his cause. Insurgents base their strategies on powerful ideologies, while the counterinsurgent has to maintain order without undermining the government. The rules applicable to one side do not always fit the other. The logic of this asymmetric power relationship forced the insurgent to avoid military confrontation and instead move the contest to a new arena where his ideological power was effective—the population became the seat of war. Politics becomes the instrument of war rather than force, and that remains true throughout the war. Politics takes longer to produce effects, so all insurgencies are protracted.<sup>59</sup>

The counterinsurgent warrior must begin by understanding the political-social-economic cause of his opponent. Large parts of the population must be able to identify with that cause. The cause must be unique in the sense that the counterinsurgent cannot co-opt it. The cause can change over time as the insurgency adapts. The power of the cause increases as the guerrilla gains strength and has success. Good causes attract large numbers of supporters and repel the minimum number of neutrals. An artificial or concocted cause makes the guerrilla work harder to sell his position, but an efficient propaganda machine can do that.<sup>60</sup>

Galula discussed several approaches to immunizing the population against the insurgent cause or message. Counterinsurgents must continuously reassess the nature and scope of the problem with which they deal; address problems proactively; isolate the battlefield from external support; and work to increase support for the regime. They must be vigilant—do not interpret a strategic pause by the insurgents as victory. Intelligence is critical. The counterinsurgent organization must have the authority to direct political, social, economic, and military efforts. The military cannot have a free hand—it must work within and be subordinate to the overall political campaign. Like Tranquier, Galula recommended a systematic division of the country and sequential search, clear, and hold operations. Counterinsurgent propaganda should focus on gaining and maintaining the neutrality of the population.<sup>61</sup> Galula is having a major influence on the development (or rediscovery) of U.S. counterinsurgency theory in 2006.

## **Kitson.**

Frank Kitson wrote *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, and Peacekeeping* in 1971. He added details to the basic structure of counterinsurgency theory already constructed by the French. Like the other theorists Kitson recognized that counterinsurgency is a multidiscipline job. He warned against abuses, but recommended that heavy force be used early to squash an insurgency while still in a manageable state. The military campaign must be coordinated with good psychological operations. Kitson conceptualized two kinds of intelligence—political and operational. Political intelligence is an ongoing process while operational intelligence supports specific military operations. The military must be involved in the intelligence gathering process (political as well as operational). Counterinsurgency forces must be attuned to the environment, able to optimize resources by phases of the campaign, and able to coordinate all the resources at their disposal.<sup>62</sup>

## **STRATEGIC ADVICE**

There are also numerous advice books that give leaders and decisionmakers more or less specific advice about what to do or how to do it without necessarily offering a comprehensive strategic or theoretical paradigm. Examples include Niccolo Machiavelli’s *The Art of War*, *The Discourses*, and *The Prince* written to influence 16th century Florentine leaders and Frederick the Great’s *Instructions for His Generals*, the title of which explains its intent. Alternatively, there are collections like *The Military*

*Maxims of Napoleon* of military advice culled from the writings of great soldiers. As historian David Chandler noted in his introduction to a recent reprint of that work, "The practical value of military maxims can be debatable. . . . Consequently the collecting of his [Napoleon's] *obiter dicta* into any kind of military rule-book for future generations to apply is a process fraught with perils and pitfalls." In a more modern vein, Michele A. Flournoy, ed., *QDR 2001: Strategy-Driven Choices for America's Security* essentially is an advice book that presents a specific strategic solution without developing an overarching strategic theory.<sup>63</sup> Advice books are often beneficial; however, their generally narrow focus and frequent bumper sticker quality limit that utility.

## DETERRENCE

During the Cold War, the nuclear weapons field developed its own set of specific strategies based on deterrence theory. Deterrence theory itself is a useful strategic concept. Conversely, concepts like mutual assured destruction, counterforce or countervalue targeting, launch on warning, and first strike versus retaliation are terms of nuclear art that will retain some relevance as long as major nations maintain large nuclear stockpiles, but they no longer dominate the strategic debate as they once did. According to the Department of Defense, deterrence is "the prevention from action by fear of the consequences."<sup>64</sup> It is altogether different from compellence where one is attempting to make another party do something. Theoretically, one party can deter another either by threat of punishment or by denial. Threat of punishment implies performing an act will evoke a response so undesirable that the actor decides against acting. Deterrence by denial seeks to avert an action by convincing the actor that he cannot achieve his purpose. In either case, deterrence theory assumes rational decisionmakers with similar value systems. To be deterred, one must be convinced that his adversary possesses both the capability to punish or deny and the will to use that capability. Demonstrating the effectiveness of deterrence is difficult, since it involves proving the absence of something resulted from a specific cause; however, politicians and strategists generally agree that nuclear deterrence worked during the Cold War. It is not as clear that conventional deterrence works, although that concept has numerous advocates and is deeply embedded in modern joint doctrine.

Deterrence theory had many fathers, but some of the most prominent deserve mention. Albert Wohlstetter established his credentials when he wrote *The Delicate Balance of Terror* for RAND in 1958. Bernard Brodie wrote, among other things, *Strategy in the Missile Age* in 1959. Herman Kahn's *On Thermonuclear War* was ground breaking in 1960. Thomas C. Schelling published *The Strategy of Conflict* in 1960 and *Arms and Influence* 6 years later; both remain classics.<sup>65</sup>

## SEAPOWER

### Mahan.

There are also schools of single service strategies devoted to sea power or airpower. In the sea power arena, the most famous strategic theorists are Alfred Thayer Mahan and Julian S. Corbett. American naval officer Mahan wrote several books and articles around the turn of the 20th century advocating sea power. Perhaps the most famous was *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*. Mahan developed a set of criteria that he believed facilitated sea power, but his major contribution was in the realm of the exercise of that capability through what he called command of the sea. His study of history convinced Mahan that the powerful maritime nations had dominated history, and specifically that England had parlayed its command of the sea into world dominance. At the grand strategic level, Mahan believed that countries with the proper prerequisites should pursue sea power (and especially naval power) as the key to prosperity.

To Mahan, oceans were highways of commerce. Navies existed to protect friendly commerce and interrupt that of their enemies. The way to do both was to gain command of the sea.<sup>66</sup> For Mahan, the essence of naval strategy was to mass one's navy, seek out the enemy navy, and destroy it in a decisive naval battle. With the enemy's navy at the bottom of the ocean—that is, with command of the sea—your merchantmen were free to sail where they pleased, while the enemy's merchantmen were either confined to port or subject to capture. Diversion of naval power to subsidiary tasks like commerce raiding (a favorite U.S. naval strategy in the early years of the republic) was a waste of resources, although in his later writing, Mahan acknowledged some contribution from such tactics. The key to Mahanian naval warfare was thus the concentrated fleet of major combatants that would fight for and hopefully win command of the sea. Ideally, that fleet would have global reach, which required secure bases for refueling conveniently located worldwide. Although Mahan's theories actively supported his political agenda of navalism and imperialism, they contained enough pure and original thought to survive both the author and his age.

### **Corbett.**

British author Julian S. Corbett had a different interpretation of naval warfare. A contemporary of Mahan, Corbett saw British success not so much as a result of dominance of the sea as from its ability to wield effectively what we call today all the elements of national power. Corbett differentiated between maritime power and strategy and naval power and strategy. Maritime strategy encompassed all the aspects of sea power—military, commercial, political, etc. Naval strategy dealt specifically with the actions and maneuvers of the fleet. Like Mahan, Corbett saw oceans as highways of commerce and understood their importance. However, he emphasized not the uniqueness of sea power, but its relationship with other elements of power. For Corbett, the importance of navies was not their ability to gain command of the sea, but their ability to effect events on land. He believed that navies rarely won wars on their own—they often made it possible for armies to do so. The navy's role was thus to protect the homeland, while isolating and facilitating the insertion of ground forces into the overseas objective area. Neither command of the sea nor decisive naval battle necessarily were required to accomplish either of those tasks. Although Corbett admitted that winning the decisive naval clash remained the supreme function of a fleet, he believed there were times when that was neither necessary nor desirable.<sup>67</sup> His theories most closely approximate current U.S. naval doctrine.

### **Jeune Ecolé.**

Another school of sea power was the Jeune Ecolé that was popular on the continent in the early 1880s. Its primary advocate was Admiral Théophile Aube of the French Navy. Unlike the theories of either Mahan or Corbett, which were intended for major naval powers, the Jeune Ecolé was a classic small navy strategy. It was a way for land powers to fight sea powers. Advocates claimed that a nation did not have to command the sea to use it. In fact, modern technology made gaining command of the sea impossible. And one certainly did not have to have a large fleet of capital ships or win a big fleet battle. Rather than capital ships, one could rely on torpedo boats and cruisers (later versions would emphasize submarines). The naval strategist could either use those smaller vessels against the enemy's fleet in specific situations like countering an amphibious invasion, or more commonly against his commerce (to deny him the value of commanding the sea). Either use could be decisive without the expense of building and maintaining a large fleet or the dangers inherent in a major naval battle.<sup>68</sup> The Jeune Ecolé was an asymmetric naval strategy. It had a brief spurt of popularity and faded. Its advocates probably chuckled knowingly during World Wars I and II as submarines executed their pet

theory without the benefit of a name other than unrestricted submarine warfare. It is still available as an asymmetric approach to war at sea.

## AIRPOWER

### Douhet.

The basis of classic airpower theory—although paternity is debatable—is *The Command of the Air* published first in 1921 by Italian general and author, Giulio Douhet. Reacting to the horrors he saw in World War I, Douhet became an advocate of airpower. He believed that the airplane could restore decisiveness to warfare that ground combat seemed incapable of achieving. It could fly over the ground battlefield to directly attack the enemy's will. Because of technical problems with detection and interception, stopping an air raid would be impossible. Big bombers carrying a mix of high explosive, incendiary, and poison gas weapons could target enemy cities. Civilian populations, which were the key to modern warfare, would be unable to stand such bombardment and would soon force their governments to surrender. Although civilian casualties might be high, this would be a more humane method of warfare than prolonged ground combat.

There were a few strategic dicta beyond that. First, a prerequisite for success was command of the air—a theory closely related to command of the sea. Command of the air granted one side the ability to fly where and when it desired while the enemy was unable to fly. Next, because the airplane was an offensive weapon, one gained command of the air by strategic bombardment—ideally catching the enemy's air force on the ground. Recognizing the technological limitations of his day, Douhet believed there was no need for anti-aircraft artillery or interceptors since neither worked effectively. In fact, resources devoted to air defense or any type of auxiliary aircraft (anything that was not a large bomber) were wasted. The resource argument also featured shifting funding from the traditional land and sea services to the air service—a position not designed to win friends in the wider defense community. Like other airmen, Douhet believed that airplanes were employed best in an independent air force.<sup>69</sup>

Douhet captured the imagination of early airmen with his vision of decisiveness through command of the air. Generations of later airpower enthusiasts continue to seek to fulfill his prophecy. Nuclear weapons were supposed to have fixed the technological shortfalls that prevented airpower alone from winning World War II. That they were unusable made little difference. Precision guided munitions are the current mantra of the airpower enthusiast—they finally have made decisive air attack possible. There may actually be something to the precision guided munitions claim; only time will tell. Douhet's assertion of the futility of air defense proved wrong when radar made locating aircraft possible, and fighters became capable of catching and shooting down big bombers. Douhet's assertion of the fragility of civilian morale under air attack also proved false. Nevertheless, he still has a major influence on airpower doctrine and is the father of all modern airpower theory.

### Other Airpower Theories.

Douhet may have been the father of airpower theory, but others followed him quickly. Most of the later airpower theorists worked on one or both of two primary issues that Douhet had first surfaced: the most efficient way to organize airpower, a debate generally about an independent air force, or the proper mix of fighters, bombers, and ground-attack aircraft. The debate about separate air forces was important but not a true strategic issue. Conversely, the issue of proper mix of aircraft got directly to the issue of the proper role of airpower. The early theorists presented a variety of views on the issue. William "Billy" Mitchell saw America's strategic problem as one of defense against sea-borne

attack. A Douhet-like offensive air strategy was inappropriate. He also believed that aerial combat could provide effective defense against air attack. Thus, he developed a strategy based on a mix of fighters and bombers. In terms of both the necessity of command of the air and the potential strategic decisiveness of airpower, Mitchell agreed completely with Douhet.<sup>70</sup>

Another early airpower theorist was British Wing Commander John C. “Jack” Slessor. Slessor served a tour as an instructor at the Army Staff College at Camberley. His book *Air Power and Armies* is a collection of his lectures at the War College. Slessor was a believer in strategic bombing, but, perhaps because of his audience, he also emphasized the relationship between airpower and ground operations. The first requirement was gaining command of the air. Next, airpower could interdict the enemy’s lines of communication. Using airpower in direct support of committed troops (the flying artillery/close air support concept) was ineffective. Slessor did believe that both aspects of the air campaign could occur simultaneously – one did not need complete air superiority to begin interdiction. From the standpoint of the ground commander, supporting airpower was most effective in facilitating a breakthrough, in the pursuit, and in the defense.<sup>71</sup>

Slessor’s advocacy of interdiction was not, however, the only way one might approach the air-ground support issue. German Chief of Air Staff during the interwar years Helmut Wilberg was a pioneer in direct air-ground support. He wrote some of and edited and approved all of Germany’s immediate post-war studies on air force operations. Those studies concluded that strategic bombardment did not work, but that close air support did. Thus, it is not surprising that, unlike either the British or the Americans, the Germans developed a tactical air force oriented on close support of ground forces. The opportunity for Germany to develop a strategic air force or doctrine occurred during the tenure of Walter Weaver as Chief of Air Staff between 1934 and 1936. Weaver was a bomber advocate of the Douhetian ilk. However, when he died in an airplane crash in 1936, the Luftwaffe canceled Weaver’s pet four-engine bomber development program and slipped comfortably back into its ground support doctrine.

## CONCLUSION

Which of these approaches to strategy is the best? What is the approved solution? The answer is simple – there is no best solution. All the above have utility for specific purposes but are lacking as generalizations on strategy. They tend to be: 1) war-oriented rather than general (i.e., military strategy rather than strategy in general); 2) too narrowly focused even within the wartime realm (that is, they address military-specific strategies rather than more general grand strategies and in some cases represent single service approaches); and 3) even in the military arena, are too focused on one aspect of a multidimensional problem (i.e., they attempt to skip the basic ends-ways-means relationship and go straight to the solution). They generally are concerned with the how, while ignoring the what or why. The exceptions were the broad concepts like attrition, exhaustion, and annihilation and nuclear strategy that always aimed at deterrence and clearly linked ways with means to achieve that end.

So why present all these strategic concepts if they do not work? Remember that, although none of the paradigms works as a generalization, each has merit in specific circumstances. The strategist needs to be familiar with each so he can select the best approach or combination of approaches for the situation he faces. In that respect strategy is much like carpentry. Both are skills intended for solving problems. The carpenter uses a saw to cut, a hammer to drive, sandpaper to smooth, and myriad other tools depending on the need – there is a tool for every job. Similarly, the strategist needs to have a wide assortment of tools in his kitbag and be able to select the proper one for the task at hand. There is an old saying that if the only tool one has is a hammer, all problems look like a nail. That is as bad a solution in strategy as it is in carpentry.



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CHAPTER 8  
TOWARD A THEORY OF STRATEGY:  
ART LYKKE AND THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE STRATEGY MODEL

Harry R. Yarger

Gregory D. Foster argued in a *Washington Quarterly* article that there is no official or accepted general theory of strategy in the United States. In fact, he notes that as a people, Americans seem to regard theorizing in general as a futile intellectual exercise. If one were to construct such a theory, Foster continues, it should incorporate those elements found in any complete theory: essential terminology and definitions; an explanation of the assumptions and premises underlying the theory; substantive propositions translated into testable hypothesis; and methods that can be used to test the hypotheses and modify the theory as appropriate.<sup>1</sup> Foster may have this theory thing right. There is little evidence that, collectively as a nation, there is any agreement on just what constitutes a theory of strategy. This is very unfortunate because the pieces for a good theory of strategy have been laying around the U.S. Army War College for years – although sometimes hard to identify amongst all the intellectual clutter. Arthur F. Lykke, Jr.'s Army War College strategy model, with its ends, ways, and means, is the centerpiece of this theory.<sup>2</sup> The theory is quite simple, but it often appears unduly complex as a result of confusion over terminology and definitions and the underlying assumptions and premises.

One sees the term strategy misapplied often. There is a tendency to use it as a general term for a plan, concept, course of action, or “idea” of a direction in which to proceed. Such use is inappropriate. Strategy is the domain of the senior leader at the higher echelons of the state, the military, business corporations, or other institutions. Henry Eccles describes strategy as “. . . the comprehensive direction of power to control situations and areas in order to attain objectives.”<sup>3</sup> His definition captures much of the essence of strategy. It is comprehensive, it provides direction, its purpose is control, and it is fundamentally concerned with the application of power.<sup>4</sup> Strategy as used in the U.S. Army War College curriculum focuses on the nation-state and the use of the elements of power to serve state interests. In this context, strategy is the employment of the instruments (elements) of power (political/diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve the political objectives of the state in cooperation or in competition with other actors pursuing their own objectives.<sup>5</sup>

The underlying assumption of strategy from a national perspective is that states and other competitive entities have interests that they will pursue to the best of their abilities. Interests are desired end states such as survival, economic well-being, and enduring national values. The national elements of power are the resources used to promote or advance national interests. Strategy is the pursuit, protection, or advancement of these interests through the application of the instruments of power. Strategy is fundamentally a choice; it reflects a preference for a future state or condition. In doing so, strategy confronts adversaries, and some things simply remain beyond control or unforeseen.<sup>6</sup>

Strategy is all about *how* (way or concept) leadership will use the *power* (means or resources) available to the state to exercise control over sets of circumstances and geographic locations to achieve *objectives* (ends) that support state interests. Strategy provides direction for the coercive or persuasive use of this power to achieve specified objectives. This direction is by nature proactive. It seeks to control the environment as opposed to reacting to it. Strategy is not crisis management. It is its antithesis. Crisis management occurs when there is no strategy or the strategy fails. Thus, the first premise of a theory of strategy is that strategy is proactive and anticipatory.<sup>7</sup>

A second premise of a theory of strategy is that the strategist must know what is to be accomplished – that is, he must know the end state that he is trying to achieve. Only by analyzing and understanding

the desired end state in the context of the internal and external environment can the strategist develop appropriate objectives leading to the desired end state.

A third premise of a theory of strategy is that the strategy must identify an appropriate balance among the objectives sought, the methods to pursue the objectives, and the resources available. In formulating a strategy, the ends, ways, and means are part of an integral whole, and if one is discussing a strategy at the national (grand) level with a national level end, the ways and means similarly would refer to national level concepts and resources. That is, ends, ways, and means must be consistent. Thus a National Security Strategy end could be supported by concepts based on all the instruments of power and the associated resources. For the military element of power, the National Military Strategy would identify appropriate ends for the military to be accomplished through national military concepts with national military resources. In a similar manner, a Theater or Regional Combatant Commander would have specific theater level objectives for which he would develop theater concepts and use resources allocated to his theater. In some cases, these might include other than military instruments of power if those resources are available. The levels of strategy are distinct but interrelated because of the hierarchical and comprehensive nature of strategy.

A fourth premise of strategy is that political purpose must dominate all strategy; thus, Clausewitz' famous dictum, "War is merely the continuation of policy by other means."<sup>8</sup> Political purpose is stated in policy. Policy is the expression of the desired end state sought by the government. In its finest form, it is clear articulation of guidance for the employment of the instruments of power towards the attainment of one or more end states. In practice, it tends to be much vaguer. Nonetheless, policy dominates strategy by its articulation of the end state and its guidance. The analysis of the end state and guidance yields objectives leading to the desired end state. Objectives provide purpose, focus, and justification for the actions embodied in a strategy.<sup>9</sup> National strategy is concerned with a hierarchy of objectives that is determined by the political purpose of the state. Policy ensures that strategy pursues appropriate aims.

A fifth premise is that strategy is hierarchical. Foster argues that true strategy is the purview of the leader and is a "weltanschauung" (world view) that represents both national consensus and comprehensive direction. In the cosmic scheme of things, Foster may well be right, but reality requires more than a "weltanschauung." Political leadership ensures and maintains its control and influence through the hierarchical nature of state strategy. Strategy cascades from the national level down to the lower levels. Generally strategy emerges at the top as a consequence of policy statements and a stated National Security Strategy (sometimes referred to as Grand Strategy). National Security Strategy lays out broad objectives and direction for the use of all the instruments of power. From this National Security Strategy, the major activities and departments develop subordinate strategies. For the military, this is the National Military Strategy. In turn, the National Military Strategy leads to lower strategies appropriate to the various levels of war.

The U.S. Army War College (in consonance with Joint Pub 1-02) defines the levels of strategy within the state as:

- *National Security Strategy* (also referred to as Grand Strategy and National Strategy). The art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security (Joint Pub 1-02).
- *National Military Strategy*. The art and science of distributing and applying military power to attain national objectives in peace and war (Joint Pub 1-02).
- *Theater Strategy*. The art and science of developing integrated strategic concepts and courses of action directed toward securing the objectives of national and alliance or coalition security policy and strategy by the use of force, threatened use of force, or operations not involving the use of force within a theater (Joint Pub 1-02).

The hierarchical nature of strategy facilitates span of control. It represents a logical means of delegating responsibility and authority among senior leadership. It also suggests that if strategy consists of objectives, concepts, and resources, each should be appropriate to the level of strategy and consistent with one another. Thus strategy at the national military level should articulate military objectives at the national level and express the concepts and resources in terms appropriate to the national level for the specified objective.

At some level, planning and action fall below the strategic threshold. Under the National Military Strategy, the Combatant Commanders develop Theater Strategy and subsequent campaign plans. At this juncture, the line between strategy and planning merges with campaign planning that may be either at the theater strategic level or in the realm of Operational Art. Graphically, the relationship between strategy and the levels of war appear as:<sup>10</sup>

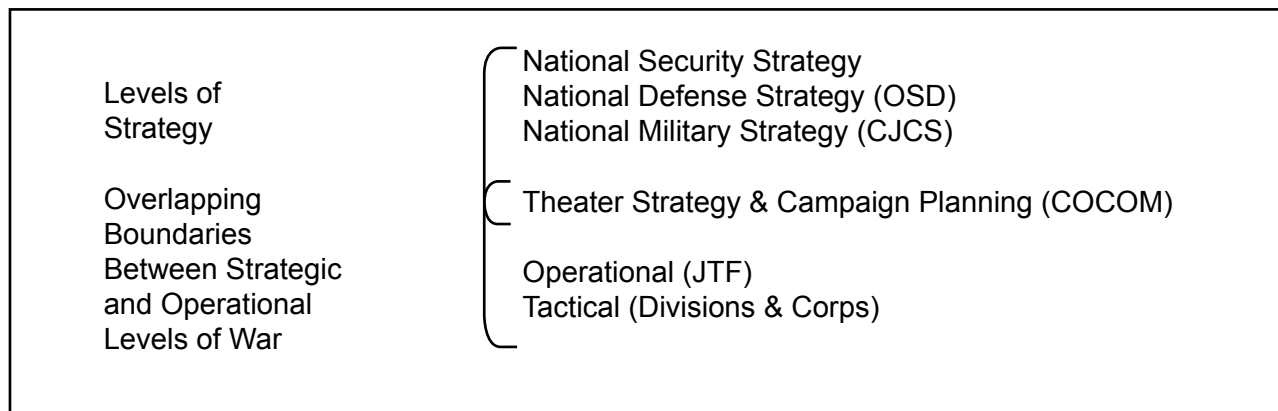


**Figure 1. Strategic and Operational Art.**

Strategy differs from operational art and tactics in functional, temporal, and geographic aspects. Functionally and temporally, tactics is the domain of battles, engagements of relatively short duration. Operational art is the domain of the campaign, a series of battles occurring over a longer period of time. Strategy is the domain of war which encompasses the protracted level of conflict among nations, armed or unarmed. Tactics concerns itself with the parts or pieces, operational art with the combination of the pieces, and strategy with the combinations of combinations. Geographically, tactics is narrowly defined, operational level is broader and more regional in orientation, and strategy is theater-wide, intercontinental, or global. It should also be noted that with the advances in transportation and communications, there has been a spatial and temporal convergence of strategy, operational art, and tactics. Increasingly, events at the tactical level have strategic consequences.<sup>11</sup>

A sixth premise is that strategy is comprehensive. That is to say, while the strategist may be devising a strategy from a particular perspective, he must consider the whole of the strategic environment in his analysis to arrive at a proper strategy to serve his purpose at his level. He is concerned with external and internal factors at all levels. On the other hand, in formulating a strategy, the strategist must also be cognizant that each aspect – objectives, concepts, and resources – has effects on the environment around him. Thus, the strategist must have a comprehensive knowledge of what else is happening and the potential first, second, third, etc., order effects of his own choices on the efforts of those above, below, and on his same level. The strategist's efforts must be integrated fully with the strategies or efforts of senior, co-equal, and subordinate elements. Strategists must think holistically – that is, comprehensively. They must be cognizant of both the “big picture,” their own institution's capabilities and resources, and the impact of their actions on the whole of the environment. Good strategy is never developed in isolation. (See Figure 2.)

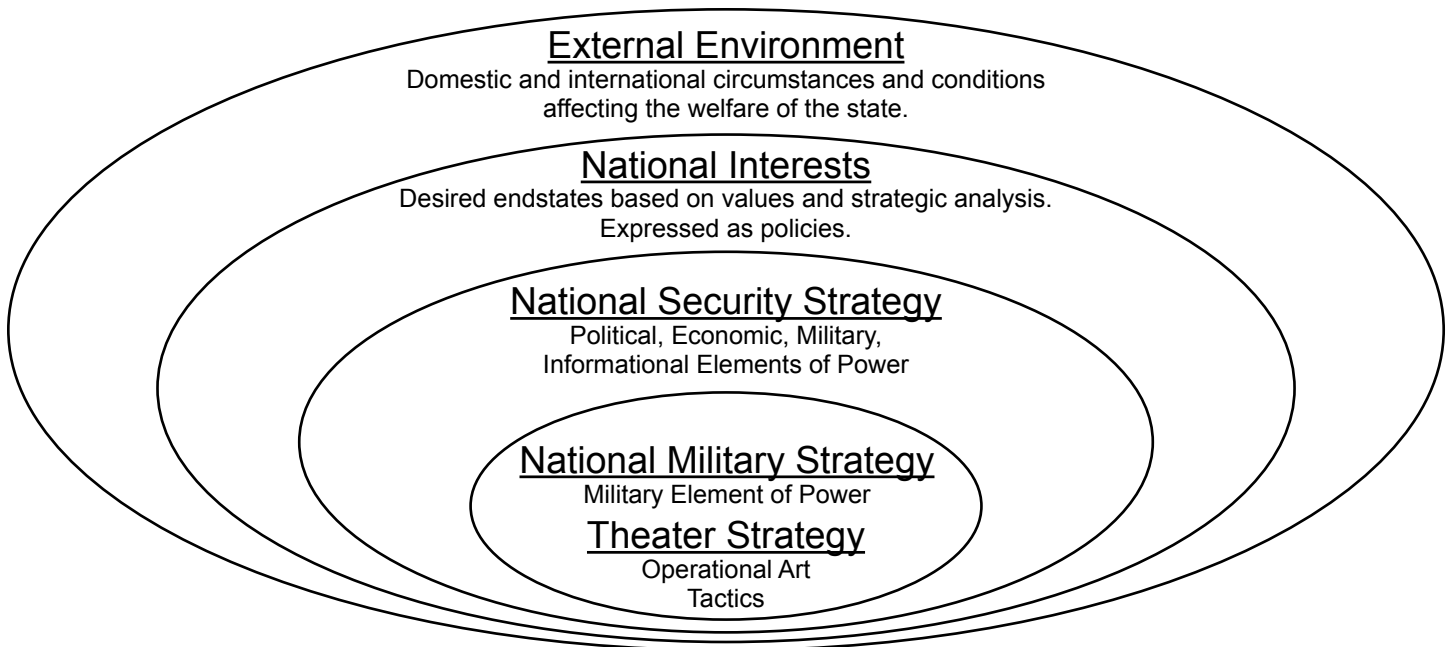


**Figure 2. Comprehensiveness of Strategy.**

A seventh premise is that strategy is developed from a thorough analysis and knowledge of the strategic situation/environment. The purpose of this analysis is to highlight the internal and external factors that help define or may affect the specific objectives, concepts, and resources of the strategy.

The last premise of a theory of strategy is that some risk is inherent to all strategy, and the best any strategy can offer is a favorable balance against failure. Failure can be either the failure to achieve one's own objectives and/or providing a significant advantage to one's adversaries.

Art Lykke gave coherent form to a theory of strategy with his articulation of the three-legged stool model of strategy which illustrated that strategy = ends + ways + means, and if these were not in balance, the assumption of greater risk. In the Lykke proposition (model), the ends are "objectives," the ways are the "concepts" for accomplishing the objectives, and the means are the "resources" for supporting the concepts. The stool tilts if the three legs are not kept in balance. If any leg is too short, the risk is too great and the strategy falls over (see Figure 3).<sup>12</sup>

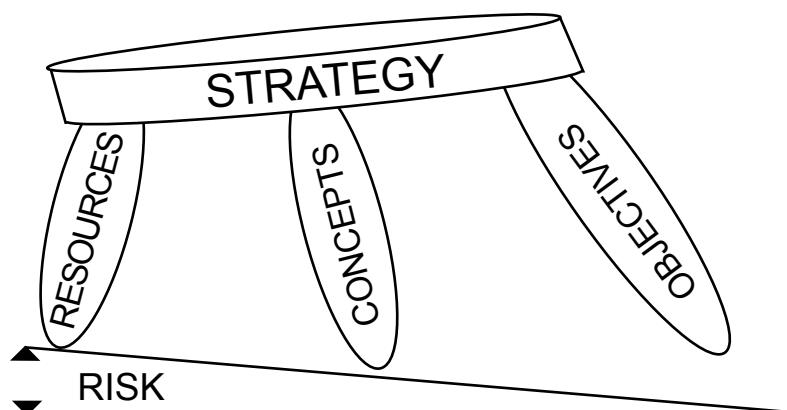


**Figure 3. The Lykke Model.**

It should be evident that the model poses three key questions for strategists. What is to be done? How is it to be done? What resources are required to do it in this manner? Lykke argues that if any leg of the stool is out of balance, then one accepts a corresponding risk unless one adjusts the legs. One might add resources, use a different concept, or change the objective. Or one might decide to accept the risk. The theory is quite clear—a valid strategy must have an appropriate balance of objectives, concepts, and resources, or its success is at greater risk.<sup>13</sup> Lykke's theory, like all good theory, does not necessarily provide a strategy. It is a paradigm that describes the questions to ask and the rules to follow. His strategic theory is supported by the underlying premises and assumptions above, and its practice is facilitated by the sharing of common definitions and formats.

Art Lykke wrestled with his proposition for many years and taught thousands of Army War College students to use his model properly through definition and illustration. These definitions and illustrations are important because they provide the common understanding by which strategists communicate. They include:

- *Ends (objectives)* explain “what” is to be accomplished. Ends are objectives that, if accomplished, create, or contribute to, the achievement of the desired end state at the level of strategy being analyzed and, ultimately, serve national interests. Ends are expressed with verbs (i.e., deter war, promote regional stability, destroy Iraqi armed forces).
- *Ways (strategic concepts/courses of action)* explain “how” the ends are to be accomplished by the employment of resources. The concept must be explicit enough to provide planning guidance to those who must implement and resource it. Since ways convey action, they often have a verb, but ways are statements of “how,” not “what,” in relation to the objective of a strategy. Some confusion exists because the concept for higher strategy often defines the objectives of the next lower level of strategy. A simple test for a way is to ask “in order to do what?” That should lead to the real objective. Some concepts are so accepted that their names have been given to specific strategies (containment, forward defense, assured destruction, forward presence are illustrations). But note that in actual practice, these strategies have specific objectives and forces associated with them and the concept is better developed than the short title suggests.
- *Means (resources)* explain what specific resources are to be used in applying the concepts to accomplish the objectives and use no verb. Means can be tangible or intangible. Examples of tangible means include forces, people, equipment, money, and facilities. Intangible resources include things like “will,” courage, or intellect.
- *Risk* explains the gap between what is to be achieved and the concepts and resources available to achieve the objective. Since there are never enough resources or a clever enough concept to assure 100 percent success in the competitive international environment, there is always some risk. The strategist seeks to minimize this risk through his development of the strategy—the balance of ends, ways, and means.

Ends, ways, and means often get confusing in the development or analysis of a specific strategy. The trick is to focus on the questions. Objectives always will answer the question of what one is trying to achieve. Concepts always explain “how” the resources will be used. Resources always explain what will be used to execute the concept. If the objective is “defend the United States (what?)”; “to develop, build, or establish a larger force” is a way (how?); and, “national manpower reserves, money, and training facilities” are examples of the means (resources to be used to support the “how”). The rule of thumb to apply here is that resources are usually physical and countable: Army, Air Force, Navy, units and armed forces of United States; personnel; dollars; facilities; equipment—trucks, planes, ships, etc.;



and resources of organizations—Red Cross, NATO, etc. Means might also include such intangibles as “will, industrial capacity, intellect. etc.,” but state them as resources. Do not use means to describe concepts and do not articulate resources as ways or concepts. In a very simplified manner, “diplomacy” is a *way* to promote regional stability (*objective*), but diplomats are the *means*. In the same manner, Clausewitz preferred “overthrow of the enemy’s government” as the end, to fight a decisive battle as the way, and a larger army as the means. He saw the larger army as an appropriate resource to support his way—the decisive battle. To say “*use of a larger army*” infers a different concept for success and is an inappropriate statement of means (resources).

Over time thousands of students at the Army War College have tested Art Lykke’s theory of strategy, using the historical case study approach. His proposition is a common model for analyzing and evaluating the strategy of historical and current strategic level leadership. By using the theory to break a strategy into its component parts, Art Lykke argued any strategy can be examined for suitability, feasibility, and acceptability, and an assessment made of the proper balance among the component parts. In addition, his lecturing and presentations have led to the adoption of the basic model by a cohort of military and political strategists. This has, in turn, led to the proactive evaluation of strategy during development against the same standards of:

- Suitability – will its attainment accomplish the effect desired (relates to objective)?
- Feasibility – can the action be accomplished by the means available (relates to concept)?
- Acceptability – are the consequences of cost justified by the importance of the effect desired (relates to resources/concept)?<sup>14</sup>

Not only has the basic proposition been tested in historical case studies and practical application, it also has proven itself adaptable to explaining differing aspects of strategic thought. Art Lykke’s argument that nations engage in two distinct types of military strategy concurrently – operational and force developmental – illustrate the theory’s adaptability. Operational strategies are based on existing military capabilities. Force developmental strategies are based on future threats and objectives and are not limited by existing capabilities. In fact, their primary role is to help determine and develop future capabilities.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the theory lends itself to both warfighters and force developers within the military.

Art Lykke’s theory of strategy is an important contribution to strategic thought. In encouraging the strategist to use the term “strategy” correctly while applying the strategy model and its four parts—ends, ways, means and risk, he provided a viable theory of strategy. The assumptions and premises of this theory have proven valid for analyzing and developing strategy. Above all, a valid strategy must find a balance among ends, ways, and means consistent with the risk the nation is willing to accept. Art Lykke’s theory of strategy provides the basis for clearly articulating and objectively evaluating any strategy.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 8

1. Gregory D. Foster, “A Conceptual Foundation for a Theory of Strategy,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter, 1990, p. 43. Foster’s analysis of the assumptions and premises of strategy is particularly thought provoking.

2. Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., “Toward an Understanding of Military Strategy,” chap. in *Military Strategy: Theory and Application*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1989, pp. 3-8. This document is the best written explanation of his ideas. Also used in this chapter are the author’s notes and recollections from Professor Lykke’s lectures.

3. Henry E. Eccles, *Military Concepts and Philosophy*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1965, p. 48.

4. Foster, p. 50.

5. David Jablonsky, *Why Is Strategy Difficult?*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1992; reprint 1995. Professor Jablonsky's work, of which this is representative, gives the best explanation. He lists the elements of power as economic, psychological, political, and military. Socio-psychological is another term used as an instrument of power instead of psychological or informational. Note also that elements of power is more inclusive than instruments of power and includes demographic/geographic elements. Dr. Jablonsky raised Art Lykke's proposition to the political level.

6. Foster, pp. 47-48.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

8. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 87.

9. Foster, p. 50.

10. This chart is adapted from an older version commonly used to explain the overlapping. Abbreviations used: CJCS (Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff); COCOM (Combatant Commander); and JTF (Joint Task Force).

11. Foster, p. 56.

12. Lykke, pp. 6-7.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Henry C. Eccles, "Strategy – The Theory and Application." *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3, May-June 1979, p. 11-21.

15. Lykke, p. 4.



## CHAPTER 9 WHY IS STRATEGY DIFFICULT?

David Jablonsky

Colonel (Ret.) Arthur Lykke has taught an entire generation of U.S. Army War College students that strategy at any level consists of ends or objectives, ways or concepts, and means or resources. This three-element framework is nothing more than a reworking of the traditional definition of strategy as the calculated relationship of ends and means. Yet the student response always is overwhelmingly favorable, with Lykke's framework invariably forming the structure for subsequent seminar problems on subjects ranging from the U.S. Civil War to nuclear strategy. This is due, in part, to the fact that students weaned on the structural certitude of the five-paragraph field order and the Commander's Estimate naturally find such structure comforting in dealing with the complexities of strategy. But those students also know from their experience in the field that there are limits to the scientific approach when dealing with human endeavors. As a consequence, they also can appreciate the art of mixing ends, ways, and means, using for each element the part subjective, part objective criteria of suitability, feasibility, and applicability – the essence of strategic calculation.<sup>11</sup>

The ends-ways-means paradigm also provides a structure at ally level of strategy to avoid confusing the scientific product with the scientific process. The former involves production propositions that are related logically and valid across time and space. The search for these immutable principles over the centuries by students of war failed because they looked at classical strategy as something like physical science that could produce verities in accordance with certain regularities. This was compounded further by military thinkers who made claims for scientific products without subjecting those products to a scientific process. Both Jomini and Mahan, for instance, ignored evidence in cases that did not fit their theories or principles of strategy.<sup>22</sup> The strategic paradigm, then, serves as a lowest common denominator reminder that a true scientific product is not possible from the study of strategy. At the same time, however, that paradigm provides a framework for the systematic treatment of facts and evidence – the very essence of the scientific process. In this regard, Admiral Wylie has pointed out:

I do not claim that strategy is or can be a "science" in the sense of the physical sciences. It can and should be in intellectual discipline of the highest order, and the strategist should prepare himself to manage ideas with precision and clarity and imagination. . . . Thus, while strategy itself may not be a science, strategic judgment can be scientific to the extent that it is orderly, rational, objective, inclusive, discriminatory, and perceptive.<sup>33</sup>

All that notwithstanding, the limitations of the strategic paradigm bring the focus full circle back to the art involved in producing the optimal mix of ends, ways, and means. Strategy, of course, does depend on the general regularities of that paradigm. But strategy does not always obey the logic of that framework, remaining, as the German Army Regulations *Truppen-fuhrung* of 1936 described it, "a free creative activity resting upon scientific foundations."<sup>44</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate why, despite increasingly scientific approaches to formulation and implementation, strategy remains principally an art rather than a science, and why, within that art, the "creative activity" of blending the elements in the strategic paradigm has become progressively more difficult over the centuries.

### **From Revolutions to Total War.**

In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, there was a growing recognition of the increased complexity of strategy, summarized in Karl von Clausewitz's warning that "there can be no question of a purely military evaluation of a great strategic issue, nor of a purely military scheme to solve it."<sup>55</sup> At the tactical

level, the Prussian philosopher wrote, “the means are fighting forces trained for combat; the end is victory.” For the strategic, however, Clausewitz concluded that military victories were meaningless unless they were the means to obtain a political end, “those objects which lead directly to peace.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, strategy was “the linking together (Verbindung) of separate battle engagements into a single whole, for the final object of the war.”<sup>77</sup> And only the political or policy level could determine that objective. “To bring a war, or any one of its campaigns to a successful close requires a thorough grasp of national policy,” he pointed out. “On that level, strategy and policy coalesce.”<sup>88</sup> For Clausewitz, this vertical continuum (see Figure 1) was best exemplified by Frederick the Great, who embodied both policy and strategy and whose Silesian conquests of 1741 lie considered to be the classic example of strategic art by demonstrating “an element of restrained strength, . . . ready to adjust to the smallest shift in the political situation.”<sup>99</sup>



**Figure 1. The Policy Continuum.**

With his deceptively simple description of the vertical continuum of war, Clausewitz set the stage for the equivalent of a Copernican shift in the strategic ends-ways-means paradigm. Now that paradigm was more complex, operating on both the military and policy levels with the totality of the ends, ways, and means at the lower levels interconnected with the political application at the policy level of those same strategic elements. This connection was the essence of Clausewitz’s description of war as a continuation of political intercourse (Verkehr) with the addition of other means. He explained that

We deliberately use the phrase “with the addition of other means” because we also want to make it clear ‘ that war in itself does not suspend political intercourse or change it into something entirely different. . . . The main lines along which military events progress, and to which they are restricted, are political lines that continue throughout the war into the subsequent peace. . . . War cannot be divorced from political life; and whenever this occurs in our thinking about war, the many links that connect the two elements are destroyed and we are left with something pointless and devoid of sense.<sup>1010</sup>

### **The Industrial and French Revolutions.**

This growing complexity in dealing with the strategic paradigm was compounded by two upheavals. Clausewitz was profoundly aware of one, the French Revolution; he was totally ignorant of the other, the

industrial/technological revolution. Prior to the French Revolution, 18th century rulers had acquired such effective political and economic control over their people that they were able to create their war machines as separate and distinct from the rest of society. The Revolution changed all that with the appearance of a force “that beggared all imagination” as Clausewitz described it,

Suddenly, war again became the business of the people—a people of thirty millions, all of whom considered themselves to be citizens. There seemed no end to the resources mobilized; all limits disappeared in the vigor and enthusiasm shown by governments and their subjects.... War, untrammelled by any, conventional restraints, had broken loose in all its elemental fury. This was due to the peoples’ new share in these great affairs of state; and their participation, in its turn, resulted partly from the impact that the Revolution had on the internal conditions of every state and partly from the danger that France posed to everyone.<sup>1111</sup>

For Clausewitz, the people greatly complicated the formulation and implementation of strategy by adding “primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force” to form with the army and the government what he termed the remarkable trinity (see Figure 2). The army he saw as a “creative spirit,” roaming freely within “the play of chance and probability,” but always bound to the government, the third element, in “subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.”<sup>1212</sup>

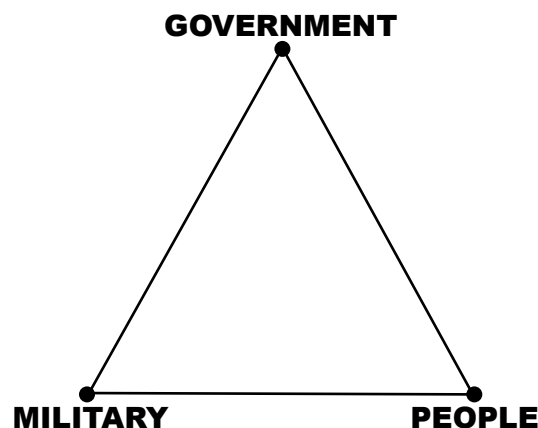


Figure 2. The Remarkable Trinity.

It was the complex totality of this trinity that, Clausewitz realized, had altered and complicated strategy so completely.

Clearly the tremendous effects of the French Revolution . . . were caused not so much by new military methods and concepts as by radical changes in policies and administration, by the new character of government, altered conditions of the French people, and the like. . . . It follows that the transformation of the art of war resulted from the transformation of politics.<sup>1313</sup>

But while that transformation had made it absolutely essential to consider the elements of the Clausewitzian trinity within the strategic paradigm, the variations possible in the interplay of those elements moved strategy even farther from the realm of scientific certitude. “A theory that ignores any one of them or seeks to fix an arbitrary relationship between them,” Clausewitz warned in this regard, “would conflict with reality to such an extent that, for this reason alone, it would be totally useless.”<sup>1414</sup>

Like most of his contemporaries, Clausewitz had no idea that he was living on the eve of a technological transformation born of the Industrial Revolution. But that transformation, as it gathered momentum throughout the remainder of the 19th century, fundamentally altered the interplay of elements within

the Clausewitzian trinity, further complicating the formulation and application process within the strategic paradigm (see Figure 3).

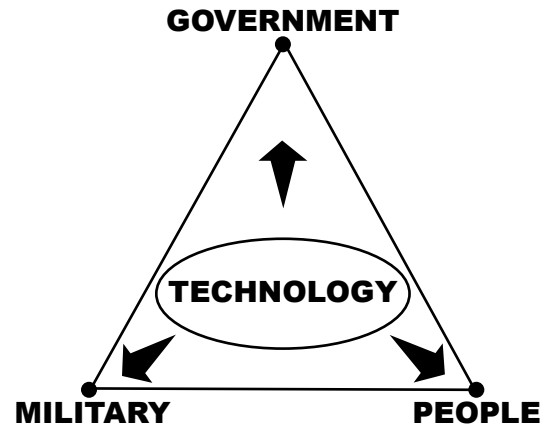


Figure 3. The Impact of Technology.

In terms of the military element, technology would change the basic nature of weapons and modes of transportation, the former stable for a hundred years, the latter for a thousand. Within a decade of Clausewitz's death in 1831, that process would begin in armaments with the introduction of breech-loading firearms and in transportation with the development of the railroads."<sup>1515</sup>

Technology had a more gradual effect on the role of the people. There were, for example, the great European population increases of the 19th century as the Industrial Revolution moved to the continent from Great Britain. This trend led, in turn, to urbanization: the mass movement of people from the extended families of rural life to the "atomized," impersonal life of the city. There, the urge to belong, to find a familial substitute, led to a more focused allegiance to the nation-state manifested in a new, more blatant and aggressive nationalism.

This nationalism was fueled by the progressive side effects of the Industrial Revolution, particularly in the area of public education, which meant, in turn, mass literacy throughout Europe by the end of the 19th century. One result was that an increasingly literate public could be manipulated by governments as technology spawned more sophisticated methods of mass communications. On the other hand, those same developments also helped democratize societies, which then demanded a greater share in government, particularly over strategic question,, involving war and peace. In Clausewitz's time, strategic decisions dealing with such matters were rationally based on Realpolitik considerations to further state interests, not on domestic issues. By the end of the 19th century, the Rankeian Primat der Aussenpolitik was challenged increasingly throughout Europe by the need of governments for domestic consensus—a development with far-reaching implications for the conduct of strategy at the national level within the basic ends-ways-means paradigm.<sup>1616</sup>

During much of that century, as the social and ideological upheavals unleashed by the French Revolution developed, military leaders in Europe generally attempted to distance their armed forces from their people. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Prussian cum German military, where the leaders worked *hard* over the years to prevent the adulteration of their forces by liberal ideas. "The army is now our fatherland," General von Roon wrote to his wife during the 1848 revolutions, "for there alone have the unclean and violent elements who put everything into turmoil failed to penetrate."<sup>1717</sup> The revolutions in industry and technology, however, rendered this ideal unattainable. To begin with, the so-called Technisierung of warfare meant the mass production of more complex weapons forever-larger standing military forces. The key ingredients for these forces were the great population increases and the rise of nationalism, as well as improved communications and governmental efficiency—the

latter directed at general conscription of national manhood, which, thanks to progress in railroad development, could be brought to the battlefield in unlimited numbers.

At the same time, this increased interaction between the government/military and the people also was tied to other aspects of the impact of technology on the Clausewitzian trinity. Technological innovations in weaponry during this period, for example, were not always followed by an understanding of their implications, societal as well as military. Certainly, there was the inability on the part of all European powers to perceive the growing advantage of defensive over offensive weapons demonstrated in the Boer and Russo-Japanese wars. That inability was tied in with a trend in Europe at the time to combine *elan* with a military focus on moral force, bloodshed, and decisive battles. The result was that the military leaders of France, Germany, and Russia all adopted offensive military doctrines in some form.<sup>1818</sup>

The fact that these doctrines led to the self-defeating offensive strategies of World War I ultimately had to do with the transformation of civil-military relations within the Clausewitzian trinity in their countries. In France, as an example, the officer corps distrusted the trend by the leaders of the Third Republic toward shorter terms of military service, which it believed threatened the army's professional character and tradition. Adopting an offensive doctrine and elevating it to the highest level was a means to combat this trend, since there was general agreement that an army consisting primarily of reservists and short-term conscripts could only be used in the defense. "Reserves are so much eyewash," one French general wrote at the time, "and take in only, short-sighted mathematicians who equate the value of armies with the size of their effectives, without considering their moral value."<sup>1919</sup> Although these were setbacks for those who shared this sentiment in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair and the consequent military reforms, it only required the harsher international climate after the Agadir crisis of 1911 for General Joffre and his young Turks to gain the ascendancy. Their philosophy was summed up by their leader, who explained that, in planning for the next war, he had "no preconceived idea other than a full determination to take the offensive with all my forces assembled."<sup>2020</sup>

Under these circumstances, French offensive doctrine became increasingly unhinged from strategic reality as it responded to the more immediate demands of domestic and intragovernmental politics. The result was France's ill-conceived strategic lunge in 1914 toward its former possessions in the East, a lunge that almost provided sufficient margin of assistance for Germany's Schlieffen Plan, another result of military operational doctrine driving policy. In the end, only the miracle of the Marne prevented a victory for the Germans as rapid and complete as that of 1870.<sup>2121</sup>

There were other equally significant results as the full brunt of technological change continued to alter the relationship between the elements of the Clausewitzian trinity in all the European powers. The larger, more complex armies resulted in the growing specialization and compartmentalization of the military—a trend that culminated in the emulation of the German General Staff system by most of the European powers. It is significant that Clausewitz had ignored Carnot, the "organizer of victory" for Napoleon, when considering military genius. Now with the increase in military branches as well as combat service and combat service support organizations, the age of the "military-organizational" genius had arrived. All this, in turn, affected the relationship in all countries between the military and the government. For the very increase in professional knowledge and skill caused by technology's advance in military affairs undermined the ability of political leaders to understand and control the military, just as technology was making that control more important than ever by extending strategy from the battlefield to the civilian rear, thus blurring the difference between combatant and noncombatant.<sup>2222</sup>

At the same time, the military expansion in the peacetime preparation for war began to enlarge the economic dimensions of conflict beyond the simple financial support of Clausewitz's era. As Europe entered the 20th century, new areas of concern began to emerge ranging from industrial capacity and the availability and distribution of raw materials to research and development of weapons and equipment. All this, in turn, increased the size and role of the European governments prior to World War I—with



the result, as William James perceptively noted, that “the intensely sharp competitive preparation for war by the nation is the real war, permanently increasing, so that the battles are only a sort of public verification of mastery gained during the ‘peace’ intervals.”<sup>2323</sup>

Nevertheless, the full impact of the government’s strategic role in terms of national instruments of power beyond that of the military generally was not perceived in Europe, despite some of the more salient lessons of the American Civil War. In that conflict, the South lost because its strategic means did not match its strategic ends and ways. Consequently, no amount of operational finesse on the part of the South’s great captains could compensate for the superior industrial strength and manpower that the North could deploy. Ultimately, this meant for the North, as Michael Howard has pointed out, “that the operational skills of their adversaries were rendered almost irrelevant.”<sup>2424</sup> The Civil War also illustrated another aspect of the changes within the strategic paradigm: the growing importance of the national will of the people in achieving political as well as military strategic objectives. That social dimension of strategy on the part of the Union was what prevented the early southern operational victories from being strategically decisive and what ultimately allowed the enormous industrial-logistical potential north of the Potomac to be realized.

### **The Revolutions Joined: The Age of Total Wars.**

Strategy changed irrevocably with the full confluence in World War I of the trends set in train by the Industrial and French revolutions. In particular, the technology in that war provided, as Hanson Baldwin has pointed out, “a preview of the Pandora’s box of evils that the linkage of science with industry in the service of war was to mean.”<sup>2525</sup> How unexpected the results of that linkage could be was illustrated by a young British subaltern’s report to his commanding general after one of the first British attacks in Flanders. “Sorry, sir,” he concluded. “We didn’t know it would be like that. We’ll do better next time.”<sup>2626</sup>

But of course there was no doing better next time, not by British and French commanders in Flanders, not by Austrian troops on the Drina and Galician fronts in 1914, not by the Russian officers on the Gorlice-Tarnow line in 1915. The frustration at this turn of events was captured by Alexander Solzhenitsyn in his novel, *August 1914*. “How disastrously the conditions of warfare had changed,” he wrote, “making a commander as impotent as a rag doll! Where now was the battlefield . . . , across which he could gallop over to a faltering commander and summon him to his side?”<sup>2727</sup> It was this milieu that demonstrated the inadequacy of classical strategy to deal with the intricacies of modern warfare. Napoleon had defined that strategy, as the “art of making use of time and space.”<sup>2828</sup> But the dimensions of these two variables had been stretched and rendered more complex by the interaction of technology, with the elements of the Clausewitz’s trinity. And that very complexity, augmented by the lack of decisiveness at the tactical level, impeded the vertical continuum of war outlined in Clausewitz’s definition of strategy as the use of engagements to achieve policy objectives. Only when the continuum was enlarged, as the Great War demonstrated, was it possible to restore warfighting coherence to modern combat. And that, in turn, required the classical concept of strategy, to be positioned at a midpoint, an operational level, designed to orchestrate individual tactical engagements and battles in order to achieve strategic results (see Figure 4). Now, a military strategy level, operating within the ends-ways-means paradigm on its own horizontal plane, was added as another way station on the vertical road to the fulfillment of policy objectives. This left the concept of strategy, as it had been understood since the time of Clausewitz, transformed into:

the level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives. . . . Activities at this level link tactics and strategy. . . . These activities imply a broader dimension of time or space than do tactics; they provide the means by which tactical successes are exploited to achieve strategic objectives.<sup>2929</sup>

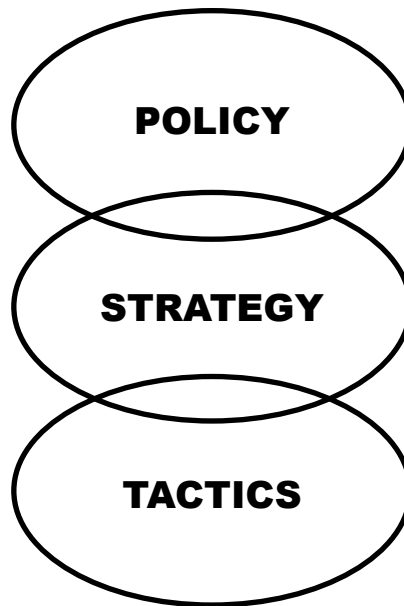


**Figure 4. The Continuum of War.**

At the same time, the full impact of technology on the Clausewitzian trinity in each of the combatant states during World War I substituted the infinitely more complex concept of national strategy for that of policy. To begin with, the growing sophistication and quantity of arms and munitions, as well as the vast demands of equipment and supply made by the armies, involved the national resources of industry, science, and agriculture—variables with which the military leaders were not prepared to deal. To cope with these variables, governments soon were forced to transform the national lives of their states in order to provide the sinews of total war.

Looking back over 50 years on the totality of this change in what Clausewitz had termed policy, Admiral Eccles defined the concept of national strategy that emerged in World War I as “the comprehensive direction of all the elements of national power to achieve the national objectives.”<sup>3030</sup> The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) is more explicit, defining the new level of strategy that emerged at the national level after 1914 as the “art and science of developing and using the political, economic, and psychological powers of a nation, together with its armed forces during peace and war, to secure national objectives.”<sup>3131</sup>

National strategy, then, involves all the elements of national power. Those elements, in turn, can be conveniently broken down on a horizontal plane into the categories described in the DoD definition of national strategy: political, economic, psychological, and military (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5. National Strategy: The Horizontal Plane.**

The linchpin in this horizontal design is the military instrument of power at the national strategic level-the apex, as we have seen emerging in World War 1, of the vertical continuum of war (see Figure 6).



**Figure 6. National Strategy and the Vertical Continuum of War.**

Thus, the mix of ends, ways, and means at the national military strategic level will affect directly (and be affected by) the same paradigm operating at each level of the vertical continuum. Adding to the complexity is the interplay on the horizontal plane of national military strategy with the other strategies derived from the elements of national power, each operating within its own strategic paradigm and all contributing to the grand design of national strategy, as that strategy evolves within its own overall mix of ends, ways, and means. That this horizontal and vertical interplay has rendered the formulation and implementation of strategy at every level more difficult has become increasingly obvious. "Because these various elements of power cannot be precisely defined, compartmented, or divided," Admiral Eccles concluded about the "fog" of strategy, "it is normal to expect areas of ambiguity, overlap, and contention about authority among the various elements and members of any government."<sup>3232</sup>

## Conclusion.

The United States is in an era in which the strategic landscape has changed and is continuing to change. Nevertheless, the core problems that make strategy so difficult for a global power remain essentially the same as they did for earlier powers ranging from Rome to Great Britain. To begin with, there are challenges to U.S. interests throughout the globe. In a constantly changing strategic environment, however, it is difficult in many cases to distinguish which of those interests are vital, not to mention the nature of the challenge or threat to them. In any case, there are never enough armed forces to reduce the risk everywhere; strategic priorities have to be established.

In addition, like the leaders of earlier great powers, U.S. governmental elites have to grapple with the paradox of preparing for war, even in peacetime if they wish to maintain the peace. The dilemma in the paradox that makes strategy in any era so difficult is that to overdo such preparations may weaken the economic, psychological, and political elements of power in the long run. The solution is to so balance the total ends, ways, and means that the natural tension in national security affairs between domestic and foreign policy is kept to a minimum, while still securing the nation's vital interests with a minimum of risk. This solution, as the leaders of the great global powers of the past assuredly would agree, is not easy to achieve. In an ever more interdependent world in which variables for the strategist within the ends-ways-means paradigm have increased exponentially, strategists are no nearer to a "Philosopher's Stone" than they ever were. Strategy remains the most difficult of all art.<sup>3333</sup>

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 9

1. Arthur F. Lykke, "Defining Military Strategy," *Military Review*, Vol. 69, No. 5, May 1989, pp. 2-8; and his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, *National Security Strategy*, hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundredth Cong., First Sess., Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1987, pp. 140-145. See also *Sound Military Decision*, Newport, RI: Naval War College, 1942, pp. 32, 34, 164, 165; and Henry E. Eccles, *Military Power in a Free Society*, Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1979, p. 73.

2. John Shy, "Jomini," pp. 173-175; and Philip Crowl, "Mahan," p. 454, both in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, Peter Paret, ed., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986. See also Stephen M. Walt, "The Search for a Science of Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Summer 1987, pp. 144-145; and John L. Alger, *The Quest for Victory*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982; Admiral J. C. Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980, p. 20.

3. Wylie, *Military Strategy*, p. 10.

4. Martin van Creveld, "Eternal Clausewitz," in *Clausewitz and Modern Strategy*, Michael L. Handel, ed., London: Frank Cass, 1986, p. 41. The formulation of strategy is the creative act of choosing a means, an end, a way to relate a means to an end." Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, p. 50.

5. Original emphasis. Carl von Clausewitz, *Two Letters on Strategy*, Peter Paret and Daniel Moran, eds. and trans., Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1984, p. 9.

6. Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, pp. 142-143.
7. Michael Howard, *Clausewitz*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 16; Clausewitz, *On War*, pp. 127-132.
8. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 111. "In the highest realms of strategy . . . there is little or no difference between strategy, policy and statesmanship." *Ibid.*, p. 178. Winston Churchill relearned these lessons in World War I. "The distinction between politics and strategy," he wrote at that time, "diminishes as the point of view is raised. At the Summit, true politics and strategy are one." Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis 1915*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929, p. 6.
9. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 179.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 605.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 592-593.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 609-610.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
15. Michael L. Handel, *War, Strategy and Intelligence*, London: Frank Cass, 1989, p. 63; Howard, *Clausewitz*, pp. 3-4; and van Creveld, "Eternal Clausewitz," p. 36.
16. Handel, *War*, p. 82. See also Dennis E. Showalter, "Total War for Limited Objectives: An Interpretation of German Grand Strategy," in *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, Paul Kennedy, ed., New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 110-111.
17. Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army 1640-1945*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 107; Michael Howard, "The Armed Forces as a Political Problem," in *Soldiers and Governments*, Michael Howard, ed., Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978, p. 16.
18. Martin van Creveld, "Caesar's Ghost: Military History and the Wars of the Future," *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1980, p. 81. See also Michael Howard, "Men against Fire: The Doctrine of the Offensive in 1914," *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 521; and Handel, *War*, pp. 21, 64-68.
19. Howard, "Armed Forces as a Political Problem," p. 17. See also Jack Snyder, "Civil Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914-1984," *International Security*, Summer 1984, p. 109.
20. Theodore Ropp, *War in the Modern World*, New York: Collier Books, 1962, p. 229; Snyder, "Civil Military Relations," pp. 110-111, 130, 132-133.
21. The French military elite made a mirror image of their disdain for reservists in their estimates of German strength. The German General Staff made extensive use of German reservists, however, and instead of the 68 German divisions that had been expected in the implementation of French Plan XVII, there were 83. Howard, "Armed Forces as a Political Problem," p. 17. Joffre's failure to use French reservists more fully in 1914 proved to be, as Douglas Porch has pointed out, "like going to war without your trousers on." See Porch, "Arms and Alliances: French Grand Strategy and Policy in 1914 and 1940," in *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, p. 142. See also Snyder, "Civil Military Relations," pp. 108, 133. It is true, of course, that had the French Army remained on the defensive instead of plunging into Alsace, it could have brought its full weight to bear on the German Army at the French frontier. Stephen Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War," *International Security*, Summer 1984, p. 89. It is also true, however, that the French offensive ultimately caused Moltke to weaken the right flank that was supposed to "brush the channel with its sleeve." Moreover, as Michael Howard has pointed out, the general concept behind Plan XVII—that France should take the strategic initiative rather than passively await the German offensive—did provide the flexibility that enabled General Joffre to recover rapidly from his opening reverses and redeploy his forces for the battle of the Marne. Howard, "Men against Fire," pp. 522-523.
22. Handel, *War*, pp. 60, 79. "The interchangeability between the statesman and the soldier," General Wavell stated later in summarizing these developments, "passed forever . . . in the 11st century. The Germans professionalized the trade of war, and modern inventions, by increasing its technicalities, have specialized it." Archibald Wavell, *Generals and Generalship*, London: Macmillan, 1941, pp. 33-34.
23. Handel, *War*, p. 58.
24. Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1979, p. 977. See also Gordon A. Craig, "Delbruck: The Military Historian," *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 345.
25. Hanson W. Baldwin, *World War 1: An Outline History*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, p. 159.
26. Gordon A. Craig, *War, Politics and Diplomacy*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966, p. 197.

27. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *August 1914*, New York: Bantam Books, 1974, pp. 330-331.
28. David G. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, New York: Macmillan, 1966, p. 161.
29. JCS Pub 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 1, 1989, p. 264.
30. Henry E. Eccles, *Military Power in a Free Society*, Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1979, p. 70.
31. JCS Pub 1-02, p. 244. This is what Andre Beaufre long ago termed total strategy: “the manner in which all — political, economic, diplomatic, and military — should be woven together.” Andre Beaufre, *An Introduction to Strategy*, New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 30.
32. Eccles, *Military Power*, p. 70.
33. Kennedy, “Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition,” p. 7. During the Roman Republic, for example, Roman foreign policy was affected by the distrust and fear felt by the ruling patricians for the plebians of Rome on the domestic front. Barr, *Consulting the Romans*, p. 6.



## CHAPTER 10 NATIONAL POWER

David Jablonsky

I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes personifies the realist approach to international relations in a world of anarchy and self-help in which individual man and men aggregated into states seek to maintain or to increase power. In the modern era, this approach is reflected quintessentially by Hans Morgenthau, who presents national power not only as an end in the Hobbesian sense that “power is always the immediate aim,” but as a means to that end.<sup>2</sup> The study of strategy also deals with power primarily from the national security perspective, an acknowledgment that the nation-state is still the most important actor in the international arena.

Most scholars focus on power as a means, the strength or capacity that provides the “ability to influence the behavior of other actors in accordance with one’s own objectives.”<sup>3</sup> At the national level, this influence is based on relations between nation-state A and another actor (B), with A seeking to influence B to act in A’s interest by doing x, by continuing to do x, or by not doing x. Some governments or statesmen may seek influence for its own sake. But for most, influence, like money, is instrumental, to be used primarily for achieving or defending other goals, which could include prestige, territory, raw material, or alliances. To achieve these ends, state A can use various techniques of influencing, ranging from persuasion or the offering of rewards to threats or the actual use of force.<sup>4</sup>

From this standpoint, the use of a nation’s power in national security strategy is a simple relational exercise. But in dealing with the concept of national power, as Clausewitz remarked of war, “everything . . . is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”<sup>5</sup> To begin with, there are subtle characteristics of power that render its use in the national strategic formulation process more art than science. Moreover, relationships among the elements of national power, as well as the context in which they are to be used to further a nation’s interests, are seldom clear-cut propositions. All this means that in the end, national power defies any attempts at rigorous, scientific assessment. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate why this is so and, more important, why, all the complexity notwithstanding, the concept of national power remains a key building block for understanding and developing national security strategy.

### THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL POWER

National power is contextual in that it can be evaluated only in terms of all the power elements and only in relation to another player or players and the situation in which power is being exercised. A nation may appear powerful because it possesses many military assets, but the assets may be inadequate against those of a potential enemy or inappropriate to the nature of the conflict. The question should always be: power over whom, and with respect to what?<sup>6</sup>

#### **Multidimensional Interrelationship.**

National power is linked historically with military capacity, a natural relationship since war in the international arena is the *ultima ratio* of power. Nevertheless, one element of power alone cannot



determine national power. For instance, there is the huge size of Brazil, the large population of Pakistan, the industrial makeup of Belgium, and the first-class army of Switzerland. Yet none of these states is a first-rank power. Morgenthau calls the mistaken attempt to define national power in terms of one element of that power, the "Fallacy of the Single Factor." Another aspect of this fallacy is the failure to distinguish between potential and actual power. Part of the problem stems from the fact that the term "power" has taken on the meaning of both the capacity to do something and the actual exercise of the capacity. And yet a nation's ability to convert potential power into operational power is based on many considerations, not the least of which is the political and psychological interrelationship of such factors as government effectiveness and national unity.<sup>7</sup>

In this context, the elements of national power, no matter how defined, can be separated only artificially. Together, they constitute the resources for the attainment of national objectives and goals. And while those goals may be judged as moral, immoral, or amoral, the elements of power are simply means to national strategic ends and, as such, are morally neutral. It is possible, in other words, to reject the cynic's belief that God is on the side of the largest number of battalions, as well as the assumption that the side with the smallest number always fights for the right.<sup>8</sup>

### **Relations and Dynamics.**

National power is relative, not absolute. Simply put, a nation does not have abstract power in and of itself, but only power in relation to another actor or actors in the international arena. To say that the United States is the most powerful nation on earth is to compare American power with that of all nations as they currently exist. Nevertheless, leaders of a nation at the peak of its power can come to believe that such power has an absolute quality that can be lost only through stupidity or neglect. In reality, the superior power of a nation is derived not only from its own qualities, but from that of other actors compared with its own. Many observers in the late 1930s, for example, perceived France as more than a match for Nazi Germany, since the French military of that era was superior in quality and quantity of troops and weaponry to the victorious French forces of 1919. But the French military power of 1919 was supreme only in the context of a defeated and disarmed Germany; that supremacy was not intrinsic to the French nation in the manner of its geographic location and natural resources. Thus, while the French military of 1939 was superior to that of 1919, a comparison of 1939 French military power to that of Germany in the same year would have shown a vastly different picture for many reasons, not the least of which was the German adoption of the military doctrine of blitzkrieg.<sup>9</sup>

Closely allied to all this is that national power is dynamic, not permanent. No particular power factor or relationship is immune to change. In this century, in particular, rapid changes in military technologies have accelerated this dynamism. America's explosion of a nuclear device instantly transformed its power position, the nature of warfare, and the very conduct of international relations. A war or revolution can have an equally sudden effect on power. The two world wars devastated Europe, caused the rise of the flank powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and set the developing world on a road to decolonization that in less than 50 years dismantled a system that had been in existence for over 3 centuries. Economic growth also can change a nation's power position quickly, as was the case with Japan and Germany after World War II. In addition, the discovery of new resources, or their depletion, can alter the balance of power. Certainly the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) control over a diminishing supply of oil, coupled with its effectiveness as a cartel, caused a dramatic shift in power relations after 1973.<sup>10</sup>

Such shifts are not always so immediately discernible. Power, as Hobbes long ago pointed out, is what people believe it is until it is exercised. Reputation for power, in other words, confers power on a nation-state regardless of whether that power is real or not. At the same time, there are examples

throughout history of nations that continued to trade on past reputations, only to see them shattered by a single event. For France, the battles of Sedan produced just such effects in 1870 and again in 1940.<sup>11</sup>

This subjective characteristic of power also plays a key role in deterrence, the exercise of negative power as state A influences actor B *not* to do x. The influence is exercised effectively because B perceives that A not only has the capability to prevent B from doing x, but the willingness to use that capability as well. In other words, national credibility must be a concomitant of national capability for deterrence to work. When the combination does not occur, as Britain and France discovered when Hitler discounted their guarantee of Poland in the summer of 1939, the result can be war. "*The men of Munich will not take the risk,*" the Nazi leader explained to his commanders on August 14, 1939.<sup>12</sup>

### **Situational.**

Some elements of national power or combinations of power cannot be applied to certain situations involving certain actors. The United States in 1979-80, for instance, was powerless to rescue American citizens held hostage in Teheran, and American nuclear power during the Cold War had little value in causing nonaligned countries to modify their policies; nor did it deter North Korea or North Vietnam in their attempts to unify their countries.

The Vietnam War also illustrates another contextual aspect of national power, that of cost-risk-benefit analysis, in which power can be exercised, but the costs and risks are perceived to be disproportionate to the benefit achieved. Power, in other words, must be relevant in the existing circumstances for the particular situation. This explains why, during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the United States was not able to persuade its European allies to allow American planes to use North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bases for refueling and maintenance. The overall economic and military strength of the United States, as well as the political bonds of alliance solidarity, proved less influential on European decisionmakers than the possible economic loss of their access to oil. This type of American power was equally irrelevant in late 1994 when Britain and France, with troops involved in peace operations on the ground in Bosnia, turned down a U.S. plan for NATO air strikes to support Muslims in the besieged town of Bihac.<sup>13</sup>

This aspect of the contextual nature of national power introduces even more complications when the diversity of actors in the international arena is taken into account. In an increasingly multicentric world, nation-states increasingly will deal with transnational actors in the exercise of national power. The European Union is just one example of international government organizations in which the confluence of political and economic trends has created a supra-national regional unit that transcends in many ways both the legal-territorial aspects of the state and the psychological unity of the nation. This type of challenge is abetted by international nongovernmental actors ranging from multinational corporations focused on self-interested profit and national liberation movements seeking to establish new governments within existing states, to organizations such as Amnesty International or Greenpeace, seeking to mobilize international public opinion in order to bring pressure on national governments to alter particular policies.<sup>14</sup>

Some of these actors respond more willingly to one aspect of national power than to another. Multinational corporations, for example, generally will react to economic factors more rapidly than the United Nations (UN) or a national liberation movement. Conversely, negotiations and appeals to human morality may prove to be more powerful at the UN than in the corporate boardroom or in the field. And the allegiance of an uneducated people in a newly independent country may help create a powerful national liberation movement, yet be meaningless for a multinational corporation or the UN. National power, then, is contextual not only in its application to other states, but to other global actors as well.<sup>15</sup>

## THE ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER

It is convenient to organize the study of national power by distinguishing between natural and social determinants of power. The natural determinants (geography, resources, and population) are concerned with the number of people in a nation and with their physical environment. Social determinants (economic, political, military, psychological, and, more recently, informational) concern the ways in which the people of a nation organize themselves and the manner in which they alter their environment. In practice, it is impossible to make a clear distinction between natural and social elements. For instance, resources are a natural factor, but the degree to which they are used is determined socially. Population factors, in particular, cut across the dividing line between both categories. The number of people of working age in the population affects the degree of industrialization of a nation, but the process of industrialization, in turn, can greatly alter the composition of the population.<sup>16</sup>

### NATURAL DETERMINANTS OF POWER

#### Geography.

Geographical factors, whether they are location and climate or size and topography, influence a nation's outlook and capacity. Location, in particular, is tied closely to the foreign policy of a state. Vulnerable nations, like Poland caught geographically between Russia and Germany, have even had to deal with the loss of national existence. Conversely, Great Britain, the United States, and Japan have been protected by large bodies of water throughout their histories. Each, in turn, used the combination of a large navy and overseas trade to become a great power. With its oceanic moats, the United States was able to follow George Washington's advice to avoid entangling alliances and expand peacefully for almost a century, free of external interference. In addition, that expansion came about primarily without conquest, through the purchase of huge land tracts from European powers that found the location of the territories too remote to defend easily.

The connection between foreign policy and location is, in fact, so fundamental that it gave rise in this century to geopolitics as a field of study. At its most extreme, geopolitics can succumb to Morgenthau's "Fallacy of the Single Factor" or be distorted as it was at the hands of Karl Haushofer and his disciples into a kind of political metaphysics with a call for adequate national living space (*Lebensraum*) that was put into ideological service for Nazi Germany. At its best, geopolitics has many insights to offer. Consider, for instance, the connection between the British and American development of democracy and civil rights and the relatively secure strategic locations of both countries, as opposed to the authoritarian regimes of Germany and Russia, direct neighbors for much of history, lying exposed on the North European plain. Or consider the continuing Russian drive for warm-water ports and the continuing value of choke points, as was demonstrated when Egypt's closure of the Straits of Tiran in May 1967 led to war. The persistence of this field of study was reflected in the Cold War by Raymond Aaron, who described the forward deployment of U.S. troops as analogous in geographical terms to earlier British policy:

In relation to the Eurasian land mass, the American continent occupied a position comparable to that of the British Isles in relation to Europe: the United States was continuing the tradition of the insular state by attempting to bar the dominant continental state's expansion in central Germany and in Korea.<sup>17</sup>

Location also is tied closely to climate, which, in turn, has a significant effect on national power. The poorest and weakest states in modern times all have been located outside the temperate climate zones in either the tropics or in the frigid zone. Even Russia has chronic agricultural problems because

all but a small part of that country lies north of the latitude of the U.S.-Canadian border. Russia is also a good example of how geographical factors such as size and topography can have advantages and disadvantages for a nation. The Soviet Union, with its 11 time zones, was able to use its vast size during World War II to repeat the historical Russian military method of trading space for time when invaded. At the same time, that immense size certainly played a role in the complex ethnic and political centrifugal forces that eventually pulled apart the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In a similar manner, the predominantly north-south Russian rivers are great natural resources that would have been economically and politically more valuable had they run in an east-west direction. In the future, technology may mitigate some of these factors in the same way that intercontinental missiles affected the importance of insular locations. But here, as in other areas, there are many geographical obstacles to the acquisition of power that are costly or impossible to overcome.<sup>18</sup>

## **Population.**

Demographics in the form of size, trends, and structure are an important aspect of national power. A large population is a key prerequisite, but not an automatic guarantee of strength. Thus, there is Canada, more powerful than the more populous but less industrialized Mexico. And Japan, with a small population marked by widespread technical skills, has been able to exercise national power far in excess of China for all its masses. At the same time, trends in population growth and decline can have significant effects on national power. The Prussian unification of the German-speaking peoples in 1870, for example, instantly created a great power with a population that grew by 27 million between then and 1940, even as that of France reflected the shift in European power, increasing by only four million in the same period. In another example, the historical increase in American power was due partly to the arrival of more than 100 million immigrants between 1824 and 1924. During the same century, Canada and Australia, comparable in territory and developmental level but with populations less than a 10th of America's, remained secondary powers. That such trends could have more complex causes dealing with other elements of power was illustrated by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which had a large and growing population during most of that period but also remained a secondary power because it was divided ethnically, weak politically, and at an extremely low level in terms of industrial development.<sup>19</sup>

In the future, global trends also will affect the structure and balance of national populations, particularly those of the poorest countries. In 1830, the global population reached one billion for the first time; it required 100 years to double. It took only 45 more years (1975) for the population to double again to four billion. In the next 21 years, the population increased almost two billion, reflecting a growth rate of about 90 million a year. For the next several decades, 90 percent of this growth will occur in the lesser-developed countries, many already burdened by extreme overpopulation for which there is no remedy in the form of economic infrastructure, skills, and capital.<sup>20</sup>

Population structure and balance also are significant for developed nations. Important here is the percentage of the population in the most productive cohort, generally considered to be somewhere between the ages of 18 and 45, that can best meet the needs of the nation's military and industry, as well as create the following generation. Comparing the numbers in this group to those in the younger cohort also provides a more accurate picture of population trends and the interaction of demographics with all power elements. Israel, for example, has to deal with its relatively small population and the fact that the military siphons off a significant segment of the civilian workforce in the middle cohort. One consequence is government emphasis on education across all age groups. Another is the government's military focus on sophisticated weaponry, mobility, air power, and the preemptive strike in order to avoid drawn-out land warfare that could be costly in manpower. Finally, a comparison of the middle population group to the older will provide a picture of trends that can have significant consequences

for a nation's power. For example, any nation with an increasing cohort of retired people, coupled with generous social welfare benefits, eventually will have to face hard choices between guns and butter on the one hand, and possible limits to its national power, as well as to its investment and economic growth potential, on the other. These choices already face the United States as the "baby boomer" generation approaches retirement age against the backdrop of a staggering explosion in social entitlements.<sup>21</sup>

### **Natural Resources.**

Large amounts of natural resources are essential for a modern nation to wage war, to operate an industrial base, and to reward other international actors through trade and aid, either in modern industrial products or in the raw materials themselves. But these resources, whether they be arable land and water or coal and oil, are distributed unevenly around the world and are becoming increasingly scarce. Moreover, as in the case of the geopolitical ownership of strategic places, the physical possession of natural resources is not necessarily a source of power unless a nation also can develop those resources and maintain political control over their disposition. In their raw state, for example, minerals and energy sources are generally useless. Thus, the Mesabi iron deposits had no value to the Indian tribes near Lake Superior, and Arabian oil a century ago was a matter of indifference to the nomads who roamed above it. Conversely, those nations with great industrial organizations and manufacturing infrastructures traditionally have been able to convert the potential power of natural resources into actual national power.

Very few nations, however, are self-sufficient. A country like the United States has a rich store of natural resources and yet may be dependent on imports because of its voracious consumption. Japan, on the other hand, has few natural resources; it is dependent on imports for 100 percent of its petroleum, bauxite, wool, and cotton; 95 percent of its wheat; 90 percent of its copper; and 70 percent of its timber and grain.<sup>22</sup> Nations traditionally have made up for such difficulties in several ways. One time-honored method is to conquer the resources, a principal motivation for the Japanese expansion that led to World War II and the Iraqi invasion that led to the Gulf War. A second method is to develop resources in another country by means of concessions, political manipulation, and even a judicious use of force—all used earlier to considerable effect by the United States in Latin America. In an age of increasing interdependence, this type of economic penetration long since has lost its neocolonial identity, particularly since both of America's principal World War II adversaries now regularly exercise such penetration in the United States.

The third and most common method for obtaining natural resources is to buy them. In recent years, however, the combination of rapid industrial growth and decline of resources has changed the global economy into a seller's market, while providing considerable economic leverage to nations in control of vital commodities. OPEC's control of oil, for example, provided its members influence all out of proportion to their economic and military power. A similar transformation may occur in the future with those nations that are major food producers as the so-called "Green Revolution" faces the prospect of more depleted lands and encroaching deserts. Finally, there is the short supply of strategic and often esoteric minerals so necessary for high technology and modern weapons. One consequence of this diminishment of raw materials has been the emergence of the sea bed, with its oil and manganese reserves, as a new venue of international competition, in which those nations with long coastlines and extensive territorial waters have the advantage. Such shortages are a reminder of how closely connected is the acquisition of natural resources to all the elements of power, particularly for a truly dependent nation like Japan, which can neither feed its people nor fuel its high-technology economy without access to overseas markets. Absent its alliance with the United States as a means to ensure its access to such resources as Persian Gulf oil, Japan would be forced to expand its "self-defense" military force, perhaps even becoming a declared nuclear power.<sup>23</sup>

## SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF POWER

### Economic.

Economic capacity and development are key links to both natural and social determinants of power. In terms of natural resources, as we have seen, a nation may be well endowed but lack the ability to convert those resources into military hardware, high-technology exports, and other manifestations of power. Ultimately, however, economic development in a nation flows from the social determinants of power, whether they be political modernization and widespread formal education, or geographic and social mobility and the ready acceptance of innovation. All this, of course, is worked out against the backdrop of balanced military investment. An excess of military spending can erode the underlying basis for a nation's power if it occurs at the expense of a larger economy and reduces the national ability to invest in future economic growth. For developing countries already short of economic investment capital, military spending represents a serious allocation of resources. But even advanced countries, especially since the end of the Cold War, have to make some choices between guns and butter. Because a nation's political stability, as well as the legitimacy of its government, increasingly are linked to domestic economic performance, excessive military spending, as the former Soviet Union discovered, can be dangerous for large and small countries alike.

Strong domestic economies also produce nonmilitary national power in the international arena. Leading industrial nations have available all the techniques for exercising power, including rewards or punishment by means of foreign trade, foreign aid, and investment and loans, as well as the mere consequences their domestic policies can have on the global economy. This type of power can be weakened, however, if a nation suffers from high inflation, a large foreign debt, or chronic balance-of-payment deficits. In short, the strength of a nation's economy has a direct effect on the variety, resiliency, and credibility of its international economic options. The size of the U.S. budget and trade deficits, for example, means that the Federal Reserve must maintain interest rates high enough for deficit financing, which limits its ability to stimulate the economy with lower rates. And American foreign aid is becoming less influential as an economic instrument of power as budgets decline. On the other hand, U.S. trade policy has become increasingly important to the U.S. economy, with American exports, as an example, expected to create 16 million jobs by the year 2000.<sup>24</sup> That such economic considerations are interrelated closely to other elements of power is demonstrated by the perennial question of whether most-favored-nation status, which is nothing more than normal access to U.S. markets, should be made conditional on progress in human rights by countries such as China.

Finally, increasing interdependence has caused major changes in the economic element of national power. National economies have become more dependent on international trade and on financial markets that have become truly global in scope. This, in turn, makes it more difficult for a nation to raise short-term interest rates or to coordinate monetary policy with other international actors. In a similar manner, the ability of nations to use exchange rates to further their national interests has declined as governments deal more and more with international capital flows that dwarf the resources available to any nation to defend its currency. From a security perspective, this type of economic interpenetration is reflected in the mutual vulnerability of national economies. Moreover, a nation's economic policy is now influenced by myriad international governmental organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), while multinational corporations stand ready to manipulate the domestic politics of nation-states to further their transnational interests.<sup>25</sup>

## **Military.**

Military strength historically is the gauge for national power. Defeat in war normally has signaled the decline, if not the end, of a nation's power, while military victory has usually heralded the ascent of a new power. But military power is more than just the aggregation of personnel, equipment, and weaponry. Leadership, morale, and discipline also remain vital factors of military power. Despite rough quantitative parity between the Iraqi military and the allied coalition, the dismal Iraqi performance in the Gulf War demonstrated the enduring relevance of those intangibles. That performance also showed how political interference or the gradual infection of a nation or its military by incompetence, waste, and corruption can weaken a nation's armed forces. By contrast, there is the example of the U.S. military working over the years in tandem with political authorities to move from the hollow force of the immediate post-Vietnam period to the joint military machine of Operation DESERT STORM.<sup>26</sup>

The Gulf War also highlights how important power projection and sustainability are in the modern era for military effectiveness. For a global power like the United States, the focus on these factors produced not only the unique air and sea lift capability that provided transportation for a half million troops to the Persian Gulf in 1990-91, but incredible resupply feats in an environment in which a single division during the 100-hour ground offensive consumed 2.4 million gallons of fuel, brought forward in 475 5,000-gallon tankers.<sup>27</sup> Allied to these factors, of course, are readiness considerations ranging from training and maneuver opportunities to the availability of fuel and repair parts. In a similar manner, a nation's potential for rapid mobilization may also play a key role. Israel, for example, has a permanent force of only 164,000 highly trained and ready soldiers. But that force can be augmented within 24 hours by almost three times that many combat-ready troops. And Sweden has the capability to mobilize a force almost overnight that can equal many European standing armies.<sup>28</sup>

The quality of arms technology also has become a vital military factor for all nations in a period marked by rapid and important scientific breakthroughs. Timely inventions ranging from the crossbow to the airplane often have been decisive when accompanied by appropriate changes in military organization and doctrine. When these two components lag technological change, however, as they did in the American Civil War and World War I, the results can be horrific diminishment and waste of military power. In addition, new technologies in the hands of rogue states or nonstate actors such as terrorist groups will continue to be an important consideration for nations in the exercise of military power. Weapons of mass destruction are, and will probably continue to be, of primary concern in this regard. But even relatively cheap, recently developed conventional weapons in the appropriate situation can be decisive, as was illustrated by the American-built, shoulder-fired *Stinger* anti-aircraft missiles that enabled the Afghan *mujahedeen* guerrillas to neutralize Soviet air power. Finally, technological advances are a useful reminder once again that military power, like all elements of national power, is contextual. Technology is not an automatic panacea for producing quick victories and low casualties, particularly absent clear political direction and coherent strategy. There comes a time, as Britain's thin red line discovered under the weight of the Zulu offensive at Isandhewana, when quantity has a quality all its own.<sup>29</sup>

## **Political.**

This element of power addresses key questions, many of which are related to the psychological element: What is the form of government, what is the attitude of the population toward it, how strong do the people want it to be, and how strong and efficient is it? These questions cannot be answered with simple statistics, yet they may be paramount in any assessment of national power. If a government is inadequate and cannot bring the nation's potential power to bear on an issue, that power might as

well not exist. Nor can an analysis turn on the type of government a state claims to have, for even the constitution of a state may be misleading. The 1936 Soviet Constitution, for example, was a democratic-sounding organic law that had little in common with the actual operation of the Soviet regime. And the German Weimar Constitution, a model of democratic devices, did not prevent Hitler from reaching power and from creating his own “constitutional law” as he proceeded.

What is clear is that the actual forms of government, each with its own strengths and weaknesses, play a role in the application of national power. An authoritarian system, for instance, restricts in varying degrees individual freedom and initiative, but permits formulation of a highly organized state strategy. Democratic systems, by comparison, require policy formation by consensus-building and persuasion in an open, pluralistic society. Consequently, it is extremely difficult for democracies to develop and implement a long-range state strategy or to change policy direction as abruptly as, for example, Nazi Germany and the USSR did in the ideological volte-face marked by the August 1939 nonaggression treaty. In addition, the level of political development within a state is also important. This development involves both the capability, and more particularly the efficiency and effectiveness, of a national government in using its human and material resources in pursuit of national interests. Thus, administrative and management skills are crucial if a nation is to realize its full power potential.

A government also takes the shape and operates the way it does for very complex reasons, many of which reflect the experience of a people and their attitude toward, and expectations of, what the government is to do and how strong, as a consequence, it should be. For example, a fear of too much state power caused the Founding Fathers deliberately to make the U.S. Government inefficient (in the sense of a quick, smooth operation) by means of “checks and balances.” In a similar manner, the French fear of a “man on horseback” in the wake of their second experience with Bonapartism caused a curtailment of executive powers that resulted in the weakness of the French governments after the Franco-Prussian War. Under both the Third and Fourth French Republics, as a result, the French strengthened the legislative branch to a degree that made strong executive leadership almost impossible. The French preferred to suffer the executive weakness rather than run the risks entailed in a strong government. Consequently, while the United States had 14 administrations between 1875 and 1940, and the British 20, France had 102. After World War II, the Fourth French Republic averaged two regimes a year.<sup>30</sup>

## Psychological.

The psychological element of power consists of national will and morale, national character, and degree of national integration. It is this most ephemeral of the social power determinants that repeatedly has caused nations with superior economic and military power to be defeated or have their policies frustrated by less capable actors. Thus there was Mao’s defeat of Chiang Kai-shek when Chiang, at least initially, possessed most of China’s wealth and military capability, the ability of Gandhi to drive the British from India, and that of Khomeini to undermine the Shah. And it is almost a cliché that any measurement of U.S. economic and military power vis-à-vis that of the North Vietnam-Vietcong combination during the late 1960s would have led to the conclusion that U.S. superiority in these two categories would result in an American victory. Harry Summers recounts a story, in this regard, that was circulating during the final days of the U.S. retreat from Vietnam:

When the Nixon Administration took over in 1969, all the data on North Vietnam and on the United States was fed into a Pentagon computer – population, gross national product, manufacturing capability, number of tanks, ships, and aircraft, size of the armed forces, and the like.

The computer was then asked, “*When will we win?*”

It took only a moment to give the answer: “*You won in 1964!*”<sup>31</sup>



National will and morale are defined as the degree of determination that any actor manifests in the pursuit of its internal or external objectives. For a given international actor, however, will and morale need not be identical at all levels of society. During 1916 and early 1917, the Russian nobility continued to plan for new offensive action even as Russian troops were abandoning their weapons and their battlefield positions. National character has an equally complex relation to national power inasmuch as that character favors or proscribes certain policies and strategies. Americans, for example, like to justify their actions. Thus, the United States did not enter World War I until Wilsonian idealism had to confront the loss of American ships and American lives. The elevation of "moralism" in the conduct of foreign policy, in turn, diminishes the ability of the United States to initiate a truly preemptive action. In the Cuban missile crisis, for example, the choice of a blockade over an air strike was based in part on the argument that from the standpoint of both morality and tradition, the United States could not perpetrate a "Pearl Harbor in reverse."<sup>32</sup> In all such cases, as with will and morale, it is extremely difficult to identify the constituent parts of and sources behind national character. Historical experiences and traditional values undoubtedly are important, as are such factors as geographic location and environment. Russian mistrust of the external world, for instance, is verifiable historically as part of the national character, whether it is because of the centuries of Tartar rule, three invasions from Western Europe in little more than a century, or something else. And Russian stoicism is a character trait, whether the cause is Russian Orthodox Christianity, communism, or the long Russian winters.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, there is the degree of integration, which refers simply to the sense of belonging and identification of a nation's people. In many ways, this contributes to both national will and morale as well as character. In most cases, there is a direct correlation between the degree of perceived integration and the extent of ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural homogeneity, all of which contribute to a sense of belonging, manifested in a sense of citizenship. On the other hand, despite examples to the contrary (Belgium, Canada, and the states of the former Yugoslavia), a lack of integration need not necessarily cause a lack of identity. Swiss unity has continued across the centuries despite low degrees of integration in ethnicity, language, and religion.<sup>34</sup>

## **Informational.**

The communications revolution, which began over a century ago with the advent of global transmission of information, has taken on new momentum in recent decades with the development of fax machines, television satellites, and computer linkages. As the revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe demonstrated in the fall of 1989, a new fact of life in the international arena is that it is no longer possible for any nation-state to deny its citizens knowledge of what is taking place elsewhere. Ideas, in other words, move more freely around the world than at any other time in the past. This has had particularly fortunate results for the United States. Even as some other aspects of power have gone into relative decline, America's influence as a source of ideas and as a shaper of culture has increased. This "soft power," in Joseph Nye's words, has been a major factor in formulating the U.S. national security strategic objective of "enlargement."<sup>35</sup> So in one sense, information has contributed to the concept of the world as a global village.

This combination of enhanced communication and dissemination of information, however, is a two-edged sword that cuts across all the social determinants of power in national strategy. In the economic realm, for instance, global interdependence has been enhanced by information-communication improvements. On the other hand, near instantaneous downturns of major economies are always a possibility with the immediate transmission of adverse economic news concerning any nation-state or transnational economic actor. Politically, instantaneous and pervasive communication can enhance the ability of governmental elites to lead the people in a democracy or to act as a national consoler in times of tragedy, such as the *Challenger* explosion or the Oklahoma City bombing. At the same time, these

developments also can aid the demagogues, the great simplifiers always waiting in the wings to stir fundamental discontents and the dark side of nationalism. In terms of psychological power, Winston Churchill demonstrated repeatedly that the pervasive distribution of targeted information can have momentous effects on intangibles such as national will. Conversely, however, this type of ubiquity has the pernicious potential of altering in a matter of years basic values and cultural beliefs that take generations to create.

Nowhere is the effect of developments in communications and access to information more far-reaching than on warfare. In the purely military realm, information dominance can create operational synergies by allowing those systems that provide battlespace awareness, enhance command and control, and create precision force to be integrated into the so-called “system of systems.” One result of all this is to compress the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war, previously considered as separate and distinct loci of command and functional responsibilities. The commander will be faced in the future with the much more complex job of recognizing those events occurring simultaneously at all three levels and integrating them into the calculation that results from the traditional consideration at the operational level of which tactical battles and engagements to join and which to avoid. Equally important, shorter time for decisions—occasioned by both the compressed continuum of war and electronically gathered information—means less time to discover ambiguities or to analyze those ambiguities that are already apparent.

At the higher level of cyberwar, the two-edged potential of communications and information is even more evident. In the future, nations will wage offensive information warfare on another state’s computer systems, targeting assets ranging from telecommunications and power to safety and banking. Such an onslaught could undermine the more advanced aspects of an adversary’s economy, interrupt its mobilization of military power, and by affecting the integrity of highly visible services to the population, create almost immediate pressure on government at all levels. As activities rely increasingly on information systems rather than manual processes and procedures, information infrastructures of the most developed nations, such as the United States, become progressively more vulnerable to state and nonstate actors. Even as there are advances in information security technologies, hacker tools are becoming more sophisticated and easier to obtain and use. One analyst concludes in this regard that, for the United States, “the possibility of a digital Pearl Harbor cannot be dismissed out of hand.”<sup>36</sup>

## EVALUATION

Evaluation of national power is difficult. The basic problem, as we have seen, is that all elements of power are interrelated. Where people live will influence what they possess; how many they are will influence how much they possess; what their historical experience has been will affect how they look at life; how they look at life will influence how they organize and govern themselves; and all these elements weighed in relation to the problem of national security will influence the nature, size, and effectiveness of the armed forces. As a consequence, not only must each separate element be analyzed, but the effects of those elements on one another must be considered. These complexities are compounded because national power is both dynamic and relative. Nation-states and other international actors change each day in potential and realized power, although the rate of change may vary from one actor to another. And because these changes go on continually, an estimate of a state’s national power vis-à-vis the power of another actor is obsolescent even as the estimate is made. The greater the rate of change in the actors being compared, the greater the obsolescence of the estimate.

In other words, like all strategic endeavors, more art than science is involved in the evaluation of where one nation-state stands in relation to the power of other regional and global actors. This has not deterred one former government official from creating a formula to develop a rough estimate of “perceived” national power—focused primarily on a state’s capacity to wage war.<sup>37</sup>

$Pp = (C + E + M) \times (S + W)$  in which:  
 Pp = Perceived power  
 C = Critical mass: population and territory  
 E = Economic capability  
 M = Military capability  
 S = Strategic purpose  
 W = Will to pursue national strategy

Regardless of its prospective contribution in calculating a Pp value, this formula has some important lessons. The more tangible elements (C, E, M) that can be quantified objectively also involve varying degrees of subjective qualifications: territory that is vast but covered with mountain ranges and has few navigable rivers; a population that is large but unskilled and uneducated; or cases in which, despite qualitative military superiority in technology and weapons on one side, the opponent is able to prevail through superior intangibles ranging from leadership to morale. Most important, by demonstrating that national power is a product—not a sum—of its components, the formula is a reminder of how important the relational and contextual aspects are. The United States discovered in Vietnam that no matter how large the sum of the more tangible economic and military capabilities in relation to an adversary, their utility is determined by the intangibles of strategic purpose(S) and national will(W). Zero times any number, no matter how large, is still zero.

These considerations are particularly important in evaluating what some might consider to be irrational acts by states that use force to alter the status quo. In fact, these states may differ from others simply in the perception of low risks where others perceive high ones, rather than in the willingness to take risks. There is growing evidence that the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait falls into this category. In another era, many of Hitler’s “Saturday surprises” in the 1930s were considered reckless by those who eventually would have to redress their consequences. These incidents came about, however, not because the Nazi leader willingly tolerated a high probability of conflict, but because he was certain that the other side would back down. When the German military opposed such policies as the Rhineland coup and the *Anschluss* with Austria on the basis that they were too dangerous, Hitler did not argue that the risks were worth the prizes, but that instead, taking the social determinants of power in Germany and the other countries into consideration, the risks were negligible. In terms of the concept of gain and risk assessment displayed in Figure 1 below, Hitler’s analysis of potential opposition came to rest at the MAXIMIN approach of Quadrant 2, not that of MAXIMAX in Quadrant 1.<sup>38</sup>

|      |            | Risk           |                |
|------|------------|----------------|----------------|
|      |            | High (Max)     | Low (Min)      |
| Gain | High (Max) | 1<br>(MAXIMAX) | 2<br>(MAXIMIN) |
|      | Low (Min)  | 3<br>(MINIMAX) | 4<br>(MINIMIN) |

Figure 1. Gain and Risk Assessment.

In the Rhineland episode of March 7, 1936, for example, the military correlation of forces was quantifiably against Germany, as Hitler was well aware. "We had no army worth mentioning," he reflected later; "at that time, it would not even have had the fighting strength to maintain itself against the Poles."<sup>39</sup> But unlike his military advisors, who were focused firmly on French military capabilities, the Nazi leader considered other elements of power, particularly the lack of political integration and coherency in the French Popular Front government and the connection to the psychological component of French national will. As a result, he concluded that France had no intention of responding militarily to the German military incursion. On March 9, the Wehrmacht commander received warning of impending French military countermoves and asked to withdraw troops from major cities in the Rhineland. Hitler, however, was still taking an essentially MAXIMIN (Quadrant 2) approach and correctly discounted the possibility of intervention by a French government vacillating between two incorrect positions: MAXIMAX (Quadrant 1) and MINIMAX (Quadrant 3).<sup>40</sup>

## THINKING IN THE BOX

A great deal of lip service has been paid of late to the need for students of strategy to "think outside the box." The "box" in this case presumably contains the traditional approaches to those issues that affect America's national security. It is natural, of course, in a time of great change to search for a "Philosopher's Stone," or to look for the sword that can, in one clean stroke, preclude the tedious unraveling of the Gordian knot of post-Cold War strategy. And perhaps this will all be possible in an extra-box environment of the future. But such explorations cannot and should not be made until the student of national security has learned to think inside the box, and that begins with an understanding of concepts like national power.

The concept of national power helps to provide an initial organizational focus as students deal with the deceptively simple thought process that links strategic ends, ways, and means. National elements of power, however they are described, provide the conceptual foundation for this process at the national strategic level. An understanding of the characteristics and the interrelationships of these elements allows the student to expand the process to comprehend how derivative instruments of power can be combined most effectively as policy options to achieve national strategic objectives. This is a key step in strategic maturation that will play an increasingly larger role in the future for military and civilian professionals concerned with national security strategy.

Military planners already deal with Flexible Deterrent Options, in which military instruments of power are matched with instruments derived from other elements of power. Military options in response to a challenge could include an increase in specific reconnaissance activities, the exercise of certain prepositioned equipment, or the deployment of small units. Politically, this could mean consultation by executive branch elites with congressional leaders or initiation of a specific diplomatic demarche. At the same time, economic options might include, alone or in combination, the enactment of trade sanctions, the freezing of assets, and the restriction of corporate transactions. In all this, the effectiveness of small discrete response options depends on how well the instruments of power are wielded together. And that will depend to a great deal on how well military strategists and their civilian counterparts understand the elements of national power from which those instruments are derived.<sup>41</sup>

The focus on these elements of national power as means to national strategic ends also serves as an organizational link to the overall strategic formulation process. That process begins by demonstrating how national strategic objectives are derived from national interests, which in turn owe their articulation and degree of intensity to national values. This linkage is also a useful reminder that power, the "means" in the strategic equation, ultimately takes its meaning from the values it serves. Absent the legitimation provided by this connection to national values, national power may come to be perceived

as a resource or means that invites suspicion and challenge; at worst it could be associated with tyranny and aggrandizement. Without the bond of popular support and the justification that comes from an overarching purpose, national power can be quick to erode and ephemeral as a source of national security.

What takes place within the box in dealing with concepts like national power is an educational process, a not inconsiderable achievement in an era mesmerized by techno-chic innovations which tend to confuse training with that process and data collection with knowledge.

In the final analysis, the study of national power is a valuable educational objective because it is so difficult. Aspiring national security strategists must grapple with concepts that overlap, that are subjective in many cases, that are relative and situational, and that defy scientific measurement. All this teaches flexible thinking – the *sine qua non* for a strategist. In short, it is this very complexity that causes students to mature intellectually, to understand that within the box there is no such thing as a free strategic lunch. Equally important, students learn that they cannot escape these limitations by moving outside the box, a lesson that many futurists need to absorb.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 10

1. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958, p. 86.
2. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 4th ed., New York: Knopf, 1968, p. 25. Although Morgenthau sees the concept of national interest defined in terms of power, much of this discussion is under a sub-heading that treats political power “As Means to the Nation’s Ends.” *Ibid.*
3. John Spanier and Robert L. Wendzel, *Games Nations Play*, 9th ed., Washington: CQ Press, 1996, p. 128. See also Theodore A. Coulombis and James H. Wolfe, *Introduction to International Relations: Power and Justice*, 2d ed., Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982, p. 64. Many scholars use this broad interpretation of influence in their definition of power: “the ability to influence the behavior of others in accordance with one’s own ends.” A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2d ed., New York: Knopf, 1968, p. 104; and “the ability of an actor to influence the outcomes of international events to its own satisfaction.” Walter S. Jones, *The Logic of International Relations*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1985, p. 245. For arguments against mixing power and influence, see Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1976, p. 29; Daniel S. Papp, *Contemporary International Relations: Frameworks for Understanding*, New York: Macmillan, 1984, p. 308; and Michael P. Sullivan, *Power in Contemporary Politics*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990, p. 98.
4. K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 5th ed., Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988, pp. 142, 152-53. On patterns of influence, see *ibid.*, pp. 154-56. On similar methods or techniques of exercising power, see Organski, pp. 112-115. Realists, in general, treat power as the “currency of politics.” Just as economists focus on the definition and variety of currency types, students of international relations define and distinguish the types of power. See, for example, Klaus Knorr, *The Power of Nations: The Political Economy of International Relations*, New York: Basic Books, 1975.
5. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 119.
6. On the context of power, see Spanier and Wendzel, pp. 144-45; Papp, pp. 309-11; and Gordon C. Schloming, *Power and Principle in International Affairs*, New York: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich: 1991, p. 528.
7. Morgenthau, p. 153; Spanier and Wendzel, pp. 128, 131; and Organski, p. 102. In English and German, *Macht*, for example, “power” indicates both capacity and the exercise of that capacity. In French, however, there are two words: *puissance*, indicating potential or capacity; and *pouvoir*, indicating the act or the exercise of power. Dennis H. Wrong, *Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses*, New York: Harper & Row, 1979, pp. 9-10. Frederick Hartmann deals with the distinction between potential and real in his definition of national power as “the strength or capacity that a sovereign nation-state can use to achieve its national interests.” Emphasis in original. Frederick H. Hartmann, *The Relations of Nations*, 5th ed., New York: Macmillan, 1978, p. 43.
8. Organski, pp. 101-02.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 121; Morgenthau, pp. 149-51; Spanier and Wendzel, p. 128; and Eugene J. Kolb, *A Framework for Political Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1978, pp. 50-52.
10. Organski, p. 110; Kolb, pp. 50-52; Morgenthau, pp. 151-53; and Schloming, p. 527. For the declinist approach to the dynamic nature of national power, see Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military*

*Conflict from 1500-2000*, New York: Random House, 1987; Mancur Olsen, *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982; Aaron L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Great Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

11. Organski, pp. 108-09; Spanier, p. 128; and Hobbes, p. 106.

12. Emphasis in original. Franz Halder, *The Halder Diaries: The Private War Journals of Colonel General Franz Halder*, Arnold Lissance, ed., Boulder, CO: **(Couldn't find publisher or year)**; and Dunn Loring, VA: Westview Press and T. N. Dupuy Associates, 1976, Vol. I, p. 8. After the Munich Conference, Mussolini appraised the British leaders as "the tired sons of a long line of rich men." Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. I, *The Gathering Storm*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948, p. 341. On the concept of negative power as used in this context, see Holsti, p. 144; and Dahl, p. 43. On a different view of negative as well as positive power, see Organski, pp. 118-19. See also Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

13. Papp, p. 311; Spanier and Wendzel, pp. 144-45; Kolb, pp. 49-50.

14. Sullivan, pp. 21-24; and Papp, p. 12.

15. Barry O'Neill, "Power and Satisfaction in the United Nations Security Council," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, June 1996, pp. 219-237; and Papp, p. 311.

16. For the distinction between natural and social determinants of power, see Organski, chaps. 7, 8. Morgenthau, p. 106, breaks the elements down into "those which are relatively stable and those which are subject to constant change." See also Coulombis and Wolfe, pp. 65, 73-78, who break national power into two categories: tangible, population, territory, natural resources, industrial capacity, agricultural capacity, military strength and mobility) and intangible, leadership and personality, bureaucratic-organizational efficiency, type of government, societal cohesiveness, reputation, foreign support and diplomacy, accidents.

17. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War*, New York: Praeger, 1966, p. 1. See also Derwent Whittlesey, "Haushofer: The Geopoliticians," *Makers of Modern Strategy*, Edward Mead Earle, ed., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973, pp. 388-414; Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartlands, Runlands, and the Technological Revolution*, New York: Crane, Russak, 1977; Hartmann, pp. 49-52; Morgenthau, pp. 106-108, 153; Spanier and Wendzel, p. 132; Hughes, p. 91; and Organski, pp. 126-38, who believes that geography's effect on national power has been exaggerated.

18. Schloming, p. 530. Hartmann, p. 49, believes climate is the most important geographical factor. Life magazine listed the air conditioner as one of the most important inventions in world history because it would enable tropical areas to begin industrialization. The shape of a nation is also important, as witness Israel's difficulty in returning to its pre-1967 configuration of long frontiers and very little depth. Spanier and Wendzel, p. 132. See also Isaiah Berlin, *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, New York: Viking Press, 1980, p. 258, who attributes the aggressive nationalism of such leaders as Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin to their geographical origins on the borderlands of the empires they will later rule.

19. Schloming, p. 531, and Julian L. Simon, *Population Matters: People, Resources, Environment, and Immigration*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990.

20. Nafis Sadik, "World Population Continues to Rise," *The Brown and Benchmark Reader in International Relations*, 1992, Jeffrey Elliott, ed., Dubuque, IO: Wm. C. Brown, 1992, pp. 291-96. See also Spanier and Wendzel, pp. 135-36; Hartmann, pp. 46-49; Schloming, p. 531; Organski, pp. 153-54; and George D. Moffett, *Global Population Growth: 21st Century Challenges*, Ithaca, NY: Foreign Policy Association, 1994.

21. Hartmann, p. 47; Schloming, p. 532; and Peter G. Peterson, "Will America Grow Up Before It Grows Old?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 1996, pp. 55-92.

22. Spanier and Wendzel, p. 139. See also Schloming, p. 531, and Organski, pp. 138-41.

23. On problems with the most basic of all resources, see Miriam R. Lowi, *Water and Power: The Politics of a Scarce Resource in the Jordan River Basin*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. See also Organski, p. 142; Schloming, pp. 533-34; and Morgenthau, pp. 109-12.

24. National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 96, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996, p. 49. See also Organski, p. 169. Hartmann, pp. 52-56, includes natural resources in the economic element of power.

25. Strategic Assessment, Vol. 96, p. 51; and Schloming, p. 158.

26. For questions concerning the jointness of Operation DESERT STORM, see Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *The General's War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1994. Stalin's great purges of the 1930s are an extreme example of political interference. In addition to the roughly 800,000 party members who were killed, about

half of the army officer corps, some 35,000 in all, were eliminated despite the weakness it imposed on the USSR in a time of growing foreign danger. Gordon A. Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, New York: Dryden Press, 1974, p. 383.

27. U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1993, pp. 12-21. See also Spanier and Wendzel, p. 143.

28. Switzerland is another prime example with the capability of mobilizing in excess of a half-million troops in less than 2 days. Schloming, p. 543.

29. In the subsequent battle of Rourke's Drift, of course, technology plus an inspired combination of all the intangibles ranging from leadership to unit cohesion produced a British victory in which 11 Victoria Crosses were earned. On revolutions in military affairs, see the Strategic Studies Institute monographs from the fifth annual U.S. Army War College Strategy Conference, April 1994. See also Schloming, p. 540.

30. Papp, p. 316; Hartmann, pp. 59-60; and Morgenthau, pp. 133-35.

31. Emphasis in original. Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context*, Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1983, p. 11. See also Papp, p. 378.

32. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of a Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missiles Crisis*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1971, pp. 123-24. See also Papp, pp. 382-84, and Morgenthau, pp. 122-34.

33. On the Russian national character, see Morgenthau, pp. 125-127, and Papp, p. 383. On the American character, see Spanier and Wendzel, pp. 186-192.

34. Papp, pp. 386-387.

35. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, New York: Basic Books, 1990; and "Understanding U.S. Strength," *Foreign Policy*, No. 72, Fall 1988, 105-129.

36. Strategic Assessment, Vol. 96, p. 197. See also *ibid.*, pp. 195-196 and chap. 15; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and William A. Owens, "America's Information Edge," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, March-April 1996; and Roger C. Molander, Andrew S. Riddle, and Peter A. Wilson, *Strategic Information Warfare: A New Face of War*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996. A recent Defense Science Board report on information warfare repeated this warning. Thomas E. Ricks, "Information Warfare Defense is Urged: Pentagon Panel Warns of 'Electronic Pearl Harbor,'" *The Wall Street Journal*, January 6, 1997, p. B2.

37. Ray S. Cline, *World Power Trends and U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1980s*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980, p. 13. See also Papp, pp. 308-309; Hartmann, p. 67; and Coulombis and Wolfe, pp. 66-67. For another approach to quantifying and ranking the actual and projected capabilities of states, see Karl Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968, pp. 21-39.

38. Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 52.

39. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, Richard and Clara Winston, trans., New York: Macmillan, 1970, p. 72. General von Blomberg pointed out after the war that if the French had resisted, the Germans would "have to have beat a hasty retreat." And General Keitel confided that "he wouldn't have been a bit surprised" if three battalions of French troops had flicked the German forces right off the map. G. M. Gilbert, *The Psychology of Dictatorship*, New York: Ronald Press, 1950, p. 211.

40. This did not mean that Hitler was not nervous. "The 48 hours after the march," he stated, "were the most nerve-racking in my life." Allan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962, p. 345. For additional measures Hitler took to make the operation as unprovocative as possible, see John Thomas Emmerson, *The Rhineland Crises*, Ames, IO: University Press, 1977, p. 101.

41. For the flexible deterrent options, see *The Joint Staff Officer's Guide* 1993, AFCC Pub 1, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993, pp. 6-11 to 6-16. For some reason, JCS currently defines national security strategy in terms of instruments of power, diplomatic, economic, military, and information) as the means "to achieve objectives that contribute to national security." JCS Pub 1-02, pp. 254-55. The same publication, however, defines elements of national power as "the means that are available for employment in the pursuit of national objectives," *ibid.*, p. 130. The use of power elements as the "means" in the definition of national strategy (*ibid.*, p. 255) is in keeping with the Goldwater-Nichols terminology concerning power and strategy. Professor Michael Morin, USAWC, November 21, 1996. See also note 4.

## CHAPTER 11 MANAGING STRATEGIC RISK

James F. Holcomb

In a tactical situation one is able to see at least half the problem with the naked eye, whereas in strategy everything has to be guessed at and presumed.<sup>1</sup>

Carl von Clausewitz

The hierarchical chart of the strategy formulation model (Figure 1, Appendix I) shows a final block labeled “Risk Assessment.” The implication of the diagram is that risk assessment is peculiar to the development of military strategy. Indeed, it figures prominently in that process, but not uniquely so. Policy and strategy properly arrived at, demand a continuous and thorough assessment and reassessment of risk throughout the total process.

Strategists and strategic theorists throughout history have grappled with the concept of risk and methodologies for its assessment. The motivation to eliminate uncertainty in policy and strategy development, as well as execution, is natural, if at times chimerical. There will always be uncertainty. It often will be unmeasurable. The very nature of war and conflict and the increasingly complex strategic environment ensures that this is so. Where then does this leave the aspiring student of strategy? Is risk assessment simply the “comfort level that senior planners experience as they assess key variables”?<sup>2</sup> It is this and more. The concept of risk assessment is worth examining in more detail to put some substance to the form.

### Defining Risk.

Defining risk is a relatively simple task. John Collins, in his primer on grand strategy, reduces it to its essentials: “Discrepancies between ends, which we have identified as interests and objectives, and means-available resources-create risks, which can rarely be quantified.”<sup>3</sup> At its core, risk arises when ends and means are not in consonance. This is known as an “ends-means mismatch.” Collins is on solid ground with this definition, the legacy of which springs from Clausewitz and his discussion of “the political object of war and the effort to be made.”<sup>4</sup> B. H. Liddell-Hart also focused on this basic truth: “Strategy depends for success, first and most, on a sound calculation and coordination of the end and the means . . . An excess may be as harmful as a deficiency.”<sup>5</sup> Strategic risk then is the probability of failure in achieving a strategic objective at an acceptable cost. The concept is simple to articulate and easy to understand. But, as in war, the simplest things in strategy are the most difficult.

The first difficulty is in understanding what Clausewitz and others meant by “means” in the ends-means equation. Current use of the term generally accepts that means constitute resources, that is, personnel, treasure, equipment, political will, time, and so on. Clausewitz also intended a larger meaning that includes concepts or courses of action to achieve particular objectives; these coupled with resources constitute the means or “effort to be made.”<sup>6</sup> It has become increasingly useful to separate these two components of Clausewitz’ “means” for consideration in strategy formulation without confusing Clausewitz’ original intent. Consequently, risk can be represented by a mismatch in ends and ways or means.

Art Lykke makes the case for this approach, developing a model comprising three variables: ends (objectives), ways (concepts, options or courses of action for achieving them), and means (resources).



Using a simple metaphor of a three-legged stool, he points out that if the ends, ways, and means (the legs of the stool) are not of equal length, then we are left with a stool (and a strategy) that is out of balance. Continuing the analogy, he defines this angle of imbalance as risk. The greater the mismatch between ends, ways, and/or means, the greater the risk of achieving ones objectives.<sup>7</sup> This is a subtle but important addition to the simple ends-means equation. One can identify the objective to be achieved correctly and accurately and provide adequate resources to achieve it. However, if the “way” of achieving it is not in balance, then there is an inherent risk of failure to achieve the strategic objective. For example, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the objective of the Kennedy administration was fairly straightforward: Get the missiles out of Cuba. The means available were adequate and deliverable. However, there were several different ways to achieve the objective. Graham Allison identifies six major categories of possible response: Do nothing, apply diplomatic pressure, secretly approach Castro, conduct an invasion, conduct air strikes, or blockade.<sup>8</sup> One also can see this in the continuing debate over the strategy for Kosovo and the use solely of airpower to achieve particular political objectives. In the Lykke model of the stool, the balance varies depending on which option is chosen. The degree of lopsidedness or imbalance defines risk. Choosing the right policy option (or way) to achieve the strategic objective is therefore a critical consideration, even assuming a clear objective and adequate means. That is, an adequately resourced “way” that is inappropriate to the “end” would still create risk of failure to achieve the strategic objective.

Thus, the definition of risk is the degree to which strategic objectives, concepts and resources are in or out of balance. Since strategy is a dynamic process, one must understand that all three elements are variable and subject to change over time. The formulation of effective strategy for any endeavor is a constant quest to ensure balance among the variables. The definition applies to all aspects of strategy development whether dealing with national security (grand) strategy, defense, military or theater strategies, business strategy or even personal strategies.

### **Why is Strategic Risk Assessment Difficult?**

The subtitle is borrowed from David Jablonsky’s piece, “Why is Strategy Difficult?”<sup>9</sup> The very nature of war and conflict presupposes a relationship between thinking adversaries. This, in turn, ensures that a degree of ambiguity, uncertainty, and yes, risk will exist in any developed strategy. Indeed, Clausewitz devotes the central theme of *On War* to this very premise; that is what distinguishes his work from his predecessors and ensures its continued relevance to the present day. Clausewitz was not the only one to recognize the subjective nature of war, but he was the first to mark that characteristic as preeminent. Throughout his work, there are allusions to “chance,” “luck,” “guesswork,” “uncertainty,” “probabilities,” and so on. The search for hard truths is a frustrating one. This in itself is a lesson. The analogies and metaphors the Prussian philosopher provides to help understand the nature of war are not based on chess, but reflect “a duel on a larger scale,” “a pair of wrestlers,” “commerce,” a “collision of living forces” or a “game of chance.” Formulating strategy presupposes “an animate object that *reacts*,” and moreover, reacts unpredictably. This equates to Andre Beufre’s definition of strategy as the “art of the dialectic of two opposing wills using force to solve their dispute.”<sup>10</sup> Just as one actor identifies objectives, develops concepts and allocates resources, so does the potential or actual adversary. The variables in the strategic equation have now doubled, further complicating the task. Moreover, ambiguity and uncertainty *increase* as one climbs up the strategic ladder as moral factors gain primacy over material ones.<sup>11</sup> The problem is that these moral factors can only be guessed at. Clausewitz explicitly refers to this transition from certainty to uncertainty in strategic analysis:

At this point, then, intellectual activity leaves the field of the exact sciences of logic and mathematics. It then becomes an art in the broadest meaning of the term—the faculty of using judgement to detect the most important and decisive elements in the vast array of facts and situations.<sup>12</sup>

The strategist now faces a prospect “that Newton himself would quail before the algebraic problems it could pose.”<sup>13</sup> Risk assessment is difficult because strategy is difficult; strategy is difficult because war is the most complex of human undertakings and filled with unknowns. Liddell-Hart concludes in this regard: “This complicates calculation, because no man can exactly calculate the capacity of human genius and stupidity, nor the incapacity of will.”<sup>14</sup> It is the inherent nature of war itself that sets the student adrift in a strategic sea of uncertainty.

### **Genius and Uncertainty.**

Despite this uncertainty, there is comfort in the knowledge that others have navigated these waters before. The challenge is to somehow structure or frame the strategic problem to minimize the unknown or more importantly, to account for it. The effective strategist strives for the “closest approximation of the truth” knowing that full knowledge is an impossibility.<sup>15</sup>

Clausewitz identifies two preeminent qualities in a successful strategist that bear consideration:

If the mind is to emerge unscathed from this relentless struggle with the unforeseen, two qualities are indispensable: first, an intellect that, even in the darkest hour, retains some glimmerings of the inner light which leads to truth; and second, the courage to follow this faint light wherever it may lead (emphasis in the original).<sup>16</sup>

These are the elements that define what Clausewitz terms “genius.” The aspiring strategist should not be misled or discouraged by the use of the term however. Clausewitz does not refer to the result of good genetics, but to the development of a mind through study and experience. He is clear on this point as he continues his discussion: “It is the *average result* that indicates the presence of military genius.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, “genius” as Clausewitz describes it is not solely the unique gift of a Napoleon or Gustavus or Hannibal. It is an achievable skill and the “inner light” can be taught and learned.

Von Moltke the Elder took up the same theme several generations later:

What is necessary is to discover the situation, such as it is, in spite of its being surrounded by the fog of the unknown; then to *appreciate soundly* what is seen, to *guess* what is not seen, to *take a decision quickly*, finally to *act with vigour*, without hesitation<sup>18</sup>

The message is that an education in strategic subjects, followed by continuous historical study to maintain mental suppleness combined with vicarious experience through exercise, and actual experience, all contribute to acquiring the skills necessary for finding the “closest approximation of the truth.” Strategic ability is rarely born, more often learned, but eminently achievable.

Acknowledging the theoretical uncertainties inherent in war, conflict and policy and strategy development is an important, if unsatisfying, step in understanding risk assessment. It allows a better framing of the strategic puzzle. It is simply a matter of knowing what is not known in order to make better use of what is known and, as von Moltke suggests, to guess what is not seen. Guessing well is an inherent part of the art of Grand Strategy.

### **The Ends, Ways, Means Conundrum in Risk Assessment.**

The essence of the challenge of strategy in general and risk assessment in particular is the core problem of relating ends to ways and means. Compounding this basic conundrum is that most often the ends will be abstract, while the ways and means will be relatively well-defined.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the real test of the master of strategic art is to translate obtuse, politically couched objectives into specific actions. This is likely to become more of a challenge as the nature, scope, and direction of potential threats multiply. Articulating the political objective in the event of a Major Theater War is relatively easy; however, achieving significant clarity in political objectives in multiplying crises around the

world, especially where vital U.S. interests are not at stake, will become increasingly problematic. One analyst notes in a critique of the U.S. foreign policy process:

Any ambiguity in the ends-means relationship, any loss in the value roots of policy, or any failure to maintain a firm commitment to the achievement of the national purpose cannot help but deprive a foreign policy of essential meaning and effectiveness.<sup>20</sup>

A second related potential pitfall facing the grand strategist is the “tail wagging the dog” phenomenon. In the absence of clear political objectives or policy guidance, the means can in fact “deflect the direction of ends.”<sup>21</sup> What gets done becomes what one has the capability of doing. The ways and means can develop a momentum of their own and the result is strategy by default, usually at the risk of desired political outcomes. The von Schlieffen Plan and America’s experience in Vietnam are two stark historic examples of this effect.

This problem has been ascribed to the “triumph of technique” in American foreign policy. One critic specifically targets the militarization of foreign affairs during the Cold War and an emphasis on quantitative assessments based solely on capabilities.<sup>22</sup> In such cases, Clausewitz’ “ephemeral factors” are discounted, and “consideration of political subtleties tends to be shunted aside.”<sup>23</sup> Ferdinand Foch, writing in 1903, complained of the same phenomenon but went further: “while the moral factors were depressed as *causes* [of war], they were also suppressed as *effects*.” The unintended result is that strategy can become a function solely of material factors.<sup>24</sup> The dramatic changes of the last decade and the growing complexities and dimensions of current and future world problems make simplistic, capabilities-based approaches dangerous at their worst, or potentially ineffective at best. Getting ends, ways, and means right has always been hard; it is becoming harder.

## Determining Risk.

The simple definition of risk as an imbalance in ends, ways, and/or means is straightforward but clearly incomplete. How does one measure the *degree* of risk in any particular strategic endeavor? This is the heart of the dilemma.

## Neuchterlein and National Interests.

Risk assessment is inherent to the entire strategy formulation process. Donald Neuchterlein addresses risk in his discussion on identifying national interests and their intensities, a fundamental prerequisite to policy and strategy development. He posits 16 criteria for assessing a particular issue as a vital interest.<sup>25</sup> These are divided into value and cost/risk factors<sup>26\*</sup>:

| <u>Value Factors</u>           | <u>Cost/Risk Factors</u>         |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Proximity of the danger        | Economic costs of hostilities    |
| Nature of the threat           | Estimated casualties             |
| Economic stake                 | Risk of protracted conflict      |
| Sentimental attachment         | Risk of enlarged conflict        |
| Type of government and         | Cost of defeat or stalemate      |
| Effect on the balance of power | Cost of public opposition        |
| National prestige at stake     | Risk of UN opposition            |
| Support of allies              | Risk of congressional opposition |

\*Note there is no direct correlation between values and cost/risk factors; they are randomly listed.

**Figure 1. Value and Cost/Risk Factors.**

Neuchterlein advocates using a simple valuation process by rating each factor high, medium, or low, or even assigning numerical scores to the factors. Likewise, for a particular issue, some factors may be more important than others and can be appropriately weighted or prioritized. The factor scores are then totaled. If the value totals of a particular issue are high compared to a low or medium cost/risk valuation, then the issue probably constitutes a vital interest. Neuchterlein does not claim a scientific basis for his methodology, only that “[i]t provides for systematic analysis of specific foreign policy issues; it should therefore lead to better judgments about levels of interest for the United States and its antagonists and, one would hope, to wiser policies than would otherwise be the case.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, it provides a simple tool that assists in the discrimination of interests in relative terms. Having determined “vitalness,” the policymaker/strategist is in a better position to articulate a balanced set of ends, ways, and means in the strategy formulation process by accounting for degrees of risk up front.

### Calculated Risk.

The noted naval theorist, Admiral J. C. Wylie, took a more rigorous approach to the problem in a tongue-in-cheek article published in 1953 entitled “The Calculation of Risk.”<sup>28</sup> The impetus for the short article apparently arose from the 1953 budget hearings in which the Army representative answered difficult questions with the rejoinder “Mr. Congressman, that is a calculated risk.” Of course, no one knew what a calculated risk was or how to calculate it, so Wylie decided to try.<sup>29</sup> Although intended facetiously, Wylie’s little paper does merit consideration in its own right. Using a series of variables and equations, he describes various strategic characteristics.<sup>30</sup>

P = Profit if successful

Cn = Cost if not attempted

Cf = Cost of attempt that fails

Cs = Cost of attempt that succeeds

S = Probability of success

Wylie defines risk as  $P/C_f$ , or the potential profit divided by the cost of a failed attempt. As long as this is greater than 1, the enterprise (or strategy) is “encouraged”; likewise, if less than 1, “discouraged.” These machinations result in general determining equations:

If  $P \times S < C_f (1-S)$  then “no go”

If  $P \times S > C_f (1-S)$  then “go”

These equations describe what is already known instinctively: If the payoff times the probability of success is greater than the cost of failure times the probability of failure, the result is a winning strategy.

Risk is further defined by an equation:  $C_f/C_s < S/(1-S)$

That is, the cost of a failed attempt over the cost of a successful attempt must be less than the probability of success divided by the probability of failure.

Having had his fun with the reader, Wylie further stipulates that “To ensure success in its use, there is only one condition that must be met: the factors involved must never be expressed in arithmetic quantities. That would blunt the fine edge of judgment and obscure the true balance of intangibles.” Wylie clearly subscribes to the Clausewitzian notions of uncertainty and unpredictability in war, and he makes this clear in his important and short book, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control*. In it, he further admonishes the reader to plan for a complete spectrum of strategies in order to have a “reserve” of strategies for the inevitable changes that will occur. He also warns that “the player who plans for only one strategy runs a great risk simply because his opponent soon detects the

single strategy – and counters it . . . planning for certitude is the greatest of all military mistakes . . .”<sup>31</sup> Wylie’s reserve of strategies is essentially conceptual hedging for uncertainty with its inherent risk. This, to borrow from operational art, is planning for strategic branches and sequels or for potential developments requiring adjustments in ends, ways, or means as a particular strategy is implemented.

Although Wylie’s formulations were intended to ridicule early whiz kids, he actually produced a relatively sophisticated approach to a difficult concept. For example, an examination of a recent study prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency to address risk assessment and management of threats to security, uses an identical formulation.<sup>32</sup> Defining risk as the potential of damage or loss to an asset, the study assesses the level of risk as the impact of loss or damage to the asset and the likelihood (probability) that a specific vulnerability could be exploited by a particular threat.<sup>33</sup> The formulation is defensive in nature since it is addressing security protection issues. Nevertheless, it equates exactly to Wylie’s **Cf (1-S)**, that is, the **Cost of Failure times the Probability of Failure**. Strategy and risk assessment are indeed eternal.<sup>34</sup>

## **Risk Management.**

The process of risk assessment is dynamic in nature over time and circumstance. That is, the variables are in constant flux. Risk assessment is simply the constant effort to identify and correct imbalances among the key variables. The first ability of the strategist is to recognize when variables change. The second is to adjust the remaining variables to account for the “delta” or, as it has been defined, the risk. This is known as risk management. In simplest terms, the strategist has several clear options:<sup>35</sup>

*Modify Ends.* When the price to achieve a particular objective is too high or the ability to affect a “center of gravity” is limited, it may become necessary to reduce the overall objective to more realistic terms. Examples include the decision to forego a cross-channel attack in 1942 in favor of North Africa, or accepting a lesser objective than the unification of the Korean peninsula after the Chinese intervention.

*Modify Means.* An increase or reallocation of resources may affect the ability to implement a strategy and achieve the objective. This is, however, not simply a quantitative solution. A definition of resources includes unpredictable and changeable elements as well. For example, public support of a particular policy/strategy is a key consideration in a democracy and must be accounted for, even if difficult to measure. Vietnam is a classic example of not adequately modifying means by calling up the reserves and generating sufficient public support for the effort.

*Modify Ways.* Assuming that the objective is sound and resources are adequate, there will likely be multiple ways to achieve the desired end-state. Use of the various elements of power (political, military, economic, informational) in differing combinations with varying emphasis may enhance the ability to achieve the same overall objective. The recent Kosovo experience serves as a good case of modifying ways: The deployment of Task Force Hawk and increasing information about planning for possible ground options coupled with retargeting the air operation are thought to have contributed to Milosevic’s decision to withdraw forces.

*Reassess the Risk.* Over time some of the going-in assumptions may be proven invalid. Additional information may become available or gaps in knowledge filled. The strategist needs to recognize the potential strategic effect of more or less information, recognizing that the 100 percent solution will always be elusive due to the “ephemeral factors.” It is important to reemphasize that this process is dynamic and “at once abstract and rational, [and] must be capable of synthesizing both psychological and material data.”<sup>36</sup> Indeed, one man’s risk is another man’s certitude and therefore grist for the continuously grinding strategic mill.

## Five Patterns of Strategy for Risk Assessment and Management.

Andre Beaufre addresses the “ends-means” conundrum in his classic book *Introduction to Strategy*. His intent is to provide a series of models, what he calls patterns of strategy, to assist in the process of strategic thinking.<sup>37</sup> The models are intended to show how various and fundamentally differing strategies can spring from the dynamic relationship between ends, ways, and means. These five patterns are macro-descriptors and it is clear to see that countless variations are possible.

*Ends Moderate, Means Large*. This is described as a strategy of “direct threat”; nuclear deterrence strategy is given as example of this pattern.

*Ends Moderate, Means Limited*. Consisting of a pattern of “indirect pressure,” this pattern is useful when freedom of action is limited. It emphasizes political, diplomatic, and economic elements of power at the expense of direct military action. It models the basis of Soviet strategy, that is, avoiding direct military confrontation with the United States.

*Ends Important, Ways Limited (Low Freedom of Action), Means Limited*. This pattern constitutes a combination of “direct threat” and “indirect pressure” applied in successive actions and reflects the strategy of indirect approach as described by Liddell-Hart. It is most appropriate to nations strong defensively but with limited resources.

*Ends Important, Ways Unlimited (High Freedom of Action), Means Inadequate*. This reflects a strategy of protracted war but at a low level of military intensity. It is the theoretical basis for Mao Tse-Tung’s theory of protracted struggle.

*Ends Important, Means Unlimited*. This traditional pattern is characterized by “violent conflict aiming at military victory.” Beufre describes it as the classic strategy of the Napoleonic era with Clausewitz as its principle theorist.

With these five patterns of strategy as a basis, Collins addresses risk specifically with seven examples of how to balance the strategic equation:<sup>38</sup>

- Eliminate waste [modifying ways and/or means]
- Compress objectives [modifying ends]
- Adjust strategy [modifying ways]
- Augment assets [modifying means]
- Reduce ends and increase means [modifying ends and means]
- Bluff [adversary misinterprets your ends, ways, means]
- Give up on the objective [the ultimate modification of ends].

Intended as examples, achieving strategic balance, and hence strategic effectiveness, may require application of one, more, or other creative elements to induce change in the strategic equation.

## Readiness and Risk.

There does exist detailed and rigorously institutionalized processes for measuring risk within the U.S. defense establishment. The roots of these processes spring from the era of Robert McNamara and the introduction of systems analysis to defense planning. In general, these methodologies represent an attempt to account for the unknown institutionally and help to “guess well.” For example, the Joint Net Assessment (JNA) is the informal process that “provides a strategic level risk assessment and provides the basis for developing risk associated with alternative force structures and strategies.”<sup>39</sup> The JNA draws on multiple sources of information and contributes to other strategic assessments and potentially

to changes in the National Military Strategy. Normally a net assessment is developed every 4 years but dramatic changes in the geostrategic environment can result in more frequent assessments. One of the sources of information feeding the JNA process is the regularized readiness reporting system. Therefore, bureaucratically and institutionally, at least in the Department of Defense, strategic risk is related closely to readiness. That is the system. But as recent events in Kosovo have demonstrated, the reality of risk assessment can have as much to do with art as with science.

### **The Chairman's Readiness System.**

The Chairman's Readiness System is the process by which the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff assesses the military's readiness to fulfill the requirements of the National Military Strategy (NMS). The vehicle for assessing and reporting readiness across the armed forces is the Joint Monthly Readiness Review (JMRR).<sup>40</sup>

The Chairman's overall strategic assessment draws on three sources of information: The individual services unit readiness reports, the Unified Combatant Commanders (CinCs) joint readiness assessments, and the Combat Support Agencies reports on their ability to support the CinCs. A full JMRR takes place quarterly with an assessment of capabilities and risk currently and out 12 months in the future.

The assessments are scenario driven and derive from the current NMS. The scenarios normally start with a real-world operation currently underway and include a Smaller Scale Contingency (SSC) or one or two Major Theater Wars (MTW) "in two distant theaters in overlapping timeframes"<sup>41</sup> CinCs are then required to address potential deficiencies in their ability to execute the scenario-based mission requirements. Deficiencies are identified and categorized. Fixes are suggested or they are forwarded for consideration and solution by other working bodies. Unresolved deficiencies are aggregated and considered collectively. These are then termed "key risk elements." Further aggregation may intensify into "overall strategic concerns"; these are potential risks to implementation of the NMS itself and constitute an overall strategic risk assessment.<sup>42</sup>

The system is largely score-based, that is, commanders at all levels are charged with assessing their own readiness and that of their subordinates and assigning a value to it. Scores are aggregated as assessments are forwarded upward. The process would appear at first glance to be relatively sound based as it is on seemingly quantitative assessments. However, the "granularity" of assessment becomes less clear as the reports are progressively aggregated. In fact, there are substantial opportunities for commanders to inject subjective assessments into the process.<sup>43</sup> It is here, as Clausewitz says, that "intellectual activity leaves the field of the exact sciences of logic and mathematics. It then becomes an art in the broadest meaning of the term."<sup>44</sup> Differing perceptions of readiness, in turn, drive differing perceptions of the degree of ultimate risk for the armed forces to implement the NMS, and by extension, elements of the National Security Strategy (NSS). This is the basis of the readiness debate within the services, the Joint Staff, the Department of Defense, and the Congress today.<sup>45</sup>

Although the system would appear to guess well on the surface, there is growing concern that an ends-ways-means mismatch exists. Culturally, commanders naturally are reluctant to report their commands unready to execute their missions. Likewise, senior commanders are adverse to less than capable readiness assessments from their subordinates. Further clouding the process is the political scrutiny under which it takes place. The measure of risk may depend on how one interprets the current strategic mandate: "The United States [must be] able to deter and defeat large-scale cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in overlapping time frames. In short, we must be able to fight and win two major theater wars nearly simultaneously."<sup>46</sup> The current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs assesses the risk factors for fighting and winning the first Major Theater War as "moderate," but the second as "high."<sup>47</sup> What does this mean in real terms, especially with the occasional Smaller Scale Contingency thrown in for good measure? One's point of view depends on where one sits. "Moderate" risk to

the Department of Defense may be acceptable to the Senate Armed Services Committee, but as it is derived from an aggregated assessment, it may be considered downright dangerous by CENTCOM or TRANSCOM.

### **The Case of Kosovo and Two MTWs.**

The conflict in Kosovo provides a fitting vehicle for examining in more real terms the nature of risk in strategy formulation and implementation. It is not the intent to examine the strategy for the conflict itself although this has proven to be a rich field of discussion and debate, especially with regard to matching political ends to military objectives, courses of action, and resources. More interesting is the impact the conflict had on the ability to execute, if need be, declared elements of the National Security and National Military Strategies and the risk thereby incurred as a result of the commitment to the Kosovo operation.

As established, the NMS (as well as the National Security and Defense Strategies) posit as a fundamental element the ability to “deter and defeat nearly simultaneous, large-scale, cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in overlapping time frames.” Moreover, this obtains in an environment in which the United States is globally engaged and, indeed, conducting “multiple concurrent smaller-scale contingency operations” at the same time.

The NSS addresses the possibility that in the event of one or two MTWs, of withdrawing from ongoing contingency operations. In doing so, the NSS acknowledges accepting a “degree of risk,” since such a course is necessary to “reduce the greater risk incurred if we failed to respond adequately to major theater wars.” What happens when a smaller scale contingency takes on the characteristics, at least in part, of a major theater war?

As outlined earlier, the JMRR is the Chairman’s snapshot of the U.S. Armed Forces ability to execute the NMS. The two JMRRs crafted during and immediately following the Kosovo conflict highlighted some of the risk entailed in the two-MTW component of the NMS.

The JMRR covering the April to June 1999 timeframe posited as a scenario an expanding Kosovo operation lasting until September with a simultaneous outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula.<sup>48</sup> It assessed the risk of not prevailing in the Korean MTW as “moderate” and the risk of successfully responding to a second, unstated MTW as “high.” Moderate risk under the given scenario was defined in terms of time and potential casualties:

This does not mean that U.S. forces would not prevail in either contingency [Kosovo and Korea], but rather, that potentially longer timelines required to initiate the counter-offensive increase the potential for higher casualties to forces in the interim and during the warfight.

As might be expected, the Air Force was particularly affected due to its significant commitment to Kosovo. In fact, the Air Force level of effort in Kosovo constituted an MTW in its own right.<sup>49</sup> The strategic concerns listed included mobility shortfalls, logistics/sustainment shortfalls, and C4 and ISR deficiencies. Since strategic concerns are “an aggregation of key risk elements that impact [on] readiness to execute the NMS,” the JMRR in effect provides an overall and general articulation of risk.<sup>50</sup>

The overall strategic effect of this risk was well-articulated in the Kosovo After Action Report to Congress:

Without question, a situation in which the United States would have to prosecute two major theater wars nearly simultaneously would be extraordinarily demanding—well beyond that required for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991. It would involve our complete commitment as a nation and would entail all elements of our total force . . . Consistent with our defense strategy, U.S. forces could not have continued the intense campaign in Kosovo and, at the same time, conducted two nearly simultaneous major theater wars.<sup>51</sup>



In fact, in the course of operations in Kosovo, higher levels of risk were reassessed, and some measures were taken to bring the strategic variables into better balance. One assumption notes that the forces in and around Southwest Asia, coupled with elements enforcing the no-fly zone constituted an effective deterrent to Saddam. The air-bridge supporting the Kosovo operation also was considered to be a positive asset if operations had to be redirected to the Gulf. However, in Northeast Asia, some units were repositioned and others put on a “tighter string” for a quicker response in the event of crisis. The objective was to “maintain a very visible defense capability to discourage leaders in Baghdad and Pyongyang. . . .”<sup>52</sup> In other words, some adjustments in ways and means were undertaken to reduce potential strategic risk in undertaking the Kosovo operation.

If all this language leaves readers slightly dissatisfied with the ability of the defense establishment to measure and articulate risk, then they are in good company. Both the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs also acknowledge a shortcoming in this particular strategic skill. The Kosovo experience brought home the potential impact that smaller scale contingencies could have on the execution of the NMS, especially the two-MTW capability.

Risk analysis is important in judging force readiness where commitments are made to support important and necessary operations but do not involve our vital interests. Some smaller scale contingencies may be in this category.<sup>53</sup>

In fact, the statement of the Secretary and Chairman before Congress acknowledged that “managing these risks is a highly complicated endeavor that would benefit from a more structured and dynamic set of tools for assessing our ability to conduct major wars when we respond to contingencies.”<sup>54</sup> The search for “the closest approximation of the truth,” like strategy, is eternal.

## **Conclusion.**

Assessing and managing strategic risk is an inherently inexact process. It encompasses a combination of inputs, both material and moral, that defy empirical resolution. Weighing these inputs, identifying possible outcomes, and planning for uncertainty should be done with the clear understanding that a complete solution is impossible to achieve but always striven for. Once a strategy is developed, the most important strategic skill and the true mark of strategic “genius” is accounting for potential change and recognizing actual change in a timely enough manner to adjust the strategic variables and thereby ensure a valid strategic equation oriented firmly on achieving the political objectives at hand. This is increasingly difficult to do in a dynamically changing strategic environment with myriad threats, challenges, actors, and unclear potential effects. This is why the development and execution of strategy is primarily an art and why the requirement for developing masters of that art is so essential. In the end, though, the essential elements of strategic risk are unchanged through the ages and consist in the proper balancing of ends, ways, and means to achieve the desired strategic outcome. Understanding that fundamental relationship and “guessing well” through study, exercise, and experience will ensure that assessing and managing strategic risk rises above simply “the comfort level of strategic planners.” A gastro-intestinal assessment is not good enough. It never was.

## **ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 11**

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 585.
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47. Henry H. Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Posture Statement before the 106th Congress Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate*, February 8, 2000, p. 5.
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49. William S. Cohen and Henry H. Shelton, *Report to Congress: Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report*, January 31, 2000, p. 121.
50. The subsequent JMRR (July-September 1999) had an even more dire assessment. The scenario assumed all real-world ongoing commitments with an outbreak of war in Southwest Asia. The JMRR assessed "moderate to high risk factors for conducting this scenario." See Grossman, "US Forces Still Faced High Risk After Kosovo Air War."
51. Cohen and Shelton, *Report to Congress*, p. 12.
52. "Joint Statement . . .," *Hearing on Kosovo After-Action Review*, p. 7.
53. Cohen and Shelton, *Report to Congress*, p. 121.
54. "Joint Statement . . .," *Hearing on Kosovo After-Action Review*, p. 8.

## CHAPTER 12

### LANDPOWER IN TRADITIONAL THEORY AND CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION

G. K. Cunningham

Our distant ancestors, wise for all their Neolithic lack of elegant refinement, were quick to note that the world was divided into mediums, a model of thought so adequate for most human endeavors that it lasted for millennia. In this worldview, the universe seemed to consist of varying mixes of these elements: air, water, fire, earth, and void.<sup>1</sup> We moderns view ourselves as more knowledgeable and sophisticated, but the technological explosion of the last few centuries, while it has altered the hard sciences of chemistry and physics, has not had much impact on our strategic thinking. We still conceptualize military power in terms of the same basic mediums: airpower, seapower, landpower, and space power. (Firepower, it would seem, is common to all of them.)

In the 20th century, airpower dominated major conflict so much that each U.S. service now has its own air arm specifically adapted for its primary medium—sea for the Navy and Marine Corps and land for the Army. Of course, the Air Force reigns supreme in the air and also has concurrently (and reasonably) assumed primary responsibility for the realm of space. In fact, dominance of space may be an essential characteristic of the American way of war in the 21st century, as the medium of space is home to constellations of satellite systems used for position and location determination, communications, intelligence gathering, and targeting.<sup>2</sup> However, for all its usefulness, no one lives there. People live on the land (barring a few hardy seadogs), commerce takes place on land (and merely across seas), and ideas are acculturated on the land. As T. R. Fehrenbach so eloquently pointed out in his masterpiece history of the Korea War, *This Kind of War*:

You may fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it, and wipe it clean of life—but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman legions did, by putting your young men into the mud.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Complementing Medium-based Visions of Strategic Warfighting Theory.**

In 1904, when Sir Halford Mackinder postulated the first nascent modern version of what we now call “geopolitics,” he did so in the context of the end of the colonial era. Mackinder claimed that, during the preceding 4 centuries of expansion, the world had been divided up about as far as it was going to be, and that politics in the 20th century would be played out in a closed system of vying states. To Mackinder, the geography of the world was the stage on which such political, ideological, military, economic, and social affairs were carried out.<sup>4</sup> Hence, anyone wishing to know more about the drama of human interaction should start with a thorough study of stagecraft as the foundation of the rest of the art.

His approach was not without merit. Alfred Thayer Mahan, the American proponent of seapower, had earlier published his seminal work, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, in which he postulated that the then preeminent dominance of the maritime nation of Great Britain rested on its ability to control sea lines of communication to resource-rich colonies. Any nation, like the United States for instance, that desired to expand its power had best follow that model. Mahan was indeed innovative in this regard, for he was the principal author of the notion that the seas were not obstacles to be overcome, but avenues of approach for military forces and wide-open lanes of commerce for economic ventures.<sup>5</sup> Thus, far from being barriers to trade, transportation, and power projection, the

seas provided the very means by which a nation might exert its national power and enlarge its influence. However, while Mackinder recognized the validity of Mahan's approach, he believed the land, and not the sea, was the key to national prosperity and power. The expansion of modern transportation across continents was fast shrinking nations to mere islands across which railroads, the sea lanes of the land, would carry commerce.

At the time Mackinder and Mahan were making these initial sweeping statements, World War I had not been fought, so the impact of air power had yet to be felt. Air power made dramatic advances during the war. One spectacular raid conducted late in the war hinted at the potential of air power. On August 9, 1918, Italian Major Gabriele D'Annunzio commanding the 87th fighter squadron, "La Serenissima," organized one of the great feats of the war. The flamboyant and dashing D'Annunzio was an accomplished novelist, poet, and dramatist, as well as a daring pilot. Leading a small squadron of nine SVA-5 two-seat warplanes, D'Annunzio flew a 700-mile round trip mission over Vienna, dropping thousands of leaflets, written in Italian and German and sporting the tricolors of Italy, urging the Viennese to surrender. This pioneer roundtrip flight of over 700 miles exemplified the potential of aviation to dominate both the air and sea mediums.<sup>6</sup>

It is no surprise, then, that the foremost proponent of airpower was an Italian, Giulio Douhet, who constructed a general theory of air power that has defined the parameters of discussion on warfare in this medium since the early 20th century. He was the first military theorist to grasp the impact of the airplane as an offensive weapon and translate it into a comprehensive mode of warfare in a new medium.<sup>7</sup> His insightful, visionary analysis would be championed by others, such as British airpower advocate Hugh M. Trenchard and American aviation enthusiast Billy Mitchell. While it would take the massive strategic bombing campaigns of World War II to provide practical evidence of the validity of their approach, the flight of the B-29 bomber *Enola Gay* was ample and definitive proof that control of the air was the fundamental prerequisite of modern warfare.<sup>8</sup>

All that said, the American approach to warfare is inherently joint, so much so that jointness is a fundamental precept of all national security planning:

The campaign is the central organizing instrument for joint warfare. Campaigns, by their nature, are joint undertakings. They are planned and executed by applying operational art. The joint operational art encompasses the translation of national security and military strategies into operational design for the joint employment of forces at all levels of war. Combatant commands develop command and theater strategies to apply the joint operational art to their contemporary missions and situations.<sup>9</sup>

In the Department of Defense (DoD) the various services, organized by medium of action, are tasked by DoD Directive 5100.1, *Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components*, among other things, "to recruit, organize, train, and equip interoperable force for assignments to combatant commands" and also "to conduct research; develop tactics, techniques and organization; and develop and procure weapons, equipment, and supplies essential to the fulfillment of the functions [so prescribed]."<sup>10</sup> While service cultures produce norms of behavior and institutionalized perspectives that are medium-dominated, the employment of U.S. armed forces takes place under the command and control of combatant commanders, organized by regional theater or global function.

Even though joint doctrine specifically defines all military planning and operation a joint campaigns under the combatant command of unified, joint commanders, the particularization of warfare into separate operations on land, sea, air, and space makes intuitive sense insofar as the actual manning, equipping, and organizing of forces for employment is concerned. And in that context, landpower remains a foremost strategic consideration unlikely to be supplanted by control of the seas, supremacy in the air, or control of space and cyberspace. Colin Gray points out:

First, the land matters most. Whether or not land constitutes the principal geographical medium on which combat is waged, strategic effect ultimately must have its way in a territorial context. Most wars entail some fighting on

the geography where the belligerents live, the land. Even if a war is dominated by the ebb and flow of combat at sea and in the air, still the whole object of the exercise is to influence the behavior on an enemy who needs to be controlled where he lives, on land. . . . Human beings do not live at sea, or in cyberspace.<sup>11</sup>

### **Mackinder and the Continental Theory of Landpower.**

For Halford Mackinder, the abstract and somewhat emblematic debate over the relative worth of seapower or landpower (or subsequently, airpower) often overshadows his more important contribution to the military theory of landpower. While it is true that the prestige of Mahan probably was greater among Mackinder's fellow Britons than among Mahan's own American citizenry, Mackinder's work was not predominantly a refutation of that popular strategic theory. Rather, it was a reminder that geopolitics is a subject that transcended single mediums of conflict. Geography was not a matter of static boundaries and coastlines, but an ever-transforming element of a global world organism that was subject to change and interpretation. Mackinder began his commentary on seapower by stating, "The influence of geographical conditions upon human activities has depended, however, not merely on the realities as we know them to be and to have been, but in even greater degree on what men imagine in regard to them."<sup>12</sup> To Mackinder, then, the geography actually was less important than the perceptions men had of it and the uses to which it was put. His own detailed charts and illustrations, as well as the detail in which he presented the seaman's and the landsman's points of view, often appear to overshadow his real intent, which was to explain to a complacent United Kingdom after the victory of World War I that continental powers were still a threat with which they must reckon.

Indeed, Mackinder's most widely regarded work, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, was first published in 1919 and was routinely ignored until World War II proved it to be a foresighted and penetrating treatise. As the title suggests, the book was predominantly a work of social strategy, or geopolitics, not pure geography. Mackinder grasped as an absolute what other strategic theorists from Corbett to Mitchell overlooked: people live on land, and power projection alone cannot disrupt national culture and state ambition for long. "In this war," Mackinder wrote of World War I, "German anticipations have proven wrong in many regards, but that has been because we have made them so by a few wise principles of government, and by strenuous effort, notwithstanding our mistakes in policy." Prophetically, he continued, "Our greatest test is yet to come."<sup>13</sup> The euphoria emerging from the defeat of Germany in World War I seemed to result from, in part, a conviction on the part of many of his countrymen that Britannia did indeed rule the waves, that democracy was a predestined condition for all mankind, and that a democratic seapower such as England could contain a continental power and was hence invulnerable.

But what Mackinder postulated was that such an interpretation was idealistic and not at all predictable. He based his premise not only on world geography, but also on an analysis of cultures and national intents. The central issue was not the absolute supremacy of either seapower or landpower, but that the two concepts represented rival nationalistic intentions that would inevitably come into competition and conflict. Great Britain was able to maintain a global empire because of its ability to quickly exert national elements of power over sea lines of communication around littoral parts of the world. In fact, its empire was largely a matter of access to littoral areas, and only extended inward in places such as the Indian subcontinent and central Africa, where land-based rivals could exert threatening influence outward into those littoral areas. From this condition, Mackinder extrapolated that a power acting from a geographical base somewhere in Eastern Europe—the Heartland of a Eurasian World Island—could indeed become a rival empire. Mackinder was never really specific in defining a precise location for the Heartland, but always referred to this in political terms as an area relative to German (that is, Prussian) and Russian interests. What was clear, though, was that this heartland was a split interest, and should it become a unified political entity, its power would become immense.

Again, this conclusion evolved from a conviction on Mackinder's part that the world stage was fixed. Even the poles had been explored and categorized. "In outline our geographical knowledge is now complete . . . claims to the political ownership of all the dry land [have] been pegged out. Whether we think of the physical, economic, military, or political interconnection of things on the surface of the globe, we are now for the first time presented with a closed system."<sup>14</sup>

Hence, any geopolitical considerations in the 20th century would involve rehashing of past conflicts, struggles over the same finite resources, and determinations of political control over the same regions as had characterized the past. If one analyzed that as a struggle of sea powers against land powers, the outcome in the 20th century was not guaranteed by past outcomes. The internal combustion engine and the extension of railroads throughout Eurasia created a different construct—one in which a landpower acting on interior lines of communication could marshal resources and employ manpower to effectively rule the world. Seen in this light, Mackinder was not prescriptive, but cautionary. Given state political ambition in a closed system, the reality was that conflict was quite a likely outcome in the times ahead. While the Great War to Save Democracy was won, and the optimistic hope for a successful and effective League of Nations was a fine ideal, those were Anglo-French perceptions not held by Germany, Russian, or the Chinese for that matter—not to mention a plethora of minor, outer rim states like Japan or the United States. The geopolitical reality was likely to prove that:

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland:

Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island:

Who rules the World-Island commands the World.<sup>15</sup>

But just who *did* rule East Europe in 1919? The social and political fact was that it was a divided region, not one ruled by any particular nationality. Rather, it was an area torn by rivalry, as the past World War had demonstrated. Mackinder emphasized, "But it cannot be too often repeated that these events were the result of a fundamental antagonism between the Germans, who wished to be masters in East Europe, and the Slavs, who refused to submit to them."<sup>16</sup> With Germany soundly defeated, and Russia impeded by social turmoil following a disruptive revolution, this division was likely to be a standing condition for the immediate post-World War I period. However, that condition, for Mackinder, could in no way be interpreted as a certain future. Should either the Slavs or the Germans command the Heartland, freedom-loving and democratically organized states had best be prepared to defend themselves.

Mackinder's proffered solution was a good one, simple, reasonable, and politically attainable: divide the Heartland into more than two states, one Germanic and one Slavic. Since the Heartland was never definitely delineated, the extent of the division was rather a fluid concept, but it most certainly demanded an independent and economically viable Poland.

In other words, we must settle this question between the Germans and the Slavs, and we must see to it that East Europe, like West Europe, is divided into self-contained nations. . . . If you do not now secure the full results of your victory and close this issue between the German and the Slav, you will leave ill-feeling which will not be based on the fading memory of a defeat, but on the daily irritation of millions of proud people.<sup>17</sup>

The central foundation of the geopolitical theory that Mackinder espoused was not the concept of Heartland, which, in fact, he periodically revised and redefined, but his pioneering assertion that in the post-World War I world rivalries would take place in a closed system.<sup>18</sup> He was more prescient than he may have realized, had he lived to see the division of the world between bipolar superpowers for much of the latter half of the 20th century. In that world, the United States assumed the mantle of predominant seapower, and the Soviet Union became undisputed master of the Heartland of East Europe, a stable division that demonstrated the supremacy of neither seapower nor landpower alone, nor the ability of air and space power to tilt the balance in any particular direction.

## Interpretations of Landpower and Strategic Intent.

In retrospect, the varying comparison of maritime power with continental power should not be surprising, as it is, at least as far as geography is concerned, a repetition of the lines of operations maxims Jomini postulated in the 19th century on a global scale:

Interior lines of operations are those adopted by one or two armies to oppose several hostile bodies, and having such a direction that the general can concentrate the masses and maneuver with a whole force in a shorter period of time than it would require the enemy to oppose to them a greater force. Exterior lines lead to the opposite result, and are those formed by an army which operates at the same time on both flanks of the enemy, or against several of his masses.<sup>19</sup>

Seapower as Mahan described it was not just a military theory, but encompassed the full range of elements of national power. But insofar as military operations go, seapower is operationally an approach working from exterior lines. The mobility of the sea enables a power to move forces rapidly around the periphery of a continental power, gaining and retaining initiative by exerting power at times and places of its choosing. In contrast, Mackinder accepted the Jominian principle that interior lines of operation generally were superior to exterior.<sup>20</sup> Hence, a power operating from the strategic center of a continent would have an advantage over a maritime power circumnavigating the littorals. It is a valid, if somewhat simplistic, point.

Jomini based his analysis predominately on the operations of the supreme commander of his era, Napoleon Bonaparte. It was fundamentally a historical approach that retains its validity, since the spectrum of human endeavor is the source of any conclusions regarding the theory of any subset of human endeavor like warfare. However, in any field of study so complex, conclusions and perspectives will differ, and historian-analysts and military theorists often have approached the fundamentals of armed conflict as a means to achieve national policy objectives from a variety of perspectives.

Even earlier commentators offer contrasts. Sun Tzu, a Chinese theorist writing about 500 BC, is perhaps the earliest landpower theorist who presented a coherent approach to land operations. His era was one of warring states, in which rival kingdoms and king-like warlords struggled for supremacy between the decline of the Zhou dynasty and the establishment of central order under the Qin and Han dynasties.<sup>21</sup> His observations took the Confucian mode of terse aphorisms, not always well organized, but consistently emphasizing what B. H. Liddell Hart would later famously label "the indirect approach."<sup>22</sup> Maneuver was highly valued, especially if it avoided actual battle until conditions were favorable. Sun Tzu encouraged indirect methods of action, exploiting intelligence, resource depletion, and subterfuge:

For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. Thus, what is of extreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy; next best is to disrupt his alliances; the next best is to attack his army. The worst policy is to attack cities. Attack cities only when there is no alternative.<sup>23</sup>

Such an outlook is consistent with the geopolitical exigencies of the use of landpower in Sun Tzu's era. In the case of warring principalities, prolonged conflict depleted resources, emptied treasuries, and sacrificed manpower. He pointed out that military power is only one element of state power and that its use is problematic: "When the army engages in protracted campaigns the resources of the state will not suffice."<sup>24</sup>

But the advent of firearms changed the balance considerably, and when military power was concentrated in the hands of two or three antagonists, as developed in feudal Japan, Sun Tzu's advocacy of skillful battlefield gymnastics was not as efficient a means to the end as a powerful, well-aimed



thrust at the heart. After the death of Emperor Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1598, rival feudal lords (*daimyo*) struggled for control. Tokugawa Ieyasu quickly surfaced as the dominant figure in an alliance of about half the *daimyo* and defeated his western rivals in the pivotal set-piece battle of Sekigahara in 1600, becoming the Shogun. During the great battle of Sekigahara, an estimated 60,000 matchlock firearms were used, a vast quantity compared, say, to the mere 3,000 matchlocks then employed in the French army. This technological advance in killing efficiency in terms of range and lethality was balanced by the inherent inaccuracies of the weaponry that mandated the massing of forces and direct action to achieve a culminating battle.<sup>25</sup> The outcome of this decisive battle was a shogunate that lasted until the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry to Japan in 1853, and hence Japanese strategy emphasized directness and thoroughness as not only a means to military victory, but also to national security and prolonged peace.

Miyamoto Musashi, a samurai who survived the battle of Sekigahara (almost miraculously, as he was a part of the defeated alliance, most of which were hunted down and slaughtered), became the strongest Asian proponent of directness in warfare. After a life of legendary proportions, in which he fought over 60 duels without a defeat, he retired to complete his notable work on strategy, *Go Rin No Sho*, that is, *A Book of Five Rings*. This work remains both enigmatic, as it is largely an extended allegory, and routinely ignored outside of Japan, as it was only translated into English in a readily available published version in 1974. But the work is clearly one with broad conceptual intent, designed as a strategic treatise rather than a fencing manual. As Musashi writes, "The principles of strategy are written down here in terms of single combat, but you must think broadly so that you attain an understanding for ten-thousand-a-side battles."<sup>26</sup>

Key to Musashi's approach to strategy is directness. He advocates no flourishes, teaching instead that success depends on clear focus on the objective of defeating the enemy:

The primary thing when you take a sword in your hands is your intention to cut the enemy, whatever the means. Whenever you parry, hit, spring, strike or touch the enemy's cutting sword, you must cut the enemy in the same movement. It is essential to attain this. If you think only of hitting, springing, striking or touching the enemy, you will not be able actually to cut him. More than anything, you must be thinking of carrying your movement through to cutting him. You must thoroughly research this.<sup>27</sup>

Whatever stance one takes, or whatever strategic ends, ways, and means one considers, Musashi advises a direct, no-nonsense attitude: "Think only of cutting."<sup>28</sup> It is ironic, perhaps, that the Japanese theorist's concepts were most represented in World War II in use against his nation by the bellicose American advocate of unrestrained strategic bombing, Curtis LeMay.<sup>29</sup>

Another way of viewing the direct-indirect dichotomy is through the portal of technological or tactical advances and their impact on operational art. In his book, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century*, Douglas A. Macgregor takes exactly that approach, which is largely a contrast of mass versus maneuver. Macgregor postulates that the Roman legions, in order to counter the crushing weight and shock of massed spears that was the Macedonian phalanx, had to devise more flexible and maneuverable formations. By deploying legionaries in boxed, offset "checkerboard" formations, depending on the coordinated use of stabbing sword and shield rather than pikes, Roman commanders gained maneuverability at the expense of Macedonian mass.<sup>30</sup> In the crucial battle of Cynoscephalae in 197 BC, an alert tribune, acting on initiative, diverted 20 maniples into an attack on the exposed rear of the Macedonian phalanx. The phalanx, like the modern battle tank, was designed to fight from the front. The Macedonians, unable to turn because of their powerful but unidirectional formation and unwieldy long pikes, were slaughtered.<sup>31</sup>

To Macgregor, this battle illustrates the swing of a long pendulum. He draws from it the conclusion that the U.S. Army of the 21st century must be light, agile, and rapidly deployable. In fact, historian Lynn Montross characterized much of military history as a cyclic interplay of mass versus maneuver.

He pointed out that the very mobility of the Roman legions that Macgregor cited, when faced with increasingly active Gothic and Persian horsemen centuries after Cynoscephalae, shifted gradually into more stable, massed formations of phalangial density to counter the speed and tactical agility of light cavalry.<sup>32</sup>

The Macedonia phalanx was proof against both the Greek hoplites, who were typically organized in a less dense array, and the lightly armored Persian skirmishers that the Macedonians faced as Alexander conquered the Hellenic world—mass over maneuver. However, the flexible Roman mandibles countered the massed Macedonian pikemen, proving to be more adaptable in rugged terrain and faster to reorient in pitched battle—maneuver over mass. By the end of the Roman era, massed Frankish infantry would fight, again shoulder to shoulder, against barbarian horsemen in the form of Moors and Goths, degenerating into a simple human wall formation that repulsed the Moorish assault at Poitiers—mass over maneuver once again. This stubborn shoulder-to-shoulder human wall tactic succumbed to mail-armored cavalry at Hastings in 1066, when William defeated the massed housecarls of Harold Godwinson. Such cavalry, in turn, fell before the increased range and penetrating power of English longbows and later firearms, until cavalry again countered by armoring themselves and their horses with thick plate armor.<sup>33</sup> Montross postulates that this mass-maneuver cycle typifies most land warfare, as when in World War I, the massed firepower of entrenched machine guns and artillery, which had forced land battle into a stalemate on the Western front, was challenged once again by maneuverable forces in the form of the British technological advance of the tank, which proved decisive and dominant in 1917 at Cambrai.<sup>34</sup>

The lethality of firepower, whether first seen as a basic ball of rock propelled from a metal tube, as in a primitive harquebus, or the massive potential of contemporary improved conventional munitions, or cluster bombs, whether delivered by warplanes or ground-based artillery or missiles, has itself generated another way of viewing the historical transformation of land warfare as an element of landpower. As modern armies, over the past few centuries, have slugged it out in the pursuit of national policies, the focus has shifted from battles and campaigns to the ability of a nation-state to bear the costs of warfare at the strategic level. As described by Russell F. Weigley, one pole of the spectrum is attrition, a strategy based on the continuous, perhaps even gradual, wearing down of a nation's capability to resist. In this concept, the ultimate will of the people to replace lost manpower and to fund the interminable costs of the war effort become paramount.

In America, George Washington successfully practiced such an attrition strategy in the American Revolution—eventually the costs of continuing the conflict simply became more than the British king and parliament were willing to bear. Washington, according to Weigley, was foredoomed to a strategy of attrition out of the necessity of military poverty. The weak colonial states could not withstand the disciplined, well-armed, and well-led British forces on any contested field. Moreover, the mobility of the British Navy made it possible to maneuver the length of the colonial coastline virtually without interference. Washington's only hope for success lay in an erosion of British will to continue the conflict. Operationally, Washington had to become a master of disengagement, avoiding decisive battles and preserving his minimal fighting strength for as long as possible.<sup>35</sup>

The protracted 20th century Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union similarly is an example of attrition strategy in a simmering conflict with occasional violent eruptions in Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East. That long competition was finally won, at least in part, when the costs of countering a massive military build-up under President Ronald Reagan proved more than the Soviet Union could support economically and socially, resulting in the collapse and dismemberment of the Soviet empire. Of course, the very nature of attrition warfare postulates a protracted conflict—the Cold War lasted from the end of World War II until 1989. Inherent in that extended effort to attrite enemy resources and will power is the potential for one's own resources and willpower to erode in the process. Hence, a strategy of attrition warfare is not without risk. In regard to Weigley's example of

the American Revolution, one might wonder, for example, what would have become of the rebellious colonies had not the French fleet fortuitously weighed in heavily on their side to counter the British domination of sea lines of operation.<sup>36</sup>

Hence, American history also includes periods in which Weigley's antipodal concept, annihilation, bears sway. The quintessential example of annihilation strategy at work, in an American context is the American Civil War. In the dual strategy of Ulysses S. Grant, the operative concept was the annihilation of the enemy's capability to resist, both in terms of military forces and also in terms of the will of the people to continue the struggle. Grant's experiences in the West had convinced him that the South simply did not have enough forces or resources to sustain a drawn-out conflict. His strategic vision was simple and hence all the more effective. In concert with the reliable George G. Meade, he would put unrelenting pressure on Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, allowing him no chance to regroup and resupply his Confederate forces. Meanwhile, in the West, William T. Sherman would slash the Confederacy to pieces, so that no forces, arms, or supplies could find their way to Lee. To Meade he issued clear intent: "Lee's army will be your objective point. Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also."<sup>37</sup> To Sherman, he wrote: "You I propose to move against Johnston's army, to break it up, and to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as it is possible, inflicting all the damage you can against their war resources."<sup>38</sup>

Annihilation policy dominates Grant's prosecution of the war, in which the aim was the complete destruction of any enemy capability to continue, both by the defeat of armies in the field and by the terrorizing of the civilian population into political capitulation. Weigley writes:

Sherman's war against the enemy's mind like Grant's war for the complete destruction of the enemy armies was a recipe for the achievement of total victory. The Northern generals were pulled toward both methods because their aim was the utter and complete conquest of the South. . . . Considerations of the possible dangerous effects of military means upon the ultimate ends of postwar sectional understanding had to be sacrificed to the immediate quest for victory, because nothing less than total victory seemed to offer an prospects for reunification at all.<sup>39</sup>

The strategic approach of Grant, one of unrelenting pursuit of total victory, is repeated in the next century in the American demand for unconditional surrender of the Japanese and German nations during World War II. Indeed, one of Weigley's basic premises is that the American way of war is largely one of annihilation rather than attrition.

As callous and rough-handed as Sherman's destruction of Southern resources and intimidation of its population may seem, it pales before the determination of Curtis Lemay to firebomb the Axis powers into submission. Hamburg, Dresden, and Kassel in Germany; and Tokyo and Kobe in Japan were wiped off the map by incendiary munitions. LeMay's prosecution of a war of annihilation in the Pacific particularly was brutal. The aerial campaign against Japan may have killed more than one million Japanese civilians. Official estimates from the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey suggest that the aerial campaign directed by LeMay between March and August 1945 killed 330,000 people and injured another 476,000, with 8.5 million people made homeless. In that regard, nearly half the built-up areas of 64 cities were totally destroyed, an astonishing count of 2.5 million buildings. LeMay accepted the viciousness of the incendiary and nuclear attacks, and had America perchance lost the war, he fully expected retaliatory treatment as a war criminal. However, he never flinched from what he considered his patriotic professional duty in carrying out such destructive and, more importantly, demoralizing attacks.<sup>40</sup>

Annihilation remains the preferred method of joint warfare. Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, states that "the Armed Forces of the United States employ decisive force—powerful enough to unequivocally and rapidly defeat an opponent."<sup>41</sup> This declaration of doctrine is accompanied by a quotation from Lieutenant General Mike Short, U.S. Air Force, that clearly and colorfully extends the limits of the doctrine:

We use force as a last resort . . . then we need to go in with overwhelming force, quite frankly, extraordinary violence that the speed of it, the lethality of it . . . the weight of it has to make an incredible impression on the adversary, to such a degree that he is stunned and shocked . . . you take the fight to the enemy. You go after the head of the snake, put a dagger in the heart of the adversary, and you bring to bear all the force that you have at your command.<sup>42</sup>

Short's emphasis on lethality as well as weight is significant, for American military muscle depends more on technological superiority than sheer weight of numbers. While emphasizing that "the design of future capabilities must avoid dependence on unique systems whose malfunction may cause mission failure,"<sup>43</sup> the capstone doctrine of Joint Publication 1 states that the foremost responsibility of joint and Service research and development programs is to "remain abreast of the leading edge of American and foreign science and technology so that new developments and their promise can be professionally incorporated into military statements of future requirements."<sup>44</sup> But Frederick W. Kagan points out that technological advantage requires continuous updating and advances to be effective, stating, "asymmetrical advantages gained by one state do not normally last very long. Technology and technique inevitably spreads. Other states acquire either similar or counteracting capabilities."<sup>45</sup> Hence, technology alone is not likely to prove able to maintain supremacy without counterbalancing supremacies in conventional forces in terms of both concentrated mass and strategic maneuverability.

This cursory glance at the history of the application of landpower theory in terms of principles of war and operational perspectives suggests that Mackinder was, by and large, right. The exact location and extent of the Heartland, however, is not as critical as the understanding that landpower is more than a military construct. It is as Mackinder asserted a function of culture, resources, and social fabric. The military application of landpower is in practice both cyclical and evolutionary. Mass versus maneuver, attrition versus annihilation, or indirect versus direct approaches all demonstrate that the application of landpower is a contextual issue. The operational applications are influenced heavily by the technology available to the antagonists, whether better armor or better firepower, and change as opposing forces seek advantage on the battlefield. However, regardless of the angle from which a theorist may look at it or the historical context in which it is employed, the strategic importance of landpower remains a stable and enduring concept.

## **Landpower in the 21st Century.**

What, then, is the situational context of landpower at the beginning of the 21st century, and what direction should the U.S. Army move in regard to it?

Certainly in the modern world, mass armies and industrialized military forces predominate. Even in irregular or partisan armies in far-flung and obscure hotspots in areas of crisis, the sources of munitions, weapons, supplies and equipment are the industrialized nations. What may be a break from the historical precedents on which a Baron Antoine Jomini or a Carl von Clausewitz<sup>46</sup> theorized is that today tactical supremacy alone is unlikely to achieve national strategic objectives except in the most particularized of cases.

One can only speculate about the state of affairs in the century ahead, and any prognostication assumes risk. However, there is a general consensus of opinion that guides the development of national security policy and the transformation of military preparedness in the decades ahead. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld sums up the central matter as one of ambiguity:

We live in a time of unconventional challenges and strategic uncertainty. We are confronting challenges fundamentally different than those faced by the American defense establishment in the Cold War and previous eras. The strategy we adopt today will help influence the world's strategic environment, for the United States is an unusually powerful player in world affairs.<sup>47</sup>

This changing security environment is not a total departure from the past, but is an enlargement of it. *Traditional* challengers remain among states with strong military capabilities. While none challenge U.S. global dominance, many could become significant regional actors in historical modalities of confrontation and conflict. *Irregular* challengers will employ terrorism and guerilla methods to oppose, and in some ways negate, the immense technological advantages of American armed forces operating jointly. In fact, *disruptive* challenges may seek to employ widely available high technology breakthroughs to counter the technology-dependent American network-centric approach to warfare. And increasingly, both nonstate actors and nations may seek to counter U.S. hegemony through the *catastrophic* use of weapons of mass destruction or effects.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, this particular scenario is among the most compelling drivers of national policy: “America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones. We are menaced less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of an embittered few.”<sup>49</sup>

Thus the potential sources of disorder and destruction are varied and great. The apparent lack of usefulness of conventional military force against the United States should not be taken as a guarantee that it will never be used. Particularly in terms of regional ambitions, even minor powers can marshal enough military might to give the United States pause for concern. The use of conventional military force is not always a judicious decision made by rational actors. “Passion will always dominate reason. People will find reasons to fight even when they should not,” points out Charles M. Maynes.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, the 1990 invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein was based on exactly that premise, that a regional power could muster the local concentration of forces necessary to act against the national interests of the United States. That Saddam Hussein was wrong will not preclude others from making the same mistake.

In some respects, especially as regards weak multicultural, failed, or undergoverned states, the current world system of states is likely to prove rather fragile. While in the past, industrially based economies favored the nation state, current high technologies contribute to the formation of nonstate actors – both commercially and politically. In a globalized economic system, many multinational corporations have assets and resources that exceed the gross domestic products of many nations, hence, they cannot avoid an increasing interest in political affairs.<sup>51</sup> While multinational businesses tend to favor stability, they make decisions based on profit and thus can produce, even if unintentionally, conditions conducive to political instability. Affordable, reliable, and globally accessible communications facilitate interactions not only of decentralized businesses, but also of political groups. Ethnic nationalism, tribalism, and a resurgence of religious identification act centrifugally to pull multicultural nations apart, whether as large as the former Soviet Union or as small as Rwanda. As William G. Heyland suggested in 1993, “Those who argue that the purpose of American policy is to safeguard democracy and democratic practices, also have to confront its handmaiden – self-determination.”<sup>52</sup> It is extremely unlikely that the United States as a nation with global interests will be immune to the disorders that state fragmentations will cause.

In this tumultuous state of instability, nonstate actors are likely to proliferate and even thrive. The sanctuaries created by the chaotic conditions in ungoverned territories and failed states allow such menaces to operate with anonymity and lack of effective interference. Even in well-established states with intact governance, criminality and politics may prove to be synergistic as criminal elements find they can exert political power, and political entities find they can profit from criminal activities. In the Western hemisphere, narcotraffickers assume just this position in many Latin American countries, and Al Qaeda and other terrorist cells depend on criminal activities for much of their revenue.<sup>53</sup>

In such chaotic and unpredictable geopolitical terrain, military responsibilities are not likely to be confined to decisive military operations. Landpower will perforce be expended in occupation duties and nation-building operations, a historical truism that many military planners and strategists overlook.

The Defense Science Board pointed out that “Stabilization and reconstruction [S&R] operations are not a lesser included task of a combat mission, but a separate and distinct mission with unique requirements for equipping and training. Thus, S&R requirements should be a major driver for the future force.”<sup>54</sup> Naturally, as this is a distinctly population-oriented activity, one can well expect it will take place just as Halford Mackinder stipulated – where the people are, to wit: the land. Landpower forces will play the predominant role in these operations, with the Army designated as the lead executive agent for stabilization and reconstruction.

Landpower, then, as an element of this 21st century geopolitical environment will extend beyond combat situations and encompass much more than land-oriented military forces, which leads to a wider definition of landpower as “the ability in peace, crisis, and war to exert prompt and sustained influence on or from land.”<sup>55</sup> Landpower, so defined, must be employed in concert with other components of military power. Such joint orchestration will be essential at all stages of implementation of this national strategy, woven into a context of integrated application of all elements of national power: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic. This will require broader interagency cooperation and increasing joint military interdependence. However, landpower and land forces will be central to the process of transformation:

Aggression flowing from internal instability thus demands the actual transformation of an unstable or aggressive state into one which is both stable and willing to adhere to the norms of the international community. ...Landpower is crucial for this new grand strategy since it is the tool by which aggressive or conflict-ridden states can be transformed into stable ones.<sup>56</sup>

The challenge for the U.S. Army is to respond appropriately to all, some, or none of the potential threats deriving from this global geopolitical environment of ambiguity. It must become and remain a more ready, adaptable, and strategically deployable landpower force with a modular mix of flexible forces that can respond appropriately to any future challenges to U.S. interests.<sup>57</sup> Chief of Staff of the Army General Peter J. Schoomaker declared, “Whereas for most of our lives the default condition has been peace, now our default expectation must be conflict. This new strategic context is the logic for reshaping the Army to be an Army of campaign quality with joint and expeditionary capabilities.”<sup>58</sup>

### **Landpower: Adding Versatility to National Security Strategy.**

William T. Johnsen postulates that landpower’s principal contribution to military strategy in the 21st century will stem in great measure from its inherent versatility. In analyzing the application of military power across the potential range of employment options, Johnsen concluded that landpower uniquely spans the widest portion of the spectrum. (See Figure 1.) He does not discount the importance of air-and seapower in an overall deterrence posture, particularly when the employment of nuclear options is concerned at the upper end of the spectrum, when national survival may well be at stake. But that eventuality, while a quintessential one from the standpoint of catastrophic danger, is an unlikely one in terms of probability. Hence, landpower offers the most options for practical employment of the military component of national power in pursuit of United States security policies:

[Land power] offers significant contributions to the key roles of supporting the nation, shaping geostrategic conditions, and deterring or compelling adversaries. Land power also offers the greatest operational and strategic flexibility across the spectrum of conflict, throughout the full range of military operations, and in all roles that the Armed Forces of the United States can be expected to perform.<sup>59</sup>

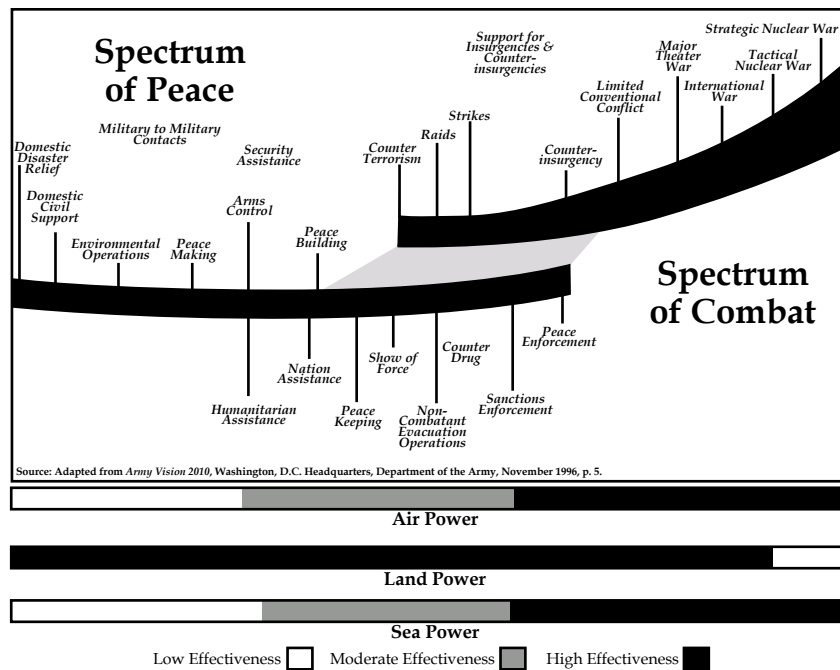


**Figure 1. The Range of Effectiveness of Military Options.<sup>60</sup>**

This conceptualization is important in implementing the kinds of decisions essential to prosecuting the National Defense Strategy in the context of an unstable and uncertain world order. In the broad range of smaller-scale contingencies such as civil support operations, counterinsurgency operations, peacekeeping missions, or counterterrorism operations that are essential to the promotion of peace and deterring war, land forces may have far greater utility than their more technology-oriented counterparts on the sea or in the air. Thus, from the standpoint of the variety of military operations that land forces can undertake, the ability of land forces to operate in direct proximity to other forces, host nations, and civilian populations, and the scalability of both kinetic and nonkinetic response capabilities, land forces represent a powerful arrow in the national military quiver.

Landpower, then, retains a preeminent role in national defense, as it represents the nation's ability to influence events and persons before challenges to national security and international stability degenerate to become more fractious, more volatile, and less manageable. In times of relative calm, when theater combatant commanders are charged with engagement strategies for bolstering relationship and reassure potential partners, landpower is invaluable in developing the close personal relationships among regional nations that prepare later avenues for the employment of landpower in concert with coalition partners.

In the advent of crisis, land forces can act aggressively to intercede to deter continued aggression, dissuade potential adversaries from further hostile actions, and reassure multinational partners of the U.S. commitment to regional stability and a peaceful world order. In the unfortunate instance of natural disasters, land power can provide relief from suffering and establish the preconditions for a return to normalcy and a restoration of essential civil functions.

Should deterrence fail, land forces can exert decisive military force to defeat adversary combat forces or deny access to territory, resources, and supportive populations. The technological overmatch of U.S. conventional forces assures American dominance of global battlespace for the foreseeable future. Despite the theoretical advantages of asymmetric approaches for countering U.S. superiorities, it is unlikely that any state or nonstate actors employing such tactics or techniques will seriously threaten

U.S. national security. That said, the introduction of weapons of mass destruction or effects into this equation will, of course, change that potential. However, the persistent use of lower level asymmetric threats over extended periods can, in fact, act as an impediment to the furtherance of U.S. interests and can become a particularly virulent form of conflict. Thus, while large-scale traditional warfare may well become less prevalent in the 21st century, particularly compared to the last one, overall small scale violence may, in fact, increase in both frequency and intensity. As ethnic struggles, confrontations caused by competition in a globalized economic environment, and population pressures on scarce resources of petrochemicals, water, minerals, and arable land proliferate, violence may be seen as an increasing viable course of action despite its inherent risks. Truly desperate or hopeless people may resort to violence simply because they believe they have nothing to lose. The ideologically extreme may not recognize or consider the risks. In any case, the widespread use of handheld communications technologies will act to facilitate small group connectivity and global networking, making coordination of such violence feasible on a worldwide scope.<sup>61</sup>

Once combat-intensive military operations cease, a full range of national effort will likely be needed to reestablish good governance, defeat pockets of organized resistance, and establish the kinds of security conditions incident to stability and reconstruction activities. It is clear that many reconstruction activities would be performed best by host nation agencies, nongovernmental and private sector organizations, or professionals from international agencies such as the United Nations. However, these kinds of organizations are generally ill-equipped to maintain their own security, and it will be incumbent on military forces to do so. In fact, U.S. military forces must be prepared to assist in rebuilding local institutions, encouraging economic activity, and even establishing representative government.<sup>62</sup> Such activities will necessitate increased attention to organizational design and manning issues, as they have prerequisite call on foreign area officers, civil affairs units, military police, engineer units, and psychological operations specialists. The U.S. Army as the landpower service of the United States will, in large part, determine the direction of joint concept development, experimentation, acquisition, training, and capabilities expansion.

However, the global potential for violence, the wide spectrum of possible military force scenarios, and uncertainty of time and place will mandate sourcing of forces from a global pool of available forces, rather than the 20th century's regional perspective. To shorten response times and maximize use of available strategic lift assets, U.S. Army planners must coordinate very thoroughly on the positioning of Army formations. Heavier, more potent combat formations will likely be located in the United States, while more expeditionary airborne, infantry, and *Stryker* brigades are situated in forward deployed locations to shorten immediate response times.<sup>63</sup> Hence, even from a landpower focus, the capabilities of seapower and airpower remain an active part of the national strategic equation, and the old paradigm of the sequential duality of strategic movement and operational maneuver will become inseparably compressed in to a single perspective of strategic dominant maneuver. Strategic dominant maneuver will not only require Army initiatives to enhance mobility improvements in terms of deployment infrastructure (railway and airfield improvements and container handling facilities), but also a joint approach to equipment prepositioning and sealift vessels and enhanced airlift capabilities, notably by the U.S. acquisition of C-17 cargo aircraft.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the military capabilities of space and cyberspace will become increasingly central to command and control of combat forces operating from dispersed global locations.

### **The Army as a Joint Land Component: Applying Landpower in a Theater.**

In the context of land forces employed by joint, regional combatant commanders, the role of large army formations in theater is complex and fluid. As part of joint and combined theater assets, the land force commander makes key contributions to the ability of a combatant commander to further national



security objectives. First and foremost, in peace or war, forward deployed ground forces provide an on-site ability to continuously assess the theater's posture and potential threats to stability, since their very deployment forward provides physical presence and frequent interactive contact. Moreover, in terms of actual Title 10 responsibilities and apportionment of national resources, the U.S. Army has specific requirements in setting the theater for the joint use of military forces, either as unified U.S. action or as part of an international combined task force. In the areas of force protection, theater-level logistics, command and control, and in many other enabling capacities, only the Army has forces trained, organized, and equipped to carry out essential theater-wide functions. For example, while strategic movement of forces into a theater of operations is most likely the purview of Air Force and Navy planners, intra-theater joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of these forces into a coherently organized land component of the joint force will usually be an Army-run function.

It also is typically the U.S. Army's lot to develop the joint and combined land operations plan that supports and augments the combatant commander's own campaign plans. Of course, in actual decisive combat operations, it will be the land component commander's role to actual command and control the land forces fight as well as integrate that action with the operational activities of the air component commander and the maritime component commander. Additionally, any land operation of major combat forces will need to be integrated with theater-wide special operations missions, as the likelihood of such actions taking place on contiguous or overlapping terrain is high.

But as operations in Iraq have illustrated most distinctly, it is landpower that assures long-term campaign success. The structures for reconstruction, stability operations, interagency and intergovernmental action, and sustainment of coalition resolve all take place on that element of geography where people actually work, farm, go to school, travel, and live—the land. Uniquely among the armed services, Army forces are trained, organized and equipped for three principal types of operations across a full spectrum of military action: offensive, defensive, and stability and reconstruction operations.<sup>65</sup> These operations may well be simultaneous and continuous, but stability and reconstruction operations tend to coalesce at the lower end of the range of military actions. These sorts of civil support operations, while neither glamorous nor effortless, are essential to the sustained application of landpower beyond decisive combat operations. They may lead to the kind of stable and secure national environment in which other elements of national power—diplomatic, economic, and informational—can generate more effective results in cooperation with legitimate and functional local self-government.<sup>66</sup>

To affect this broad range of landpower activities, Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) support geographic unified commands and also some designated sub unified commands. Commanders of ASCCs normally are the senior Army officer not assigned to specific and primary joint duties within a combatant command. However, this commander also may well have other joint and multinational titles, and may well be designated as the joint force land component commander. ASCC organizational structures are neither mandated nor uniform, but rather are modular and scaleable to provide a combatant commander with a range of army capabilities in accordance with anticipated missions. In peacetime, they may vary from less than 2,000 in a deferred theater such as U.S. Army South as an economy-of-force theater, to the some 65,000 in U.S. Army Europe. For a major theater war, U.S. Army Central Command would grow to over 300,000. Some selected ASCCs have the embedded capability to establish numbered armies, when augmented, as an operational-level headquarters for multicorps operations.<sup>67</sup>

The ASCC commander need not be collocated in the theater of operations to which assigned, but regardless of actual physical location, must be able to perform essential functions for the combatant commander. As mentioned, this command constitutes the component headquarters necessary to accomplish joint planning tasks and also to act as a liaison headquarters for the U.S. Army, as the

principal proponent Service for landpower. Of course, it also sources and supports those U.S. Army forces that may be assigned to the theater of operations, and it also conducts joint and combined land operations, if assigned that role by the combatant commander. If fact, when designated, this commander may act as the joint or combined land component commander.

Figure 2 depicts the varying and overlapping responsibilities of the Army Service Component Commanders. The block outlined by large dashes lists those functions an ASCC exercises in support of the combatant commander. These responsibilities have both joint (J) and Army (A) objectives. While not all-inclusive, they do serve to illustrate what functions an ASCC performs on an ongoing basis. However, an Army commander at any level can be designated as an Army forces commander in any joint task force formation. As an Army representative, this commander has the same service responsibilities for any Army element in the joint force. But he also assumes joint responsibilities, as depicted in the figure in the short dashoutlined block.

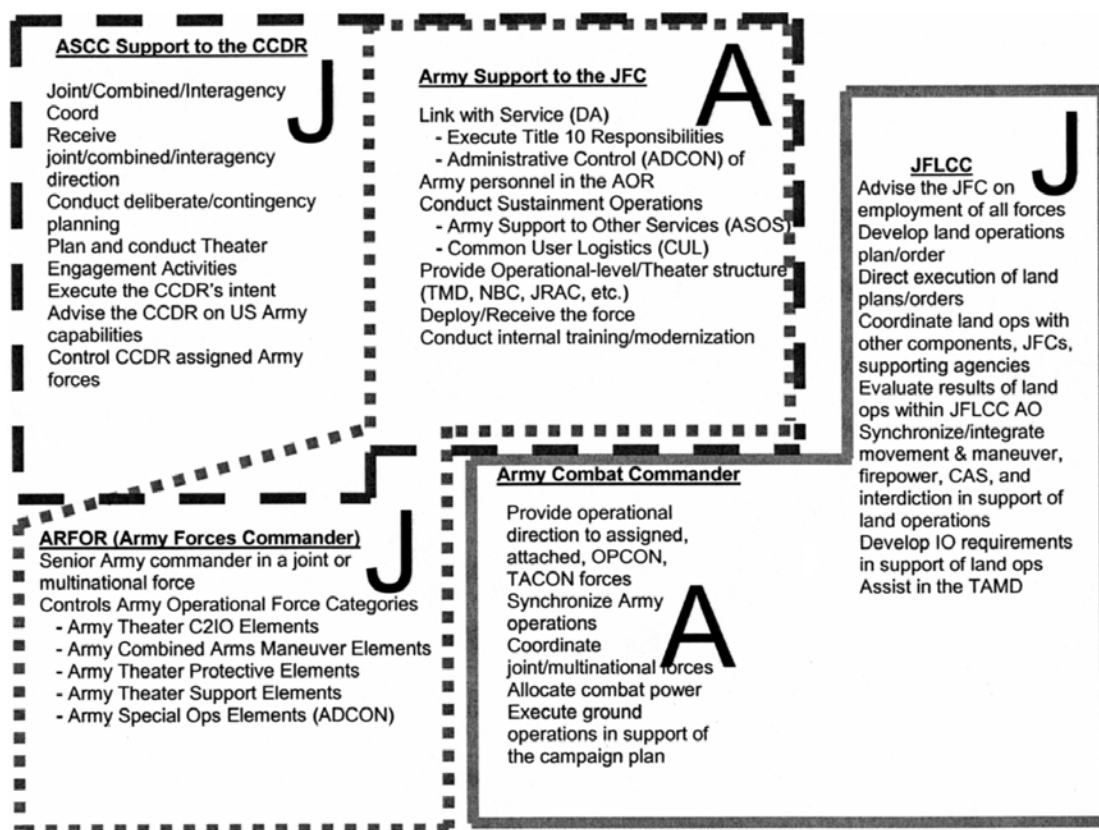


Figure 2. Responsibilities of a Theater Army in Joint and Combined Operations.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, the Army commander also is a combat commander who must accomplish warfighting missions, as depicted in the solid-outlined block. If he is designated as a joint or combined land component commander, his responsibilities increase relative to the overall joint and combined joint force organization. Again, these functions pertain to both joint and Army functions. This requires that the ASCC and combatant commanders and their staffs must understand the roles, missions, and functions required of both headquarters for joint and Army-centric operations. To do this, the ASCC commander and his or her staff must organize for the mission and identify any critical augmentation requirements with regard to force posturing, sustainment capabilities, and command, control, and communications arrangements.

While this concept focuses on joint capabilities and processes, it is probable that 21st century conflicts will be multinational in character, and that any such architecture will be shifting and multipolar in

nature. Stable alliances will continue, but any joint force land component commander will need to deal with ad hoc security arrangements, necessitating imaginative approaches to dealing with the reception and employment of forces from coalition partners from a wide range of readiness postures, with regard to manning, equipping, and training.<sup>69</sup>

There are several options available for the designation of an Army forces commander, for any size joint task force in a joint or combined operation. That is, in every joint or coalition organization that includes an Army force there must be a commander who is charged with the responsibilities of ensuring support and control of those Army forces. In every case where he is appointed as a joint commander, as the senior Army commander in the command, this Army forces commander retains his Army-specific responsibilities unless he, in turn, establishes a separate, subordinate army forces command. This delegation must be done by directive in order to avoid confusion with regard to who the joint Army forces commander actually is.

Thus, if the Army forces commander is, in fact, the senior Army commander in a joint or multinational force he may have several other hats. For example, he may be the actual Army Service Component Commander for a unified or subunified command, as Commander, Army Forces Central Command was in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. He may be a tactical-level commander in smaller contingencies, as was XVIII Corps in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The commander, Army forces may also be tasked to function as a joint land forces component commander, when forces outside the U.S. Army are committed to ground operations in the theater of operations as part of a larger joint or combined land force, as was Commander Army Forces Central Command when designated the Combined Force Land Component Commander in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. He alternatively may be assigned as a joint task force commander in his own right, as was XVIII Corps as CJTF-180 for Operation JUST CAUSE. Regardless of designation, any such commander must still perform all the Title 10 responsibilities for all Army forces in the command unless another, separate commander is delegated those duties within a specific joint force.

Any Army Service Component Commander, then, functions not as a mere administrative headquarters, but as the combatant commander's chief soldier, the main headquarters for planning, conducting, and sustaining land-based campaigns. He or she must provide authoritative direction to any land forces assigned, attached, or otherwise under the operational or tactical control, especially if designated as a combined or joint force land component commander, as determined by the combatant commander. He or she must create synergies among land forces, as well as synchronization with other joint and multinational forces in peacetime operations and open warfare and in any type of conflict between those extremes. That includes providing the operational-level theater structure for the prosecution of a land campaign. Beyond operational responsibilities in theater, the Army Service Component Commander is the combatant commander's principal link with the Department of the Army in the execution of Title 10 responsibilities. Other mandated support operations include Army support to other services and common-user logistics mandates, which typically extend in practice to include coalition partner forces as well as U.S. joint formations.

### **Landpower, the Foundation of Pax Americana.**

The steady tramp of the booted feet of thousands of legionaries over centuries ensured the crowning achievement of the Roman empire, the Pax Romana, which marked an era in which peaceful commerce and relative security were the dominant characteristics of the Western world. In sunny Hispania or the damp forests of Germania, the forts and patrols of the Roman legions represented the determination of the people of the Roman state to maintain their frontiers and fend off the inroads of barbarian hordes on the move. Behind the shields of the legionaries, commerce, engineering, arts, language, and social institutions took on distinctly Roman characteristics, so much so that much of what we today

acknowledge as Western culture is Roman in origin. If the 21st century is to see a parallel state of affairs, a Pax Americana, it will surely rest on a similar foundation.

Landpower is more than military forces deployed to far-flung places. Rather, it is a conglomerate of elements, each interacting so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Certainly military forces are the power projection element of landpower, but governments; commercial and financial corporations and industrial systems; nongovernmental organizations and institutions; science and technology; agriculture; social and political factors; and cultural norms all play a significant part in preparing and sustaining those forces in action. In concert with other mediums of military operations, landpower's major contribution to U.S. national security objectives lies in its versatility and scalability. Land forces can be tailored precisely to address specific situations with many component variables. From the mere presence of soldiers on the ground to the lethal employment of a wide range of kinetic and nonkinetic weapons, the U.S. Army is uniquely postured to provide the military force necessary to influence human activity in the domain where human beings dwell, where their business is conducted, and where their values are maintained – the land.

Land forces provide the capability to sustain peace by proactively shaping the security environment of the theaters to which they are deployed. They provide visible, personal, face-to-face contact with other people and other governments, creating lasting relationships and enduring demonstrations of American commitment. Particularly at the lower, less kinetic ranges of the spectrum of conflict, land forces interact with people and provide unmatched flexibility in reassuring allies, persuading potential coalition partners, and deterring would-be aggressors. Land forces extend landpower in virtually countless ways for as far or fast or long a national policy dictates, limited only by the strategic reach of deployment means, and bounded only by the speed and clarity of policy formulation, the resoluteness of leadership decisions, and the national will to persevere.

It is landpower that interrupts the security environments of enemies of the nation, whether structured as political territories or as nonstate organizations. Seapower, airpower, space power, and even cyberspace power have enabling roles to play and may even actually prove decisive in the outcome of a war, but they will only rarely prove definitive in determining a conclusive and persistent change for the course of the future. The final outcomes always will be relative to landpower. In this way, landpower is uniquely the final arbiter of national defense policy, as it works synergistically with other elements of military power to curtail the flexibility and freedom of movement of adversaries, to deny them sustainment and support, to defeat their open challenges, and to squelch organized resistance and create the conditions for a secure peace.

After the decisive conclusion of major combat actions, the duties and responsibilities of a combined or joint force land component commander are not likely to cease, but will merely take on new policy objectives and a more wide-reaching axis of advance. When the warship's missiles and the warplane's bombs no longer descend, the land warrior's work still remains, often as active and dangerous as combat operations were, for landpower is the essential enabler for the stability operations necessary to secure territory, for the creation of the conditions conducive to infrastructure reconstruction and renewal, and for the facilitation of an atmosphere of change so that interagency and intergovernmental objectives aimed at stabilization, economic progress, and political self-sufficiency can be attained.

So long as America is to remain the beacon of liberty, the protector of democratic principles, and the endorser of free enterprise, landpower offers the nation the versatile, sustained potential to accomplish national security objectives, demonstrate and defend the American way of life, and act as an agent of good for all humanity.

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## CHAPTER 13 THUCYDIDES AND CONTEMPORARY STRATEGY

R. Craig Nation

### A POSSESSION FOR ALL TIME

Nearly 2 1/2 millennia have passed since the Greek historian Thucydides composed his famous history of the Peloponnesian War (432-404 B.C.E.).<sup>1</sup> Although well-known among scholars, the text was not translated from the Greek original until 1478.<sup>2</sup> Contemporary interest in Thucydides dates to the European renaissance and emergence of the modern state system, whose dynamic of armed competition between contending sovereignties his work is often presumed to represent. Ever since, Thucydides has been a source of inspiration for policymakers as well as scholars. In our time, no armed conflict anywhere in the world is fought to a conclusion without some attempt to use his work as a vehicle for interpretation.<sup>3</sup>

Thucydides' influence has been manifest in modern American strategic thought. In 1947 U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall turned to Thucydides to fathom the emerging Cold War: "I doubt seriously," he proposed, "whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep conviction regarding certain of the basic issues today who has not at least reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the fall of Athens."<sup>4</sup> A latter U.S. Secretary of State and former general officer, Colin Powell, speaking upon his retirement as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1993, cited Thucydides to the effect that "of all manifestations of power, restraint impresses men most." Powell kept the passage posted at his desk for many years.<sup>5</sup> When Stanfield Turner set out to revamp instruction at the U.S. Naval War College in the 1970s, he made Thucydides the focal point of the curriculum. Today Carl von Clausewitz, Sun Tzu, and Thucydides are the only strategic theorists whose work predates the 20th century that are studied systematically at U.S. senior service schools.

In the past several decades, there has been an explosion of work devoted to Thucydides, no longer addressed primarily to an audience of classical scholars, but rather the larger community of security and strategic studies.<sup>6</sup> This attention rests on an appreciation of his work's multifaceted relevance. Leo Strauss represents Thucydides' text as a commentary upon war itself: "The Peloponnesian war is that singular event which reveals fully, in an unsurpassable manner, for all times, the nature of war."<sup>7</sup> Clifford Orwin sees it as a political primer; "Of all writers on politics, none stays closer than Thucydides to the world of citizen and statesman," whose work belongs "to students of political life of whatever time and place."<sup>8</sup> Richard Ned Lebow concentrates on Thucydides' contributions to international relations theory, as "the first writer to analyze the origin of war, the role of power in international relations, the relationship between domestic and foreign politics, the process by which civil and international orders unravel and what might be done to restore them."<sup>9</sup> Such commendations can be multiplied many fold. Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* is, without question, a seminal study of warfare and a "possession for all time" as the author aspired for it to be.<sup>10</sup>

Why is this so? What does *The Peloponnesian War* have to teach us about the problems of war and strategy? It is, in fact, generally easier to assert the text's importance than to discern the character of its insights. Like any great work, its message is ambiguous and has been read in different ways depending on the prevailing *Zeitgeist*. In the early modern centuries, Thucydides was viewed as a guide to the primacy of power and *raison d'état* in the Westphalian state system. The young Thomas Hobbes, who in 1624 authored one of the first English translations of *The Peloponnesian War*, provides an example. Hobbes' philosophical work, which considered the urge to power to be integral to human nature and



emphasized the insecurity that results from an anarchic state of nature, was influenced deeply by his classical predecessor.<sup>11</sup> The realist tradition in international relations theory consistently has claimed Thucydides as a progenitor—Joseph Nye calls him “the founding father of Realism.”<sup>12</sup> For Marshall, the war between Athens and Sparta became a prototype for the bipolar confrontation of the emerging Cold War, and the clash of values between democracy and totalitarianism that informed it. Others see the work as a humane reflection on the human condition whose overarching theme is “the suffering of war.”<sup>13</sup> Powell, from the perspective of the victorious United States of the post-Cold War, found a cautionary tale about the limits of power. Today, Thucydides’ work is being applied as a vehicle for understanding the logic of terrorism in the world after September 11, 2001 (9/11).<sup>14</sup> This is as it should be. Classic works of strategic literature cannot be read as users manuals. They offer illuminations rather than answers—their status as “timeless” works in a sense demands that it be so.

Policy and strategy, defined as the craft of statesmanship and the use of military force in the pursuit of political aims, are practical undertakings. Many U.S. commanders carried copies of Antoine Jomini’s work onto the battlefields of the American Civil War—the Swiss theorist made a conscious attempt to provide maxims that could be applied to tactical and operational problems. Alexander the Great is reported to have slept on campaign with a version of *The Iliad* prepared by his tutor Aristotle at his bedside (as modern commanders might carry a Bible or Koran)—cultural inspiration also may serve as a foundation for waging war. It is difficult to imagine Thucydides in a knapsack on campaign; his insights are too complex to serve as guides on the tactical level, and his conclusions too elusive to provide cultural inspiration. His work has a different kind of merit, however, that is perhaps no less relevant and profound.

What Thucydides provides is strategic insight. He offers invaluable points of orientation for statecraft and supreme command in the domain of national policy, as well as searing judgments about the factors that lead states to victory or defeat in protracted strategic competition. His subject is the institution of war in all its dimensions, and his text illustrates that although we no longer fight with shields and stabbing spears, on the strategic level, warfare has remained remarkably constant over time. Those who read Thucydides for the first time usually are struck by his work’s astonishing current relevance—not so much as an agenda for action as a guide to understanding.<sup>15</sup> As a reflection on war intended to help us to come to terms with the larger strategic environment, *The Peloponnesian War* remains unsurpassed.

## A WAR LIKE ALL OTHERS

Much of the current literature concerning the Peloponnesian War is focused on the conflict itself, considered as an event in space and time that can be understood empirically. Victor David Hanson’s recent study, *A War Like No Other*, emphasizes the distinctiveness of the struggle, which he portrays as an armed conflict virtually unique in history in its scope and complexity.<sup>16</sup> This is potentially misleading. Almost everything that we know about the Peloponnesian War is based on what Thucydides tells us, and, despite the best efforts of archeologists and classical scholars, that is not likely to change.

There is an ongoing debate about the accuracy of Thucydides’ narrative, but it rests on distressingly few supplementary sources (essentially stone tablets containing state records and a very small number of fragmentary primary and secondary accounts). Basically, much of Thucydides’ story must either be accepted on faith or rejected as improbable. Thucydides was in an excellent position to assemble an accurate record of events. His appreciation for the importance of the war gave him a strong motive to do so. And he went out of his way to demonstrate his objectivity, a trait for which his work has long been appreciated. David Hume, later echoed by Immanuel Kant, famously remarked that the first page of his text “was the commencement of real history,” while even the skeptical George Cawkwell lauds his “monstrous passion for the truth.”<sup>17</sup>

Up to the publication of Jacqueline de Romilly's seminal study of Athenian imperialism in 1947, the issue of chronology dominated Thucydides scholarship—when the work was composed, the stages of composition, and how much the author was in a position to know.<sup>18</sup> Today, scholars broadly accept that *The Peloponnesian War* was conceived and composed as a whole. Scholarship has shifted from issues of accuracy in narration toward an immanent reading of the text, viewed as an artful reconstruction used to convey the author's personal view of Greek political life.<sup>19</sup> This kind of research agenda may be exaggerated in its own right, but it is certainly true that Thucydides interprets as well as describes—his account is infused with the author's perspective. "Thucydides has imposed his will," notes the commentator Arnold Gomme, "as no other historian has ever done."<sup>20</sup> The Peloponnesian War was indeed a great armed conflict, but it was not the only one waged in classical antiquity. It may be perceived as a "war like no other" only because of the brilliance of Thucydides' rendition of events. And as a 19th century commentator warns, Thucydides' masterly text can lead us to neglect the fact that "history does not consist of events in and of themselves, but rather in the impact that they have upon others."<sup>21</sup> For the purposes of strategic studies, as distinct from classical studies and historiography, it is *Thucydides' Peloponnesian War* that matters.

What do we know about Thucydides? Three vitae survive from the Byzantine period, but they are contradictory and sometimes clearly erroneous. Most of what we can assert derives from what Thucydides himself tells us in four brief references to his personal circumstances in *The Peloponnesian War*, and perhaps more importantly from what we can infer about the author from reading his text.<sup>22</sup>

Thucydides was born in the 5th century, around 460. He was therefore 29 years old and in the prime of life in 431 when the Peloponnesian War began, and 55 in 404 when it ended with Athens' defeat. The date of his death is not known with certainty, but probably occurred around 400-397. The author records his full name as Thucydides, son of Olorus from the deme of Halimous. This indicates Thracian origin and possible familial ties to the powerful and conservative Philaidea clan, which included the Athenian statesman Miltiades (550-489, the victor at Marathon in 490) and his son Cimon (510-450, ostracized from Athens in 461). Thucydides was clearly of high social standing, and a man of means. At one point, he mentions that his family possesses the Athenian concession for gold mining in all of Thrace. In 424 the citizens of Athens elected him to the post of general, one of only ten individuals to hold that post annually and therefore a leading figure in the state. In the same year, ordered to come to the relief of the commercial center of Amphipolis in Thrace with a small fleet of seven triremes (warships), he arrived too late to prevent the city's fall to the Spartan general Brasidas. Returning to Athens, Thucydides was condemned as a sign of disfavor and exiled from the city for 20 years (a fairly common punishment in the era). For the remainder of the conflict, he was therefore able to observe, from the perspective of a not entirely disinterested onlooker, the war swirling around him. During the war, when he may have spent much of his time on his Thracian estate, and after his return to Athens on its conclusion, he composed on a series of papyrus scrolls, what was in effect a contemporary history, recording in great detail the course of events from 431 to 411. Thucydides' history is left unfinished, and, in fact, breaks off abruptly in the midst of a paragraph.<sup>23</sup>

More important than the details of this modest biography is what it seems to indicate about the author's intellectual orientation. Thucydides' life ran parallel to the golden age of classical Hellenic civilization. He lived to see the triumph of Athenian material civilization with the raising of the great temples on the Acropolis, the construction of the long walls linking Athens to the port of Piraeus, and the constant expansion of an Athenian maritime empire. He was contemporary with the political leader Pericles (495-429); the historian Herodotus (484-425); the sculptor Phidias (490-430); the philosophers Gorgias (483-375) and Socrates (469-399); and the dramatists Sophocles (497-406), Euripides (480-406), and Aristophanes (448-380).<sup>24</sup> Thucydides was therefore a participant in one of the greatest cultural flowerings in all of history, and present at the creation of what we call Western Civilization. He also

lived to see the defeat and ruin of his native city, an event whose cultural as well as strategic importance he fully appreciated. Thucydides begins his history by remarking that its subject is “the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians . . . believing that it would be a great war, and more worthy of relation than any that had preceded it.”<sup>25</sup> He makes no attempt to justify this focus, and, in fact, none is required. “War is the father and king of all,” wrote the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus (535-475) in a passage that is not incongruous for a civilization whose founding text was Homer’s *Iliad*.<sup>26</sup> It was a valuation that Thucydides shared. The sentiment was echoed from the other side of the world by Thucydides’ approximate contemporary Sun Tzu, for whom: “Warfare is the greatest affair of state, the basis of life and death, the way to survival or extinction. It must be thoroughly pondered and analyzed.”<sup>27</sup> Thucydides’ experience with hegemonic warfare led him to validate these conclusions, and to perceive war as the essential focus for all political life. The political, social, and cultural implications of the great war between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians are the real subject of his history.

One might surmise that as a young man Thucydides turned away from the oligarchic political preferences that would come naturally to someone of his social standing, and embraced the idealism of Periclean Athens. The tribute to the civic culture of democratic Athens that he transcribes in Pericles’ funeral oration in Book Two of *The Peloponnesian War*, where the Athenian leader honors the city’s fallen soldiers by evoking the cause for which they offered their lives, obviously is sincere.<sup>28</sup> Thucydides also sees and describes in brutal detail the dark side of democratic governance, but his allegiance to Pericles as the embodiment of the ideal of an open society never wavers. In this sense, his history takes on the contours of a tragedy – the account of the downfall, occasioned by its own hubris and tragic flaws, of a great civilization. W. Robert Connor notes a “recurring paradox” in Thucydides’ history; “the intense emotional power of a work ostensibly so detached.”<sup>29</sup> The paradox is only apparent. Thucydides’ major themes, the harsh reality of warfare as a locus of political intercourse and the corruption of a civilized polity exposed to the pressures of total war, are passionately felt. It is the importance of these themes that leads him to insist on a dispassionate investigation of the questions of causation and responsibility. “The absence of romance in my history,” he writes, “will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the understanding of the future . . . I shall be content.”<sup>30</sup> Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War is important not primarily for what makes it unique, but for what it shares in common with and reveals about the nature of other hegemonic conflicts. It is a war like all others that poses themes of universal and enduring importance.

## THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

The war that Thucydides recounts certainly merits his judgment that, in scope and importance, it was “much greater than the wars which preceded it.”<sup>31</sup> This is due to its length and extent, but also because of the cultural stakes. Thucydides begins his narrative with an account of the evolution of Hellenic civilization itself (known to modern students as the *Archaeology*), which demonstrates the development from the 7th to 5th centuries of a classic Greek civilization around the political unit of the city-state (*polis*). City states were engaged in constant feuding over agricultural land at the margin of their territories, waging a “Greek way of war” with armed citizens’ militias deployed as heavy infantry (hoplites) fighting in close formation (the phalanx) in a strategic context heavily constrained by myth and ritual.<sup>32</sup> This relatively harmonious system, whose value system Homer depicted in his epics, was soon to be swept away – first by external shocks and then by war waged between its leading polities.

The Greek world drew together to repel the Persians in the *Persian Wars* (490-479) as recounted in the *Histories* of Herodotus, culminating with the famous battles of Marathon (490), Salamis (480), and Plataea (479).<sup>33</sup> What followed might be compared, with due allowance for changed circumstances, to

the emergence of the Cold War after 1945, when disparate allies forced together to resist a common threat fell out when the threat was removed.<sup>34</sup> Athens and Sparta, the leading Greek powers, allies in the struggle against the Persians but possessed of radically different institutions and aspirations, soon were engaged in a struggle for dominion. Thucydides devotes a large section of his text (the *Pentecontaetia* or “50 years”) to describe the rise of a revisionist Athens bent upon replacing Sparta as the leading power in Hellas in the decades following the Persian War.

Thucydides’ analysis of the causes of war has a strong cultural dimension. The author repeatedly refers to the differences in style, attitude, and values that divide the major belligerents. Sparta represents a distinctive variant of the oligarchic tyranny, with an agricultural economy based on the labor of a massive population of enslaved helots, with defense provided by professional warriors or Spartiates organized in elite infantry units famed for their courage and discipline. Sparta’s force as a land power is justly famed – no other power in the Greek world is presumed to be capable of standing before it. Sparta also heads a loose alliance based on bilateral agreements with like-minded allies known as the Peloponnesian League. As an agrarian based oligarchy committed to traditional values and an unchallengeable land power with a status-quo geopolitical orientation, Sparta may be said to represent a conservative force in Greek life. By way of contrast, Thucydides portrays Athens as dynamic and innovative. Though, like all Greek city-states, its economy rests on slave labor, it is ground-breaking in developing democratic institutions and offers a considerable degree of empowerment to its free citizens. Its international position rests on sea power, commerce, and an empire of subject states (city-states in the Aegean, Thrace, and Asia Minor) that originally ally with Athens to resist the Persians and are organized under Athenian leadership in the Delian League in 478. Athens is culturally innovative, economically dynamic, and strategically expansive. After the construction of the long walls linking Athens to Piraeus in 450, it is also virtually invulnerable. Periclean Athens is bent on extending its power, and brash and assertive in its dealings with others.

When the city-state of Megara withdrew from the Spartan alliance and joined with Athens in 460, a First Peloponnesian War that pitted Athens and Sparta against one another as primary belligerents ensued. The war ended in 446 with a compromise known as the Thirty Years Peace, including a pledge to submit future differences to binding arbitration. Between 433 and 431, however, a series of events on the periphery of the Greek world drove the two antagonists to war once again. Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War was waged from 431-404, over a span of 27 years. For purposes of simplification (the distinction is not made by Thucydides), historians generally divide the war into three phases: the *Archidamian War* from 431-421, named for the Spartan King Archidamus who ironically opposed a resort to arms and sought to contain hostilities once in progress; the *Peace of Nicias* from 421-412, named for the Athenian general Nicias who negotiated the truce in 421 and went on to meet a tragic fate as commander of the doomed Athenian expeditionary force on Sicily; and the *Ionian War* from 412-404 beginning with an Athenian revival but concluding with her final defeat.

The Archidamian War unfolded as a stalemate between Spartan land power and Athenian sea power. Each side was capable of hurting its opponent, but not overthrowing it. A turning point came when Athens established a base on the Peloponnesus at the isolated outpost of Pylos, capturing several hundred elite Spartiate warriors and threatening to inspire a helot revolt. The Peace of Nicias was the result, but it did not strike deep roots. By this point, the war had taken on a momentum of its own, with allies and local commanders refusing to respect ceasefires, and a war party on each side committed to pursue the conflict *jusqu’au bout*. Thucydides goes to some length to argue that the Peace of Nicias, which he calls a “treacherous armistice,” does not divide the Peloponnesian War into two distinct parts, but rather represents an integral part of an extended conflict with a consistent strategic logic.<sup>35</sup>

In 416, with rivalry between the two parties unabated, Athens, led by the flamboyant, ambitious, and unprincipled young Alcibiades, launched a great armada with the intention of shifting the balance of power decisively by conquering the island of Sicily.<sup>36</sup> The destruction of its expeditionary force at

Syracuse weakened Athens substantially, but not decisively. An oligarchy overthrew the Athenian democracy in 411, but democratic forces quickly regained political control of the city. Athens eventually recouped its strength and launched a military comeback, carrying the war into the Aegean and the Hellespont. The Ionian War essentially was a naval contest waged in these regions, with the Athenian fleet successful at the outset but unable to force the issue to decisive conclusion. In the end, it was the intervention in the Spartan cause of the former common enemy, Persia, that turned the tide. In 405 at the battle of Aegospotami, the Spartan admiral Lysander caught the Athenian fleet drawn up on shore and destroyed it. In 404, with its real center of gravity eliminated, Athens surrendered. The Spartan army occupied the Acropolis, tore down the long walls, and imposed an oligarchic tyranny under a kind of junta known to history as the Thirty Tyrants. As a competitive polity in the eastern Mediterranean, Athens' authority eventually would be restored, but its Golden Age, inspired by the ideals of Pericles, would not return. Thucydides' account of the war ends at the year 411, but it is clear throughout the narrative that he is aware of its eventual outcome, and that this awareness importantly shapes the way in which he structures his text and develops its themes.

## THUCYDIDES AND GRAND STRATEGY

Even in brief outline, the Peloponnesian War presents the observer with an extraordinarily wide variety of strategic gambits, military adventures, and political ploys. Thucydides' history includes detailed descriptions of major fleet actions, pitched battles, sieges, unconventional operations, plague, revolution, atrocity and massacre, political confrontations, instances of decisive leadership, and, in fact, virtually every kind of circumstance that shapes the outcome of major wars. The story is engrossing, but, as already argued, it is not unique. What is it that makes Thucydides' account the "classical and canonical work of Western culture" that it is universally considered to be?<sup>37</sup>

Part of the answer lies in the controlled emotion with which Thucydides infuses an account of a war that he firmly believes to be an unprecedented tragedy. Part lies in the author's methodological contributions. Thucydides sets out to chronicle a war, not to craft a general theory of warfare. But he clearly states the conviction that because human nature remains essentially the same, by examining the past, we can identify recurrent patterns in social and political intercourse, learn from them, and on that basis develop strategies for more effective action in the future. The author's magisterial detachment, refusal to accept conventional explanations at face value, and unapologetic rationalism are nothing short of remarkable. Moses Finley calls Thucydides "the most careful and, in the best sense, the most skeptical historian the ancient world ever produced."<sup>38</sup> In this regard, his work provides a solid foundation for modern historiography and the discipline of political science. Most importantly, perhaps, *The Peloponnesian War* is timeless because it develops an appreciation of warfare in a larger strategic context and poses classic problems in strategic analysis in a particularly lucid way. We can illustrate the way in which this occurs with three examples: Thucydides' reflections on the causes of war, the strategic level of warfare, and ethical and moral concerns.

### The Origins of War.

Identifying the causes and nature of war is a basic challenge that arguably has become more difficult in an era when declarations of war have become things of the past, when the state of war has lost much of its formal legal status, and when the United States finds itself engaged in an open-ended "war on terrorism and radical extremism" that may last for generations. Thucydides' account of the origins of the Peloponnesian War offers an interesting case study for working through these problems.

Thucydides devotes a great amount of attention to discussing the causes of the Peloponnesian War and makes a fundamental distinction, which he is sometimes said to have invented, between

the immediate or short-term sources of the conflict and underlying or structural causes.<sup>39</sup> Simon Hornblower describes this aspect of his work as “a conscious, secular theory of causation in terms of deep and superficial political causes.”<sup>40</sup> Perhaps the most famous sentence in Thucydides’ history is the comment that however one might adjudicate immediate causes, ultimately “the growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Sparta, made war inevitable.”<sup>41</sup> The pessimistic fatalism that seems to be reflected here, the view of political life as an endless striving for power and dominion, has found great resonance in the realist camp of international relations theory. Hans Morgenthau quotes Thucydides to the effect that: “Of the gods we know, and of men we believe, that it is a necessary law of their nature that they rule whenever they can.”<sup>42</sup> Athens’ ambition, opines Raymond Aron, condemns it to brutality: “The servitudes of power are inescapable.”<sup>43</sup>

In fact, Thucydides does not make any effort to develop a systematic theory of causation. He describes the origins of the Peloponnesian War in considerable detail, but leaves the reader to draw conclusions concerning the relative weight of the various factors on which he touches. Thucydides mentions Sparta’s fear of growing Athenian power on several occasions.<sup>44</sup> Clearly, the security dilemma occasioned by the rise of a great power challenger, competitive bipolarity, and an impending power transition are powerful structural factors that contribute to systemic instability and increase the likelihood of war.<sup>45</sup> Much the larger part of Thucydides’ description, however, is devoted to immediate causes. One set of variables that he discusses concern economic motivation. The Spartans emphasized the Megarian Decrees that imposed a commercial embargo on Athens’ rival, Megara, as a primary cause of war. In response, Pericles enjoined Athens to enforce the decrees rigorously. The origin of the war in an obscure dispute over a small settlement on the margin of the Greek world is not unrelated to the fact that the settlement in question is poised strategically along the trade route leading to Italy. Thucydides does not offer a reductionist explanation that locates the roots of war in an Athenian imperialism driven by the merchants of the Piraeus, but he is not insensitive to the weight of economic factors.<sup>46</sup>

Thucydides also probes the diplomatic interaction leading up to the war. Neither of the belligerents necessarily seeks to provoke war, but all become caught up in a maze of misperceptions, ambiguous communication, erroneous calculations, and policies of bluff and bluster. As in the July Crisis of 1914, there is a sense in which the Peloponnesian War becomes a “war by accident” as a result of the failure of diplomacy. Domestic politics and policy processes, including the critical role of charismatic leadership, also have their place. The Spartans decision for war results from the crude *va-t’en-guerre* rhetoric of the ephor, Stenelaides, who declaims that he does “not pretend to understand” the long speeches of the Athenians, but nonetheless urges a “vote for war, as honor demands.”<sup>47</sup> Pericles’ personal authority and powers of persuasion are critical factors that turn Athens away from a policy of compromise that it otherwise might have preferred.

Thucydides’ account does not resolve the issue of the relative importance of structural and immediate causes, nor does it seek to do so. What the text demonstrates is multiple causality.<sup>48</sup> Structural explanations alone do not suffice – the choice for war is an ambiguous action that is conditioned by numerous variables, “a confluence of causes at multiple levels of analysis.”<sup>49</sup> While the calculus of power may be a necessary context for a decision for war, it must be filtered through a screen of perception and misperception, threshed out in the domestic policy process, refined by diplomatic interaction, and implemented in practice. Nothing is fixed and inalterable. Wars are seldom clear cut, war aims and strategic calculations are subject to change, and the precise combination of factors that may have motivated a choice for war at one point in time will alter as the dynamic of conflict unfolds.

## **The Strategic Level of Warfare.**

Thucydides’ depiction of warfare is nearly unparalleled in its intensity and power. There is no more sophisticated rendering of the complementary roles of land and sea power, the burden of command,

the consequences of defeat, the impact of political faction on strategic choice, or the role of chance and circumstance in effecting strategic outcomes. Despite the best efforts of responsible leaders, momentous events continue to turn on the unpredictable and unexpected—an eclipse of the moon and bolt of thunder, cloud cover during a night attack, unidentified terrain features, or the personal foibles of leaders under stress. The Peloponnesian War is one of the greatest books ever written about the theme of war itself. But Thucydides does not just depict the face of battle. He places warfare in a grand strategic context where a multiplicity of factors must be explored to account for the difference between victory and defeat. Thucydides' appreciation for the strategic level of warfare is one of the most important, and neglected, dimensions of his work.

Thucydides depicts grand strategy as *comprehensive*. In great wars, everything matters and nothing is superfluous. In *The Peloponnesian War*, this includes such things as the *domestic political environment* (Sparta is chronically concerned with the possibility of a helot revolt, there is a constant struggle between oligarchic and democratic factions within individual city-states with serious strategic implications); *economic necessity* (control of commercial routes, access to strategic raw materials); *pride and reputation* (alliance defection becomes unacceptable because the hegemonic power will lose face); *military innovation* (the enhanced role of light infantry including archers, slingers, and Thracian *peltasts* as the war proceeds, the new Corinthian ramming tactics that wreck havoc with the Athenian fleet in the Great Harbor of Syracuse); *geostrategy* (control of maritime choke points and lines of communication); *alliance stability* (much of Spartan strategy consists of attacking the integrity of the Athenian alliance system); and *decisive battle* (the encounters at Delium, Mantinea, or Syracuse where strategic outcomes hinge on a single day's fighting). Thucydides makes no attempt to identify a unique hub of power and movement capable of serving as a Clausewitzian Center of Gravity (even if his narrative provides plenty of material for making such an assessment retrospectively). What he depicts is an extraordinarily complex strategic environment where victory can be a consequence of many things, some of which are virtually impossible to predict.

In addition to being comprehensive, Thucydides' strategic environment is *dynamic*. At the outset of the Peloponnesian War, the two major belligerents clearly have outlined strategies for waging and winning the war. Sparta's intention is to invade Attica and force the Athenians to confront their army in order to prevent the ravaging of their lands and homes. Presumably the Spartans will defeat the Athenians in a major battle between opposing hoplite armies, leaving Sparta in a position to dictate the terms of peace. Athens, led by Pericles, intends to withdraw its population from exposed rural regions and concentrate it inside the city walls, refuse battle, subsist by importing vital commodities via sea, avoid adventures, and use naval power to raid and harass the Peloponnesus. Eventually, the Athenians presume, Spartan resolve will flag, and Athens will be in a position to impose an advantageous peace.<sup>50</sup> Each set of assumptions proves misguided, and what follows is an extraordinary set of strategic innovations.

Athenian resolve is weakened by the great plague that strikes the overcrowded city in the second year of the war—a completely unforeseen event with great strategic consequences.<sup>51</sup> The most prominent victim of the plague is Pericles himself. After his passing, Athens, led by the demagogue Cleon, becomes more aggressive, establishing the base at Pylos and using it as a means for placing pressure on its enemy. Sparta, inspired by the generalship of Brasidas, counters by attacking the Athenian alliance in Boeotia and Chalcidice. Both sides make partial gains but come no closer to ultimate victory. The Peace of Nicias represents an attempt to impose a strategic pause, but it does not address the underlying sources of hostility and fails to break the momentum of confrontation. Enduring resentment allows the talented adventurer, Alcibiades, to up the ante by creating an alliance with Argos, Mantinea, and Elis to challenge Spartan control of the Peloponnesus. He succeeds in provoking a decisive battle at Mantinea in 418, in which the Spartans are compelled “to stake their all upon the issue of a single day,”

but in the end, it is Sparta that prevails.<sup>52</sup> Alcibiades' next gambit is the Sicilian Expedition, a strategic disaster but not yet a decisive defeat. Athens recovers from the setback, and it is only when Sparta enters into a closer association with the Great King of Persia, builds a battle fleet, and finds a ruthless commander in the person of Lysander that it is able to win decisively at Aegospotami in 405.

This brief overview calls attention to a great diversity of strategic initiatives. Thucydides' history demonstrates that in protracted conflicts strategy must be flexible and adaptive. Security, of course, is grounded in a capacity for self-defense. The author has composed the history of a war, and his image of strategy is tied firmly to "the part which is played by force, or the threat of force, in the international system."<sup>53</sup> Strategy, the domain of force, is not a synonym for policy. But the clear implication of Thucydides' study is that, on the level of grand strategy, all instruments of national power must be leveraged in conjunction with military means in pursuit of national goals. Events and local circumstances as they unfold and develop will determine what "mix" of factors will be most relevant at any given point in the conflict.

### **Ethical and Moral Context.**

Thucydides' *History* is notable for its lack of illusion. War, he remarks, is a "rough master that brings most men's characters to a level with their fortunes."<sup>54</sup> The strategic environment that he depicts is filled with instrumental logic, cynicism, abuse of power, and brutal massacre.<sup>55</sup> It is a Hobbesian universe where the struggle of all against all is often the essence of strategic interaction and the limits of morality are defined by *Staatsraison*. Hugo Grotius used the remark of Thucydides' Athenian emissary Euphemius to the effect that "for a king or a free city, nothing is wrong that is to their advantage" as a foil for his effort to assert a law of nations.<sup>56</sup> Finley argued that "nothing so marks Thucydides' work as the sense of living in a world where moral sensitiveness and inherited tradition were . . . a luxury, and the very survival of states hung on the skillful use of power and power alone."<sup>57</sup> The discourse of power that drives interstate relations leads inexorably toward the harsh doctrine of might makes right, as imparted by the Athenians to the Melians: "You know as well as we do that right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."<sup>58</sup>

In a recent attempt to update, realist theory John Mearsheimer describes the above passage as "Thucydides' famous dictum," but it is no such thing.<sup>59</sup> The Melian Dialogue, in which Athens lays down the law to the representatives of the would-be neutral power of Melos, is perhaps not quite so clear in its implications as might appear at first glance. The Athenian representatives speak the words during their negotiations with the Melians; they do not necessarily express the opinions of the author. The views of the Athenians are far from being self-evident, and, in fact, they belie the larger spirit of Thucydides' work as a whole. In *The Peloponnesian War*, breaches of the moral order are punished, and pride comes before the fall. Sparta comes to believe that its early military misfortunes are the consequence of its unethical breaching of the Thirty Years Peace. Pericles' glowing funeral oration is followed immediately by the terrifying description of the great plague. The doctrine of naked power defended at Melos is the prelude to Athens' descent into the heart of darkness in Sicily. The blustering and violent Cleon comes to no good end. The unbridled ambition of Alcibiades leads him, and the policy he represents, to ruin.

These contrapositions are not accidental. Thucydides is not a moralist—he rejects the gods, strives for neutrality in his explanation, and does not preach. Nonetheless, his work forcefully poses the moral and ethical dilemmas of protracted strategic rivalry. Alternatives to the realist interpretation of Thucydides emphasize the compassion and austere humanity with which he contemplates the disasters of his time.<sup>60</sup> The Melian Dialogue, often read out of context as a set piece and touted as



a foundation for political realism, also can be viewed as a depiction of the moral decline of Athens that leads inexorably to her defeat.<sup>61</sup> Viewed through this lens, the Athenian discourse at Melos is not prudent but pathological, and the crass exercise of overwhelming force that it embraces is intended to provoke revulsion rather than encourage emulation. The dialogue is, in fact, unique in Thucydides' text. Among the 40 discourses cited verbatim, it is the only one constructed as a real dialogue—a conversation between two parties with a theatrical structure and dramatic denouement. This gives it a unique intensity and centrality in the text that is clearly intended. In the dialogue, it is the Athenians who are dogmatic and inflexible, and the Melians who argue instrumentally. The Melians see the big picture, calculate the odds of defiance on a cost-risk basis (even if their calculations are faulty), and attempt to point out that by striking at the vulnerable without constraint, Athens will place its long term interests at stake. And the Melians are right. Athens' harsh conduct reflects an overweening pride that eventually leads to disaster. Its policies and attitude offend allies, alienate neutrals, create new enemies, and encourage rivals to redouble resistance.

In *The Peloponnesian War*, power without principle does not prevail. Thucydides does not portray interest and justice as antithetic, rather they are "inextricably connected and mutually constitutive."<sup>62</sup> Thucydides does not shy from the carnage of war, but he also does not glory in it as some "blood and guts" realists suggest.<sup>63</sup> His gripping narration places the reader on the ground alongside leaders, soldiers, and citizens caught up in the midst of calculated violence and coping as best they can, but he laments the "general deterioration of character throughout the Greek world" that protracted war promotes.<sup>64</sup> War is indeed a violent teacher, and as such, in the words of Leo Strauss, "it teaches man not only to act violently but also about violence and therefore about the truth."<sup>65</sup> *The Peloponnesian War* is, in large part, a cautionary tale about the use and abuse of power with the implicit moral warning "to use it wisely or lose it woefully."<sup>66</sup> For much of the war and despite many setbacks, Athens sustains its great power status, but in the end, it abandons the high ground of legitimate authority and is lost. In a harsh world, administering force effectively demands rigorous professionalism, including a strong sense of purpose and adherence to an elevated moral code.<sup>67</sup> Successful strategy, one may conclude, must be developed within a sound and stable ethical context.

## CONCLUSION

The real subject of Thucydides' history is the decline and fall of a political civilization under the strains of hegemonic warfare. Thucydides built the narrative on careful observation and detailed accounting, but the story line inexorably directs the reader's attention to the big picture, the grand strategic environment within which the decisions are made that lead to victory and defeat. What are the dynamics that cause great power war? Can they be contained, and, if so, how? What kinds of policies are most conducive to the pursuit of victory? How can the various instruments of national power be combined in a coherent grand strategy? How should strategy be sustained or adapted in the course of protracted armed conflicts? What are the attributes of effective strategic leadership? How can power be linked to purpose, and justice to interest, in a balanced national strategy that sustains legitimate authority? These are the kind of questions that emerge from a careful reading of *The Peloponnesian War*. Thucydides does not reach the end of this history, and his text does not include a formal summary or conclusion, but he clearly intended it as a guide to statecraft and a plea for caution and moderation that is as relevant in our time as on the day it was written.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 13

1. There are several excellent modern English translations. Rex Warner's version, completed in 1954, appears in Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986. The Richard Crawley translation, originally published in 1874 and rendered in eloquent Victorian prose, appears in Richard B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, New York: The Free Press, 1996. The Strassler compilation, with extensive reader aides including maps and explanatory notes, is an invaluable tool. Henceforward all dates cited will be B.C.E. unless otherwise noted.

2. The first English translation by Thomas Nicolls dates to 1550.

3. This is a long-standing tradition. See Gilbert Murray, *Our Great War and the Great War of the Ancient Greeks*, New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1920, for parallels with the First World War; or Carlos Alonso Zaldívar, "Tucídides, en Kosovo," *El País*, May 17, 1999, for applications to the war in Kosovo during 1999.

4. Marshall made this remark in a public address at Princeton University on Washington's Birthday in February 1947. The articulation of the Truman Doctrine was several weeks away.

5. See George F. Will, "Powell's Intrusion," *The Washington Post*, November 25, 2001, p. B07.

6. The publication of *The Landmark Thucydides* in 1996 was both a reflection of and contribution to swelling interest. Some subsequent works (the list is long) include George Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War*, London: Routledge, 1997, a sophisticated introduction; Gregory Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity: The Limits of Political Realism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998; Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000; Philip De Souza, *The Peloponnesian War, 431-404 B.C.*, New York: Routledge, 2002, a detailed general history; Donald Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War*, New York: Viking, 2003, a one volume summation of Kagan's earlier four volume history; Richard New Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003; John F. Lazenby, *The Peloponnesian War: A Military History*, New York: Routledge, 2004; the eloquent introduction by Perez Zagorin, *Thucydides: An Introduction for the Common Reader*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005; and Victor Davis Hanson, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*, New York: Random House, 2005, a series of essays that attempt to demonstrate the human dimension of the conflict.

7. Leo Strauss, *The City and Man*, Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1964, p. 155.

8. Clifford Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 3-4.

9. Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics*, p. 26.

10. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.22.4.

11. David Grene, ed., *The Peloponnesian War: The Complete Hobbes Translation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959. Hobbes' work contains some technical errors in translation.

12. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Neorealism and Neoliberalism," *World Politics*, Vol. 40, 1988, p. 235.

13. W. Robert Connor, *Thucydides*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 32.

14. Hanson, *A War Like No Other*, pp. 89-122.

15. The conclusion is based upon student reactions in a seminar devoted to reading and discussing *The Peloponnesian War* conducted by the author at the U.S. Army War College for the past 8 years.

16. Hanson, *A War Like No Other*.

17. Cited in Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 20; and Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War*, p. 9. In the early 19th century, Thomas Macauley could declare Thucydides "the greatest historian who ever lived." Thomas Babington Macauley, *The Letters of Thomas Babington Macauley*, Thomas Pinney, ed., 6 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976-), vol. 3, p. 138.

18. Eduard Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thucydides*, 3rd ed., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1960; and Finley, *Thucydides*, outline, respectively, the "stages of composition" and "unitarian" approaches to the Thucydides Question. See also Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963.

19. Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 3, September 2001, pp. 547-560.

20. Arnold W. Gomme, ed., *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 5 vols. (vols. 4 and 5 co-edited with Anthony Andrewes and K.W. Dover), Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1945-1918, vol. 1, p. 29.

21. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thucydides*, p. 19.

22. A survey of what we know of Thucydides' life appears in John H. Finley, Jr., *Thucydides*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967, pp. 1-35.
23. The history of the Peloponnesian War from 411 to its conclusion in 404 is taken up, in a conscious attempt to complete Thucydides' account, by Xenophon in his *Hellenica*. See the Rex Warner translation in Xenophon, *A History of My Time*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979.
24. G. W. T. Patrick translation from Heraclitus, *Fragments*.
25. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.1.
26. G. W. T. Patrick translation from Heraclitus, *Fragments*.
27. Sun-tzu, *The Art of War*, Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, p. 167.
28. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 2.35-2.46.
29. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 6.
30. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.22.4.
31. *Ibid.*, 1.21.2.
32. Victor Davis Hanson, *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
33. Herodotus, *The Histories*, London: Penguin Books, 2003.
34. Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969, p. 41, specifically compares the Delian League to the Cold War's North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
35. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 5.26.
36. Steven Forde, *The Ambition to Rule: Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989, sees Alcibiades as the apotheosis of Athenian individualism and self-aggrandizement. His rise to prominence is not accidental – he embodies both the dynamism and self-destructive egoism of the polity he represents.
37. Zagorin, *Thucydides*, p. 8.
38. M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, New York: The Viking Press, 1965, p. 34.
39. Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*, p. 345, makes the assertion that Thucydides "invents" the distinction between immediate and underlying causes of war.
40. Hornblower, *Thucydides*, p. 191.
41. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.23.6.
42. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978, p. 38. The passage is cited from the Melian Dialogue, *The Landmark Thucydides*, 5.105.2.
43. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966, p. 137.
44. When the Spartan assembly votes in 432 that Athens has violated the Thirty Years Peace, Thucydides remarks that the decision was made because "they feared the growth of the power of the Athenians, seeing most of Hellas already subject to them." At the conclusion of the *Pentecontaetia*, he notes that Sparta has concluded that "the growth of the Athenian power could no longer be ignored," and "that they could endure it no longer." *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.88 and 1.118.2.
45. See the classic study by Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War*, New York: The Free Press, 1973.
46. In his popular history of the Sicilian Expedition, Peter Green places particular emphasis upon Athens' economic motivation: "The constant foreign aggression, the search for *Lebensraum*, the high-handed treatment of the subject-allies – all these things had as their aim the securing of desperately needed raw materials." Peter Green, *Armada from Athens*, Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970, p. 46.
47. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1.86.
48. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity*, p. 37, suggests that Thucydides' famous reference to the growth of Athenian power as the "real cause" of the war can be adapted to multiple causation with more refined translation. The best rendering of the passage, he suggests, refers to the "truest cause," that is, one among many.
49. Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics*, p. 112.

50. The German military historian Hans Delbrück interpreted Periclean strategy as a prototype for what he called strategies of "attrition." Hans Delbrück, *Die Strategie des Perikles: erläutert durch die Strategie Friedrich des Grossen mit einem Anhang über Thucydides und Kleon*, Berlin: Reimer, 1890.
51. Thucydides' description of the plague is justly famed. See *The Landmark Thucydides*, 2.47-2.54.
52. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 6.16.6.
53. Cited from "The Strategic Approach to International Relations," Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 36. See also Hew Strachen, "The Lost Meaning of Strategy," *Survival*, Vol. 47, No. 3, Autumn 2005.
54. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 3.82.2.
55. Hanson, *A War Like No Other*, pp. 89-121.
56. Hugo Grotius, *The Law of War and Peace*, Roslyn, NY: Walter J. Black, Inc., 1949, p. 3. This passage is rendered in *The Landmark Thucydides*, 6.85, as "for tyrants and imperial cities nothing is unreasonable if expedient."
57. Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 29.
58. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 5.89.
59. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001, p. 163.
60. See, in particular, Strauss, *City and Man*; Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics*; Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides*; and Thomas L. Pangle and Peter J. Ahrens Dorf, *Justice Among Nations: On the Moral Basis of Power and Peace*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999, pp. 13-32.
61. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 208-212; and Peter J. Euben, *The Tragedy of Political Theory: The Road Not Taken*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 178, 197-198.
62. Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics*, p. 166.
63. See Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, New York: Norton, 1997, pp. 49-92.
64. *The Landmark Thucydides*, 3.82-85.
65. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 162.
66. Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War*, p. 19.
67. Note the uncompromising statement of this premise in the Antistrophe of Euripides' *Andromache*, composed during the Peloponnesian War: It is better not to have a victory that sullies reputation than to overthrow justice by force and win hatred. Such gain brings men delight at first but in time it withers in their hands and voices of reproach beset their house. This is the way of life I approve, this the one I wish to make my own, to wield no power in my home or my city that transgresses justice." Euripides, *Andromache*, lines 779-784.



**PART III**  
**ELEMENTS OF POWER**



## CHAPTER 14

### DIPLOMACY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POWER

**Reed J. Fendrick**

A diplomat is an honest man sent abroad to lie for his country."

Apocryphal

The patriotic art of lying for one's country."

Ambrose Bierce<sup>1</sup>

The media and intellectual elites, the State Department (as an institution), and the Foreign Service (as a culture) clearly favor the process, politeness, and accommodation position.

Newt Gingrich<sup>2</sup>

Ordinary Americans often have been uncomfortable about the art and practice of diplomacy. Frequently, they associate diplomacy and American diplomats either with elitist, pseudo-aristocratic bowing and scraping before supercilious foreigners whose aim is to impinge on our sovereignty and partake of our largesse; or as naïve country bumpkins whose gullibility allows them to forsake key American goals and objectives; or as ruthless, cynical practitioners of Bismarckian realpolitik whose aims and practices fall far short of our Founders' noble aspirations; or as liberal, one-worldists whose collective ideology is far from the American mainstream and who seek to undermine the political aims of elected Administrations. These stereotypes go back to our country's origins and have been reinforced by such traumatic events as Wilson's perceived failure at Versailles, the Yalta Conference near the end of World War II, Henry Kissinger's role as architect of the opening to China, and the failure to obtain a United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution endorsing the use of force in Iraq.

Is any of this true? True or not, does it matter? What is diplomacy supposed to do? Does the United States wield diplomacy effectively? Can democracy and diplomacy function harmoniously? How does diplomacy fit in with the protection and furtherance of national security?

First, diplomacy is one instrument among many that a government utilizes in its pursuit of the national interest. Among others are military power, actual or potential; economic power; intelligence-gathering and operations; cultural and information or "soft power"; relative degrees of national unity; and probably others. Diplomacy never functions in isolation from the other instruments of power but at times may be emphasized as the situation warrants. In its simplest, most original form, diplomacy is the official means by which one state formally relates to other states. Although ambassadors have existed since antiquity representing one sovereign to another, the earliest diplomats often functioned more as de facto hostages to ensure peace or compliance with some agreement than in the modern understanding of an ambassador's role. Since nation-states were more or less legitimized by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, a whole series of codes and protocols have been established to create a framework for the practice of diplomacy. These include such seeming anomalies (and irritants to common citizens) as diplomatic immunity; creation of embassies; establishing and breaking diplomatic relations; sending and receiving diplomatic notes, demarches, nonpapers and other forms of communication; holding international conferences and many other means of interstate communication and relations.



Diplomats are agents of the state. In theory, they act on instruction. Until the advent of modern communications, their instructions necessarily had to be general, and they required a nearly innate understanding of the national interest of the country they represented. Both because of the nondemocratic nature of nearly all states before the American and French Revolutions, and due to the need for confidentiality to protect state secrets and national security, diplomatic exchanges and even treaties or agreements often were undertaken in secret or with quiet discretion. When Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points called for "open covenants openly arrived at" (a reference to Allied agreements for post-World War I division of spoils from the Central Powers that appeared to make a mockery of claims the War was meant to make the "world safe for democracy"), he was publicly challenging the entire edifice of traditional diplomacy that, however, had begun to be modified with the rise of the mass media and popular participation in the 19th century. Increasingly, mounting scrutiny from democratic media and academics and ever-increasing intrusive clandestine intelligence-gathering make formal secret agreements less and less palatable.

One prism through which to view diplomacy is to think of it as an element on the spectrum of national security devices. In the "normal" course of events, most nations most of the time, while competing for influence, markets, relative perceived power and other markers of strength, relate to one another the way competitors do in seeking market-share—not as gangs fighting over turf. In other words, the assumption is that peaceful approaches, use of agreements and treaties, and normal intercourse will prevail. In this scenario, diplomacy provides the lubricant for acceptable relations, seeks to remove irritants, and strives for mutual understanding. However, even in the relations between traditionally peaceful entities, in the semi-Hobbesian universe of contemporary international relations, diplomacy holds in its quiver, the potential threat of force. In the cases where rivalry becomes equated with threats to vital national interests (a determination that is difficult to objectively define but that governments make drawing on their specific cultural, historical, and political traditions and bringing to bear whatever institutions or individuals wield predominant influence on this subject), diplomacy becomes an adjunct to overt or masked displays or use of armed force. In this situation, diplomacy becomes the main instrument to build coalitions, influence publics and elites in other countries of the justice of the cause, and works closely with the military establishment to make available critical spaces in non-national territory for the possible deployment of armed force (i.e., aircraft overflight rights, port visits, shipment of men and materiel). Finally, if armed conflict does erupt, diplomacy continues during that period (albeit with a lower emphasis) focusing on post-war planning, cost and burden-sharing, and international organization endorsement (or at least noncondemnation) of the military actions.

Diplomacy fundamentally consists of a constant assessment of other countries' power potential, perceived vital interests, relationship with other states, in an attempt to maximize one's own country's freedom of action with the ultimate purpose of assuring the achievement of the nation's vital interests, the core of which is survival. Diplomacy traditionally and currently utilizes a variety of practices or maneuvers to obtain the protection or furtherance of the national goals or interests. Essentially all these practices are elements of diplomatic strategy that seek advantage for the state short of war (although war always remains the ultimate recourse). From the realist perspective, all strategies, while perhaps amoral in themselves, have as the ultimate goal the moral aim of the survival of the state and its core values. Thus, leaders must take account of the particular circumstance of the place in the international order of their state to determine what would be an effective strategy and tactics or maneuvers to enable its success. Thus, from the British and French perspective in 1938, the decision to appease Germany over the Sudetenland may have been a misperception of the relative power of each state but was not, *a priori*, an invalid tactic. The constant politically-charged accusation of "Munich" or "Yalta" in quite different circumstances is meaningless. Sometimes appeasement is good or unavoidable. In the case of Nazi Germany, in hindsight, it was a bad tactic because Hitler could not be appeased, and the Allies

simply postponed the inevitable clash to a moment when they yielded military advantage to Hitler. Détente (especially the series of arms control and human rights agreements), as practiced by Nixon and Kissinger, was an effort to reach accommodation with the Soviet Union at a time when it appeared a balance of power in nuclear weapons had been struck, and neither side could expect to gain a decisive advantage. The effort by President George H. W. Bush to create a coalition in the First Gulf War was not so much to increase U.S. military advantage over Iraq as it was to demonstrate – especially in the Arab and Islamic worlds – the broad support to repel Iraqi aggression in Kuwait. In the recent Gulf War, the relative absence of a significant coalition was largely a function of the administration's desire to not be constrained in tactics, operations (targeting), and strategy in the way it believed North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) operations in Kosovo had been hampered.

## **Diplomatic Instruments.**

The main instrument of diplomacy is negotiation, whether in a formal or informal setting. In a sense, all diplomacy is a constant adjustment of relations among states pursued simultaneously through multiple, overlapping dialogues: bilateral, multilateral (e.g., UN); special conferences and other venues. The goal is usually, but not always, to reach an agreement that could range from those containing significant enforcement mechanisms for implementation (e.g., the Non-Proliferation Treaty) to hortatory proclamations such as the Kellogg-Briand pact that purported to outlaw war. One of the special advantages diplomats as a profession may have is that they should possess significant knowledge of the personalities and national cultural styles of their interlocutors. Since much diplomatic maneuvering by states consist of bluffs and feints as well as subtle signals either of accommodation or willingness to risk war, a capable diplomacy can discern and characterize the meaning of a given action. Misinterpretation, ignorance, lack of knowledge, or arrogance can lead to unforeseeable consequences (e.g., ignoring India's warning during the Korean War that China would intervene if U.S. forces approached the Yalu River).

Diplomatic relations among countries long have followed a common set of practices. The necessity to maintain contact as a means to facilitate dialogue between states leads to diplomatic recognition that can be of the state, but not the government (e.g. North Korea by the United States); or of the government as well. Normally, such recognition is not a moral stamp of approval but a reflection that a regime controls the preponderance of national territory, and that it is in the interest of the other country to have formal channels of communication. Breaking relations can be a prelude to war; more often, it is a mark of extreme disapproval. But if the regime survives, nonrecognition can be a cause of great inconvenience, since maintaining a dialogue usually involves talking either through third parties or in multilateral institutions. There also are anomalous situations such as is currently the case with Cuba where the United States maintains a large Interests Section under the technical protection of the Swiss embassy in order to pursue business with the Castro regime without compromising its disapproval. Sometimes a decision is made to withdraw the ambassador, temporarily or for longer periods, to deliver a significant rebuke for some policy or action of the host government. The downside to such an action is that dialogue between the states may become more rigid and are certainly conducted at a lower level of authority. In normal practice, the ambassador heads an embassy that is usually divided into numerous sections each specializing in a particular subject area. The number of persons granted diplomatic status, which under the Vienna Convention imparts immunity to certain host government laws, is negotiated between the two states.

An American embassy normally is organized in the following manner: at the apex is the Ambassador, appointed by the President as his personal representative and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. He may be a career Foreign Service Officer from the Department of State or he may be chosen from other agencies

or the private sector. His/her alter ego is the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) who serves under the Ambassador to assure the timely, efficient, and correct carrying out of instructions and to assure good management practices in the embassy (i.e., avoidance of waste, fraud, and mismanagement). There are usually several functional State Department Sections (i.e., Political, Economic, Consular, and Administrative) that handle the reporting, management, and protection of U.S. citizens and issuance of visas to foreign nationals. Many embassies also maintain a Defense Attaché Office with representatives from one or more of the armed services; a Defense Cooperation Office that manages foreign military sales and transfers; often a Foreign Commercial Service that promotes U.S. exports; a Foreign Agricultural Service that does the same for agricultural commodities; a Legal Attaché (normally Federal Bureau of Investigation) that liaises with host country police authorities; Drug Enforcement Agency that does the same on narcotics issues; and a representative from Customs, possibly the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Depending on the country, many other Federal agencies may be represented. Similarly, the receiving country may have similar sections in its embassy in Washington.

How, in the real contemporary world, does modern American diplomacy work? With or without the publication of the *National Security Strategy*, which is an explicit annual overview of an administration's top priorities, often together with a general roadmap on how to achieve the objectives, the Department of State, usually in conjunction and coordination with the other foreign affairs agencies under the auspices of the National Security Council, will send telegraphic (or sometimes e-mail or telephone) instructions to an embassy in a given country or international organization. It might be a request for information on a matter that has risen to the attention of at least the Country Director in a regional or functional bureau of the Department of State (perhaps due to media attention, pressure from a lobbyist, or a request from a member of Congress). Or the department could instruct the Ambassador to raise with the host country a matter of concern such as the arrest of an American citizen, a report of human rights abuse by a military unit, allegations of unfair commercial practice harmful to an American firm, sale of military weapons, a request for port visit of a U.S. warship, surveillance of a suspected terrorist or many other possible items. In what becomes a continuous conversation, the appropriate section in the embassy (Political, Economic, Consular, Defense Attaché, Commercial Service, or others) would be tasked to take the necessary action. Sometimes the embassy itself reports on a matter and offers a recommendation. In rare cases where immediate action is vital, the embassy might report what it did and implicitly request endorsement of the action. Often, in parallel fashion, especially on important issues, the Department would convoke the Ambassador or an appropriate official from the relevant embassy in Washington or its Mission to the UN to make similar points. Because embassies and foreign ministries are organized on highly hierarchical principles, it often is possible to adjust the tone and content of the message to a particular rank, thus making clear the relative importance of the message. Depending on response, the message's content, deliverer, and recipient can be ratcheted up or down accordingly.

## **Diplomatic Roles.**

What are the principal roles of a diplomat? First, he is an agent of his government ordered to carry out instructions from authorized superiors. In the American case, there is often a vigorous internal debate throughout the foreign affairs agencies of the government on a given policy, as well as on the tactics of its proposed execution, a dialogue in which both Department of State and embassies continuously engage. However, once a decision is made, the action is carried out. Whatever an individual diplomat's private feelings on a given issue may be, he is duty-bound to carry out the instructions. If his conscience does not so allow, he may request a transfer to another assignment or region or offer to resign. In effect, the diplomat in this role functions as a lawyer with the U.S. Government as his client. Just as a lawyer's

ethical responsibility is to make the most vigorous possible advocacy for his client regardless of his personal opinions of the client's innocence, so is a diplomat in public or in conversation with foreign interlocutors expected to make the best possible presentation on behalf of his government.

The diplomat is also an information-gatherer and analyst. Although not expected to compete in real-time with the media organizations such as CNN or the *New York Times* on basic facts, due to his presumed experience and familiarity with a country, its culture, institutions, and key personalities, the diplomat should be able to bring added value by analyzing and putting in context what to harried Washington senior leaders can seem like isolated, meaningless events. So, for the diplomat to be well-informed, he ideally should speak, read, and understand the local language, extract from the mass media key nuggets of important information, develop a string of well-informed contacts covering a wide spectrum, and attend major events such as political party congresses. As a message-drafter, the diplomatic drafter needs to be succinct, clear, pungent enough to both hold busy readers' attention and to answer the "so-what" question. The analysis needs to be substantiated by fact and interpretation, each clearly labeled as such. While never writing with the intent to provoke, when necessary, the drafter may have to call attention respectfully but clearly to actual or potential situations that may be unpleasant or resented by policymakers. At the same time, national leaders must be careful not to shoot the messenger, even if they disagree with the analysis or recommendations. Sometimes this requires courage from the drafter and restraint from the recipient. It is always the policymakers' prerogative to choose other courses. But retaliation against unwanted advice or analysis can lead to self-censorship and ultimate harm to the national interest through failure to realistically assess events.

In Washington, the middle-level diplomat is not as concerned with interpreting events in a foreign country as he is with assisting in defining his agency's position on a given issue (usually a whole host of them), while interacting with other elements of the foreign affairs agencies in order to glean their positions to better support their own agency's position.

A diplomat is also a negotiator. Depending on the issue, a diplomat may have more or less freedom to adjust from basic instructions, tactics, and goals. In order for a negotiation to succeed, which may not always be desirable or the preferred outcome, the astute diplomat will have a good general understanding of his counterpart's baseline requirement, some sense of the national cultural manner of negotiating, and a willingness to bargain—but not to bargain away essential or vital objectives. This propensity for negotiation, also an inherent part of a lawyer's toolkit, is what sometimes infuriates ideological or idealistic individuals, since they believe it immoral to negotiate with either blatantly evil states or leaders or they believe it puts the United States in a position of appearing to make compromises on what can be construed as vital interests. Unless there is no longer a need to negotiate at all because of acknowledged overwhelming power of one country or because diplomacy has yielded to open war, such compromises are an inherent property of having to deal with a Hobbesian world of sovereign states. Even criminal prosecutors make plea bargains with criminals to achieve a balance of justice, resource use, and likelihood of conviction on the most serious charges.

In a slightly different key, a diplomat facilitates and maintains dialogue with his counterparts, hopefully with a view to arriving at complementary assessments of threats, benefits, and actions to take to maximize their respective national interests. If the dialogue goes far enough, it can lead to commitments usually expressed in the form of treaties or agreements. They can range from reciprocal reduction of tariffs to willingness to go to war on behalf of another country.

Diplomats also act as spokesman and sounding board for the country. A good diplomat will be effective in public and private gatherings at furthering his country's interests and refuting criticism of it by couching his advocacy in a manner best suited to the culture where he is stationed. Because of the ubiquity of media outlets, a good diplomat learns how to access the host country media, key decisionmakers, and most relevant institutions (parliament, military, chambers of commerce, labor

union federations etc.), and gets his point across over the blare of “white noise” emanating in the modern media.

At the more senior level, diplomats serve as counselors to national leaders, few of whom are regional or global experts. While diplomats rarely have the final say in the most solemn decision a nation can make – the decision to go to war – they can serve to make clear the potential costs as well as benefits of such acts and the likely prospects of coalitions in favor (or opposed) to their country. While certainly not pacifists, diplomats are inclined temperamentally and professionally to seek nonviolent solutions partly because that is what they do, and partly because they frequently can foresee second and third order consequences that can lead to a worse situation than the *status quo ante bellum*. It is at this juncture that politicians and the media sometimes confuse reporting and analysis that may be at odd with national leadership goals with disloyalty. It is not a desire for the status quo, let alone a preference for dealing with dictators, that may drive diplomats as some have charged. Rather it is a realization that in the absence of comprehensive universally-acknowledged supremacy, negotiation with other regimes, no matter how unpalatable, may be necessary. The obvious classic quote is that of Winston Churchill who, despite being before and after World War II an adamant anti-Communist, said upon Hitler’s attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, “If Hitler invaded hell, I would make at least a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons.”<sup>3</sup>

## Conclusion.

To sum up, diplomacy is a mechanism—one among many—used in furtherance of the national interest and in protection of the national security. While styles of diplomacy may differ by national cultures, personal idiosyncrasies, and historical memories, they all have a common purpose. As long as there are states and they hold differing assessments of their national interests, there will be diplomacy. While technology is making certain traditional means of conducting diplomacy obsolete, the core functions of diplomacy will remain. In the past, the airplane and telegraph made clipper ships and quill pen instructions redundant. New information technology already is making reporting far more focused on analysis than simple newsgathering that is done better by CNN, and e-mail and cell-phones are replacing cabled instructions. Such advances occasionally produce serious suggestions to eliminate some or many embassies, but only because of a perceived more efficient manner of performing their functions. Diplomacy is still a vital element of national power.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 14

1. Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil’s Dictionary*, available at [www.alcyone.com/max/lit/devils/d.html](http://www.alcyone.com/max/lit/devils/d.html), accessed August 7, 2003.
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**CHAPTER 15**  
**THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MODERN DIPLOMACY:**  
**ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT TO 1914**

**Louis J. Nigro, Jr.**

Diplomacy, broadly defined as the peaceful dialogue and interaction between political units, is as old as civilization itself. The first known peace treaty was signed about 2300 BC between a king of Ebla, in what is today Syria, and the king of Assyria. The Amarna tablets record the diplomatic correspondence between Egypt and Syrian rulers more than 1,400 years ago, while *Genesis* 14 talks of Abram's "treaty of alliance" with Amorite kings. From the 8th to the 3rd century BC, China was divided among several "warring states" that conducted diplomacy, as well as made war on each other in order to survive and succeed, as Sun Tzu's writings indicate. Other early civilizations offer similar examples of diplomatic activity.

This chapter, concerning the development of modern diplomacy from its origins in 15th century Europe until the 20th century, seeks to accomplish five things. First, the chapter describes the origins of the modern state in Renaissance Italy and shows how that new type of political organization developed a new kind of diplomacy that met its needs. Second, it examines the role of Florentine political thinker Niccolò Machiavelli in providing a theoretical basis for the new state and for the new diplomacy used to accomplish its goals. The chapter stresses that Machiavelli gave directions to rulers of the new states – whether monarchies, principalities, or republics – on how to be successful in an international system characterized by constant interaction among geographically sovereign units for power, influence, and security. Third, it describes the parallel development of the modern sovereign or Westphalian state and the modern diplomacy that serves it. Fourth, it looks at the application of modern diplomacy to the classic European age of grand strategy and the balance of power from 1648 to World War I. Finally, the chapter serves as background and introduction to other chapters in this volume that deal with the characteristics of the state, the nature of the international system, and the role of diplomacy as an element of national power in the contemporary world.

## **FROM MEDIEVAL TO MODERN**

Europe created modern diplomacy because Europe created the modern, geographically sovereign state—the so-called Westphalian state after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The new form of international actor that has characterized the modern international system required a new kind of diplomacy, matched to its needs and consonant with its nature.

The modern, geographically sovereign state (or nation-state) began to emerge in Europe during the 16th century as the old structures of European international order began to break down. The international order that Europe had inherited from the Middle Ages was composed of structures of power that were different from the nation-states that compose our contemporary international system. There were structures that existed above and beyond today's nation-state, structures that we can call *supra-statal*, and structures existing below and within today's nation-state that we can call *infra-statal*.

The chief supra-statal institutions were the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire, both rooted in the spiritual domain and both reflecting the glory of the ancient Roman Empire. Both Popes and emperors claimed to be the heirs of Rome. Popes and emperors claimed wide and broad powers over other rulers and over the subjects of other rulers that gave them legal, religious, financial, and other authorities. The primary infra-statal institutions were a bewildering (to us, not to contemporaries)

assortment of thousands of autonomous jurisdictions, starting from “national” kingdoms like England, France, and Aragon, and continuing down a long hierarchical chain of political organizations through principalities, duchies, free counties, bishoprics, free cities, commercial alliances (like the Hanseatic League), baronies, petty lordships of all types and sizes, to corporate bodies like guilds, military orders, and religious orders. All of them exercised what we would call political power in various ways. The jurisdictions, rights, powers, and responsibilities of both the supra-statal and the infra-statal institutions often conflicted and overlapped.

Together these supra-national and infra-national institutions made up what contemporaries called Christendom. Christendom’s institutions drew their strength and legitimacy from feudal traditional practices that mixed public office and public functions with private property and hereditary rights; from religious and spiritual sanctions; and from social and cultural habits a thousand years in the making. Political order in Christendom was characterized by interlocking networks of rights and responsibilities fragmented into many small, autonomous parts. The focus of political authority was personal, feudal, and local. The idea that political rule was strictly linked to control of territory rather than to other sources of authority largely was absent, so that rulers were not geographically sovereign in the sense of exerting supreme and monopolistic authority over and within a given territory and population. Christendom as a political system appears to us to have been ambiguous, complicated, messy, and illogical, but it worked as long as people believed in it.

The medieval order of Christendom started to break down under pressure from rising political units that drew their strength and legitimacy from new territorial and demographic realities; that were sanctioned more by the possession and use of practical power than by religion and tradition; and that were evolving behind borders that were more definite and more restrictive than the old porous, overlapping medieval political units. The growth of vernacular languages and the concomitant beginnings of national consciousness aided the process of the development of the new political units, which eventually would become the legally equal, sovereign states. This would intensify into the process of state formation at the expense of both the old supra-national institutions and the old infra-national institutions.

## **THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ORIGINS OF MODERN DIPLOMACY: 1450-1500**

Italy was the birthplace of the Renaissance and also of the first prototypes of the modern, geographically sovereign state. The reason for this was Renaissance Italy’s vanguard status in most areas of European endeavor – art, literature, science, jurisprudence, philosophy, economics, and finance – but also in political development. Jacob Burckhardt’s classic 1860 interpretive essay, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, had as its central theme the problem of politics and of political anthropology. Burckhardt believed that it was the unique political environment of Renaissance Italy that led to the development of the Renaissance mind with its more liberated ideas, ideals, morals and attitudes. The two overarching organizing institutions of the pre-Renaissance West, of what people thought of, not as Europe, but as Christendom – the universal Papacy and the universalistic Holy Roman Empire – effectively had been absent from Italy and had therefore exerted little or no influence in Italian political life for over a century and a half. That absence, Burckhardt wrote, “left Italy in a political condition which differed essentially from that of other countries of the West” and explained why “in them, we detect for the first time the modern political spirit of Europe.”<sup>1</sup>

### **The Italian Microcosm.**

Because the foundations of the medieval international order crumbled in Italy around 1300, the Italians began to create a new political institution to fill the void left by that collapse. This new institution

was called in Italian the *stato*, transforming a word that, until then, had been used to describe the legal classes into which people fell within a political unit. Now *stato*—and all its cognates, such as *state* in English, *état* in French, *estado* in Spanish, *Staat* in German, and so on—would become the term used to describe the basic political unit of the new international order. The Italian microcosm was an anarchic political space. The new states that the Italians evolved to fill that space were the prototypes of the future Westphalian state. They were, in contemporary eyes, illegitimate, existing outside the medieval and feudal hierarchies of political authority. They had to create their own legitimacy by defending their existence. They were, therefore, warlike and aggressive. They were geographically discrete—separate and distinct from other states or any other authorities and were nearly “sovereign” in the modern sense of the term, jealously guarding a monopoly of political authority within their borders and recognizing no other authority higher than themselves.

The power vacuum created by the absence of higher authority in Renaissance Italy resulted in the growth of several Italian city-states into territorial states that absorbed smaller and weaker neighbors. This Darwinian process of political consolidation by conquest eventually resulted in the creation of a miniature state system in Italy, an enclosed political space with five “great” powers contending among themselves for hegemony and influence over smaller, weaker city-states. By 1450, the five principal territorial states of Florence, Venice, Milan, Naples, and the Papal State (based on Rome) dominated the Italian peninsula. As they maneuvered against one another for power and advantage, making and breaking alliances among themselves, the Italian peninsula came to constitute an enclosed system of interacting states—a state system—that was a microcosm of the European state system to follow. In 1454, a series of wars to resist Milanese hegemonic aggression resulted in the general Peace of Lodi. In 1455, most of the five powers and other smaller ones signed a mutual security agreement, the Italic League, which guaranteed the existence of signatory states and called for common action against outsiders. These arrangements led to nearly 50 years of peace on the peninsula. Managing the peace was largely the work of Lorenzo “the Magnificent,” the Medici ruler of Florence who believed that maintaining a balance among the five powers was better policy than trying to eliminate enemies. This was the first conscious balance of power policy in a post-medieval state system.

### **The State as a Work of Art.**

The 15th century Italian states were prototypes of the modern state in the sense that they interacted as equals with the other states of their microcosmic systems and in the way they interacted with the other powers and lesser political units of Italy. The new territorial states existed because of the absence in Italy of the great, overarching, hierarchy-anchoring, legitimacy-conferring institutions of Papacy and Empire. As such, the new, legitimacy-challenged Italian states had to struggle to survive, and they knew it. The Italian state was “a new fact appearing in history—the state as the outcome of reflection and calculation, the state as a work of art,” according to Burckardt.<sup>2</sup> The Italian states, lacking the luxury of traditional legitimacy, were on their own. To survive, they adopted an approach to statecraft that responded more to necessity than to the traditional approach that enjoined Christian moral standards on rulers and the diplomats that served them. They acted, if not in an *immoral* way, then at least in an *amoral* way, according to the medieval canons of princely comportment. The end—the survival of the state—justified the means—whatever efforts the state was capable of—regardless of the established standards of international conduct. This is the argument that makes *raison d'état* (reason of state) the ultimate justification for action by states vis-à-vis other states.

As the Italian states became more self-conscious of their circumstances, they began to recognize that the medieval way of diplomacy was no longer adequate to their needs. Medieval diplomacy was based on the occasional dispatch and receipt of very prestigious but often untrained individuals as envoys



on specific, short-term missions. Occasionally, diplomats were as much hostages as negotiators. The diplomat usually viewed himself as serving as an emissary for the higher needs of Christendom, not the political ruler who sent or received him. But the new Italian territorial states needed diplomatic institutions and mechanisms more effective, more durable, and more permanent than the old medieval ones. They needed both continuous dialogue with their neighbors and continuous intelligence regarding their neighbors' designs. The Renaissance ruler needed a mechanism to gather and report intelligence and to sustain diplomatic dialogue. They therefore invented the key institution of modern diplomacy – the resident ambassador endowed with diplomatic immunity – to conduct the relations between the five states of the system continuously and seamlessly. During the second half of the 15th century, all five of the major Italian states and many smaller ones established permanent accredited diplomatic missions headed by ambassadors in each of the five major capitals.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the Italian Renaissance produced the basic elements of the future European state system. It created the geographically sovereign international actor called the state. It posited an anarchical international environment in which states struggled ceaselessly for power and rulers deployed statecraft, diplomacy, and military force according to calculations, not of right or wrong, but of political expediency. It developed the notion of *raison d'état*; that what was good for the state was the right thing to do, because in politics the end justified the means. It created the mechanism for continuous, sustained diplomacy to manage the state's engagement with the world. Finally, Renaissance Italy developed the idea of the balance of power as a goal of the state system.

At the end of the 15th century, the days of the Italian microcosm of an enclosed and protected peninsular state system were numbered. The world beyond the Alps, with political units much more militarily powerful than the Italian states, began to influence Italian affairs. In 1494, the French invaded successfully, drawing other non-Italian powers, especially Spain and the revived Holy Roman Empire, into a struggle for control of the peninsula that made Italy a battle field for 60 years. The Italian microcosm was destroyed, but not before its transalpine destroyers adopted the diplomatic methods and diplomatic institutions that the Italian states had developed and deployed to meet the needs of their prototypical modern state system. The Italian Renaissance way of diplomacy became the basis of the European way of diplomacy for the future.<sup>4</sup>

## MACHIAVELLI AND THE THEORY OF MODERN DIPLOMACY

Concepts like the amorality of politics, the ends justify the means, and *raison d'état* are usually labeled "Machiavellian," referring to the ideas of the Florentine statesman, diplomat, and political thinker Niccolò Machiavelli (1465-1527). His works have come to epitomize the difference between the premodern, medieval international system, and the modern, geographically sovereign one that first appeared in the Italian state system of the 15th century.

Machiavelli received a typical Italian Renaissance education based on the ancient Greek and Roman classics. That was the essence of the Renaissance, which means rebirth – the Italians and others believed that they were presiding over a rebirth of learning, art, and philosophy based on the recovery of ancient examples of those pursuits. The Renaissance was obsessed with ancient Greek and Roman culture as the Reformation would later be obsessed with ancient Jewish and Christian culture. Renaissance humanism was a preference for those areas of ancient Greek and Roman culture that were oriented toward empowering human beings in this world rather than preparing them for another, better world. The Renaissance humanist curriculum stressed rhetoric, history, and ethics, because these were tools men could use to pursue secular, and especially political, economic, and social objectives.

Machiavelli put those tools to work as a bureaucrat in the government of the Florentine Republic. From 1498 to 1512, he worked in the equivalents of its war and foreign ministries and went on many

diplomatic missions to the other courts of Italy and those of France and the Empire. He was a participant in the political and diplomatic life of Italy in the last years of the existence of the Italian microcosm as well as the first years of the spread of the new state structure and the new diplomacy to the rest of Europe. In 1512, the republic he served underwent a revolution and the autocratic Medici family returned to power. Machiavelli was forced into exile in a hamlet near Florence. There he wrote his principal works, especially *The Prince*, *The Discourses*, and *The Art of War*, all classics of political realism. *The Prince* gives advice to monarchical regimes, especially to princes newly raised to power, on how to retain and extend their power and influence. *The Discourses* does much the same thing for republican regimes. *The Art of War* analyzes the military element of national power in terms of its relationship to the political and social bases of the state.

Machiavelli's contribution to political thought was instantly, inevitably, and lastingly controversial. Most of his readership was confined to *The Prince*, a short, enigmatic, epigrammatic, and elusive work that lent itself to misinterpretation. (Machiavelli's other more straightforward works, including *The Art of War* and *The Discourses*, were read less often.) In *The Prince*, Machiavelli gave practical advice to an Italian prince trying to create a new state. His advice was blunt: In order to be successful, the new prince had to use every tool available to him, including violence, deceit, treachery, and dissimulation. The desired end was to increase his own and his state's power. The means were politically expedient actions, without reference to justice or traditional morality. The standard of a ruler's conduct was *raison d'état*, not Christian ethics.

Contemporaries and later writers interpreted *The Prince* as the bible of the doctrine of political expediency that justified immoral conduct if it produced the desired result, that elevated power over principle, and that denied that Christian morality applied to politics. He was accused of justifying any means to accomplish political goals, especially the retention of and extension of state power. He was denounced for advising rulers to use cunning, duplicity, and bad faith to enhance their own power and undermine their enemies. Criticism of Machiavelli's ideas developed into a genre of writing on political theory, as thinker after thinker wrote an "anti-Machiavelli" attack on his doctrines. Shakespeare called him "the murderous Machiavel." The Catholic Church condemned all Machiavelli's writings and placed them on its Index of Prohibited Books. Later, Machiavelli was praised for the very same doctrines, now seen as *Realpolitik*—the "politics of reality" or "power politics"—based on practical and material factors rather than theoretical or ethical objectives. Proponents hailed *The Prince* as an attempt to "liberate" politics from morality and ethical concerns and to see politics "as it really is." Louis XIV called *The Prince* his "favorite nightcap"; Napoleon annotated his copy of it heavily; Benito Mussolini extolled it as a "handbook for statesmen"; and Adolf Hitler said he kept a copy of it by his bedside.<sup>5</sup>

### **Machiavelli's Message.**

Machiavelli's ideas went much further and deeper than such readers of *The Prince* realized. In fact, when one takes into account his ideas as expressed in his more substantial political works, Machiavelli emerges as the first and still the preeminent theorist of the new geographically sovereign state. He was also the first theorist of the new diplomacy that the new states required in order to survive and prosper. Machiavelli's political theory is a reflection of the rise of the state system in Italy and the new diplomacy that kept them running. As such, they are both descriptive and prescriptive. Machiavelli's political theory constitutes the "user's manual" for rulers and servants of the new state—statesmen, diplomats, and military leaders alike—in the new international environment. They instruct those who ruled the new state and directed its engagement with the world how to succeed at statecraft under the new conditions.

Machiavelli's world-view is a primer for the realist theory of international affairs. In all his major works, Machiavelli assumed a Westphalian international order long before the Peace of Westphalia gave

its name to such an order — one composed of geographically sovereign states with durable boundaries, equal in legal standing and legitimacy, in which the ruler monopolized the lawful use of force. He assumed an anarchic international order, with no higher court of justice or authority than the state itself in defending and advancing its interests. He assumed that recourse to war will be frequent and that the new state must be organized for war to be successful. And he assumed that the state's engagement with the world would be constant; the state must also be organized for continuous, professional diplomacy, in order to be successful. If we read Machiavelli broadly — not just *The Prince*, but *The Discourses* and *The Art of War* as well — with these assumptions in mind, we take away a coherent theoretical structure that reflects the Italian microcosm's political realities that already were on their way to becoming the future international political realities of Europe as a whole.

Machiavelli's lessons for statecraft, war, and diplomacy generally were valid for monarchies and republics. Rulers were responsible for the good of their state, for its survival and stability, in a word, for its security. Rulers were judged by their success in defending and advancing the interests of the state, not by any other standards, moral or political. The more legitimate the government, that is, the more recognized its use of state power by constitutions, laws, tradition, custom, and religious sanction, the stronger it would be, and the less the ruler would need recourse to extreme measures. The less legitimate the government, the more likely its ruler would need to use extreme measures to enforce the government's rule. Republics and monarchies could possess strong legitimacy. But republics were, by virtue of their representative nature, stronger and more stable than monarchies. Republics owed their strength and stability to their ability to mobilize the loyalty and power of the people better than monarchies, because the will of the people lent powerful reinforcement and legitimacy to any state that represented their interests rather than those of the monarch. Well-constituted republics were internally stable and externally strong because they were better able to promote and exploit the economic prosperity, military potential, and patriotism of their people. But the rulers of a republic had the same responsibility for the security of the state as monarchs, and they were judged by the same standard — reason of state. Machiavelli advocated a return to ancient Roman republican values, especially replacement of decadent Christian religious values with a Roman-style "civic religion" that worshiped service to the state as the highest value, in order to reform the Italian states of his day and prepare them for success in the anarchic international order in which he lived.

One of Machiavelli's key legacies was the concept that the state's primary role was external, to deal with other states through diplomacy and war — the primacy of external policy. Another was that all states, including republics, needed a strong executive power in their constitutions to facilitate action against external threats. The state that Machiavelli designed in his major works would be able to fulfill its mission of active and successful participation in an anarchic international system. That state could contend with other sovereign states for power, influence, and security and would justify its actions by their success according to the measure of reason of state.<sup>6</sup>

## **THE SPREAD OF MODERN DIPLOMACY TO EUROPE: 1500-1650**

French King Louis XI led his army into Italy, took, and occupied cities from the border to Naples, and then successfully retreated despite suffering tactical defeat by Italian forces. This revealed the stark power differential between the small Italian states and their European counterparts, especially the strong monarchies of France and Spain. Italy became a battleground for foreign powers for the next 60 years. The invasions of Italy helped spread the Renaissance to all of Europe, including the new Italian political institutions. The idea of the new state with its exclusive territorial basis and its concentration of power in the ruler's hands was attractive to Western European rulers. And the European rulers had one thing that the Italian Renaissance new states lacked — legitimacy. Their rule, whether over

kingdoms, principalities, duchies or other jurisdictions, was sanctioned and supported by the soft power of legitimacy based on religion, tradition, or custom. When these rulers adopted the ways of the Italians in concentrating power within defined territorial limits, they became more and more powerful at the expense of the old medieval system. Diffused authority and fragmented rights and responsibilities among nobility and church, cities and social orders, and all the other atomized institutions that claimed a share of political power on traditional and feudal grounds could not withstand the new state system.

The northern rulers also adopted the diplomacy that the Italians had developed to serve their new states. More and more, diplomacy was restricted to political units that had pretensions to sovereignty – a monopoly of legitimate force within the borders of the territory they controlled. The Italian system of permanent, resident ambassadors, duly accredited and endowed with diplomatic immunity rapidly became the standard for Europe. The resident ambassadorial system gave rulers ways to influence other states by representing policies and views to other rulers, by providing timely and accurate political intelligence back to the capital, and by concerting actions with allied and friendly governments; it soon became the norm throughout Europe.

## **The Reformation.**

The invasions of Italy and the spread of the Renaissance Italian state system to the rest of Europe in the early 16th century coincided with the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation had great influence on the development of the modern state system and modern diplomacy because it discredited the two great supra-statal political institutions of Christendom, the Papacy and the Empire. The Reformation radically reduced those institutions' ability to influence the international system, and at the same time greatly strengthened the power of the rulers of the new states. The Reformation strengthened the hand of Protestant rulers by transferring to them the effective leadership of the reformed churches. The Reformation therefore intersected with the rise of territorial states in ways that powerfully accelerated the process of state formation that the Renaissance had begun. The Reformation harnessed the immense power of religion to the *raison d'être* of the state and added religious differences to the already long menu of reasons for states to conflict with other states. In the short run, the expansion and development of diplomacy suffered as states of different religions downgraded or interrupted normal diplomatic relations for a time. In the long run, however, the development of diplomacy resumed its previous trajectory, keeping pace with the development of state power and self-awareness, as well as with the extension of a state system that required continuous and consequential diplomatic activity in order to function effectively.

The Reformation led to a long series of religious struggles, first in Germany and Central Europe, and later in France, the Low Countries, and elsewhere. It led, too, to the Catholic Counter-Reformation, which reorganized the Church in Catholic lands as the Reformation reorganized the churches in Protestant lands. In both Catholic and Protestant Europe, however, the religious breakdown of the unity of Christendom resulted in a tremendous source of political influence for the new states—religious uniformity under the control of the state and its ruler became the norm. Everywhere, the sanction of guardian of the faith was added to the secular ruler's authority, vastly increasing the concentration of his power. This was recognized in international law and practice by the Peace of Augsburg of 1555 between the Catholic Emperor Charles V and the rebellious Protestant states of his Empire. The question of which religion people would be allowed to practice—in this case, either Catholicism or Lutheranism—was to be decided by the local ruler. This arrangement was expressed as the principle of *cujus regio, ejus religio*—the ruler's religion is the religion of the ruler's people. At the state level, no toleration of religious minorities was foreseen. At the macro level, the result was greater toleration for religious diversity in the international system of sovereign states.

## **Balance-of-Power Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion.**

As the modern state system developed, its characteristic dynamics developed as well. In an anarchic system, hegemonic threats appeared as one state grew stronger than others. The system began to respond to hegemonic threats through the mechanism of the balance of power, in which coalitions developed to resist, restrain, and reduce the would-be hegemon's power and influence to manageable proportions. This happened even during the wars of religion. The attempts of Habsburg Emperor (and King of Spain) Charles V to restore and extend the power of the Holy Roman Empire from the 1530s until his abdication in 1556 led to the formation of coalitions against him on both religious and purely political grounds (although the distinction was losing its edge). This was the last serious attempt by a Holy Roman Emperor to achieve European hegemony and Christian unity, another indication that the modern state was succeeding in crowding out premodern political forms. The development of the major European states into absolute monarchies was another. The balance of power mechanism was extended beyond Europe when France signed a treaty with the Turkish Sultan in 1536 to bring the Ottoman Empire into play diplomatically in its resistance to Charles's hegemonic effort.

Habsburg dynasts made two more attempts to assert hegemony over Europe using religion as a justification. Charles V's son, King Philip II (1556-98) of Spain, tried to leverage the power of his realm and its wealthy overseas empire to achieve European hegemony, but met the opposition of coalitions that linked his Dutch and Belgian Protestant subjects with England and France. Between 1618 and 1648, the Habsburg rulers of Spain and the Empire again grasped for hegemony, trying to exploit the Counter-Reformation's partial successes to once again impose a Habsburg-controlled order on Europe. The Thirty Years War that prevented that from happening was the result of the resistance of a wide coalition of German Protestant states backed by Catholic France and Lutheran Sweden. The leading anti-hegemonic statesman of the first half of the 17th century was France's Cardinal Richelieu, who knitted together the anti-Habsburg coalition that won the Thirty Years War by blocking the Spanish and Austrian branches of that family's bid for mastery of the continent.

## **THE ABSOLUTE MONARCHIES AND BALANCE-OF-POWER DIPLOMACY: 1650-1815.**

The Westphalia settlement of 1648 ended the period of religious wars and ushered in one in which the Great Powers engaged in episodic struggles to extend their power and influence in order to achieve hegemony for themselves, or in order to prevent the achievement of hegemony by others. The settlement itself generally is considered to have established definitively the sovereign state as the basic international actor and to have christened the European state system as one composed of distinct and juridically equal, sovereign states. These Westphalian sovereign states monopolized the legitimate use of force within well-defined borders and struggled for power in an anarchical international environment. The reality was not quite so advanced, but the idea of the modern Westphalian state gradually would become accepted as the norm. A constant search for equilibrium governed the system through diplomacy that sought to restore the balance of power among competing states. The universalist idea was no longer seriously considered outside the Papal Apartments in the Vatican.

Adam Watson describes how the period from Westphalia to Vienna contributed to the development of modern diplomacy. First, there was the propagation of the concept of the professional career diplomat, who cultivated specific skills that ensured effective performance of his duties. Second, there arose the idea that these professional diplomats belonged to informal but useful groups of accredited diplomats at various courts of Europe who shared a common outlook and common goals. These included a common need to protect their status and privileges; mutual advantage in exchanging information and evaluations, especially among representatives of allied and friendly states; and reciprocal advantage in

maintaining good working relations, even as their governments quarreled. The diplomatic corps had taken shape and would become permanent, although its members came and went. Third, diplomatic congresses began to play an increasingly important role in ending and regulating conflict, and began to be seen not as isolated events, but as “climaxes in dialogue.”<sup>7</sup>

Diplomacy was becoming continuous and general, as war was becoming occasional and limited to certain principals, while some neutrals normally stood aside. Negotiation increasingly was regarded as valuable in and of itself, as Cardinal Richelieu stated in his *Political Testament*. Richelieu also sought to remain in constant diplomatic contact with the enemies of France, including during war, in order to be better placed to influence their policies, even as their respective armies fought. Fourth, diplomacy increasingly was conceived of as the management mechanism for the balance of power, which ensured the continued existence of all international actors by adjusting and readjusting the alignment of states to compensate for changes in the level of power of individual states. Diplomacy was needed to negotiate these adjustments. Finally, institutions to manage the conduct of diplomacy in capitals coalesced into regular ministries of foreign affairs, as a “logical complement of resident envoys.”<sup>8</sup>

The balance of power could ensure the survival of most states, but it could not preserve the peace entirely. First France under Louis XIV (1640-1715) threatened to become the European hegemon, especially by unifying France and Spain into one grand dynastic empire that would include Spain’s far-flung international holdings. This brought coalitions led by the Netherlands, the Holy Roman Empire, and Britain into play in order to deny French ambitions. Such coalitions fought the French and their allies four times between 1667 and 1713, exhausting France and Spain. The last of these wars, the War of the Spanish Succession or Queen Anne’s War in America (1702-13), was very nearly a world war, because it involved operations and alliances with local rulers on several continents.

Through the rest of the 18th century, French attempts to reassert itself and English efforts to prevent France from dominating Europe, while extending its own colonial and commercial empire, were played out in a series of wars based on shifting alliances – the War of the Polish Succession (1733-38); the War of the Austrian Succession or King George’s War in America (1740-48); the Seven Years War (1756-63), called the French and Indian War in America (1754-63); and the War of the American Revolution (1775-83). The war in America became a Great Power struggle as skillful diplomacy and astute use of intelligence by the colonists intersected with French desire for revenge on Britain. That produced an American-Franco-Spanish alliance that fought the British militarily and a pro-American, Russian-led League of Armed Neutrality served to isolate Britain diplomatically and economically.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic period brought a renewed French drive for continental hegemony as well as British resolve to prevent it, involving coalitions on both sides. Napoleon, in fact, realized albeit briefly (1807-11) the general European hegemony about which Charles V and Louis XIV had dreamed. In Europe in 1811, only Britain was outside the French orbit. The French Empire was surrounded by satellite states and allies of dubious loyalty but unwilling to oppose Napoleon’s dictates openly. Napoleon’s political overreach in Spain and military defeat in Russia in 1812 revived British efforts to create an anti-French coalition. British diplomacy was ultimately successful in exploiting the state system’s inherent unwillingness to tolerate an aggressive hegemon by constructing and maintaining a Grand Coalition of all the other Great Powers to defeat Napoleon and finally to impose regime change on the French.

## **BALANCE-OF-POWER DIPLOMACY AND EUROPEAN EQUILIBRIUM: 1815-1914**

The post-Napoleonic settlement began an unprecedented period of comity in the European state system. After the Congress of Vienna that codified the post-Napoleonic settlement, no general wars lasting more than a few months or involving all of the Great Powers were fought for nearly a century.

The statesmen and diplomats gathered at Vienna were intent on restoring the 18th century balance of power in the European state system as the best way of ensuring peace. The territorial changes they made and the institutional initiatives they took were successful in providing the basis for a durable peace among the Great Powers for nearly 100 years. No shock to the international system as great as that produced by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Hegemony has yet been followed by such a sustained period of peace.

Sir Harold Nicolson described the chief characteristics of the diplomacy of the period from Vienna to World War I, when grand strategy was implemented on the basis of the balance of power, first in Europe and then in the rest of the world, as the European powers spread their influence internationally. First, diplomacy was Eurocentric. Europe was regarded as the most important area of the world and the other continents of secondary importance. Second, diplomacy was Great-Power-centric. The smaller and weaker powers were drawn into the orbits of one of the Great Powers in order to play their supporting roles in the unending maneuver to maintain, restore, or overthrow the existing balance of power. Third, the Great Powers possessed a "common responsibility for the conduct of the Small Powers and the preservation of peace between them." This implied a right of intervention by the Great Powers in crises and conflicts involving the smaller and weaker powers. Fourth, there was the establishment in every European country of a "professional diplomatic service on a more or less identical model." These professional diplomats developed a kind of corporate identity based on a common belief, notwithstanding the policies of their various governments, "that the purpose of diplomacy was the preservation of peace." Finally, diplomacy was conducted on "the rule that sound negotiation must be continuous and confidential."<sup>9</sup>

From 1815 to 1848, Britain followed its successful wartime diplomatic leadership with an ambitious attempt at peacetime coalition diplomacy. The British aimed to create a system of collective security based on dynastic legitimacy and participation in periodic international congresses to regulate the balance of power diplomatically. British foreign secretary Lord Castlereagh was the architect and inspiration both of the anti-Napoleonic coalitions and of the post-war settlement. Charles de Talleyrand, who served in leading political and diplomatic roles for every French government from the Old Regime before 1789 to Napoleon's Empire, deserted Napoleon to lead the French diplomatic effort to preserve key territorial gains since 1789 and win a seat at the table of European congress-diplomacy after 1815, thereby rescuing and restoring France's Great Power status. In 1818, the victorious powers—Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia—welcomed the same France they had defeated into a quintuple alliance that would exert a kind of collective supervision over the European state system. Five-power congresses authorized French intervention in Spain and Austrian interventions in Italy to put down revolutions there in the 1820s. The collective security arrangements of the Congress System did not last long, but the idea of a less institutionalized but still effective Concert of Europe, with the Great Powers acting as a kind of continental directorate, ensured general peace among themselves while permitting minor adjustments to the prevailing order for 30 years. Austrian Prince Clemens von Metternich, called "the coachman of Europe," guided the concert-system on the continent through the second quarter of the century, successfully pursuing peace and stability through the Concert of Europe and the conservative Holy Alliance of Russia, Austria, and Prussia to defend dynastic legitimacy against the threat from the most dangerous non-state actors, the nascent national movements. Even so, the system peacefully absorbed the effects of revolutions in France, Belgium, and Poland in 1830.

During the period 1848-71, the wave of nationalistic political and social revolutions that swept over Europe in 1848-49 strongly challenged the system, and the gradual breakup of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, which led to the Crimean War of 1856, further taxed it. The processes of Italian and then German national unification were severe tests for the state system and deeply affected the balance of power, but even these events involved short, limited wars that were not allowed to become general European conflicts. The forces of nationalism were managed without recourse to general war. Italy was

united under the Kingdom of Piedmont-Savoy through the diplomatic virtuosity of Prime Minister Camillo di Cavour, who joined the Franco-British alliance against Russia in the Crimean War (1854-56). This gained him the British diplomatic support and the French military assistance he needed to defeat the Austrians (1859) who ruled northern Italy and to begin the unification process completed by his successors in 1870. Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck united Germany by isolating France diplomatically while constructing an anti-French coalition among the smaller German states to defeat France in 1870 and proclaim the creation of the German Empire in 1871 with the Prussian king as Kaiser. Lord Palmerston put British naval and financial might to work to influence the balance of power on the continent to London's advantage. The American Civil War did not tempt the European powers, especially Britain and France, to serious intervention, either militarily or diplomatically. U.S. diplomacy, aimed at keeping the Europeans out of the issue, bested Confederate diplomacy, which sought European intervention and eventual recognition of the Confederacy as a legitimate, sovereign state. Even under the difficult conditions created by a rising tide of nationalism and political and social revolutionary sentiments the European powers managed to regulate their state system without recourse to general war or war between certain powers for more than a few months.

During the years 1871-1914, European diplomacy was concentrated on the peaceful management of two intense contests among the European powers, the competition for the remnants of the dissolving Ottoman Empire, especially in Europe, and the competition for colonial expansion in Africa and Asia. Bismarck's political foresight and diplomatic skill were demonstrated in both spheres, first as he assembled the Powers in Berlin in 1878 to craft a general settlement to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 that involved multiple changes of boundaries and prevented war from spreading. He called them together again in 1885 to submit a number of African colonial disputes to general arbitration and international decision. The United States under Theodore Roosevelt played a leading diplomatic role in ending the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 through mediation at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

The 19th century produced advances in diplomatic institutions in response to developments in military affairs, economic expansion, nationalist ambitions, and the rise of public opinion. From the 1830s, military attachés were added to embassy staffs, reflecting the growing complexity of the military element of national power. Soon after, commercial attachés made a similar appearance in the diplomatic world, reflecting the growing importance of the economic element of national power. Governments also began to engage in cultural diplomacy by supporting missionaries they saw as spreading their languages and cultures as well as the faith, and by promoting cultural associations like the French *Alliance Française* and the Italian *Società Dante Alighieri* to encourage familiarity with and respect for their respective languages and cultures. Finally, governments started to exploit the possibilities of influencing foreign public opinion, usually by trying to influence the popular press to report and comment favorably on their policies and actions.<sup>10</sup>

The ability of the European powers to continue to manage their diplomatic relations without recourse to general war ended in the cataclysm of 1914-18. Historians would later see World War I, and especially the inability of the powers to reach a durable settlement after it in Paris in 1919, as the end of the European state system and the beginning of the global state system of the 20th and 21st centuries. Diplomacy would, nevertheless, continue as a crucial element of power.<sup>11</sup>

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 15

1. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, Oxford: Paaidon, 1944, p. 2. A long struggle for preeminence between the Popes of Rome and the Holy Roman Emperors resulted in the defeat of the German emperors and their expulsion from the Italian peninsula from 1250-75. The Popes had called on French arms to do so and soon thereafter fell under French influence. From 1307-78, most Popes were French and resided in Avignon in Southern France rather than Rome. That period of "Babylonian Captivity" in France was followed by nearly 50 years of deep division in the Church government, the Great Schism, when two or three different popes, each one of them considering the others "antipopes,"



elected by different factions and residing in different places inside and outside Italy, contended for the papal authority. The schism was only fully healed when Pope Martin V won general recognition as the only legitimate pope and returned to reside regularly in Rome in 1420.

2. Burckhardt, *Civilization*, p. 2.

3. Several Italian states had long experience with intelligence systems based on agents resident in foreign capitals. The Papacy had clerical envoys in every Christian court, and the repository of their reports in the Cancelleria palace in Rome was the prototype for the foreign ministries of later times; some governments still refer to foreign ministers as chancellors. The Venetian Republic also had its commercial agents all over Europe and the Middle East who were tasked with providing topical information to the city's rulers. In the 15th century, the Medici family that ruled Florence started to require the managers of the foreign branches of the family banking house to submit similar reports.

4. A superb introduction to Renaissance diplomatic history, theory, and practice is Garrett Mattingly's *Renaissance Diplomacy*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1955. The same author's *Catherine of Aragon*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1955, captures the political transformation of medieval *Christendom* into premodern *Europe* during the 16th century.

5. Good introductions to Machiavelli and his influence on political theory and practice are J. R. Hale, *Machiavelli and Renaissance Italy*, New York: Collier, 1960; Maurizio Viroli, *Machiavelli's Smile: A Biography*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2000; Bernard Crick, "Introduction to Niccolò Machiavelli," *The Discourses*, London: Penguin, 1970, pp. 13-69; and Torbjörn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory: An Introduction*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992, pp. 25-40.

6. Machiavelli was a major influence on Clausewitz, who read the Italian's main works and admired his approach to war and politics: "No book on earth is more necessary to the statesman than Machiavelli's; those who affect disgust at his principles are idealistic dilettantes" . . . "The 21st chapter of Machiavelli's *Prince* is the basic code for all diplomacy – and woe to those that fail to heed it!" Carl von Clausewitz, *Historical and Political Writings*, Peter Paret and Daniel Moran, eds. and trans., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 268-269.

7. Adam Watson, *Diplomacy: The Dialogue Between States*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983, p. 103. Adam Watson served in the British Diplomatic Service from 1937 to 1974, including as ambassador in West Africa and to Cuba. He later taught at the University of Virginia. He is the author of many books on history, diplomacy, and international relations, including *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis*, London and New York: Routledge, 1992; and *The War of the Goldsmith's Daughter*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1964. He is considered one of the leading figures in the English school of international relations theory.

8. Watson, *Diplomacy*, p. 107.

9. Harold Nicolson, *The Evolution of Diplomacy*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, pp. 100-105. Sir Harold Nicolson was a distinguished British diplomat and historian. From 1909-29, he represented the British government in various parts of the world. He was an active participant in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, which he described in the study *Peacemaking, 1919*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1933. He served in the House of Commons from 1935 to 1945 and was knighted in 1953. See also his *Diplomacy*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 1963; and *The Congress of Vienna: A Study in Allied Unity, 1812-1822*, New York: Viking, 1964.

10. M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450-1919*, New York: Longman, 1993, pp. 128-141.

11. Besides the references cited elsewhere, I consulted the following in preparing this chapter: G. R. Berridge, Maurice Keens-Soper, and T. G. Otte, *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger*, New York: Palgrave, 2001; Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory, and Administration*, London and New York: Routledge, 1995; David Jablonsky, *Paradigm Lost? Transitions and the Search for a New World Order*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993; Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994; Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; and A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954. I recommend them for further study.

## CHAPTER 16

### INFORMATION: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTRUMENT

Frank L. Jones

Information and the various technologies that disseminate it to people throughout the world are critical to modern life, even though some people take it for granted while others resist its impact with Hutterite vigor. The very nature of our personal lives, including the means of social interaction as well as the conduct of commerce and government, has been changed dramatically by the use of computers and telecommunications equipment. The technological revolution that we have witnessed since the 1970s forced us to coin the term “Information Age” to provide the context for the influence that the computer and the silicon chip have had on our daily activities. The means by which we communicate today are decidedly different from the methods used even a decade ago, and the technological advances that are likely to be developed in the next several decades cannot be readily understood or appreciated except by a few visionaries. Nonetheless, we now readily grasp that the methods used to communicate are in constant transformation.

The repercussions of this spectacular and perhaps radical change in technology are numerous. Nonetheless, for the national security professional, it has strategic implications. States now must not only deal with other states, but with a variety of subnational and nonstate actors. Diplomacy in a wired world is far different in its conduct than it was even a few decades ago. This is because of the capacity of the global media to transmit information and images throughout the world with astonishing speed but also because the nature of communication today is transnational, domestic audiences cannot be isolated from foreign ones. We live in an increasingly connected world. The other two elements of power, military and economic, have been changed substantially by the wired world as well.

U.S. military doctrine addresses the concept of “information dominance,” which is defined as “the degree of information superiority that allows the possessor to use information systems and capabilities to achieve an operational advantage in a conflict or to control the situation in operations short of war, while denying those capabilities to the adversary.”<sup>1</sup> Military theorists argue that information dominance is essential to military operational success and relies on a sophisticated understanding of what information is required, as well as a capacity to manage the use and dissemination of that knowledge to the right place, at the right time, and for the desired purpose.<sup>2</sup>

Economists talk about information production and use as a modern measurable inventory of assets, a medium of exchange, and the target for growth.<sup>3</sup> In other words, knowledge and information are understood as commodities that can be moved thousands of miles in fractions of seconds. Yet, despite this recognition of information as an integral facet of contemporary society and its inclusion as an element of national power by many scholars and strategic thinkers, this element’s unique role often is misunderstood.

Since the 1990s, many political scientists and international relations scholars have identified and advocated information as a fourth element of power. Bartlett, Holman, and Somes have argued that the dynamic security environment that we confront today and in the future will alter the relative utility of the other three elements—economic, diplomatic, and military. They suggest that strategists increasingly must consider additional forms of influence, including the growing use of information media to shape the battle space.

## Defining Information as an Instrument of Power.

Nonetheless, a common understanding of information as an instrument of power is necessary before proceeding. Information as an element of power has taken on a new meaning in the past decade with the introduction of such concepts as information operations (IO) and information warfare. Unfortunately, both of these terms have disputed and convoluted meanings that encompass numerous aspects of warfare ranging from computer network attack to psychological operations. Consequently, our understanding of information as an element of power often is confused or so ambiguous as to be meaningless to the strategist. We need a more refined definition.

In his seminal article, "Soft Power," Joseph Nye argues that the notion of power is changing in world politics. He contends that displays of power do not reside in resources but in the ability to change the behavior of states, to control the political environment. Military power and economic power have their limitations because of unintended consequences and the costs associated with using these instruments, as well as the diffusion of certain equalizers such as technology. Power is being transferred from the "capital rich" to the "information-rich," and that power in world politics has now another dimension, what Nye calls "co-optive power" or "soft power" whereby "one country gets other countries to do what it wants" rather than using force to order other countries to act in a certain manner. He continues by stating that soft power is designed to shape beliefs and preferences of other countries based on the attractiveness of culture and ideology. To succeed in this endeavor, a state must have the ability to communicate its messages to other countries.<sup>4</sup>

Information, as an element of soft power, is a strategic instrument within the context of grand strategy. As an instrument, it relies on the "understanding and use of graphic, intellectual, or sensory imagery, drawing on historical, cultural, linguistic, religious, ethical, and other issues of substance and belief which affect people as individuals or groups within the strategic environment."<sup>5</sup> Thus, information as an element of power should be understood as a psychological dimension of warfare, not to be confused with psychological operations, which is a component of the information element of power. Therefore, for the U.S. Government, the informational element of power is its ability to employ its information capabilities to influence the attitudes and behaviors of foreign elites and publics. Unfortunately, the informational element often is viewed as a component of the diplomatic or political elements of power, but to view information solely as a subordinate tool is myopic since information is an instrument in its own right. The increasing reach of regional and global communication systems has made it an autonomous tool of statecraft.

It is important to differentiate information as an element of power from the diplomatic and military elements. Regarding the former, the diplomatic element tends to focus primarily on state-to-state communication through the auspices of foreign ministries and other governmental institutions.

The military use of information largely has been placed under the umbrella term, "information operations." As mentioned earlier, the functions that constitute IO have been a subject of debate for several years. The definition in *Army Field Manual 3-0*, June 2001, will suffice for our purposes: "Actions taken to affect adversaries' and influence others' decisionmaking process, information, and information systems while protecting one's own. . . ."<sup>6</sup> Consequently, this definition could include such practices as computer network operations (attack and defense), deception, and psychological operations. For most people, however, information operations are synonymous with computers. This meaning is inconsistent with the objective of influencing foreign audiences. It confuses the technology that is used with the intention. Instead, there must be some basic principles to define information as an element of power. William Kiehl, a U.S. public diplomacy expert, offers a useful term—*influence and perception management*. Influence and perception management may be defined as "the use of the tools of influence and perception management in peace or in war to influence positively the perceptions, attitudes and

actions of publics to advance the interests of a nation.”<sup>7</sup> Kiehl makes no distinction between foreign and domestic audiences. Such a distinction must be noted because of U.S. law. The Smith-Mundt Act, which was enacted in 1948, prohibits the domestic dissemination of any “information about the United States, its people, and its policies” prepared for foreign dissemination.<sup>8</sup> In essence, Congress was concerned about U.S. Government agencies propagandizing the American public. Therefore, in the U.S. context, the emphasis is on influencing foreign publics, although many practitioners argue that this distinction is no longer realistic, given the transnational nature of information dissemination by the global media.<sup>9</sup>

Regardless, Kiehl’s term is more apt as it speaks to the outcomes that a strategist wants to effect in utilizing information as an instrument of power, that is, influencing the behaviors and actions of allies, friends, neutrals, and enemies in order to attain national security objectives, while at the same time recognizing that to influence publics one must make use of various tools. The U.S. Government uses four tools for influence and perception management: public diplomacy, public affairs, international broadcasting, and psychological operations.

### **The Four Components of the Informational Element.**

The ability to influence the attitudes and behaviors of foreign audiences historically has been a government’s ability to further its national strategic goals through an integrated, synchronized interagency process using the aforementioned tools as its channels.

Public diplomacy is one of the earliest tools that the founders of this nation used in attempting to influence foreign publics. One can argue that the Declaration of Independence is not only a statement of the aspirations of some American colonists to break from England and create a new philosophy of democratic governance, but it is also a well-crafted propaganda document directed at the English and European publics to justify their actions against the monarch and Parliament.

There is no generally accepted definition of public diplomacy. In fact, its meanings have changed over the years and with various presidential administrations. Nonetheless, it generally is understood to be the careful engagement primarily of targeted sectors of foreign publics (individuals and groups) in order to promote U.S. national interests through understanding, information and influence.

Public diplomacy activities, consisting of two elements, are carried out by the Department of State. The first are information activities which include publications and electronic media, overseas information resource centers, speakers, and specialists who meet with foreign publics and governments in various venues, and various video and teleconference programs. The other aspect of public diplomacy is educational and cultural exchanges such as academic exchanges, the Fulbright program, and international visitors programs, to name a few.

Public affairs is the second component. It is the provision of information to the public, press, and other institutions regarding the goals, policies, and activities of the U.S. Government. It seeks to foster an understanding of these goals through a dialogue with individual citizens, groups, and institutions, as well as the domestic and international media. Nonetheless, the focus of public affairs is to inform the U.S. domestic audience.

The primary departmental offices concerned with public affairs as it related to the conduct of national security policy are the Department of State’s office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.

The third component, international broadcasting, is conducted under the auspices of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which became the independent, autonomous entity responsible for all U.S. Government and government sponsored, nonmilitary, international broadcasting in October 1999. This was the result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Public Law 105-277), the single most important legislation affecting U.S. international broadcasting since the early 1950s.

The Board consists of nine members, eight private citizens and the Secretary of State (the director of the U.S. Information Agency represented the U.S. Government on the board until that agency was abolished in 1999). Congress intended the composition of the BBG to protect the integrity of the journalists working in international broadcasting and to maintain their ability to operate under the Voice of America Charter.

The Voice of America (VOA) Charter, drafted in 1960 and later signed into law in July 1976 by President Gerald Ford, provides the principles that guide U.S. Governmental international broadcasting. The Charter indicates that the long-range interests of the United States are served by communicating directly to the peoples of the world and by gaining the attention and respect of these listeners. Therefore, three principles pertain to achieve this end:

- VOA will serve as a consistently reliable and authoritative source of news. VOA news will be accurate, objective, and comprehensive.
- VOA will represent America, not any single segment of American society, and will therefore present a balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought.
- VOA will present the policies of the United States clearly and effectively, and will present responsible discussions and opinion on these policies.

The U.S. Government's international broadcasting programs are transmitted directly to a mass audience rather than through an embassy. These programs are disseminated on a daily basis by the individual BBG international broadcasters: the VOA, Radio Sawa, Radio Farda, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Radio and TV Marti, and WORLDNET Television, with the assistance of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), which provides administrative and other support for the broadcasters.

The final component of the informational element of power is international military information (IMI), better known as overt psychological operations. Psychological operations are defined as operations to induce or reinforce attitudes and behavior that are favorable to U.S. foreign policy or military objectives in selected foreign audiences through planned operations to convey selected information in order to influence emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately behavior, and to accomplish this end through truthful means.<sup>10</sup> Historically, psychological operations have been conducted at the operational and tactical level by designated psychological operations units and less at the strategic level, since the modes of information dissemination at that level belong to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Experts typically view IMI as having two facets. The first is information communicated to foreign audiences through the execution of the regional combatant commander's Theater Security Cooperation Plan, using such measures as forward deployments, military-to-military contacts, unit visits, exercises, and conferences. IMI also includes overt peacetime psychological operations programs (OP-3), which was established in the early 1980s. OP-3 are annual programs that regional commanders have coordinated with the chiefs of U.S. diplomatic missions to support and provide for the conduct of overt psychological operations in support of U.S. regional objectives.

### **Using the Power of Information – The U.S. Historical Experience.**

As indicated earlier, influence and perception management has been understood as an important aspect of American foreign policy since the founders declared their independence from Great Britain. However, it was not an institutionalized or a highly developed tool until the American experience in World War I, with the creation of the Committee on Public Information in 1917. It was at this time that the U.S. Government first comprehended and valued the importance of communicating

with foreign publics and opinion makers to promote its foreign policy goals, dismiss rumors, and counteract disinformation and propaganda. Over the succeeding decades, it has created a number of organizations, usually of limited duration, and utilized a variety of media to communicate with foreign audiences. Media have ranged from the technologically simple such as printed materials, to the more sophisticated such as radio broadcasts, film, television, Internet websites, and direct satellite broadcasting. The purpose for establishing these organizations and using these media is to inform and influence foreign audiences, whether friendly or not, to understand and accept and support, or at least tolerate, U.S. activities and policies. Yet, the U.S. Government's overall investment in these media has been minimal, and its attention to the importance of this instrument has been sporadic at best.

Nonetheless, beginning with the Cold War, some Presidents have understood the value of an information campaign directed at foreign audiences. For example, in 1951, President Harry S Truman created the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) to provide for more effective planning, coordination, and conduct of psychological operations within the structure of approved reporting directly to the National Security Council.<sup>11</sup>

This belief in the use of information as an instrument of power was not necessarily shared by the administrations that followed. In some instances, the use of this instrument became too narrowly focused because a national-level strategic vision was lacking or was beleaguered by bureaucratic resistance and poor operational coordination among the responsible agencies. Scholars and practitioners have maintained that these problems manifested themselves during the Vietnam War and festered through the 1970s and into the 1980s as a foreign policy consensus in the United States unraveled. It can be argued as well that within the Department of Defense (DoD), starting in the late 1950s, psychological operations, then called psychological warfare, became an element of the Army's special warfare mission and therefore lost its strategic focus, becoming instead a device for use in counterinsurgency. Regardless of these reasons, what does seem clear is that the post-Vietnam war era signaled the beginning of a long period of decline and ultimately degeneration, until President Ronald Reagan's election.<sup>12</sup>

President Reagan, the "Great Communicator," appreciated and used information as a fundamental part of his administration's national security strategy to destroy the Soviet Union. National Security Decision Directives 45, 77, and 130, signed in 1982, 1983 and 1984, respectively, emphasized the importance of public diplomacy, particularly, international radio broadcasting and psychological operations. Public diplomacy programs were acknowledged as a strategic means of implementing U.S. national security policy and not merely supplementary to diplomacy.<sup>13</sup> Carl Builder concluded in his book, *The Icarus Syndrome*, that the barriers of the Cold War were "breached not by military forces, diplomacy, alliances or economic power, but by information spewing out of television sets, telephones, audio and video tapes, computers, and facsimile machines, into the minds of the individuals."<sup>14</sup>

President Bill Clinton recognized the importance of strategic information dissemination and signed Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 68, International Public Information, in 1999. The objective of this directive was to use international public information activities to improve the ability of the U.S. Government to prevent and mitigate crises and to promote understanding and support for U.S. foreign policy initiatives around the globe. PDD-68, however, was not directed against a particular adversary in order to defeat that opponent. Instead, it was developed in response to primarily the horrors of Rwanda and the use of "Hate Radio" by Hutu extremists to incite violence against Tutsis and moderate Hutus, but also because of the U.S. peacekeeping experience in Haiti and Bosnia. Although the directive had its flaws, the absence of senior official support for timely implementation of its provisions, insufficient staff, and no funding specifically targeted for its purposes ensured that it remained a half-measure. Yet, like its predecessor directives, with a change in administration, what little progress had been made in underscoring the importance of influence and perception management was lost since there was no organizational structure in place to ensure continuity.

Diplomats, members of Congress, and others recognized this situation in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. Shortly after those tragic events, members of Congress, practitioners, and scholars wrote opinion pieces decrying the U.S. Government's inability to communicate its message to foreign audiences. Congressional committees held hearings dedicated to understanding the U.S. Government's public diplomacy role in the war on terrorism. The Department of State enlisted the Advertising Council to assist in the creation of public service announcements to be used overseas. This measure only highlighted that the U.S. Government had no strategic information policy or plan that had been forged in the interagency process and that would synchronize the efforts of the Departments of State and Defense, as well as other agencies that can contribute to this effort. Instead, the administration was reacting to events as many of its predecessors had done, and when it did act, it did not always tailor its message to foreign audiences accurately. Eventually, the George Bush administration recognized that it needed to implement several actions in the "War on Terrorism," to include reestablishing media and information capabilities that had been eliminated because of limited resources and implementing a formal interagency coordination process at the senior level.<sup>15</sup> President Bush also established by executive order an Office of Global Communications in the White House to advise the President and other U.S. Government leaders on how to achieve the most effective means for the United States Government, to ensure consistency in messages that will promote the interests of the United States abroad, prevent misunderstanding, build support for and among coalition partners of the United States, and inform international audiences.<sup>16</sup>

It is too early to determine if such measures will be long lasting. Historically, the U.S. Government's awareness of information as a critical element of power has been uneven, always receiving more attention during crises. Nonetheless, the events of September 11, as well as the "War on Terrorism," have sensitized strategic leaders to the importance of not only having a more effective apparatus for disseminating the U.S. Government's message, but the creation of specialized programs primarily aimed at communicating with the Arab and the wider Muslim community. Yet, even these efforts are not panaceas, as there are limitations due to the complexities involved to how successful the U.S. Government can be in influencing foreign audiences.

### **Controlling the Information Environment.**

Control of the information environment at the strategic level always has been a critical requirement for U.S. political leaders. Every act of government has a psychological effect on the nation's foreign relations whether it is a trade delegation visit, a diplomatic summit, or a military training exercise conducted with allies and friends. Numerous administrations have attempted to consolidate strategic information capabilities and develop an information strategy, but the task is difficult for a number of reasons ranging from the mundane—such as competing bureaucratic demands and interests and the availability of resources—to the more complicated elements of time, image, and ideas. These three elements, according to Professor Barry Fulton, underscore that a government's ability to influence the attitudes and behaviors of foreign audiences is difficult and limited.

There is a decided belief that if an information campaign is well-designed and directed toward the correct audience, it will change attitudes and behavior. As Fulton points out, time past often is forgotten, that is, any message will be filtered through culture, history, and experience, and these variables have a tendency to distort the message. Further, he argues that governments tend to concern themselves with today's message or with short-term goals, while changing attitudes and behaviors takes years to accomplish. Thus few government leaders are in office long enough to sustain an information campaign over an extended period, and few want to dedicate resources to address problems that may be decades away.<sup>17</sup>

The second element is image, that is, we act on the pictures that we perceive and retain, not on the complex reality of which these pictures are a part. In other words, how people perceive images is individualistic, and it is difficult to predict how broadcasted images will be received, what reality they may represent.<sup>18</sup> As Carnes Lord has pointed out, success in psychological warfare is more than the conflict of ideas, ideologies, and opinions. It is also about cultural and political symbols, about perceptions and emotions. The informational content of television pictures is low or nonexistent, and they are often “torn out of any intelligible context” so as to arouse emotions that hinder rational discussion.<sup>19</sup>

Lastly, ideas are more than the messages. Ideas are best nurtured in dialogue—listening is as important as speaking. Fulton refers to the work of two RAND Corporation researchers, John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, who suggest that there are three realms of information. The first is cyberspace—the global network of electronic connectivity, primarily the internet plus electronic information held by corporations and governments. The second is the infosphere, which consists of cyberspace and broadcast, print, and other media, as well as command, control, and communication systems of the military. The third is noosphere, the realm of knowledge and wisdom. If one focuses on cyberspace and the infosphere, then the tendency is to concentrate our attention on the media and the message. Fulton argues that the contemporary strategist must go beyond these two dimensions and become comfortable in the more abstract noosphere where he must learn to think in terms of ideas and values.<sup>20</sup>

## Conclusion.

Clearly, the times warrant a greater recognition of the distinctiveness and importance of information as an element of national power, given the technological advances in communications that have occurred over the past 3 decades. These advances have furnished new tools of communication, influenced not only the structures and processes of public and private sector organizations, but also given rise to a multitude of nonstate actors that now wield power in international affairs, and transformed political and economic relationships domestically and globally. In short, information is now understood to be an essential instrument of power and influence that, when used strategically, can be effective in achieving national interests.

Senior leaders and strategists who do not comprehend that information is a strategic element surrender the advantage to those who do. As General Wesley Clark underscores in his book, *Waging Modern War*, the efforts of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the U.S. Government to tell their story during Kosovo and to counter the Serb media campaign were inadequate. He declares that the importance of attending to media coverage was not lost on the military and political leaders in the West.<sup>21</sup> The validity of his pronouncement is subject to debate. His experience is not. Strategic leaders must understand the value that the components of the informational element of power can bring to the strategic art. Using information effectively is more than networks and hardware. Instead, the synchronized and timely dissemination of a relevant message consistent with the audience’s values is critical to achieving national security objectives.

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## CHAPTER 17 MILITARY POWER AND THE USE OF FORCE<sup>1</sup>

John F. Troxell

Force without wisdom falls of its own weight.

Horace

International politics is a struggle for power. Power, in the international arena, is used to protect a nation's interests by influencing potential competitors or partners. The most important instrument of power available to a nation-state is military power. "In international politics in particular," according to Hans Morgenthau, "armed strength as a threat or a potentiality is the most important material factor making for the political power of a nation."<sup>2</sup> The other elements of power certainly are important and can contribute to the furtherance of national interests; however, as long as states continue to exist in a condition of anarchy, military power will continue to play a crucial role in international politics. As Kenneth Waltz aptly put it, "In politics force is said to be the ultima ratio. In international politics force serves, not only as the ultima ratio, but indeed as the first and constant one."<sup>3</sup>

The current world situation once again focuses the international community's attention on the role of military power, due in part to the absolute and relative dominance of the world's sole superpower, the United States. According to recent figures, U.S. defense expenditures account for 39 percent of the world's total spending on defense. The United States spends more than eight times the combined defense budgets of China and Russia, and more than 25 times the combined defense spending of the remaining six "rogue nations" (Cuba, Iran, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and North Korea). These comparisons do not reflect the defense contributions of the closest U.S. allies, nor do they include the impact of the Pentagon's fiscal 2005 budget request of \$400 billion, a cumulative increase of 24 percent over the past 3 years.<sup>4</sup> The resultant gap in military capabilities is huge, and may even be greater than that reflected in a comparison of defense budgets due to the technological lead and the high quality professional armed forces of the United States. Recent conventional operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq only confirm this dominance.

As important as military power is to the functioning of the international system, it is a very expensive and dangerous tool of statecraft—one, as Robert Art recently pointed out, that should not be exercised without a great deal of wisdom:

Using military power correctly does not ensure that a state will protect all of its interests, but using it incorrectly would put a great burden on these other instruments and could make it impossible for a state to achieve its goals. Decisions about whether and how to use military power may therefore be the most fateful a state makes.<sup>5</sup>

Art's caution is clearly evident in the emerging security environment of the 21st century. Despite undisputed U.S. military supremacy, the United States and its allies sense a greater vulnerability to their basic freedoms and way of life than at any time since the height of the nuclear standoff with the Soviet Union. Military supremacy has yet to find an answer to the combined threats of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and international terrorism. Failed states and rogue states continue to present security concerns and the resultant demand for military forces to contain conflicts and rebuild nations. The United States faces two strategic challenges—one of ends and the other of means. The most prominent declinist of the last decade, Paul Kennedy, argued that great powers succumb to "imperial overstretch" because their global interests and obligations outpace their ability to defend them all simultaneously. James Fallows recently echoed this concern, claiming that "America is over-extended" because the United States has so many troops tied down in so many places that we

can no longer respond to emerging crises. Beyond the concern with over-ambitious ends, Fallows also claims that the United States is in danger of actually breaking the military instrument of power through overuse and thus returning to the days of the post-Vietnam “Hollow Army.”<sup>6</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the role of military power in the international arena in an effort to address challenges, highlighted above, associated with its use. There are two major parts to this discussion. The first concerns the political purposes of military power, and the second concerns the actual use of military force. The use of force discussion will include a brief consideration of employment options (the Range of Military Operations), a presentation of various guidelines for the use of force, and a look at the issue of legitimacy.

## POLITICAL PURPOSES OF MILITARY POWER

Despite all of the changes that have occurred in world politics since the end of the Cold War, there is, in many respects, an underlying continuity with earlier eras. The recent conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and mass-casualty terrorism are evidence that the use of military power as an instrument of political purpose remains as relevant today as in the past. Clausewitz’ famous dictum continues to ring true, “that war [the application of military power] should never be thought of as something autonomous but always as an instrument of policy,” and that “war is simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means.” While still serving as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell analyzed the military successes that the United States had experienced through most of the 1990s. The principal reason for these achievements, he concluded, “is that in every instance, we have matched the use of military force to our political objectives.”<sup>7</sup>

From a modern day American perspective, the U.S. Constitution establishes the political context in which military power is applied and the framework for civilian authority over the Armed Forces. The capstone publication for the U.S. Armed Forces, Joint Publication 1 (JP 1), *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, which addresses the employment of the U.S. military as an instrument of national power, is very explicit on this point: “Under the Constitution’s framework, American military power operates for and under conditions determined by the people through their elected representatives. This political context establishes the objectives and the limits of legitimate military action in peace, crisis, and conflict in the United States and abroad.”<sup>8</sup>

Military power can be matched to several different categories of broadly defined political objectives. The traditional categories that were developed and articulated during the Cold War, in the context of the U.S./Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) nuclear rivalry, included deterrence, compellence, and defense.<sup>9</sup> Since the threat of large-scale nuclear war between competing nation-states largely has receded, it seems more appropriate to focus on the political purposes behind the use of conventional forces. In this context the categories can be modified, as shown in Figure 1.

### Defeat.

Military power can be used in its purest sense to physically defeat an adversary. Joint Pub 1 clearly articulates this objective as the fundamental purpose of military power – to fight and win the nation’s wars. Although recognizing other, potential noncombat objectives, JP 1 argues that “success in combat in defense of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, societal values, and national interests is the essential goal and measure of the profession of arms in American society.”<sup>11</sup> Thomas Schelling, in the classic *Arms and Influence*, used the phrase brute force and referred to a country’s ability, assuming it had enough military power, to forcibly seize, disarm, or disable, or repel, deny, and defend against an opponent.<sup>12</sup> Schelling’s discussion clearly recognizes both offensive and defensive uses of force. Robert Art, on the other hand, focuses on the defensive use of force as the deployment of military power either to ward off an attack or to minimize damage if actually attacked. Despite this focus, Art also argues that

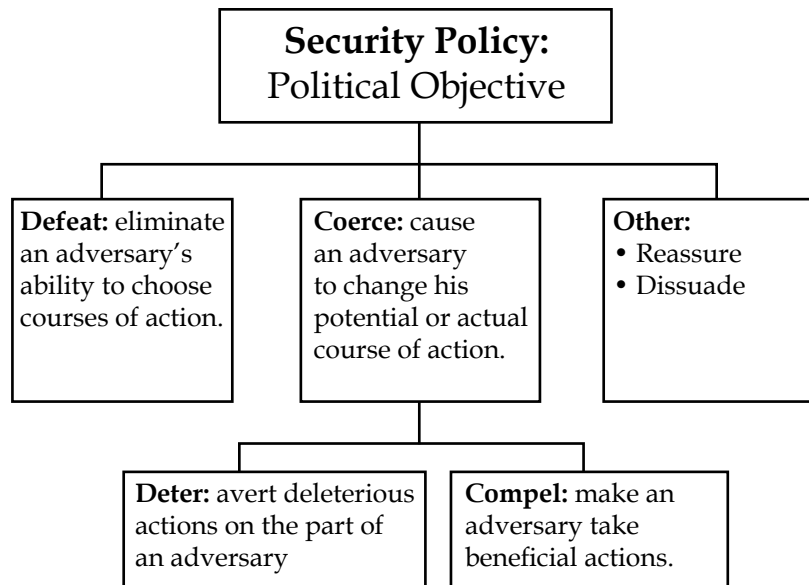


**Figure 1. Components of Security Policy.**<sup>10</sup>

a state can use its forces to strike first if it believes that an attack is imminent or inevitable. This leads to the distinction between a preemptive attack, in response to an imminent threat, and a preventive attack, in response to an inevitable attack. A preventive attack can be undertaken if a state believes that others will attack it when the balance of forces shift in their favor, or perhaps after key military capabilities are developed. In the case of either preemptive or preventive actions, Art concludes that “it is better to strike first than to be struck first,” and supports the maxim that “the best defense is a good offense.” The defeat aspect of military force seeks to eliminate the adversary’s ability or opportunity to do anything other than what is demanded of it.<sup>13</sup>

## **Coercion.**

Because of the high cost and uncertainty associated with combat operations, a nation’s primary strategic objective is usually an attempt to cause an adversary to accede to one’s demands short of war or actual combat operations. As such, most states attempt to achieve their goals through coercion. Successful coercion is not warfighting, but is the use of threatened force, including the limited use of actual force to back up that threat, to induce an adversary to behave differently than it otherwise would. Coercion relies on the threat of future military force to influence an adversary’s decisionmaking.<sup>14</sup> As opposed to brute force, coercion is the “threat of damage, or of more damage to come, that can make someone yield or comply.”<sup>15</sup> From this perspective, it is withheld violence that can influence an adversary’s choice. It is this perception of withheld consequences that causes a nation to acquiesce to a coercer’s demands. Those consequences can take the broad form of anticipated punishment in response to an action, or anticipated denial or failure of an opponent’s chosen course of action. Punitive coercion seeks to influence an opponent through fear, and coercion by denial through hopelessness. Finally, just as it is important to recognize the dynamic nature of the strategy formulation process, strategists also should view coercion as a dynamic, two (or more) player contest. Each side acts, not only based on anticipation of the other side’s moves, but also based on other changes in the security environment. The adversary can react to alter the perceived costs and benefits and certainly has a vote in assessing the credibility of the coercer’s threat.<sup>16</sup> Coercion has two subcategories: deterrence and compellence.

*Deterrence.* Deterrence, in its broadest sense, means persuading an opponent not to initiate a specific action because the perceived benefits do not justify the estimated costs and risks. Deterrence can be

based on punishment, which involves a threat to destroy what the adversary values, or on denial, which requires convincing an opponent that he will not achieve his goals on the battlefield. In either case, the adversary is assumed to be willing and able to engage in well-informed cost-benefit calculations and respond rationally on the basis of those calculations. An irrational (or ill-informed) opponent that will accept destruction or disproportionate loss may not be deterrable.<sup>17</sup> Deterrence theory became almost synonymous with strategy during the Cold War as both superpowers sought to ensure their survival through mutual threats of massive nuclear retaliation.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, there are certain important distinctions concerning the term:<sup>19</sup>

- General (strategic) or immediate (tactical) deterrence (the former refers to a diffuse deterrent effect deriving from one's capabilities and reputation; the latter to efforts to discourage specific behavior in times of crises). An example of tactical deterrence was the evidently successful threat conveyed to Saddam Hussein during the first Gulf War to dissuade Iraq from using WMD against coalition forces. An unsuccessful example was the U.S.-United Arab Emirates (UAE) tanker exercise that failed to dissuade Iraq from invading Kuwait.
- Extended and central deterrence (the former alludes to endeavors to extend deterrent coverage over friends and allies; the latter to the deterrence of attack upon one's homeland). Examples continue to abound concerning extended deterrence—one particularly difficult issue concerns the U.S. security guarantees extended to Taiwan.

There are two challenges to the future deterrent posture of U.S. forces. The first is the on-going issue of trying to evaluate the effectiveness of a deterrent policy. The willingness of a legislative body to allocate resources to various elements of military power normally is contingent on recognition of beneficial results. Henry Kissinger aptly describes the problem:

Since deterrence can only be tested negatively, by events that do not take place, and since it is never possible to demonstrate why something has not occurred, it became especially difficult to assess whether existing policy was the best possible policy or a just barely effective one. Perhaps deterrence was unnecessary because it was impossible to prove whether the adversary ever intended to attack in the first place.<sup>20</sup>

The second challenge deals with the changing nature of the threat. During the Cold War, deterrence was based on a known enemy operating from a known location and under the assumed direction of a rational leader. The emergence of rogue states and transnational terrorist networks that could gain access to WMD has created what Colin Gray defines as the current crisis of deterrence. These new actors do not necessarily share the long-standing and highly developed theory of deterrence that emerged from the Cold War, and the cost-benefit calculus that underpins deterrence may be clouded by cultural differences and varying attitudes towards risk. In fact, as Gray observes, “. . . some of the more implacable of our contemporary adversaries appear to be undeterrable. Not only are their motivations apparently unreachable by the standard kind of menaces, but they lack fixed physical assets for us to threaten.”<sup>21</sup> The current U.S. *National Security Strategy* is in full accord with these views: “Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents; whose so-called soldiers seek martyrdom in death and whose most potent protection is statelessness.”<sup>22</sup>

*Compellence.* Compellence is the use of military power to change an adversary's behavior. It attempts to reverse an action that already has occurred or to otherwise overturn the status quo. Examples include evicting an aggressor from territory it has just conquered or convincing a proliferating state to abandon its nuclear weapons program. According to Thomas Schelling, who initially coined the term, “Compellence . . . usually involves initiating action that can cease, or become harmless, only if the opponent responds.”<sup>23</sup> Physical force often is employed to harm another state until the latter abides by

the coercer's demands. It is important to recognize the difference between compellence and deterrence. The distinction, according to Robert Art, "is one between the active and passive use of force. The success of a deterrent threat is measured by its not having been used. The success of a compellent action is measured by how closely and quickly the adversary conforms to one's stipulated wishes."<sup>24</sup>

Compellence may be easier to demonstrate than deterrence because of the observable change in behavior, but it tends to be harder to achieve. It usually is easier to make a potential aggressor decide not to attack in the first place than to cause the same aggressor to call off the attack once it is underway. A state that is deterred from taking a particular action can always claim that it never intended to act in such a way, and thus publicly ignore the deterrent threat. However, if a state succumbs to compellent actions, it is much harder to change behavior without an associated loss of prestige and possible national humiliation. Consequently, compellent threats should be accompanied by a complementary set of concessions or face-saving measures to make it politically acceptable for a state to comply. Success also can be driven by the perceived or actual imbalance of interests at stake. As the American experience in Vietnam demonstrated, compellence tends to fail when the issue is of vital importance to the adversary but possibly only represents an important or peripheral interest to the coercing state.<sup>25</sup>

In the post-Cold War era, three broad conditions have emerged that facilitate the effective use of military threats. These relationships are expressed in Figure 2. Together, the credibility of the threat and the degree of difficulty of the demands shape the targeted leader's evaluation of the likely cost of complying or of not complying with U.S. demands. If the threat is perceived to be wholly incredible, the anticipated cost of noncompliance will be low. The balance between the cost of compliance and the cost of defiance represents the potency of the threat. In the post-Cold War period, despite overwhelming U.S. military supremacy, it has been extremely difficult for the United States to achieve its objectives without actually conducting sustained military operations. A principal reason for this difficulty is the existence of a generation of political leaders throughout the world whose basic perception of U.S. military power and political will is one of weakness. They enter any situation with a fundamental belief that the United States can be defeated or driven away.<sup>26</sup>

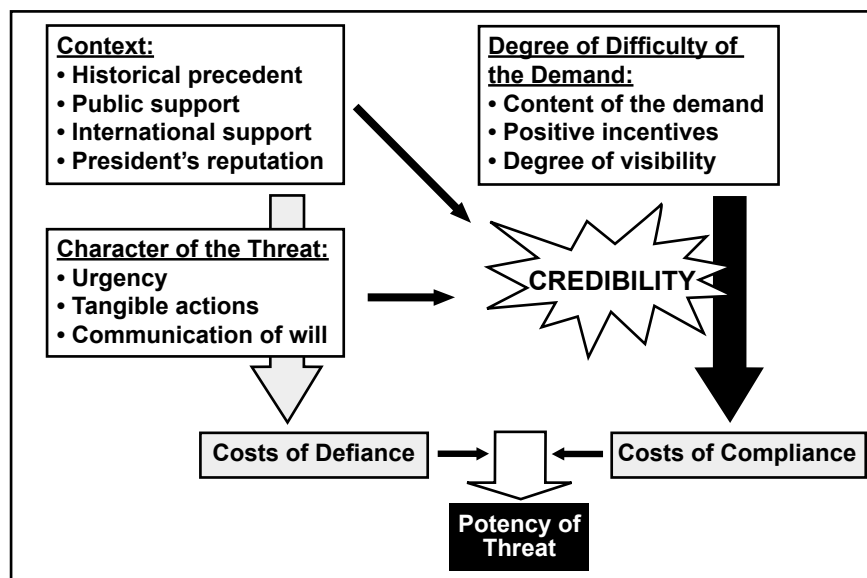


Figure 2. Evaluations of Compellent Threats.<sup>27</sup>

Echoing Colin Gray's crisis of deterrence, perhaps there is a similar crisis of compellence. According to Blechman and Wittes:

American presidents have been reluctant to step as close to the plate as had been required to achieve U.S. objectives in many post-cold war conflicts. They have made threats only reluctantly and usually have not made as clear or potent a threat as was called for by the situation. They have understood the need to act in the situation but have been unwilling or perceived themselves as being unable to lead the American people into the potential sacrifice necessary to secure the proper goal. As a result, they have attempted to satisfice, taking some action but not the most effective possible action to challenge the foreign leader threatening U.S. interests. They have sought to curtail the extent and potential cost of the confrontation by avoiding the most serious type of threat and therefore the most costly type of war if the threat were challenged.<sup>28</sup>

This conclusion was written prior to the tragic events of September 11, 2001 (9/11), and the subsequent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Time will tell if Americans will sustain their support for two very challenging and increasingly costly nation-building projects.

### **Reassurance.**

Finally, there are two other political objectives listed on Figure 1. The first of these is reassurance, a term that began as a key element of U.S. nuclear strategy. In particular, reassurance was associated closely with the notion of extended deterrence in that its objective was to extend security guarantees to friends and allies. As a consequence, reassurance played a crucial role in the Cold War if for no other reason that the concept helped to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to states like Germany and Japan. In a similar manner, the current U.S. defense policy includes, as its first objective, the goal of assuring friends and allies. This assurance is gained through the forward presence of U.S. forces and ensures allies and friends that the United States will honor its security commitments and continue to be a reliable security partner. In addition to the stationing of large numbers of U.S. military personnel overseas, the political objective of reassurance/assurance is achieved through numerous security cooperation activities and agreements. Security cooperation serves U.S. national interests by advancing U.S. values and beliefs, promoting regional stability, and improving cooperation among allies, partners, and friends.<sup>29</sup> From this perspective, security is this country's most influential public-sector export. "We are the only nation on earth," one analyst observes, "capable of exporting security in a sustained fashion, and we have a very good track record of doing it."<sup>30</sup> A primary consequence of a more secure environment is the promotion of global economic growth. With this focus on both security and economic interests, the ultimate purpose of U.S. military engagement, according to some analysts, is to maintain international order, thereby allowing the American people to continue to reap the benefits of globalization.<sup>31</sup>

### **Dissuasion.**

The final political objective is dissuasion, sometimes presented as the ultimate purpose of both defense and deterrence, that is, persuading others not to take actions harmful to oneself. The notion here, however, is more in keeping with that of the *National Security Strategy*, which describes building military forces strong enough U.S. military forces "to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling the power of the United States."<sup>32</sup> The *Quadriennial Defense Review* (QDR) elaborates on this objective: "Well targeted strategy and policy can therefore dissuade other countries from initiating future military competitions. The United States can exert such influence through the conduct of research and development, test, and demonstration programs. It can do so by maintaining or enhancing advantages in key areas of military capability."<sup>33</sup> The goal clearly is to maintain, if not grow, the tremendous capability gap that U.S. military forces enjoy over virtually all other militaries. The origin of this objective dates back to the formerly discredited draft 1992 Defense Planning Guidance. When initially leaked to the press, this document included a call to preserve

American global military supremacy, to discourage others from challenging our leadership, and to maintain a military dominance capable of “detering potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional of global role.”<sup>34</sup> More recently, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has been equally explicit: “Just as the existence of the U.S. Navy dissuades others from investing in competing navies – because it would cost them a fortune and would not provide them a margin of military advantage – we must develop new assets, the mere possession of which discourages adversaries from competing.”<sup>35</sup>

The concept, however, need not be so rough-edged, dissuasion also can apply to countries that are not full-fledged adversaries, but those with which the United States has a mixed relationship – mutual suspicions and common incentives to avoid violence. The term goes to the heart of the new geo-strategic era. “In short, dissuasion aims at urging potential geopolitical rivals not to become real rivals by making clear that any sustained malevolent conduct will be checkmated by the United States. It involves military pressure applied with a velvet glove, not crude threats of war and destruction.”<sup>36</sup> The key relationship for U.S. dissuasion is that with China in terms of preventing the People’s republic from developing assertive, and menacing geo-political policies. Colin Gray is much more sanguine about this policy’s prospects, noting “we should expect state-centric enemies to attempt to organize to resist the American hegemony, and in particular to work hard in search of strategic means and methods that might negate much of our dissuasive strength.”<sup>37</sup>

In all this, it is important to recognize that military power alone is not sufficient to conduct a successful foreign policy. Military power must be integrated properly with the other elements of statecraft – political, economic, diplomatic, and information. Even for the greatest of nations, as Joseph Nye argues, military power is always in short supply and consequently must be rationed among competing goals: “The paradox of American power is that world politics is changing in a way that makes it impossible for the strongest world power since Rome to achieve some of its most crucial international goals alone.”<sup>38</sup>

### RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

The broad political purposes for the use of military power clearly encompass many different employment options for military force, which have been grouped under employment categories in what the Joint Staff calls the “Range of Military Operations (ROMO)” (Figure 3). These distinctions are designed to assist strategists in understanding the characteristics of each one.<sup>39</sup> War refers to large-scale, sustained combat operations necessary to achieve national objectives or protect national interests. These operations could include preventive attacks or preemptive operations. Preemptive actions are associated with imminent threats, and the identification of these threats places a premium on intelligence and warnng.

| Range of Military Operations |           |                                    |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Military Operations          |           | General U.S. Goals                 | Representative Examples                                      |                                                                                                                                                     |
| COMBAT                       | War       | Fight & Win                        | Large-scale Combat Operations:<br>Attack / Defend / Blockade |                                                                                                                                                     |
|                              | NONCOMBAT | Military Operations Other Than War | Deter War &<br>Resolve Conflict                              | Peace Enforcement/<br>Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO)<br>Strikes/Raids/Show of Force<br>Counterterrorism/Peacekeeping<br>Counterinsurgency |
|                              |           |                                    | Promote Peace &<br>Support U.S. Civil Authorities            | Antiterrorism/Disaster relief<br>Peacebuilding<br>Nation Assistance<br>Domestic Support<br>Counterdrug / NEO                                        |

Source: Joint Publication 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, September 10, 2001, I-2

Figure 3. Range of Military Operations.



On the other hand, force is only used as a combat mode in one of two broad categories concerned with military operations other than war (MOOTW), that of deterring war and resolving conflict. These operations include punitive attacks or raids and strikes, in which military force is designed to inflict pain and cost, normally in retaliation for some behavior, but not necessarily designed to reverse the adversaries actions. Punitive attacks also require evidence of who was responsible for the offending action. Interdiction involves the discrete use of direct force to prevent the transshipment of goods or resources. These operations can be associated with sanctions enforcement.

Under this same category are peace enforcement and peacekeeping operations. Peace enforcement operations are also referred to as Chapter VII operations under the United Nations (UN) Charter, which addresses enforcement actions “with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.” A closely related category is peacemaking, which assumes that one of the protagonists opposes the status quo. These operations take place in a nonconsensual environment. Peacekeeping is often referred to as a Chapter VI operation under the UN Charter, which addresses “peaceful settlement of disputes.” Peacekeepers are impartial and relatively passive, called upon to monitor or verify troop withdrawals, separation of forces, or provide security during elections. These operations take place in a consensual environment.

Promoting peace and support to civil authorities, which do not involve the use or threat of force, represent the other end of the MOOTW spectrum. Nevertheless, nation assistance or nation building is still an extremely intrusive form of intervention designed to bring about political leadership and/or institutions different from those that presently exist. Disaster relief or humanitarian assistance involves the deployment of forces to save lives without necessarily altering the political context. These generally occur in a consensual environment, although occasionally military forces will take part in an imposed humanitarian intervention which may be carried out in a hostile environment.

In any event, all of these different classifications of military operations can be viewed as fulfilling one of the three principal political purposes: deterrent, compellent, or defensive. For example, the political goal of humanitarian interventions and peacekeeping operations is to save lives; this is defense of parties under attack. The political goal of nation-assistance is to construct a viable government; this can be viewed as compelling armed groups or other elements of the society to obey the new central government. The political goal of any collective security arrangement is to prevent aggression; which is deterrence.<sup>40</sup>

There is one important type of military operation that is not explicitly cited in the “Range of Military Operations” chart—covert action. These actions are a specialty of the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) community, which is currently enjoying an unprecedented prominence within the U.S. military. Covert action is defined by U.S. law as activity meant “to influence political, economic, or military conditions abroad, where it is intended that the role of the United States Government will not be apparent or acknowledged.”<sup>41</sup> According to the Special Operations Command posture statement, “SOF are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct covert, clandestine, or discreet counterterrorism missions in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments.”<sup>42</sup> The current definition of covert operations was adopted as part of the effort to fill gaps in oversight that led to the Iran-Contra scandal. According to the law, covert actions must first be authorized by a written presidential finding, and the House and Senate intelligence committees must be notified before the operation has begun.<sup>43</sup>

In the past, SOF missions were viewed as “traditional military activities” in support of on-going or anticipated military campaigns and thus were not subject to the covert action oversights just mentioned. However, in the on-going and broadly defined campaign against global terrorism—a campaign in which the Special Operations Command directly plans and executes its own missions—there is some concern that this type of use of force will be removed completely from congressional oversight. On the

one hand, the U.S. Government should be able to use every tool available in the fight against terrorism. However, such broad-brush authority, combined with an increasing propensity to use SOF in covert operations in support of an aggressive preemption strategy, may lead to abuse and risks to U.S. foreign policy.<sup>44</sup>

One final point concerning the current nature of military operations is the increasingly cluttered battlefield from the standpoint of other coalition partners, interagency elements, and even nongovernmental organizations. The Joint Staff describes the nature of these operations as *unified action*. The concept of unified action highlights the synergistic application of all of the instruments of national and multinational power and includes the actions of nonmilitary organizations as well as military forces.<sup>45</sup>

## GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF FORCE

War cannot be divorced from political life; whenever this occurs in our thinking about war, the many links that connect the two elements are destroyed and we are left with something pointless and devoid of sense.

Clausewitz

If not in the interests of the state, do not act. If you cannot succeed, do not use troops.

Sun Tzu

Madeleine Albright asked me in frustration, “What’s the point of having this superb military that you’re always talking about if we can’t use it?” I thought I would have an aneurysm.

Colin Powell

Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Here I am. Send me.

Isaiah<sup>46</sup>

These quotations emphasize the importance of linking political objectives to the use of military force. One of the best ways to ensure this is to use military force only in support of the national interest and when success is assured. The difficulty with such a straight forward prescription is reconciling the various degrees of interests, to include valid concerns about furthering important national and international values. In addition, the resort to war or conflict always unleashes the forces of chance and friction, creating in one analyst’s description, “a fearful lottery.”<sup>47</sup> Creating the conditions for success, let alone guaranteeing success is much easier said than done. Decisions concerning the use of force are the most important that any nation can make. Given that the post-Cold War experience supports the necessity of resorting to force and the threats of force, but also emphasizes the risks of doing so, national security decisionmakers are left with a critical issue in the theory and practice of foreign policy: under what conditions and how can military force and threats of force be used effectively to accomplish different types of policy objectives. In the final analysis, political leaders should come up with convincing answers to these questions before sending soldiers in harm’s way.<sup>48</sup>

Debates in the United States about appropriate guidelines for the use of force normally revolve around the Weinberger Doctrine—which is viewed habitually as an outgrowth of the lessons from the Vietnam War.<sup>49</sup> However, the origins of the current debate actually go back to the Korean War. Two schools of strategic thought developed from an assessment of that limited and inconclusive war. The first was the never-again, or all-or-nothing school, which advocated that either the United States should do everything necessary to win a decisive military victory, or it should not intervene at all.<sup>50</sup> At the other extreme was the limited-war school. Proponents of this view held that the United States

could expect to become involved in regional conflicts demanding intervention in support of less than vital interests. Colin Powell, although normally associated with the all-or-nothing school, has argued that all wars are limited; either by territory on which they are fought, the means used, or the objectives for which they are fought.<sup>51</sup>

Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger articulated his six criteria for the use of force in response to two major issues—the lessons of the Vietnam War and an on-going policy debate in the Reagan administration about the appropriate response to terrorism. Both issues are clearly relevant as the debate on the use of force enters the 21st century. Lessons from Vietnam included the recognition that military victory does not always result in political victory, and that sustaining public and political support throughout a prolonged war can be difficult. Both of these issues continue to resonate in the debate about U.S. operations in Iraq. Senator Edward Kennedy, for instance, recently charged that “Iraq has developed into a quagmire,” and has become George Bush’s Vietnam.<sup>52</sup>

Concerning terrorism, when the Weinberger doctrine was unveiled in 1984, the national security elites were in a heated debate about this issue, particularly as it related to the failure of U.S. policy in Lebanon. Weinberger was reluctant to commit troops to such an indeterminate and chaotic situation. Secretary of State George Shultz, on the other hand, argued that the Weinberger doctrine counseled inaction bordering on paralysis, and that “diplomacy could work these problems most effectively when force—of the threat of force—was a credible part of the equation.” The *Wall Street Journal* referred to “Mr. Shultz’s sensible anti-terrorist policy of ‘active-prevention, preemption and retaliation.’”<sup>53</sup> Shultz was on the losing end of this debate in the 1980s, but 20 years later, his approach seems to have carried the day, at least in the Bush administration. Figure 4 shows the Weinberger doctrine and several more recent versions of guidelines for the use of force.<sup>54</sup>

| Guidelines for the Use of Force                                 |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Two questions:<br>1. When to use force?<br>2. How to use force? |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                 | Weinberger Doctrine<br>(November 28, 1984)           | Powell<br>(Fall, 1992)                                                                                                                            | Perry (Clinton NSS)<br>(April 1995 / NSS '99)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Joint Pub 1<br>(Nov 2000)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Rumsfeld<br>(Nov 2002)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| W<br>H<br>E<br>N                                                | 1. Vital interests at stake                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No fixed set of rules</li> <li>Relevant questions</li> <li>Evaluate the circumstances</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political: interests</li> <li>Military: success</li> <li>Ethical</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adhere to societal values</li> <li>No unbending rules</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <u>Questions for the use:</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                 | 3. Clearly defined political and military objectives | Unambiguous military objective                                                                                                                    | 1. Vital interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- overwhelming force</li> <li>- unilateral (if necessary)</li> </ul> 2. Important interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ability to succeed</li> <li>- cost/risk assessment</li> <li>- last resort</li> <li>- limited options</li> </ul> 3. Humanitarian interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- catastrophic</li> <li>- urgent need</li> <li>- unique resources</li> <li>- minimal risk</li> <li>- end state</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advances national interest (all three categories)</li> <li>Clear mission</li> <li>International support</li> <li>Public support</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                               | 1. Necessary?<br>- national interest<br><br>2. Doable?<br>- clear goals<br>- military capabilities<br>- clear Cmd structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                 | 5. Public support                                    |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 3. Is it worth it?<br>- public support<br>- worldwide consequences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| H<br>O<br>W                                                     | 6. Last resort                                       | Last resort                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear mission</li> <li>Public support</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                 | 2. Commitment to victory (sufficient force)          | Will the force be successful?<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs &amp; risks</li> <li>Decisive means (overwhelming force)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multilateral</li> <li>Opportunity cost on the force (OPTEMPO)</li> <li>Exit strategy</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decisive means</li> <li>End state and exit strategy               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Termination conditions</li> <li>- Path to success</li> <li>- Milestones</li> <li>- Alternatives if military unsuccessful</li> </ul> </li> <li>NGOs and IGO's ready</li> </ul> | <u>Guidelines for how:</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                 | 4. Continuous reassessment                           | End state consequences (exit strategy)                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action – offensive</li> <li>Don't restrict options               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no arbitrary deadlines</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use all elements of power               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- military last choice</li> </ul> </li> <li>Brutally honest               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- don't promise what can't be delivered</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

Figure 4. Guidelines for the Use of Force.

When to use force is the first critical question. The linkage of such use in support of vital national interests harkens back to the Napoleonic notion of fighting wars for grand purposes. Samuel Huntington defined national interest as a public good of concern to all or most Americans, and a vital national interest as one that Americans are willing to expend blood and treasure to defend. The 2000 *National*

*Security Strategy* defined vital interests as those directly connected to the survival, safety, and vitality of the nation. There are two problems with this very straightforward proposition. The first is the difficulty in determining what those vital interests are. The domestic consensus that supported U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War has been shattered, resulting in a lack of agreement on the nature and importance of U.S. national interests.<sup>55</sup> The recent focus on commercial and ethnic interests exacerbates the lack of widespread agreement on national interests. "The institutions and capabilities created to serve a grand national purpose in the Cold War," according to Huntington, "are now being suborned and redirected to serve narrow subnational, transnational, and even nonnational purpose."<sup>56</sup> Conversely, the attacks of 9/11 have undoubtedly contributed to a recognition of grand purposes and vital national interests, at least as associated with the war on terrorism.

The second concern is that states often use force in support of secondary and even tertiary interests. They do this either to protect vital interests, or to support important national values. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry supported the selective use of force and thus distinguished between three categories of interests – vital, important, and humanitarian. He argued that different uses of limited force, and not necessarily applied in an overwhelming manner, were appropriate to protect these interests in the pursuit of limited objectives.<sup>57</sup> Perry's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John Shalikashvili, also desired more flexibility in the use of force. He reportedly claimed that he did not have the right to put a sign on his door saying, "I'm sorry – we only do the big ones." The United States clearly has continued to use force in support of nonvital interests or important national values. And wars waged in the name of values invariably turn out to be more controversial than wars waged for interests.<sup>58</sup>

Weinberger borrows heavily from Clausewitz for his third, and relatively uncontroversial criteria, the importance of having clearly established objectives. According to Clausewitz, "No one starts a war . . . without first being clear in his own mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."<sup>59</sup> This criteria is common across all of the sets of guidelines. Recognizing the need for clear objectives, however, does not necessarily remove all debate on the issue. The objectives chosen, just as the articulation of the national interests at stake, may not reflect broad agreement.

There are two other points worth considering on this criterion. First, once a war begins, chance, friction, and uncertainty take effect and original political objectives and force requirements, as Michael Handel has observed, can change.

Weinberger's assumptions are more correct for military interventions/operations that can be carried out swiftly and decisively, ... than they are for prolonged interventions and wars. The problem, of course, is that it is often very difficult to tell in advance which interventions will be short and decisive, and which will be costly and long.<sup>60</sup>

The second point is that it is always difficult to determine in advance if a certain compellent or deterrent action will have the desired effect, or result in an unanticipated counterreaction by an adversary. As Richard Haass so aptly puts it, "It is as simple – and as basic – as the difference between winning a battle and winning a war. It only takes one party to initiate hostilities, but it takes everyone involved to bring hostilities to an end."<sup>61</sup>

The next two criteria, public support and last resort, also are common across all of the sets of guidelines. The need to maintain public and political support is common sense but not completely without debate, and certainly not without potentially great difficulty in execution. In the original argument over the Weinberger doctrine, Secretary Shultz took issue with the need for public support prior to initiating action. In his view, the duties of leadership could require action before mobilization of public support.

My view is that democratically elected and accountable individuals have been placed in positions where they can and must make decisions to defend our national security. The risk and burden of leadership is that those decisions

will receive, or not receive, the support of the people on their merits. The democratic process will deal with leaders who fail to measure up to the standards imposed by the American people . . .<sup>62</sup>

There is a great deal of historical validity to the “rally-around-the-flag” and “support-the-troops” effect. That approach can be effective particularly for short and decisive campaigns. In prolonged wars, however, the difficulty does not lie so much in obtaining initial public and political support as it does in sustaining it for the duration.<sup>63</sup> Leaders must lead and mobilize public support. That can be done most easily by appeals to moral values or national interests. In any event,

the inertia of the governed can not be disentangled from the indifference of the government. American leaders have both a circular and a deliberate relationship to public opinion. It is circular because their constituencies are rarely, if ever, aroused by foreign crises, even genocidal ones, in the absence of political leadership, and yet, at the same time, U.S. officials continually cite the absence of public support as grounds for inaction.<sup>64</sup>

Last resort is an important component of the just war theory of *jus ad bellum*, or just resort in going to war. Americans traditionally have been very reluctant to resort to force unless they have been attacked directly. There is always a strong desire to give diplomacy a chance, or obtain sufficient results through the application of economic sanctions or other pressures. Time also is needed to mobilize domestic and international support. However, it may not always be wise to delay military action. Once again, George Shultz challenged this point, “The idea that force should be used ‘only as a last resort’ means that, by the time of use, force is the only resort and likely a much more costly one than if used earlier.”<sup>65</sup> General Wesley Clark, in his examination of the Kosovo campaign, concluded that the key lesson must be that “nations and alliances should move early to deal with crises while they are still ambiguous and can be dealt with more easily, for delay raises both the costs and the risks. Early action is the objective to which statesmen and military leaders should aspire.” All of this has direct relevance for the threat of catastrophic terrorism. Countering undeterrable terrorist organizations armed with WMD places the other instruments of statecraft at a huge disadvantage. “To consider force as a last resort is appropriate when trying to settle inter-state conflict,” according to Ivo Daalder, “but when it comes to . . . preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, or defeating terrorism, waiting too long to employ force can both enhance the cost and reduce the effectiveness of its use.”<sup>66</sup>

The last two items on Weinberger’s list concern how force should be used. The first of these addresses the importance of committing sufficient forces to accomplish the objectives. The goal is to avoid a long, drawn-out gradual employment of force that may not accomplish the objectives in a swift and decisive manner. This is the essence of the Vietnam syndrome. The U.S. military wants to avoid a half-hearted approach that results in higher casualties, a prolonged war, and a decision to quit before the mission is accomplished. One significant deterrent to U.S. action in Bosnia was the estimated steep cost of intervening in terms of troops required. For instance, the Joint Staff estimated in 1992 that it would take 50,000 U.S. ground troops to secure the Sarajevo airport for humanitarian relief operations. The airlift eventually was conducted under the watchful care of only 1,000 Canadian and French forces.<sup>67</sup>

On the other hand, it normally is better to go into a hostile environment with too much rather than too little force. General Powell used the phrase decisive force and indicated that decisive means and results always are preferred, and that if force is used, “we should not be equivocal: we should win and win decisively.”<sup>68</sup> Decisive means eventually evolved into overwhelming force, and related concepts, such as shock and awe. Joint Pub 1 notes that “when combat is possible, the force employed must be both overwhelming and decisive.”<sup>69</sup> The controversy about U.S. endstrength in Iraq, in both the initial combat phase and the subsequent stabilization and reconstruction phase, will contribute only to renewed military reluctance to undertake operations with less than overwhelming or decisive force. General Wesley Clark has argued in this regard that Operation IRAQI FREEDOM took “unnecessary risk because it skimmed on the forces made available to the commanders,” during the combat phase, and

he claimed the existence of excessive risk during the post-combat phase. "The result was a U.S. force at the operation's end that was incapable of providing security, stopping the looting and sabotage, or establishing a credible presence throughout the country."<sup>70</sup> The all-or-nothing versus limited objective (limited war) debate continues.

Michael Handel refers to the final item, the need for continuous reassessment, as the escape clause. Circumstances may change, or the enemy may respond in an unexpected manner, all necessitating a reassessment of objectives (ends), concepts (ways), and forces (means). That criteria also implies that if the costs become too high or if the objectives do not justify a greater commitment of resources, it may be prudent to terminate the conflict.<sup>71</sup>

Figure 4 clearly shows that several of the Weinberger guidelines have evolved and been modified over the years. One of the most important and far-reaching evolutions is the expansion of applicable interests categories and the recognition that limited options for the use of force may be appropriate in the pursuit of less than vital interests. Another is the inclusion of the concern about multilateral or international support. That guideline was added in the Clinton administration's national security strategies and reflected a growing interest in ensuring multilateral responses to security issues. Multilateralism obviously included deliberations and support from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but also recognized an enhanced role for the UN. America's alliances were one of the keystones of Clinton's selective engagement strategy, and the administration saw the UN as an important actor in the new world order. Having partners when it comes to using force also contributes to gaining and sustaining public support. As Charles Krauthammer argued at the close of the Gulf War, "Americans insist on the multilateral pretense. A large segment of American opinion doubts the legitimacy of unilateral American action, but accepts action taken under the rubric of the 'world community.'" He went on to say that the ultimate problem with "multilateralism is that, if you take it seriously, you gratuitously forfeit American freedom of action."<sup>72</sup>

Finally, in terms of the evolution of the Weinberger guidelines, there is the inclusion of end state and exit strategy concerns. The desire to establish an exit strategy is principally associated with interventions that do not involve vital interests. If vital interests are at stake, national security experts generally assume that politicians will apply overwhelming force, unilaterally if necessary, until the conflict is resolved. For interventions in support of important or humanitarian issues, there is much more of a premium placed on quickly reaching an agreed upon end-state, getting U.S. forces out, and reconstituting them for the next "big one." As indicated on Figure 4, the Joint Staff has expanded this criteria to include specific termination conditions, paths to success, and milestones along those paths. Rumsfeld's guidelines, however, seem to challenge this point by specifically cautioning against arbitrary deadlines. He is supported in this view by Richard Haass, who argues that it is important to "avoid a specific end point or certain date for ending the commitment regardless of local developments. Artificial boundaries on a U.S. intervention run the risk of emboldening adversaries, who need only to wait until the deadline has passed, and unnerving allies."<sup>73</sup> End states can also be very ambiguous and constrained, since they rarely include unconditional surrender, regime change or destruction of the warmaking capability of the other side.<sup>74</sup>

Michael Handel's analysis of the Weinberger doctrine concluded that it represented a utilitarian, realistic yardstick not much concerned with moral and ethical questions, although it does, in fact, provide useful insights for moral and ethical decisions about the use of force.<sup>75</sup> The proliferation of intrastate conflicts in the post-Cold War world, and the growing threat posed by nonstate actors, will continue to place pressure on decisionmakers to decide when and how to use force. Figure 5 represents a score card of sorts to portray a subjective assessment of the application of the Weinberger doctrine to recent U.S. military operations.

| <b>Weinberger Doctrine from Vietnam to Iraq</b> |                |                |                |               |                         |                |                                             |               |                                   |                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Criterion                                       | <i>Vietnam</i> | <i>Grenada</i> | <i>Lebanon</i> | <i>Panama</i> | <i>Persian Gulf War</i> | <i>Somalia</i> | <i>Haiti (1994)</i>                         | <i>Bosnia</i> | <i>Kosovo</i>                     | <i>Iraq (2003)</i>                         |
| 1. Vital interests at stake                     | NO             | NO             | NO             | NO            | YES                     | YES            | NO                                          | NO            | NO                                | YES                                        |
| 2. Commitment to victory                        | NO             | YES            | NO             | YES           | YES                     | NO             | YES – for regime change<br>NO – nation bldg | NO            | NO                                | YES – for regime change<br>? – nation bldg |
| 3. Clearly defined pol/mil objectives           | NO             | YES            | NO             | YES           | YES                     | YES then<br>NO | NO                                          | ?             | YES – short term<br>? – long term | YES                                        |
| 4. Continuous reassessment                      | YES            | YES            | YES            | YES           | YES                     | YES            | YES                                         | YES           | YES                               | YES                                        |
| 5. Public support (mobilized by the gov't)      | NO             | NO             | NO             | NO            | YES                     | YES (at first) | YES                                         | YES (?)       | YES                               | YES                                        |
| 6. Last resort                                  | NO             | NO             | NO             | NO            | NO                      | NO             | YES                                         | NO            | NO                                | YES/<br>NO                                 |
| Success or Failure                              | FAILURE        | SUCCESS        | FAILURE        | SUCCESS       | SUCCESS                 | FAILURE        | FAILURE                                     | ?             | ?                                 | ?                                          |

**Figure 5. Weinberger Doctrine from Vietnam to Iraq.<sup>76</sup>**

## LEGITIMACY

One of the main tenets of the Weinberger doctrine was the need to garner public and congressional support—“some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their elected representatives in Congress.”<sup>77</sup> Public support represents the will of the people, and as Harry Summers concluded, the failure to invoke that national will was one of the principal strategic failures of the Vietnam War, producing a strategic vulnerability that the North Vietnamese were able to exploit.<sup>78</sup> Public support and national will are both a reflection of the legitimacy with which the use of force is viewed. Legitimacy is fostered and sustained through many channels, including the steadfast application of Weinberger doctrine-like guidelines, congressional resolutions and legislation, presidential leadership, and actions of the international community. Legitimacy thus is grounded in both domestic processes and international or multilateral organizations and processes.

### The President and the Congress.

Constitutional provisions represent the foundation of legitimacy in the United States. Under the Constitution, the president and Congress share the war powers. The president is commander in chief (Article II, Section 2), but Congress has the power to declare war and raise and support the armed forces (Article I, Section 8). Congress, however, has declared war only on five occasions, the last being World War II. Despite having considerable constitutional authority over decisions about the use of force, Congress largely has deferred to the president as commander-in-chief, in general recognition that this role makes him responsible for leading the armed forces and gives him the power to repel attacks against the United States. Consequently, the executive branch has executed most military interventions.<sup>79</sup>

In an effort to regain some control over decisions on the use of force, and as a backlash to the Vietnam War, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution (WPR) over President Richard Nixon's veto in 1973. The purpose of the War Powers Resolution was to ensure that Congress and the president share in making decisions about the use of force. Compliance becomes an issue when the president introduces forces abroad in situations that might be construed as hostilities or imminent hostilities. The law included a broad set of triggers for executive consultations and explanations of the rationale for, and the scope and duration of, military operations. If Congress does not grant authorization in a certain period, the law does not permit the action to continue. Presidents have never acknowledged the constitutionality of the War Powers Resolution; however, they have made modest efforts to comply with its reporting requirements, submitting 104 reports to Congress concerning troop deployments abroad.<sup>80</sup> Some deployments were not reported because of the brevity of the operation or the perceived lack of hostilities or imminent hostilities. Most of the reports submitted to Congress are done "consistent with the War Powers Resolution," and not in "compliance" with the WPR.

Despite this record on reporting, a longer-term issue concerns the degree to which Congress actually is participating in the decisions to employ force. The WPR requires the president to consult with Congress prior to introducing U.S. forces into hostilities and to continue consultations as long as the armed forces remain. The conclusion of one congressional research study is that there has been very little executive consultation with Congress, "when consultation is defined to mean seeking advice prior to a decision to introduce troops."<sup>81</sup> It is certainly in the country's best interest to garner congressional support, and thus the two branches of government need to work out useful political processes that debate, inform, and support the country's engagement in conflict. From this perspective, a major purpose behind the WPR was not necessarily to constrain the president, but to force the Congress to meet its obligations to share in decisions on the use of force, "compelling members to face within a predictable period and under specified procedures the fundamental question regarding military action by the United States: Does the Congress endorse or oppose the commitment of American blood and treasure to a particular mission?"<sup>82</sup> The question is appropriate for Congress. As confirmed by Secretary Weinberger, U.S. military personnel want to know that it has the backing of the public – a commitment affirmed through a constitutional political process.<sup>83</sup>

The WPR played an important role in the Persian Gulf War of 1991. In response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, President George Bush notified Congress that he had deployed forces to the region. Although he had not consulted with Congress before acting, both houses later adopted resolutions supporting the deployment. Throughout the fall of 1990 there was intense debate within Congress concerning the use of force. Urged by congressional leaders, President Bush later asked for a resolution supporting the use of all necessary means to implement the UN decrees on Iraq. On January 12, 1991, both houses, by narrow margins, approved a joint resolution authorizing the use of force pursuant to UN resolution 678, which had been passed on November 29, 1990.<sup>84</sup>

In the crisis in Bosnia, on the other hand, the United States participated without congressional authorization in humanitarian airlifts into Sarajevo, naval monitoring and sanctions, and aerial enforcement of no-fly zones and safe havens. In late 1995, after President Clinton committed over 20,000 combat troops as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force, Congress considered several bills and resolutions authorizing this deployment, but failed to reach a consensus. In 1999, President Clinton ordered U.S. military forces to participate in the NATO-led military operation in Kosovo, without specific authorization from the Congress, a state of affairs that one analyst has termed "virtual consent" – in which the public is consulted but the formal institutions of democracy are bypassed:

The decay of institutional checks and balances on the warmaking power of the executive has received almost no attention in the debate over the Kosovo conflict. This suggests that citizens no longer even care whether their elected politicians exercise their constitutional responsibilities. We have allowed ourselves to accept virtual consent in the most important political matter of all: war and peace.<sup>85</sup>



The catastrophic events of 9/11 initially created a united sense of purpose between the executive and Congress. Only 3 days after the terrorist attacks, Congress passed a Joint Resolution, authorizing the president “to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks.” Three weeks later, “consistent with the War Powers Resolution,” President Bush reported to Congress the use of force against Afghanistan.<sup>86</sup> In a similar manner, Congress passed the Joint Resolution, “Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq,” in October 2002. This resolution authorized the President to use the armed forces of the United States “as he determines to be necessary and appropriate,” to defend the United States against the threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions regarding Iraq. The President, in turn, dutifully reported to the Congress on March 21, 2003, “consistent with the War Powers Resolution” and pursuant to his authority as Commander-in-Chief, that he had “directed U.S. Armed Forces operating with other coalition forces, to commence operations on March 19, 2003, against Iraq.”<sup>87</sup>

The political storm gathering around the 9/11 Commission and the on-going struggle in Iraq will constitute a severe test of the nation’s willingness to support a prolonged and deadly conflict. The legitimacy of these actions will be dependent largely on the President’s ability to mobilize public opinion and the willingness of Congress to continue to provide support. According to Alton Frye, “unless there is continuing consultation in good faith between Congress and the Executive, the unity that marks the beginning of the campaign against terrorism could degenerate into the profound disunity that scarred American politics 30 years ago.”<sup>88</sup> But the harsh reality is that Congress rallies around victory and piles on in defeat. Success matters more than procedure in the politics of making war.<sup>89</sup>

## **The United Nations.**

The founding of the UN substantially narrowed the legitimacy of the use of force by individual nation-states. The UN Charter indicates in its Preamble that it is established “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,” and its substantive provisions obligate the member states to “settle their international disputes by peaceful means” (Article 2(3)) and to “refrain . . . from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state . . .” (Article 2(4)). In place of the traditional right of states to resort to force, the charter creates a system of collective security in which the Security Council is authorized to “determine the existence of any threat to the peace” and to “decide what measures shall be taken . . . to maintain international peace and security” (Article 39).<sup>90</sup>

The UN security apparatus, created in 1945, was a hybrid, combining a universal quality with a great power concert. The system did not work well during the Cold War because the UN was kept on the sidelines by U.S.-Soviet bipolar rivalry. With few exceptions, UN involvement in use of force decisions began in the 1990s. The evolving nature of global threats, however, has caused a reexamination of the collective security apparatus. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan helped set the stage for this process: “The United Nations Charter declares that ‘armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest.’ But what is the common interest? Who shall define it? Who shall defend it? Under whose authority?”<sup>91</sup>

Article 51 of the UN Charter recognizes the inherent right of self-defense: “Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.” Some authorities interpret Article 51 to permit anticipatory self-defense in response to an imminent attack. Such an interpretation allows action, either unilaterally or collectively in self-defense, or preemptively based on an interpretation of imminent threat. The threat of catastrophic terrorism argues for a requirement to establish intelligible and transparent

criteria of imminent threat that could provide for legitimate unilateral, coalition of the willing, or, hopefully, UN Security Council action.<sup>92</sup> Even Kofi Annan has suggested that UN members should consider developing “criteria for an early authorization of coercive measures to address certain types of threats—for instance, terrorists groups armed with weapons of mass destruction.”<sup>93</sup> Article 106 of the charter can be interpreted to allow coalitions of states to take action to maintain international peace and security pending UN Security Council action. This article originally was added to accommodate regional alliances such as the RIO Pact and NATO. By modifying certain aspects of the charter, to include article 106, a better understanding may be developed for the legitimate requirements for multilateral response to threats outside the confines of the Security Council.

Based on the use of force in the last decade, some analysts have argued that the UN Security Council must be reformed: enlarged to become more representative, and restructured to replace the veto system. One rationale for the elimination of the veto power of the permanent five is based on the need for legitimacy:

All modern military operations need international legitimacy if they are going to succeed. Consequently, the great powers, especially America, face a difficult choice: they can either maintain the veto, and embark on unsanctioned military adventures with their partners only to see these fail because of lack of international approval; or they can surrender veto power in return for the increased likelihood of securing majority approval for the use of military power.<sup>94</sup>

As this argument relates to the debate in the UN about Iraq, France, or any other country on the Security Council, should be in a position to adopt and support a particular view, but it should not be in a position to block pursuit of a vital interest and put at risk the entire UN enterprise. “What do you do if, at the end of the day, the Security Council refuses to back you?” asks Charles Krauthammer, “Do you allow yourself to be dictated to on issues of vital national—and international—security?”<sup>95</sup> Thomas Friedman answered the question, “The French and others know that . . . their refusal to present Saddam with a threat only guarantees U.S. unilateralism and undermines the very UN structure that is the best vehicle for their managing of U.S. power.”<sup>96</sup>

This debate also touches on the concept of multilateralism. Americans define multilateralism as a policy that actively seeks to gain the support of allies. As such, Security Council authorization is a means to an end—gaining more allies—not an end in itself. The Europeans, on the other hand, view multilateralism much more narrowly as a legitimate sanction from a duly constituted international body—the Security Council. Despite the fact that the United States enjoyed the support of dozens of nations for the war in Iraq, and is supported by 33 troop-contributing coalition partners as I write, many critics continue to charge that the United States is acting unilaterally. The current debate “over multilateralism and legitimacy is thus not only about the principles of law, or even about the supreme authority of the UN; it is also about the transatlantic struggle for influence. It is Europe’s response to the unipolar predicament.”<sup>97</sup> In any event, it is clear that any new arrangements to exercise collective security need to be developed and given legitimacy by the international community.

## CONCLUSION

War between nation-states endures because human interests, values, and commitments often are irreconcilable. In addition, because of the existence of a much more insidious kind of violence—catastrophic terrorism—military power remains the ultimate defender of common human values and the ultimate arbiter of human disagreements:

The efficacy of force endures. For in anarchy, force and politics are connected. By itself, military power guarantees neither survival nor prosperity. But it is almost always the essential ingredient for both. Because resort to force

is the ultimate card of all states, the seriousness of a state's intentions is conveyed fundamentally by its having a credible military posture. Without it, a state's diplomacy generally lacks effectiveness.<sup>98</sup>

Strategists must be able to answer the classic charge from Clausewitz, "No one starts a war . . . without first being clear in his own mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it." The political objectives for the use of force must be reassessed continually in light of the changing nature of warfare and the proliferation of nontraditional threats. Likewise, remembering the caution raised by President George H.W. Bush that there can be no single or simple set of fixed rules for the use of force, the prudent strategist needs to keep in mind relevant questions and issues he should evaluate in each particular circumstance that might require military force. Finally, democracies have the unique challenge of dealing with the elusive and malleable concept of legitimacy. "Discovering where legitimacy lies," according to Robert Kagan, "at any given moment in history is an art, not a science reducible to the reading of international legal documents."<sup>99</sup> Still there are immutable principles such as that of Horace who cautioned that "force without wisdom falls of its own weight." Today, more than ever, the key question concerning the use of force is not whether it is lawful, but whether it is wise.<sup>100</sup>

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 17

1. The author would like to acknowledge the grateful assistance of Dr. Charles Krupnick and Dr. David Jablonsky in reviewing and making valuable suggestions for this chapter.

2. Han J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 5th Ed., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973, p. 29.

3. Anarchy refers to the absence of government but should not be confused with chaos. International politics exhibits a great deal of order, regularity, and cooperation, but also includes much coercion, unpredictability, and bloodshed. Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 4. Kenneth Waltz is quoted in Robert J. Art, "The Fungibility of Force," Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz, eds., *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*, 5th ed., New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999, pp. 5-6.

4. *The Military Balance: 2003-2004*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2003. Also refer to Anup Shah, "High Military Expenditures in Some Places," [www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp](http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp), accessed March 23, 2004.

5. Art, "The Fungibility of Force," p. 4.

6. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, New York: Vintage Books, 1989, p. 515. Kennedy posits two challenges for the longevity of every major power: "whether, in the military/strategical realm, it can preserve a reasonable balance between the nation's perceived defense requirements and the means it possesses to maintain those commitments; and whether it can preserve the technological and economic bases of power," p. 514. His basic declinist argument is that if a "nation overextends itself geographically and strategically" and chooses "to devote a large proportion of its total income to 'protection,' leaving less for 'productive investment,' it is likely to find its economic output slowing down, with dire implications for its long-term capacity to maintain both its citizens' consumption demands and its international position," p. 539. The United States was able to harness the economic vitality of the information age and thus avoid the predictions of decline at the end of the 20th century. Perhaps it will not be as fortunate in this new century. James Fallows, "The Hollow Army," *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 2004.

7. John Baylis and James J. Wirtz, "Introduction," John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen and Colin Gray, eds., *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 12; Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, pp. 88, 605. As famous as this dictum is, it is not fully accepted without some debate. Colin Gray goes into some depth on this issue in his book, *Modern Strategy*. He goes so far as to say, "Although Clausewitz was more wise than foolish in this dictum, the wisdom in the formula is hostage to the folly." He concludes his initial review of this topic by stating that "the idea of force as an agent of political purpose is generally persuasive," but should be viewed as the product of not only political purpose, but also of an on-going political process. Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 30; and Chapter 2, "Strategy, Politics, Ethics," pp. 48-74; Colin L. Powell, "US Forces: Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 5, Winter, 1992/93, p. 39. General Powell contrasted the success of military operations in the 1990s with the failed mission to Lebanon in 1983. Concerning Lebanon, he stated that we "inserted those proud warriors into the middle of a five-faction civil war complete with terrorists, hostage-takers, and a dozen spies in every camp." Perhaps the successes

of the 1990s resulted from simpler problems or an avoidance of the very complex, a prescription that the West may not be able to follow in the new century.

8. Joint Publication (JP), p. 1; *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, Washington, DC: The Joint staff, November 14, 2000, pp. I-4.

9. Robert J. Art, "To What Ends Military Power?" *International Security*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Spring 1980, pp. 3-35.

10. This figure is a modified version from David E. Johnson, Karl P. Mueller, and William H. Taft, *Conventional Coercion Across the Spectrum of Operations: The Utility of U.S. Military Forces in the Emerging Security Environment*, Vol. V, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2002, p. 9. Several noted analysts, Art and Colin Gray, are more inclined to classify compellence as the sole coercive component. Gray, *Maintaining Effective Deterrence*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic studies Institute, August 2003, p. 13, refers to compellence as coercion or coercive diplomacy. But he later recognizes that deterrence is "executed as a coercive strategy intended to control unfriendly behavior" (p. 17). Thomas Schelling, who coined the term compellence, also concluded that, "'Coercion'. . . includes 'deterrent' as well as 'compellent' intentions." *Arms and Influence*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966, p. 71.

11. JP 1, p. III-1.

12. Schelling, pp. 1-2.

13. Art, "To What Ends Military Power," pp. 5-6. Richard Haass includes preventive attacks and punitive attacks, along with deterrence and compellence, as the principle uses of military power. See Richard N. Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*, Washington, DC: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994, pp. 50-56. For another interesting discussion of preventive war and preemption as strategic choices, refer to Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1982, pp. 141-149.

14. Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *Confronting Iraq: U.S. Policy and the Use of Force Since the Gulf War*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000, p. 6.

15. Schelling, 3.

16. Johnson, pp. 15-17; Byman and Waxman, pp. 8-9.

17. John J. Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, p. 14; Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Michael J. Mazar, *American National Security*, Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 38. A fundamental debate concerning U.S. grand strategy involves the continued deterrability of U.S. opponents. Failed and rogue states may not be viewed as rational, particularly from a western perspective. Nevertheless, as David Jablonsky argues, even crazy states can be deterred: "... a state may behave rationally in an instrumental sense of effectively achieving its ends or goals which in themselves may be 'crazy.'" He emphasizes that there must be at least a modicum of instrumental rationality on the part of a nation to be deterred. David Jablonsky, *Strategic Rationality is not Enough: Hitler and the Concept of Crazy States*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1991. Unfortunately, the current list of opponents includes highly lethal nonstate organizations, such as the al Qaeda terrorist network. As Paul Davis and Brian Jenkins argue, this class of terrorist, driven by extremely strong, messianic, religious views, lacks instrumental rationality, and therefore cannot be deterred and must be eradicated. Paul K. Davis and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Deterrence & Influence in Counterterrorism*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2002.

18. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994, p. 608. There is a vast literature on the evolution of nuclear strategy during the Cold War. One source for a systematic and comprehensive treatment of the major themes of nuclear strategy is Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983. Despite using the word 'evolution' in the title, he claims that it is somewhat misleading. In the introduction, he mentions the cyclical character of the debates and states that "much of what is offered today as a profound and new insight was said yesterday; and usually in a more concise and literate manner." The utility of military power during the Cold War, particularly concerning great power competition, was constrained by the logic of nuclear deterrence. As Bernard Brodie declared, "Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them." Bernard Brodie, "Implications for Military Policy," *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order*, Harcourt Brace, 1946, p. 76.

19. Gray, p. 13. See also Johnson, *et. al.*, pp. 10-12; Haass, pp. 50-51; Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002, pp. 14-15, 328-329. Bobbitt makes the argument that extended deterrence has driven U.S. nuclear strategy, not central deterrence. Concerning a more contemporary issue—missile defense—Bobbitt reiterates the on-going importance of extended deterrence: "Extended deterrence is the single most effective instrument the United States has to prevent major-state proliferation because it permits these states to develop their economies without diverting vast resources to the nuclear arms competition, and yet remain relatively safe from nuclear attack." Although the United States has vastly reduced and restructured its nuclear force posture, nuclear deterrence retains its relevancy even after the end of the Cold War.

20. Kissinger, p. 608.

21. Gray p. vii. See also William T. Johnsen, *The Future Roles of U.S. Military Power and their Implications*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies institute, April 17, 1997, p. 7; and Bobbitt, p. 12. Colin Gray points out that the current concern is not about irrational leaders—those leaders that cannot connect means purposefully with ends. “The problem is not the irrational adversary, instead it is the perfectly rational foe who seeks purposefully, and rationally, to achieve goals that appear wholly unreasonable to us.” He goes on to argue that he believes Al Qaeda is deterrable. “Al Qaeda has many would-be martyrs in its ranks, but the organization is most careful of the lives of its key officers, and it functions strategically. It can be deterred by the fact and expectation of strategic failure.” pp. vii, viii, 21-22. He also recommends several practical measures to enhance the role of deterrence under the current circumstances and recognizes the synergy achieved through combining elements of both deterrent and defensive, preventive-preemptive, postures. “A little prevention-preemption would do wonders for the subsequent effectiveness of deterrence in the minds of those whose motives were primarily worldly and pragmatic.” *Ibid.*, pp. v, 29. Gray’s bottom line is that deterrence, though diminished in significance, remains absolutely essential as an element of U.S. grand strategy.

22. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002, p. 15. Also see John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004, pp. 69-70.

23. Byman and Waxman, p. 6; See also Art, *Grand Strategy*, p. 5; Schelling, p. 72.

24. Art, “To What Ends Military Power?” p. 8. See also Schelling, pp. 69-91. Byman and Waxman argue that it is often difficult to distinguish compellence and deterrence. “Classifying cases as compellence as opposed to deterrence is always speculative to some degree, given the inherent opacity of enemy intentions. And, ultimately, general deterrence and compellence are codependent, as success or failure in coercion affects the coercing power’s general reputation to some degree and thus its overall ability to deter.” p. 7.

25. Art, pp. 8-10; and Haass, pp. 53-54.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-11. This point was expressed explicitly by Mohamed Farad Aideed to Ambassador Oakley concerning the disastrous U.S. involvement in Somalia: “We have studied Vietnam and Lebanon and know how to get rid of Americans, by killing them so public opinion will put an end to things.”

27. This is a slightly modified version of a chart found in Barry M. Blechman and Tamara Cofman Wittes, “Defining Moment: The Threat and Use of Force in American Foreign Policy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 114, No. 1, Spring 1999, p. 7.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

29. Bobbitt, p. 14; *The Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Washington, DC: The Department of Defense, September 30, 2001, p. 11. For a good discussion of the benefits of forward presence, see Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, pp. 139-145; Johnsen., p. 11.

30. Thomas P.M. Barnett, “The Pentagon’s New Map,” *Esquire*, March 2003, p. 228.

31. Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities & Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 128. Bacevich argues that the United States has been pursuing a grand strategy of “openness” since the days of Woodrow Wilson. This strategy seeks economic expansion and aims to foster an open and integrated international order, thereby perpetuating the undisputed primacy of the world’s sole remaining super power.

32. National Security Strategy, 2002, p. 30.

33. *QDR*, 2001, p. 12.

34. Barton Gellman, “Keeping the U.S. First: Pentagon Would Preclude a Rival Superpower,” *The Washington Post*, March 11, 1992, p. 1. The principal author of the document was then Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Paul Wolfowitz. When the draft DPG was leaked, it was criticized roundly and, consequently, dramatically toned down in the final version. It seems that the Secretary meant what he said 10 years ago in that it is now an accepted tenet of the U.S. defense strategy.

35. Donald H. Rumsfeld, “Transforming the Military,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 3, May/June 2002, p. 27. He goes on to site several specific examples: deployment of effective missile defenses to dissuade ballistic missile programs; hardening U.S. space systems to dissuade the development of killer satellites; new earth-penetrating weapons that would make deep-underground facilities obsolete as hiding places for terrorists or WMD capabilities.

36. Richard Kugler, “Dissuasion as a Strategic Concept,” *Strategic Forum*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University (NDU), No. 196, December 2002, pp. 1-2.

37. Gray, “Maintaining Effective Deterrence,” p. 14.

38. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "U.S. Power and Strategy After Iraq," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 4, July/August 2003, p. 72.
39. This list is taken from JP 1, pp. III-14 - III-15; and Haass, pp. 51-65.
40. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, pp. 5-6.
41. Jennifer D. Kibbe, "The Rise of the Shadow Warriors," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 2, March/April 2004, p. 104. Covert actions are distinct from clandestine missions. The term "clandestine" refers to the secrecy of the operation itself, "covert" refers to the secrecy of its sponsor.
42. U.S. Special Operations Command, *Posture Statement 2003-2004*, p. 36.
43. Kibbe, p. 105. The definition and oversight requirements were contained in the Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 1991.
44. Donald Rumsfeld, *2003 Secretary of Defense Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: The Pentagon, 2003, p. 2. This report highlights the historic change in the charter of the SOCCOM, from supporting missions of the other regional combatant commanders, to planning and executing its own missions in the global war on terrorism. Kibbe, p. 109.
45. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, September 10, 2001, pp. II-3 - II-4.
46. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 605; Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Samuel B. Griffith, trans., New York: Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 142; Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1995, p. 561; *Isaiah* 6:8.
47. Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*, New York: Picador USA, 2000, p. 179.
48. The discussion in this section is related to the discussion on just war theory, as presented in Chapter 3 of this volume, "Ethical Issues in War: An Overview," by Martin L. Cook. This section will focus on political and military considerations, as opposed to the international legal framework associated with just war theory. However, it should be clear that many of the issues overlap.
49. Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, 3rd ed., London: Frank Cass, 2001, pp. 10-11.
50. Edward Luttwark refers to this as "Napoleonic" warfare—wars fought for grand purposes, implying the decisive employment of large forces. Edward N. Luttwark, "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare: The Obsolescence of Total War," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 3, May/June 1995, pp. 113-114.
51. Alexander L. George, "The Role of Force in Diplomacy: Continuing Dilemma for U.S. Foreign Policy," talk at CSIS Security Strategy Symposium, June 25, 1998; Available from [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/article.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/article.html), accessed, March 2, 2004; Colin Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 5, Winter 1992/93, p. 36. Also see Les Aspin, "The Use and Usefulness of Military Forces in the Post-Cold War, Post-Soviet World," from an address to the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, Washington, DC, September 21, 1992; excerpted in Haass, pp. 183-190.
52. Handel, p. 10; Evan Thomas, "The Vietnam Question," *Newsweek*, April 19, 2004.
53. George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993, p. 650.
54. The Weinberger doctrine was first presented in a speech before the National Press Club, November 28, 1984. It's rendition for the figure is from Handel, pp. 310-311. The criteria are numbered in accordance with the sequence in which they originally were presented. However, that sequence is broken on the chart to help categorize criteria as either addressing the "when" or "how" of using force. Colin Powell's list is taken from Aspen, as excerpted in Haass, pp. 184-185. The best first person account is from Powell's *Foreign Affairs* article which was cited previously. Secretary William Perry's list is from "The Ethical Use of Military Force," the Forrestal Lecture, Foreign Affairs Conference, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD, April 18, 1995. These points largely were incorporated in all subsequent National Security Strategies issued by the Clinton administration. Joint Pub 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, November 14, 2000, IV-2, contains a list of considerations for the use of military force. The final set, from Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is taken from his remarks before the Fortune Magazine Global Forum, November 11, 2002.
55. Samuel Huntington, "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5, September/October 1997, p. 35. Huntington goes on to state that "national interests usually combine security and material concerns, on the one hand, and moral and ethical concerns, on the other." *A National Security Strategy for A Global Age*, Washington, DC: The White House, December 2000, p. 4; George, p. 3.
56. . Huntington, 37.
57. Handel, 312; Bobbitt, 298. Perry was initially responding to the on-going debate about committing U.S. forces to help solve the crisis in Bosnia. The National Security Advisor for Bush (p. 41), Brent Scowcroft, clearly reflected the opposite

view that helped keep U.S. forces out of Bosnia for years. "We could never satisfy ourselves that the amount of involvement we thought it would take was justified in terms of U.S. interests involved... We were heavily national interest oriented... If it [war] stayed in Bosnia, it might be horrible, but it did not affect us." Quoted in Samantha Power, *"A Problem From Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*, New York: New Republic Book, 2002, p. 288.

58. David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals*, New York: Scribner, 2001, pp. 390-391; Ignatieff, p. 72.

59. Clausewitz, p. 579.

60. Handel, p. 316.

61. Haass, p. 74.

62. Shultz, p. 650.

63. Handel, p. 318.

64. Power, p. 509. Public support can be very fickle, based on the latest news from the battlefield, and is particularly problematic in prolonged and costly military operations. Handel, p. 319.

65. Haass, pp. 88-89; Shultz, p. 650.

66. Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo and the Future of Combat*, New York: Public Affairs, 2001, p. 423; Ivo H. Daalder, "The Use of Force in a Changing World—U.S. and European Perspectives," The Brookings Institution, November 25, 2002, p. 12.

67. Handel, p. 314; Power, p. 283. Another example cited is the claim, once again in 1992, by Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey, to Congress, that 400,000 troops would be needed to enforce a cease-fire. Scowcroft conceded that the military's analysis probably was inflated.

68. Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," p. 40.

69. Joint Pub 1, p. IV-2.

70. Wesley K. Clark, *Winning Modern Wars: Iraq, Terrorism, and the American Empire*, New York: Public Affairs, 2003, pp. 86-87. Clark went on to conclude that the "ensuing disorder vitiated some of the boost in U.S. credibility won on the battlefield, and it opened the door for deeper and more organized resistance during the following weeks."

71. Handel, p. 317.

72. Quoted in Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1992, p. 252.

73. Haass, pp. 76-77.

74. Ignatieff, p. 208. As an example of an ambiguous end state, he cites the military technical agreement that concluded the conflict between NATO and Serbia. It specified the terms and timing of Serbian withdrawal and the entry of NATO troops, but left entirely undefined the juridical status of the territory over which the war was fought.

75. Handel, p. 324.

76. This chart has been modified from one that appears in Handel, p. 326. Handel's chart did not include Haiti, 1994, and Iraq, 2003. Handel also had included a column for Central America, which has been omitted. As mentioned in the body of the chapter, these ratings should be viewed as subject to open debate and discussion. In fact, a useful exercise would be to determine your own ratings for particular interventions. As one example of the subjectiveness of these ratings concerning Kosovo, Handel concluded that the public supported the operation. Ignatieff, on the other hand, stated that "the public did not sign up to 78 days' worth of bombing, and had they been asked, most would have said no" (p. 183).

77. Handel, p. 311.

78. Summers, *On Strategy*, p. 43.

79. Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, *Congress and Its Members*, 9th edition, Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 2004, p. 439.

80. Richard F. Grimmett, "War Powers Resolution: Presidential Compliance," *Issue Brief for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, updated March 24, 2003, CRS; Robert B. Zoellick, "Congress and the Making of US Foreign Policy," *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 4, Winter 1999-2000, p. 33; Grimmett. Of the 104 reports, Ford submitted 4; Carter, 1; Reagan, 14; George H. W. Bush, 7; Clinton, 60; and George W. Bush, 18; CRS-11.

81. *Ibid.*, CRS-13.

82. Alton Frye, "Applying the War Powers Resolution to the War on Terrorism," testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, April 17, 2002.

83. Zoellick, p. 34.

84. George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, New York: Vintage Books, 1998, p. 446. For a superb discussion of the intricacies of gaining both domestic and international support for the use of force, refer to pp. 355-449. Concerning this debate, Brent Scowcroft had this to say: "We were confident that the Constitution was on our side when it came to the president's discretion to use force if necessary: If we sought congressional involvement, it would not be authority we were after, but support," p. 398. And President Bush added; "... even had Congress not passed the resolutions, I would have acted and ordered our troops into combat. I know it would have caused an outcry, but it was the right thing to do. I was comfortable in my own mind that I had the constitutional authority," p. 446.

85. Grimmett, CRS-3 – CRS-4; Ignatieff, pp. 180-181.

86. Davidson and Oleszek, p. 440.

87. "Congressional Joint resolution to Authorize Use of Force Against Iraq," *Washington Post*, October 11, 2002, p. A12; Grimmett, CRS-12.

88. Frye, Congressional testimony.

89. John Lindsay, cited in Zoellick, p. 34.

90. David M. Ackerman, "International Law and the Preemptive Use of force Against Iraq," *CRS Report for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, updated March 17, 2003, CRS-3.

91. Kofi Annan, "The Legitimacy to Intervene," *Financial Times*, December 31, 1999, available from [www.globalpolicy.org/secgen/interven.htm](http://www.globalpolicy.org/secgen/interven.htm).

92. John Burroughs, *et. al.*, "The United Nations Charter and the Use of Force Against Iraq," October 2, 2002, p. 2; Robert S. Litwak, "The New Calculus of Pre-emption," *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Winter 2003-03, p. 73.

93. Quoted in Robert Kagan, "America's Crisis of Legitimacy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 2, March/April 2004, p. 81.

94. Ignatieff, p. 182.

95. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *The National Interest*, No. 70, Winter 2002/03, p. 17.

96. Thomas Friedman, "Present At . . . What?" *New York Times*, February 12, 2003.

97. Kagan, pp. 82-83.

98. Art, "To What Ends Military Power?" p. 35; The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, *New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century*, September 15, 1999, pp. 3-5.

99. Kagan, p. 77.

100. Michael J. Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 3, May/June 2003, p. 16.





**CHAPTER 18**  
**ECONOMICS:**  
**AMERICAN ELEMENT OF POWER OR SOURCE OF VULNERABILITY?**

**Clayton K. S. Chun**

The early Romans worshipped Janus, one of their many panoply of gods. Janus, the god of beginnings, was frequently depicted as two-faced; one face looked at new beginnings, while the other looked to the past. In many respects, the economic element of national power is like Janus. Economics has two faces: one as a dominant element of power, and the other as a source of potential vulnerability for the nation. Economic activity is a potent source of power that includes the ability to create wealth, produce goods and services, influence, and weaken or coerce possible foes. It is also a potential vulnerability that must be protected. The United States is blessed with a rare combination of labor, physical and human capital, entrepreneurial spirit, legal system, raw materials, and geography that have allowed it to become the leading global economic power. Conversely, economics also may be a source of vulnerability or weakness for a nation. The nation can exist without international trade; however, the standard of living of its citizens and its wealth certainly would suffer. This nation's economy is linked inextricably to countries, large and small, throughout the world. Globalization has become an integral part of the American economic system. We purchase many finished goods, components, and raw materials from around the world. Similarly, we rely on financial investment from foreign nations, businesses, and individuals to help pay for a host of government and commercial ventures. Real and perceived disturbances in the global economy certainly can affect actions that reach this country's shores.

For many people, economics is a complex subject. The topic can entail highly mathematical models or arcane issues that, on the surface, do not seem to have much relevance to national security. However, the world does revolve around economics. Without firing a shot, nations could face panic and disruption throughout their societies. Whether the problem is a stock market crash, currency devaluation, natural disaster, oil crisis, or depression, economic concerns can paralyze a country. Economics is simply the study of the use of constrained resources. One of national leadership's main concerns is the acquisition of additional resources or the maximization of their use. In this respect, the United States tries to expand its ability to make goods and services using constrained resources or to extend its access around the world to get more. These objectives naturally come into conflict from a host of domestic and international sources. On the domestic side, members of Congress and the President might disagree about how much we will spend on military, income redistribution, social, or healthcare programs. More interesting issues arise on the international scene. Potential rivals that may refuse access to strategic materials threaten a nation's ability to get resources necessary for its economic security. Control of products, raw materials, financial assets, and other economic resources can provide unfettered influence from one state to another. Outsourcing of jobs and services to foreign countries affects directly domestic jobs and generates fears of fundamental changes to the economy. Loss of whole segments of the economy may put the state's security at risk.

This chapter explores economics as an element of national power. The most potent and flexible U.S. ability to influence events worldwide may not be military, but economic. Increasingly in the future, national leadership may find exercising military power difficult to accomplish or inappropriate for the circumstances. A basic understanding of the scope of the nation's economic power will help the reader think about how the country can use it along with other elements of power-political, military, and informational. The author addresses what makes an economy strong and how the nation can use its economic power to achieve its national interests. Although the chapter focuses on the United States,

much, if not all, of this discussion is applicable to other countries. This examination can help the reader evaluate the economic capabilities and limitations of nation-states.

### **What Makes an Economy Strong?**

The United States is fortunate that it has, at present, the preeminent economy in the world. The nation's businesses and her people can draw on a host of resources that they can convert to capabilities expressed in an effective military or other element of power. What does a nation require to do so? One certainly can use the United States as an example to analyze. No matter what the size or strength of national economies, they have certain common characteristics that allow them to flex their economic power. No matter what problems a nation has, most have some ability to use their resources to conduct economic activities.

Every nation in the world has some type of national resource that it can parlay into economic power. For some, it might involve a natural resource like oil or some other type of raw material. However, not all countries have the luxury of self-sustaining supplies of raw materials. Instead, a nation might have the benefit of other types of national resources that can compensate for the lack of basic raw materials. Three types of resources might allow a nation's industry to provide value-added activities that transform raw minerals or components into a product or service that allows that state to extract economic gain that is the wherewithal of national security. Human, capital, and technological resources are some of the most visible means that states can use to strengthen their economies and where they might be vulnerable.

Human resources involve the skill and abilities of labor and management. A highly educated and motivated labor force can increase the capabilities of an economy through improved productivity or by increased flexibility to change scope or direction of activities. Additionally, management teams that provide leadership, innovation, and risk acceptance can introduce new or better products when coupled with a skilled labor force. Nations such as Singapore have compensated with human resources for the lack of geography and raw materials to become a regional economic power in Southeast Asia. Singapore's economy depends on its biggest resource, people, to provide value to the nation's production of finished goods from consumer to high-tech products, like electronics, that depends on skilled labor. Similarly, a focus on advanced education has allowed India and the People's Republic of China (PRC) to expand their economies from ones that merely produced goods to ones that design and conduct research on them.

Increasingly, capital resources have become very important assets that allow a nation to control the investment or production of goods and services. Capital can take the form of physical plant or financial assets. Physical plants, the traditional image of industrial might, allows a nation to transform raw materials into goods. Financial resources allow the construction of new or modifications of existing physical plants in the country. More frequently, countries rely on financial resources to acquire means of production by building or purchasing productive capacity or other activities outside their borders. Such investment in the form of foreign-owned businesses often is welcomed by countries with other resources but little capital or technical knowledge. Financial capital also provides great influence. The threat or actual withdrawal of investment funds can slow research, development, and construction. Panic in domestic financial markets or the devaluation of currencies can trigger internal problems that may spread to regional catastrophe or even become worldwide panic. The United States has relied increasingly on foreign capital sources to finance mounting public and private debt. Foreign firms, individuals, and governments have footed the bill for our international trade deficits to balance our growing appetite for imports.

Nations also can replace or substitute products through technological advances. A nation's ability to provide resources to research, develop, and further educate their people can lead to new applications

of science and knowledge to solve problems—in other words, technology. Technological advances can replace existing weapon and support systems to enhance or expand warfighting capability. Acquiring technology through a nation's human resources or with capital resources can allow the nation to make great leaps in economic progress. The PRC attracted billions of dollars in foreign direct investment through favorable business terms, e.g., cheap labor or taxes, and aggressively seeking critical knowledge through activities like sending graduate students to nations that possess desired technology. These efforts have paid handsome dividends to Beijing due to a combination of low cost labor, available technology, financial investment, educated professionals, and failure of competitors to keep up with the Chinese economy. Information technology and software innovation, once the monopoly of the American economy has migrated to countries like China, India, or Taiwan. Global competition has forced a reconstruction of economies worldwide. Forced to seek lower costs, many industries in the United States have moved operations and production offshore; research, design, and technological development soon followed. Questions about the benefit of low cost products compared to a loss of employment are contentious issues involving the value of globalization.

A country's government has a significant impact on the performance on an economy. Government policies to improve business and labor activities can motivate market activities that may lead to innovation or increased competition. These actions can allow the nation's population to develop the state's economic power. Similarly, the government can fund activities to improve common public infrastructure like roads, utilities, and other services that provide a foundation for economic growth. Governments also can send messages to their people on how they will treat business activities. Will the government operate inefficient, publicly-owned enterprises that compete unfairly with private business? Does the government punish businesses with onerous taxes or uncompetitive labor laws? These and other activities can challenge the economic future of a nation. Indeed, government plays a large role in the domestic economy, but it also affects international events. National governments might agree to international standards of the World Trade Organization; support regional alliances; or encourage the free flow of goods, services, and capital that may affect economic relations with other states.

The structure of market systems also plays a key role in an economy. Free markets allow an almost unfettered exchange of goods and services to flow within and across borders. Reliance on the "rule of law" to settle differences and a minimum of government interference supports creative and growing markets. Along with free exchanges of products and services, many markets also encourage information exchange that allows ideas and principles to circulate among a nation's population and its trading partners. Opportunities to create wealth and improve one's living standard also can force changes in government.

Not all nations possess all of the aforementioned resources and policies. They use a combination of available resources to convert what assets they have or can acquire into a capability. Even though the United States dominates all other individual nations economically, it is not self-sufficient today in terms of raw materials, goods, services, and, increasingly, financial capital. The nation must import many components to sustain its economy. Although the United States sold over \$807 billion of exported goods to foreign countries in 2004, it purchased \$1,473 billion of imports in the same period.<sup>1</sup> The trend of increasing reliance on finished goods and raw materials like oil from abroad has continued for decades. This situation has economic and political ramifications that range from foreign control of sectors of the economy to debt concerns. As countries like China and India develop their economies and reap gains from trade, demand by their consumers for the same goods and raw materials will rise. Changes in standard of living and overall economic strength will occur here and abroad. The subsequent trading relationships between nations will force greater reliance on and interest in events around the world that can create pressures on other resources and the economy itself.

Nations that historically have had little impact because of past trade relations or possession of raw materials of limited value are now capable of influencing American foreign policy actions. These nations have either a direct linkage to or indirectly affect America's economy. For example, the United States has attempted to seek oil sources from other than Persian Gulf nations. Some of the largest sources of available non-Middle East oil imports are from Venezuela and Nigeria. This reliance on Venezuelan and Nigerian oil gives those nations greater influence on U.S. foreign policy, or at least a stronger bargaining position with Washington. Failure to consider them or problems within their regions can produce hefty economic penalties to the nation and the global economy. Although the amounts of oil imported from Venezuela and Nigeria is smaller than imports from Saudi Arabia and some other oil producers, upward spikes in oil prices can slow down the American economy by directly "taxing" consumers and production due to higher prices at the gas pump and for many products. However, the effect does not stop there. Higher world oil prices also threaten the economic health of many small nations. This, in turn, affects their ability to produce exported goods and services and can seriously reduce their ability to buy imported American goods. Economic hardship can create disruption that leads to political instability and conflict.

### **Economics as an Element of Power.**

National power is a very topical issue today. Countries that desire to achieve certain goals or objectives can do so in many ways in this complex world. Although most people equate national power with military power, many situations in international politics are inappropriate for the sole use of military means. Often, a combination of other elements, with or without the military, might accomplish the objective faster and with better results. Perhaps one way to think about national power is as the capacity to create capabilities that a nation can exploit to undertake actions to achieve its national interests. In this light, a strong economy provides the means to allow national leaders the ways to attain desired ends. The economy does this through a number of measures by providing the goods and services necessary to carry out selected actions.

A nation could produce goods and services itself either through domestic production, or acquiring them from international sources. The United States has been able to mobilize its economy to fight wars and to provide resources to her allies. Certainly, the United States was able to aid in the defeat the Axis powers in World War II significantly through its role as the "arsenal of democracy." American-made trucks, aircraft, tanks, small arms, clothing, and food helped arm and feed the Allied armed forces and liberated peoples around the world. American business and labor leaders were able to transition the economy from a depression-era subsistence production level to a fully mobilized economy that made military and, albeit limited, civilian goods and services available. Times have changed. Today, with the globalization of the economy, the United States and other nations must go progressively beyond their shores to get products, raw materials, and services. Trade access and the financial wherewithal allows the country to get those goods and services that are not available or are more costly in the United States. Even though some goods and services may be available domestically, concerns about quality, cost, and other issues have forced peacetime consumers and businesses to purchase the items from foreign sources. Unfortunately, many of these commercial products are vital for national security. Many military-specific products like aircraft, satellite communications, information technology, and other items are made overseas. Manufacturing capability has declined rapidly in the United States. In 1995 the United States possessed 17.2 million manufacturing jobs; by November 2005, it had declined to 14.3 million positions.<sup>2</sup> Some of the declines are due to increased productivity from improved automation or technology. Given the growing U.S. population, this statistic represents a disturbing trend as whole industries move offshore in search of lower cost production sites. Although consumers benefit from

lower prices, future ability to design, build, and maintain like type products may disappear. Reliance on foreign technology and products is possible, assuming access is guaranteed. What if Washington cannot acquire these systems due to a lack of available products or the refusal of a foreign government or firm to sell them?

National leadership can take several economic approaches to addressing potential security concerns. In most cases, governments concentrate on three primary approaches for security policy. A government can use an instrument or combination of instruments of power to persuade, coerce, or defeat an adversary.<sup>3</sup> These techniques work well with economics, as well as other elements of power. A nation could try to persuade or use influence to change what a power might believe or value. For example, the United States could offer to reduce tariffs on imported goods to motivate the nation to agree to a proposal. Similarly, a country might want to change certain of its adversary's behaviors. A state could then use coercion to force modifications of selected behaviors. Washington could ban import or increase tariffs on a country's goods until the objectionable behavior changed. Finally, the nation's government might try to eliminate another power's ability to take certain actions or capabilities through defeating them in some endeavor. The nation could out produce or try to purchase outright the capacity of a rival to produce goods or services. Economics can be used in all three cases independently or along with political, military, and informational elements of power.

A government can persuade or influence another state that perhaps what they value or believe fundamentally is flawed.<sup>4</sup> The United States could educate a trading partner on the benefits or costs of taking a particular position. For example, the United States might preach that better economic gains or prosperity result from allowing more open trade than from maintaining closed markets or limiting the production of products or raw materials. One might provide examples of nations that experienced increased standards of living after privatization of state owned enterprises or elimination of high import tariffs.

Economic success and prosperity are seen easily. Improved standards of living manifested in material and financial wealth, mortality rates, education, and other measurable means are very powerful as evidence of economic growth. In our hemisphere, many nations in Central and South America have seen the success, in many areas, of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and now the new Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). Not only have they improved industry and increased jobs across borders, but they also have helped improve intergovernmental relations in many respects. Central American nations also might see political benefits through improved cooperation between themselves by using a similar agreement as a device for better relations.<sup>5</sup> Mexico and Canada have seen increased investment in their countries by U.S. businesses that directly have advanced their countries economically. Other nations easily could see the potential benefits from economic integration. Still, this status comes at a cost, with employment changes spread among industries that move across borders.

Economic foreign aid or assistance is a classic persuasive tool. Economic aid is a well-understood "carrot" and very useful as a reward for good behavior or decisions that favor the granting country. Thus, the United States granted both Egypt and Israel large annual allocations of economic and military aid to help persuade the nations to accept the Camp David peace accords. Because only intent separates this technique from our next category, foreign aid also can be a coercive tool.

Coercion takes on a more ominous image than persuasion. Instead of trying to voluntarily change behavior from within, coercion attempts to force changes in measured behavior. A nation can take two routes to coerce another: deter or compel.<sup>6</sup> The difference is that, in one case you are trying to prevent an opponent from doing something, while in the other you are trying to cause him to do something he might not otherwise do. Deterrence involves getting an opponent to realize that, if it takes a certain action, then any result from that action will become more costly to it than any potential gains. For

example, a nation might use the threat of force to dissuade another from taking a contemplated action. Nations also could deter other nations by getting them to join an alliance or agreement to force them to accept certain standards of behavior and reject others. Similarly, a nation could compel other states to take certain actions. Nations can use threats or more positive means to force adversaries to take a particular avenue to solve a problem.

A government can use economic means to deter or compel another to take certain actions or behavior. The United States could use her economy to deny a potential adversary essential goods or services to deter an action or to coerce an action. The nation simply can refuse to sell certain items to that country; outbid rivals for the sale of the items so that the targeted country cannot purchase the items; deny them the ability to sell good and services that would reduce their ability to buy certain resources; or get other countries to act against the state in question. A strong economy has a great say among producers and consumers around the world. In some respects, even if the nation is concerned about buying a product from another country, the United States could moderate the seller's behavior. Suppose the seller of a raw material decides to export that product to an American adversary. We could use our purchasing power to buy or use the threat to buy the entire surplus; pressure the seller not to allow the sale of the product to the adversary by threatening to buy the product from someone else; or withhold sales of a product to the selling nation. Certainly, the options are numerous, given the strength of the economy compared to a weak economy that leaves a country vulnerable.

A nation also can use its economy to try to defeat another power. The nation can use its economic power in attempts to destroy a targeted country's capability to take certain actions or ability to project her power. Although physical defeat of the enemy more often is associated with military operations, economic means also are viable to support the elimination of a nation's ability to take certain actions. These economic measures could allow only one course of action open to the adversary, one chosen by the power that destroyed the economy.

Perhaps a nation could target a particular segment of an opponent's economy for destruction that would render it vulnerable to other actions. Let us suppose that a nation relies primarily on manufacturing for domestic and international sales. Further, this manufacturing capability is tied to steel production. A nation or combination of nations can try to limit a raw materials used in its steel production; outproduce the target and sell the steel at a lower price; convince others to boycott the adversary's products; or find some other way to choke off vital manufacturing capability to destroy the capacity to make steel permanently. As mentioned earlier, this nation lent vital economic aid to allied countries during World War II. Some might argue that it was American economic power that out produced the Axis powers' economies to defeat them. The United States, as the world's largest and most diverse economy has many options it can use to influence, coerce, or defeat a foe with economic means.

Indeed, economic power has become a very powerful tool to enhance the abilities of a nation and limit those of an adversary. However, as nations become more intertwined through globalization, they become more vulnerable to disruptions in their economies, manmade or natural, due to reliance on foreign sources of raw materials, components, finished products, or key services. This is especially true for complex, highly integrated economies like the United States. For example, U.S. dependence on energy sources indicates a strong need for imported oil. In 1973, the average production from U.S. oil fields was 9,208 thousand barrels per day. The country imported 3,244 thousand barrels daily. By 2004, the average American production amount fell to 5,419 thousand barrels. Imports had jumped to 10,088 thousand barrels.<sup>7</sup>

Consequently, the nation has become more sensitive to external events that might affect the future supply of oil. Any reduction in oil production, regardless of its intended destination, affects the nation's economy in several ways. First, if there is a reduction in oil production, prices rise worldwide

since buyers bid up prices to meet their demand. This disrupts resource flows and production. Energy substitutes, such as natural gas, also see a rise in demand and price. Second, poorer nations that cannot afford high priced oil might face internal political strife as their standard of living declines. These concerns can create conditions for mass disruptions in poor nations. Third, uncertainty and turmoil about the future threatens long-term investment and consumer confidence due to fears that the nation's economy might slow. This will affect the nation's ability to produce goods and services in the coming years. Fourth, declining oil stocks can affect key trading partners' and allies' economies that also rely on access to oil. If those nations do not have viable economies, they might not produce the goods we need nor are they capable of buying our exports.

An oil crisis or shortage of some other product like an imported computer microchips, whether caused by a manmade or natural disaster, can create a series of political and economic conditions that can affect the health of a nation severely. A reduction in oil supplies creates all types of possible government responses, and may become a cause to use other elements of power to assure that oil flows freely in the world market. One could use, for example, the political element to encourage other states to increase production. Conversely, we could use informational means to persuade oil consumers not to panic and cause additional disruptions in the market. Finally, the country could use military means to create a secure supply line from oil producers to consumers.

## **Conclusion.**

Economic interdependence on one hand has allowed competitive forces to lower prices and increase availability of many goods and services. Economic security, improving domestic employment and wealth, have been increased with international trade. Free trade has helped sharpen the government's ability to achieve national objectives. The promise of access to American and other tariff free markets can help motivate other countries to cooperate with the United States. Increased access to markets also has allowed American business to sell products from computers to agricultural items that result in jobs. However, with the enhanced economic relationships have come critics who charge that more international integration has led to the loss of vital industries that have left the country to seek lower cost production elsewhere. This aspect of free trade has eliminated U.S. jobs, created a hemorrhage of technology, strengthened potential regional rivals, and left the nation more vulnerable to economic disruption. Manmade or natural disruptions in supply of imported assets may slow the ability to sustain combat operations or alter a decisionmaker's options to involve the country in operations for fear of adverse economic consequences. One of the challenges facing the nation's leaders will continue to be how to use economics to strengthen America's security while balancing the risk of future involvement in economic relationships that may constrain, rather than enhance, U.S. national security.

Economic power has helped shape American foreign policy for decades and will do so far into the future. This element of power is very flexible. If used wisely in conjunction with the political, military, and informational elements, it is hard to beat. Whether a nation has a large or small military, its leadership must understand economics. Economics is a great tool to create conditions for further action or to force a nation to change behavior. As the world further embraces globalization, economics as an element of power will only gain greater influence in the United States and around the world.

## **ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 18**

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3. David E. Johnson, Karl P. Mueller, and William H. Taft, *Conventional Coercion Across the Spectrum of Operations*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2002, p. 9.



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5. "How to Trade Up," *Economist*, February 15, 2003, p. 36.
6. Johnson, p. 8.
7. Energy Information Agency, "August 2005 Monthly Energy Review," available from [www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/mer/petro.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/mer/petro.html), Internet, accessed September 13, 2005.

**CHAPTER 19**  
**PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC STATECRAFT:**  
**RETHINKING ENGAGEMENT<sup>1</sup>**

**Douglas A. Borer**

February 2003 marked the 12th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait by the United States and its global allies, and their near-total victory over the military forces of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Operation DESERT STORM. However, much to the surprise of members of the first George Bush administration, academic scholars, military analysts, media pundits, foreign policy experts, and the average layman, Saddam Hussein remained in power in Iraq and continued to defy the international community successfully. Regardless of the military success of the U.S. war with Iraq prosecuted by the second Bush administration in 2003, Saddam's longevity, in itself, should serve as a significant warning to policymakers that something may be amiss in the formulation and execution of U.S. foreign policy. In this chapter, the author reexamines the fundamental intellectual and strategic assumptions of what is known as "engagement," the foreign policy doctrine that guided U.S. behavior toward Iraq in the decade preceding Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. Despite the wholesale failure of U.S. strategy toward Iraq before 1990, the fundamental assumptions that guided U.S. engagement policies have remained largely unexamined. This failure to acknowledge historic mistakes raises the disturbing possibility that similar failures of engagement may occur in Washington's strategic relationships with other problematic international actors and rogue states.

**Engagement in Practice: U.S. Relations with Iraq, 1982-90.**

Engagement serves as a core policy doctrine of U.S. national security strategy in the 21st century.<sup>2</sup> In practice, implementing engagement relies heavily on the manipulation on the economic elements of national power, primarily in the areas of trade and finance, to influence the behavior of other states. Engagement uses economic interdependence, or mutual dependence, to create ties that, in theory, should bind states together. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye suggest that economic interdependence should be understood in terms of the power to influence, or the effects on each state of their trade linkages. Indeed, as many scholars have indicated, states have long recognized the truth that power generally flows from asymmetrical (or imbalanced) interdependence.<sup>3</sup> In keeping with this tradition, Keohane and Nye stress that when planning an effective diplomatic strategy, "It is asymmetries in dependence that are most likely to provide sources of influence for actors in their dealings with one another. Less dependent actors often can use the interdependent relationship as a source of power in bargaining over an issue and perhaps to affect other issues."<sup>4</sup> At its core, economic statecraft is founded on the principle of asymmetrical power.

In 1979 political turmoil in the Middle East forever changed the regional strategic landscape. In January of that year, a groundswell of Islamist protesters drove the Shah of Iran from the Persian throne; in December the Soviet Union launched its ruinous war in Afghanistan; and in September 1980, Iraq invaded Iran. Thus, the Middle East stage radically was changed as the Reagan administration entered the White House. In the minds of Ronald Reagan's foreign policy team, U.S. national interests in the oil-rich Persian Gulf now faced two significant new threats: communist expansionism by direct military means from the Soviet Union and the spread of anti-U.S. Islamic fundamentalism from Iran. With these two factors in mind, Iraq's sponsorship of international terrorism was seen as a lesser of evils, and therefore Baghdad was perceived as a potential partner that could serve U.S. strategic interests in the region.

In terms of strategic formulation, the ends (or goals) were clear: block both Soviet expansion and the further expansion of radical Islam into the Gulf region. The way in which these goals could be achieved was identified as the transformation of Iraq into a pro-U.S. country vis-à-vis a policy of engagement. The means to be deployed would be a combination of three elements of national power: 1) limited military support; 2) increased diplomatic and political intercourse; and 3) heavy economic incentives; with the latter being the key element. What was the risk assessment of such a strategy? There was little chance that U.S.-Iraq relations could be made any worse than they were at the time, thus, it seemed that almost any strategy that could increase U.S. influence in with Baghdad was worth a try. If the strategy worked, the United States would achieve its regional political goals and possibly even score a broader battle in the Cold War by weaning a Soviet client state away from Moscow. The only possible negative outcome was a domestic political backlash by those who would accuse the administration of negotiating with a terrorist-sponsoring state. However, there were no well-organized anti-Saddam groups of Iraqis in the United States that could pressure Congress (unlike the powerful Cuban-American community) to block White House overtures. Due to the huge leverage Washington held over Tel Aviv by its yearly military and financial aid packages, any potential pressure that the Israeli lobby might decide to mount was considered manageable. Finally, it must be remembered that these events transpired during one of its most strained periods of the Cold War. Virtually all opposition to a change in policy toward Iraq could be bent upon the traditional wheel of geopolitical Cold War national security interests. In short, the risk assessment suggested a high potential gain, with a minimal potential loss; as a result, engagement was given the green light.

In March 1982, the U.S. Government officially began engaging Saddam Hussein by removing Iraq from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. The official reason was to recognize Iraq's improved record,<sup>5</sup> a claim that a Defense Department official later rebutted, stating: "No one had any doubts about [the Iraqis'] continued involvement in terrorism. . . . The real reason was to help them succeed in the war against Iran."<sup>6</sup> Thus Iraq, no longer on the list of terrorist states subject to highly binding export restrictions on weapon purchases and technology exports, became eligible for U.S. Government financed credits designed to promote the export of U.S. goods. It was presumed that after Iraq began to benefit from and become reliant on U.S. economic linkages, the United States would be able to induce Iraq to behave more in accordance with international norms. Engagement of Saddam's regime was anchored on the assumption that trade interdependence would be asymmetrical in favor of the United States, and that, in turn, the United States would be able to shape Iraq's behavior, using trade as a tool of influence. In November 1984, after Reagan's reelection, Washington resumed full diplomatic ties with Baghdad.

The contextual setting of the time strongly suggested that such a strategy had an excellent chance of success. As a result of war-related disruptions in shipping through the Persian Gulf, Iraq's oil revenues had shrunk from \$22 billion in 1980 to approximately \$9.5 billion in 1982. Iraq was dependent on imports for 75 percent of its food supply, and it was deep in debt.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it comes as no surprise that three of the main areas of trade that Reagan administration officials focused on for engagement with Iraq were in the realms of oil, agriculture, and finance. By 1984 the U.S. Agriculture Department's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) had extended \$513 million in credits for Iraq to purchase U.S. farm products. In 1985 the U.S. Export-Import Bank extended more than \$684 million in short- and long-term credits to Iraq for the construction of a strategic oil pipeline through Jordan that would have the capacity for a million barrels per day. In terms of military assistance, the United States still officially maintained a stance of neutrality in the Iran-Iraq war. However, the United States sold to Iraq a wide variety of "dual-use" items. For instance, Iraq purchased more than 100 helicopters from manufacturers in the United States, which in export documents were designated for civilian and recreational purposes. Upon arrival in Iraq, they immediately were diverted to the front with Iran, with no ensuing protest from Washington.

The Reagan administration also gave the “nod and wink” to the illegal transfer of U.S. weapons from third countries, including sales of theator of war (TOW) anti-tank missiles, helicopters, small arms, mortars, and munitions from Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. However, of greater military value was the intelligence data supplied to Iraq from U.S. satellite photography. In 1984 President Ronald Reagan signed a national security directive authorizing intelligence-sharing with Iraq, a move analysts would later describe as having saved the Iraqis from being overrun in several key battles.<sup>8</sup>

U.S. engagement incentives continued to grow throughout the remainder of Reagan’s term in office. Under the first Bush administration, however, the use of the economic tools of statecraft moved to a higher level. His transition team argued, “Trade is the best key to political influence.”<sup>9</sup> By 1989, Iraq had become the single biggest market for U.S. rice exporters, with sales running to \$180 million. Sales of wheat, flour, livestock feed, cotton, and other commodities amounted to more than \$345 million in additional income for U.S. farmers and agribusinesses. In 1990 the U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed allocating \$1 billion in new credits to Iraq, bringing the total to more than \$2 billion.<sup>10</sup> These selected examples only begin to portray the variety of ways in which the United States attempted to engage Iraq with economic incentives.

Considering what we now know about Iraq in the years that have passed since the Gulf War, it is only pointed rhetoric to ask if the policy was a success. However, even before the Gulf War, it was apparent to many observers that engagement of Iraq was not working. Despite Saddam’s official opening of Kurdistan to foreign reporters, atrocities against the Kurds continued unabated in 1989 and 1990. Amnesty International documented the kidnapping and torture of more than 300 Kurdish children as human hostages in an attempt to intimidate Kurdish separatists in the north of Iraq,<sup>11</sup> and the U.S. Government’s own human rights report clearly stated that even *perceived* political and military opposition to the Iraqi government was dealt routinely with through the torture and execution of suspected Kurds.<sup>12</sup> Some of the most disturbing warning signs of Saddam’s continued predatory profile come from the review of Iraq’s supposedly clandestine program to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD). As early as March 1985, Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle urged that the United States impose a “non-nuclear assurance” clause as a written condition for exporting advanced computers. Perle, who was known as one of the administration’s most hard-line hawks in his anti-Soviet views, was not convinced that economic statecraft (in the form of technology transfers) should be used in the attempt to wean Iraq away from Moscow. However, those who were certain that such transfers were necessary to convince the Iraqis of Washington’s friendship overruled Perle and others in the administration.<sup>13</sup>

From 1985 to 1990, U.S. controls on exports of specialized, high-technology dual-use products were weakened steadily despite repeated protests from high-ranking officials in the Energy and Defense Departments.<sup>14</sup> However, in retrospect, it is clear that until the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the U.S. foreign policy agencies that had embraced the economic tools of statecraft (primarily State and Commerce) were able to override continually those agencies focused on national security (Defense and the CIA). Correspondingly, the Iraqi record on terrorism remained largely unchanged. In 1982 Iraq was tied to the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador to London, the hit man being a colonel in the Iraqi intelligence services. After expelling the well-known Palestinian terrorist, Abu Nidal, under pressure from the U.S. Congress, Saddam proceeded to patch up relations with Yasir Arafat, who thanked the Iraqi leader for his “donations” of weapons to reequip the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) after it had been driven out of Beirut by Israeli forces. In October 1985 the Iraqi government assisted the escape of the terrorists responsible for the murder of wheelchair-bound U.S. citizen, Leon Klinghoffer, on the cruise ship, *Achille Lauro*, and Baghdad refused to revoke the diplomatic passport held by Abu Abbas, the lead terrorist in the high-profile attack. In 1985 two Iraqi-based terrorists were captured in Rome in transit to planned attacks on American targets. Despite official public denials from the U.S.

Executive Branch, it was acknowledged in a then-classified Reagan administration document that Iraq continued to support terrorism.<sup>15</sup>

Probably the most damning evidence of engagement's ineffectiveness in altering Iraq's behavior comes from a review of that country's use of chemical weapons against Iranian soldiers and Iraqi civilians. In 1983, the first of four reports of the use of chemical weapons against Iranian forces was received in Washington, and in 1984 a report issued by the United Nations (UN) provided the first public documentation of Iraq's violation of international law on the use of such weapons.<sup>16</sup> The Reagan administration responded to these chemical weapon attacks by filing paper protests with the Iraqi government, sponsoring a resolution in the UN General Assembly, and tightening some export controls on chemical supplies and technology.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, however, the United States continued to provide Iraq with intelligence data on Iranian troop movements and formations, ignoring the fact that such data was being used to optimize the deployment and use of chemical attacks against the Iranians.

It is obvious that from a moral, ethical, or legal perspective, the U.S. position in these policies is an impoverished one. However, in the amoral, *realpolitik* world of international diplomacy, where strategic concerns often take precedence over moral and ethical principles, one might choose to argue that the U.S. position was not necessarily an illogical one. But does such an amoral realist's analysis actually hold true under closer scrutiny in terms of its strategic logic? The key question is this: When George Bush took over from Ronald Reagan, what had happened to the original strategic rationale for engaging Iraq?

In 1988, immediately after the end of the Iran-Iraq War, using U.S.-built helicopters, Saddam unleashed brutal gas attacks on the Kurds. Approximately 30 villages were gassed with chemical agents that included mustard gas and nerve toxins. Normally, the United States would lead the outraged international response to any such act. (One can only imagine the response at the time if the Sandinista government in Nicaragua had gassed the U.S.-supported Contras.) In fact, the Reagan administration did sponsor a resolution in the UN condemning the use of chemical weapons, and it tightened some export controls; however, the great majority of all dual-use export licenses were approved by the Reagan administration.<sup>18</sup> While the record clearly shows that the United States refused to pursue a highly confrontational approach (in the form of economic sanctions), there is little evidence that Washington made any serious attempt to alter Saddam's behavior by using any form of leverage that the burgeoning asymmetrical economic ties had created during 6 years of engagement.

This inaction on the part of the United States is remarkable for a number of reasons. First, economic sanctions had been imposed on Libya simply based on intelligence data showing that the country was developing a chemical weapons program. In contrast, Iraq had not only developed the most extensive chemical weapons program in the Third World, but it actually had used the weapons repeatedly. Yet no sanctions were forthcoming. As noted at the time by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Schifter, Saddam's actions constituted a "consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights," which, according to existing law, required sanctions.<sup>19</sup> Second, and perhaps more to the point, the geopolitical strategic situation in the region, which drove the original overture to Iraq, had changed by the summer of 1988. The Cold War was at its lowest ebb in years as Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost* revolution accelerated. This revolution in Soviet behavior was validated that year by the announcement that Soviet troops would begin withdrawing from Afghanistan. In August 1988, Iraq's war with Iran came to an end, with stalemate along the original border being the end result. Thus, both core strategic U.S. goals had been fulfilled: fundamentalism had been blocked geostrategically from spreading from Iran into the oil-rich Gulf states, and the Soviet military threat was in rapid retreat from the region. If the "ends" or goals of U.S. strategy had been accomplished, why, then, did the Bush administration continue the policy of engagement, vis-à-vis positive incentives, rather than turning to more coercive threats by threatening to cut off Iraq's sole remaining lifeline?

In terms of the logic of engagement, the potential for U.S. leverage over Iraq was quite salient at the time. In 1988 Iraq was mired in debt and in desperate need of foreign capital for reconstruction after 8 years of destructive war with Iran. If the rationale of asymmetrical interdependence that lay at the foundation of U.S. engagement policies was correct, Iraq should have been malleable under any new economic stresses imposed by the United States. Indeed, the war with Iran had cost the country nearly half a trillion dollars in direct and indirect costs.<sup>20</sup> Iraq was behind in its loan payments, with an overall foreign debt of more than \$80 billion. Its major economic lifeblood, oil, was a commodity in high supply and lower demand on world markets. In 1980, before the war, Iraq had made \$22 billion a year in oil revenues; in 1988 the figure was \$11 billion, before adjusting for inflation.<sup>21</sup>

The question is, when Saddam used poison gas to lay waste to Kurdish Iraqi citizens, why did the United States put so little pressure on Iraq to change its behavior? This lack of action seems inexplicable when the original policy of building economic ties to gain political leverage over Iraq seemed so ripe for success. If the tools of economic statecraft had been deployed with the goal of making Iraq open to U.S. influence, then those tools could be given meaning and substance only if the United States was willing to put coercive pressure on Iraq when behavioral reciprocity failed to emerge. In retrospect, the preponderance of evidence, even at the time made it quite clear that Iraqi behavior had not fundamentally changed. Yet, despite Iraq's ongoing pariah-like behavior, the United States was unwilling to invoke the power of the trade linkages it had intentionally created. Why?

### **Bridging the Gap in Theory and Practice: Inverse Engagement.**

The policy of engagement refers to the use of noncoercive means, or positive incentives, by one state to alter the elements of another state's behavior. As such, some scholars have categorized engagement as a form of appeasement.<sup>22</sup> However, I concur with the view articulated by Randall Schweller that while engagement can be classified in generic terms as a form of appeasement, an important qualitative difference exists between the two: "Engagement is more than appeasement," he says:

It encompasses any attempt to socialize the dissatisfied power into acceptance of the established order. In practice engagement may be distinguished from other policies not so much by its goals but by its means: it relies on the promise of rewards rather than the threat of punishment to influence the target's behavior. . . . The policy succeeds if such concessions convert the revolutionary state into a status quo power with a stake in the stability of the system. . . . Engagement is most likely to succeed when the established powers are strong enough to mix concessions with credible threats, to use sticks as well as carrots. . . . Otherwise, concessions will signal weakness that emboldens the aggressor to demand more.<sup>23</sup>

Schweller's account provides the basic parameters of how engagement should work in theory, but what can theory tell us about how engagement works in practice? When the "carrots" fail to produce change, can theory help to explain why an established power fails to use the "sticks" mentioned by Schweller? In this case, how can theory help us explain the first Bush administration's ongoing practice of granting noncoercive, positive trade incentives to Iraq in the face of overwhelming evidence before its invasion of Kuwait, showing that Iraq had not changed its preengagement behavioral profile and was continuing to act as a rogue state? In other words, why did the United States not use its significant power over Iraq?

To bridge this gap between theory and practice, I turn again to Keohane and Nye's classic work, *Power and Interdependence*:

Power can be thought of as the ability of an actor to get others to do something they otherwise would not do (and at an acceptable cost to the actor). . . . When we say that asymmetrical interdependence can be a source of power, we are thinking of power as control over resources, or the potential to affect outcomes. A less dependent actor in a relationship often has a significant political resource, because changes in the relationship (which the actor may be



able to initiate or threaten) will be less costly to that actor than to its partners. This advantage does not guarantee, however, that the political resources provided by favorable asymmetries in interdependence will lead to similar patterns of control over outcomes.<sup>24</sup>

Clearly, our study of U.S.-Iraq relations is illustrative of a case when a less dependent actor (the United States) is not guaranteed control over outcomes. Why? In order to understand the dynamics of power in an interdependent relationship, Keohane and Nye distinguish two useful concepts: sensitivity and vulnerability. Sensitivity interdependence, “involves degrees of responsiveness within a policy framework – how quickly do changes in one country bring costly changes in another, and how great are the costly effects? It is measured not merely by the volume of flows across borders, but also by the costly effects of changes in transactions on societies or governments.” The authors characterize vulnerability interdependence as the cost to, and the capabilities of, a state to offset or change any unwanted impacts caused by the actions of its foreign partner.<sup>25</sup> For instance, two countries may be equally sensitive to change in an economic variable, but one might be less vulnerable than the other because it has a wider variety of alternatives available to it. To illustrate both concepts, Keohane and Nye use the following pertinent example:

In petroleum, for instance, what matters is not only the proportion of one’s needs that is imported, but the alternatives to imported energy and the costs of pursuing those alternatives. Two countries, each importing 35 percent of their petroleum needs, may seem equally sensitive to price rises; but if one could shift to domestic sources at moderate cost [e.g., the United States], and the other had no alternative [e.g., Japan], the second state would be more vulnerable than the first. The vulnerability dimension of interdependence rests on the relative availability and costliness of the alternatives that various actors face.<sup>26</sup>

How does this distinction between sensitivity and vulnerability help us understand the relationship between interdependence and power? According, again, to Keohane and Nye:

Clearly, it indicates that sensitivity interdependence will be less important than vulnerability interdependence in providing power resources to actors. If one actor can reduce its costs by altering its policy, either domestically or internationally, the sensitivity patterns will not be a good guide to power resources.<sup>27</sup>

As shown during the oil shocks of the 1970s and again most recently in 2000, the U.S. policymaking sphere is highly sensitive to changes in the world price of oil.<sup>28</sup> Because of its own domestic oil production, the United States is less vulnerable than a country like Japan in terms of absolute dependence on foreign sources, but price sensitivity for such products as gasoline and heating oil is similar in the United States and Japan, a sensitivity that invokes policy changes by decisionmakers in the White House. Thus, if Iraq somehow had the power to dictate world oil prices, then the United States would be both sensitive to price increases for petroleum products<sup>29</sup> and vulnerable because of a lack of alternative suppliers, although less vulnerable than countries that rely more heavily than the United States on imported oil. On the flip side, because of its heavy reliance on exported oil as its primary source of state revenue, Iraq’s policymaking sphere also was highly attuned to changes in the world crude oil price. If too many producers were pumping too much oil, the global price would drop, and Iraq would suffer.

In terms of vulnerability, by 1990 Iraq’s exposure to variations in the global oil market clearly was much higher than that of the United States. The oil shocks of the 1970s driven by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) were followed by efforts by numerous suppliers to increase global production, which resulted in overproduction by the late 1980s. OPEC unity progressively deteriorated as its members blatantly violated production quotas, resulting in an oil glut and low prices that lasted until the beginning of the Gulf War (and resumed thereafter to continue through the 1990s). As a result, by 1990, U.S. vulnerability to any single oil supplier had greatly lessened. With the supply outpacing demand, the United States could acquire oil from a broader assortment of sources than had

been contributing to the world market a decade earlier (for example, new sources included the United Kingdom's North Sea operations and new domestic production in Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico), and existing suppliers had all increased production. As an importer, the United States remained vulnerable to the overall supply of oil, but only if major exporters cooperated in cutting production and raising prices. Lacking such cooperation by OPEC and other major exporters, in 1990 the United States was not vulnerable to the actions of any single source-point supplier like Iraq.<sup>30</sup> However, Iraq, which added to the global oversupply problem by pumping as much oil as possible to finance its war debt, could not easily find an alternative customer to replace the level of consumption represented by the United States.<sup>31</sup> Within the U.S.-Iraq trading relationship, the United States might have had incurred some minimal short-term financial costs for replacing its Iraqi oil with oil from other suppliers. But, in comparative economic terms, the costs borne by Iraq would have been significantly higher if Washington had decided to play its economic cards – that is, its asymmetric power within the bilateral interdependency. All other things being equal, in terms of bilateral economic pain and influence, Iraq should have had a lower threshold than the United States, because in 1990, Iraq's weakened economy was much more vulnerable than the U.S. economy to existing conditions in the global oil market.

A similar situation existed in the two other pillars of the bilateral economic relationship, the intertwined areas of agriculture and finance. In an economy that relied on imports to supply 65 to 70 percent of its agricultural commodities, food and the financial ability to pay for it were two critical economic sectors with a high degree of vulnerability for Iraq. By the late 1980s, Iraq had become increasingly dependent on U.S. Government-backed loans that were used to buy agricultural goods produced in the United States. According to data from the U.S. Export-Import Bank, by 1988 Iraq had serious credit problems. Primarily because of Iraq's payment arrears, which totaled over \$100 million to Italy, \$90 million to France, \$65 million to the United Kingdom, \$36 million to West Germany, and additional large amounts to Japan, the governments of the industrialized countries were unwilling to extend further loans to Baghdad.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, Iraq had mostly exhausted the huge lines of credit and outright grants of cash that had been extended by its oil-rich, but by then cash-strapped, Arab neighbors. These Arab countries held approximately half of Iraq's \$80 billion in foreign debt. Thus, as noted earlier, the \$1 billion in agricultural credits approved in 1990 under the CCC program was exceedingly important to Iraq because it had few options.<sup>33</sup> Thus, having no alternative funding sources if U.S. credits dried up, Iraq was exceedingly vulnerable to any U.S. fiscal actions. In short, in terms of U.S.-Iraq interdependence, Iraq was dependent asymmetrically on the United States for its economic well-being and was of negligible importance to the overall economic well-being of the United States.

If Iraq was highly vulnerable to U.S. power over the core economic areas of oil, food, and finance yet Saddam remained a bad actor, why did the United States not act to assert its economic leverage despite the change in the strategic picture after 1988? Ignorance of Saddam's ongoing behavior by decisionmakers in Washington certainly was not the case. As hinted at previously, the Reagan/Bush policies of uninterrupted economic engagement with Saddam did not proceed without serious internal dissent within the U.S. Government. Inside the Administration, the strongest opposition came from the Department of Defense (DoD), which (as noted in the earlier Richard Perle example) had argued for years against the shipment of dual-use technologies that could be used in the development of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. Dissenting voices also were heard from those within the State Department responsible for monitoring human rights violations. Additional internal resistance was put forward at the sub-Cabinet level and by analysts in the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Treasury, and the Federal Reserve. On the whole, however, within the upper echelons of the executive branch, any direct challenges to the overall engagement mandate eventually were overridden by Cabinet-level secretaries wielding their most effective lever: the national security directives signed by both Presidents Reagan and Bush.<sup>34</sup>



A more serious challenge to U.S. policies of engagement with Iraq came from Congress. Under the framework of the Constitution, the executive branch holds the greatest sway in overall matters of foreign policy. Because of its control over the nation's taxation and spending authority, however, Congress can influence any U.S. foreign policy that utilizes financial instruments. Although Congress did not act to condemn Iraq for the gassing of Iranian soldiers on four verified occasions in the mid-1980s,<sup>35</sup> Saddam's gassing of Kurdish civilians in 1988 from American-made helicopters did foment a significant congressional reaction, primarily from the Senate.

In early September, the Senate unanimously passed the Prevention of Genocide Act of 1988. In its original form, the legislation called for the following changes in U.S. policy toward Iraq:

- An embargo on all dual-use technology exports,
- The elimination of all CCC and Export-Import Bank credits,
- An embargo on all U.S. imports of Iraqi oil,
- A requirement that all loans to Iraq under consideration in international financial institutions (the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, etc.) be opposed by the United States.<sup>36</sup>

Liberal and conservative senators alike lent their outspoken support to this assertive legislation. Liberal Democrat Claiborne Pell declared, "Iraq's conduct is a crime against humanity. . . . It must be met with the strongest possible response." His conservative Republican counterpart, Senator Jesse Helms, concurred, stating that the Senate legislation "will help demonstrate to the Iraqi regime just how serious our country views its campaign against the Kurds. In addition, it will help assure that United States tax dollars do not subsidize the Iraqis."<sup>37</sup> As members of the Senate saw it, the time had come for exercising whatever leverage the United States held in its relationship with Iraq. However, despite the unanimous support of the Senate, over the course of the next few months, the sanctions bill systematically was watered down, and it eventually died under the heavy influence of both the Administration and opponents within the House of Representatives.

The power to influence is a two-way relationship. The key question in this case is "who is influencing whom?" On the surface, the answer appears simple. By the end of the Iran-Iraq War, the United States had become Iraq's most important international trading partner. Thus the American plan hatched by the Reagan White House for building economic ties had, in fact, worked. However, as noted by Keohane and Nye, "sensitivity interdependence can be social or political, as well as economic."<sup>38</sup> While the United States consciously pursued its own diplomatic strategy to engage Baghdad with economic tools of statecraft, Iraq simultaneously was organizing its own political muscle in Washington on the basis of a strategy of *inverse engagement* that targeted the power of interest-group politics within the U.S. political system.

To achieve its own national interest goals, Iraq pressured American businesses and organizations with vested interests in trade to lobby key members of the House. For instance, at the urging of Iraq, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly encouraged Representative Dante Fascell (Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee) to step away from an emotional response to the Iraqi poison gas attacks and to think in terms of the economic cost to Americans if sanctions were imposed.<sup>39</sup> Other pro-Iraq business groups also put pressure on members of the House. One important lobbying group, created in 1985 at the urging of the Iraqi government, was the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum. Since this group was one of Iraq's major tools of influence inside the U.S. business community, it subsequently held significant influence inside the American government. At the forum's founding, Iraq's Ambassador to the United States, Nizar Hamdoon, publicly urged corporate executives to join the group, promising that its members would receive preferential treatment in any competitive ventures involving Iraqi government contracts. In addition to a wide assortment of medium-sized and small American businesses, the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum included Fortune 500 companies (AT&T, Bechtel, Caterpillar, and General Motors),

major defense contractors (Bell Helicopter-Textron, Boeing, Lockheed, and United Technologies), and some of the world's largest U.S.-based oil companies (Amoco, Exxon, Mobil, Occidental, and Texaco).<sup>40</sup> In aggregate, the membership of the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum represented a significant cross-section of the commanding heights of corporate America.

Implemented through the manipulation of powerful American domestic special interests, Iraq's strategy of inverse engagement is perhaps best illustrated in its oil pricing policies. In its effort to engage Iraq, the United States had gone from importing no Iraqi oil before lifting sanctions in 1982, to importing 126 million barrels in 1988. However, what is most interesting in this exchange is that despite historically low global oil prices, American oil companies received a \$1 per barrel discount on purchases of Iraqi oil, a benefit not shared by non-U.S. companies. Thus, by 1988 Iraq's inverse engagement policy resulted in discount pricing that increased normal American oil company profits on 126 million barrels of oil per year.<sup>41</sup> These companies could have purchased non-Iraqi oil from alternative suppliers; however, they would do so without the \$126 million financial "carrot" offered by Saddam's inverse engagement strategy. Thus, despite its severe financial crisis, the Iraqi government was willing to purchase what it perceived as an extra \$126 million worth of power and influence with American oil company executives, who in turn would be asked to use their substantial clout inside the Washington beltway.

Was inverse engagement a good policy choice by Iraq? When sanctions for gassing the Kurds were being debated within the U.S. Government, Iraq threatened to turn to other countries in the world market, warning that it would stop payment on over \$1 billion in outstanding debt if the United States imposed sanctions. Leading members of the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum and other special interests in Washington then pressured members of the House to kill the sanctions bill. As *New York Times* reporter Elaine Sciolino reported,

The special interests got into the act," [Senator] Pell said in a speech on October 21, 1988. "Agriculture interests objected to the suspension of taxpayer subsidies for agricultural exports to Iraq; the oil industry protested the oil boycott — although alternative supplies are readily available. Even a chemical company called to inquire how its products might be impacted."<sup>42</sup>

To borrow Harold Lasswell's statement, the Iraqis clearly understood the intricacies of "who gets what, when, and how"<sup>43</sup> in American politics. In order to achieve its foreign policy goals, Iraq demanded that its major trade partners in the private sector pressure key members of Congress, as well as the White House, to block any proposals for economic sanctions or to act in other ways that harmed Iraq. In terms of economic statecraft, Iraq's inverse engagement was a brilliant tactical approach that used Washington's own erroneously perceived strengths to Iraq's advantage. By specifically targeting congressional political sensitivity to any matters related to trade, domestic employment, and the profit margins of politically active groups, the Iraqis were able to effectively neutralize America's power to exploit the asymmetric economic interdependence that had been created through the policy of engagement. Indeed, as noted above, "Trade is the best key to political influence"; in this case, however, the sentence should read: "Trade is the best key to political influence in the United States, not necessarily in other countries."

## **Conclusion.**

It would be a bold and erroneous assertion to claim that a single variable—domestic special interests—fully explains the complexities of U.S. foreign policy in the case of Iraq in the 1980s. However, it does seem clear that the concepts of sensitivity and vulnerability lend credence to the relative weight of this analytical approach, although not precisely in the manner that Keohane and Nye prescribed. In

retrospect, it is clear that America's engagement policies, both past and present, are built on the basic theoretical assumption that economic sensitivity and vulnerability in the target state will ensue from any asymmetrical trade linkages that favor the United States. This assumption may be theoretically true in purely economic terms, but it is less relevant (if not erroneous) in terms of practical statecraft, the arena where economics and politics are inextricably linked. In the real-world politics of U.S.-Iraq relations, the political spheres in the United States were highly sensitive to Iraq's counterstrategy of inverse engagement, despite the asymmetrical nature of interdependent U.S.-Iraq economic ties. Here, too, it is clear that international relations theory needs some rethinking. First, it is clear that the more dependent actor (Iraq) held more power to influence policy than the less dependent actor (the United States). Second, Keohane and Nye's assertion that "sensitivity interdependence will be less important than vulnerability interdependence in providing power resources to actors"<sup>44</sup> is challenged by the evidence on the ground in this particular case. American sensitivity to Iraqi-inspired economic threats was greater than Iraq's vulnerability to overall U.S. economic power. As British military historian Charles Callwell wrote early in the 20th century, "Theory cannot be accepted as conclusive when practice points the other way."<sup>45</sup>

Therein lies a key conceptual problem of engagement. In thinking about how engagement would work in Iraq, U.S. policymakers failed to comprehend fully the internal dynamics of both sides of the system, both in terms of the Iraqi regime and in terms of the U.S. regime. As a result, perhaps the most important lesson of this study is the failure of U.S. foreign policy practitioners to grasp the domestic consequences of their actions at home. In other words, when engaging a foreign power, during the critical risk assessment phase, the question should be asked: What impact will policy changes have inside the United States? Iraq did, of course, respond to U.S. engagement initiatives, but not in the way policymakers in the United States hoped it would. Instead of responding as predicted in Washington, the Iraqis designed their own inverse engagement policies to obtain some measure of control over American policy. In the United States, politicians rule on the democratic principle of popular sovereignty; in day-to-day practice, however, American policymaking in both domestic and foreign affairs is influenced heavily by interest-group politics that have little to do with voting by the masses.<sup>46</sup> Domestic special interest groups in the form of oil companies, agribusinesses, labor unions, and industrial conglomerates existed long before the United States embarked on its new policies with Iraq in 1982. However, before the Reagan administration decided to engage Iraq, no significant pro-Iraq special interests existed in the United States because there were no vested interests in Iraq. Professional umbrella political organizations such as the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum emerged only after engagement of Iraq began in the early 1980s. To use a battlefield metaphor, Iraq's inverse engagement policy was a well-executed flanking maneuver that took advantage of the shifting diplomatic terrain created by the United States.

In thinking broadly about trade politics in general, this domestic-level oversight may not be a critical consideration in relations between democracies, but when an autocracy is involved, all bets are off. Indeed, as this case study suggests, when an economically powerful yet politically sensitive democracy (the United States) is pitted against an economically vulnerable yet politically resilient autocracy (Iraq), the autocracy may achieve undue levels of influence if it is clever enough to follow the Iraqi model and employ an inverse engagement strategy. Thus, if one wished to identify an Achilles' heel of engagement, the answer is not found beyond America's borders but within the nation's constitutional structures and governing order. In rethinking engagement, a keener understanding of, and greater respect for, any given opponent's ends, ways, and means for influencing the U.S. process must be considered seriously by American decisionmakers.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 19

1. An earlier version of this chapter appears under the title "Inverse Engagement: Lessons from U.S.-Iraq Relations, 1982-1990," that was published in *Parameters: U.S. Army War College Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Summer 2003, pp. 51-65.
2. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, Washington: The White House, October 1998. Document appears in appendix of Michael E. Brown, et al., eds., *America's Strategic Choices*, rev. ed.; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000.
3. For instance, see Albert Hirschman, *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945. Thucydides asserts that war between Sparta and Athens was the result of an imbalance of power resulting from Athens' increasing success as an Aegean trading center. Fear of increased Athenian military power that derived from its impressive growth in trade drove Sparta to launch a preemptive strike against its rival.
4. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 3d. ed.; New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 2000, pp. 10-11.
5. See letter from Reagan's chief of congressional relations, Kenneth Duberstein, to members of Congress, in "Congress and Iraq: A Chronology," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, April 27, 1992, p. 1070. Cited in Bruce Jentleson, *With Friends Like These: Reagan-Bush and Saddam, 1982-1990*, New York: Norton Press, 1994, p. 33.
6. Guy Gugliotta, et al., interview with Former Assistant Secretary of Defense Noel Koch, "At War, Iraq Courted U.S. into Economic Embrace," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 1990, p. A34.
7. Jentleson, p. 42.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
10. Memorandum to file, Assistant U.S. Attorney Gale McKenzie, "Briefing of USDA-OIG by NDGA re: Criminal Investigation of BNL-Atlanta," June 16, 1992, cited in Jentleson, p. 132.
11. Jentleson, p. 45.
12. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices of 1985*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986.
13. Perle and his deputy, Stephen Bryen, were overruled by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger after their views were rejected by Secretary of State George Schultz. See Jentleson, p. 51.
14. Kenneth Timmerman, *The Death Lobby: How the West Armed Iraq*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991, p. 202.
15. U.S. Department of State Memorandum, "Iraq's Retreat from International Terrorism," cited in Jentleson, pp. 53-55. Abbas was captured by U.S. forces on the outskirts of Baghdad on April 15, 2003.
16. *Ibid.*
17. U.S. Department of State Memorandum, "Curbing Proliferation of Chemical Weapons," June 10, 1985, cited in Jentleson, p. 76.
18. See Jentleson, pp. 68-93.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
20. Elaine Sciolino, *The Outlaw State: Saddam Hussein's Quest for Power and the Gulf Crisis*, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991, p. 105.
21. Jentleson, p. 81.
22. See Alexander L. George, *Bridging the Gap*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993, pp. 61-70. George is careful to clarify that he is using the term in its classic definition as a conflict resolution strategy, and not in the pejorative sense that is usually equated to appeasement of Hitler in the late 1930s.
23. Randall L. Schweller, "Managing the Rise of Great Powers: History and Theory," *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power*, Alastair I. Johnston and Robert S. Ross, eds., London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 14-15.
24. Keohane and Nye, p. 11.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-15.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
27. *Ibid.*

28. This sensitivity in the policy realm was revealed most recently in September-October 2000 with the Clinton administration's decision to tap 30 million barrels of oil from the strategic petroleum reserve when crude oil prices topped \$30 per barrel.

29. This sensitivity was illustrated shortly after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, when oil prices spiked above \$40 per barrel. Prices rose dramatically on fear of a possible Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia, the world's largest exporter. Sensitivity and vulnerability in the policy sphere in Washington were manifest in the decision to go to war with Iraq to prevent its control of the world's most concentrated oil resources.

30. Iraq's OPEC quota of 2.73 million barrels per day was not enough to even service the interest payments on its debt when the average price of oil hovered around \$16 per barrel. See Christine Moss Helms, "Arab Perspectives on the Gulf Crisis," *The Persian Gulf Crisis: Power in the Post-Cold War World*, Robert F. Helms and Robert H. Dorff, eds., Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993, p. 75.

31. For instance, in 1988 the United States purchased \$1.6 billion of Iraq's \$11 billion in sales, or 15 percent of total Iraqi exports. See Jentleson, pp. 81-82.

32. Export-Import Bank, *Country Report: Iraq*, April 24, 1989, Appendices 1-2, cited in Jentleson, p. 81.

33. In documents relating to the BNL scandal involving the foreign bank, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, the Iraq desk officer from the U.S. Treasury Department indicated that only U.S. and UK export financing sources were available to Iraq. See Jentleson, p. 129.

34. Most important in this regard were Secretary of State George P. Schultz under Reagan and Secretary of State James A. Baker III under Bush.

35. March 1984, April 1985, February-March 1986, April-May 1987. See Anthony Cordesman, "Creating Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Armed Forces Journal*, January/February 1989, p. 56.

36. Jentleson, p. 77.

37. *Congressional Record*, September 9, 1988, pp. S12136-37.

38. Keohane and Nye, p. 12.

39. Letter from William T. Archey, Vice President, International Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dante B. Fascell, September 15, 1988, cited in Jentleson, p. 85.

40. Jentleson, p. 84.

41. U.S. Department of Energy, "Petroleum Supply Annual," Energy Information Administration, Office of Oil and Gas, 1981-90; "Discount Prices on Imports of Iraqi Oil, 1988-1990," document provided by U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Sub-committee on Energy and Power; cited in Jentleson, p. 81.

42. Sciolino, p. 171. See also Douglas Waller, "Glass House," *The New Republic*, November 5, 1990, pp. 13-14.

43. Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How*, New York: P. Smith, 1950.

44. Keohane and Nye, p. 15.

45. Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: A Tactical Textbook for Imperial Soldiers*, reprint of the 1906 ed., London: Greenhill, 1990, p. 270; cited in Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, London: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 4.

46. For the classic critical expression of this analysis, see Theodore Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States*, 2d ed.; New York: W. W. Norton, 1979.

## **PART IV**

### **NATIONAL SECURITY POLICYMAKING**



## CHAPTER 20

### NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS

**Gabriel Marcella<sup>1</sup>**

Power is the capacity to direct the decisions and actions of others. Power derives from strength and will. Strength comes from the transformation of resources into capabilities. Will infuses objectives with resolve. Strategy marshals capabilities and brings them to bear with precision. Statecraft seeks through strategy to magnify the mass, relevance, impact, and irresistibility of power. It guides the ways the state deploys and applies its power abroad. These ways embrace the arts of war, espionage, and diplomacy. The practitioners of these three arts are the paladins of statecraft.<sup>2</sup>

Chas. W. Freeman, Jr.

The United States is a fully equipped, globally deployed, interagency superpower. It is the indispensable anchor of international order and the increasingly globalized economic system. Nothing quite like it has ever existed. Indeed, such great powers as Rome, Byzantium, China, Spain, England, and France achieved extraordinary sophistication, enormous institutional and cultural influence, and longevity, but they never achieved the full articulation of America's global reach.

Today the United States forward deploys some 250 diplomatic missions in the form of embassies, consulates, and memberships in specialized organizations. It possesses a unified military command system that covers all regions of the world, the homeland, and even outer space. It is the leader of an interlocking set of alliances and agreements that promotes peace, open trade, the principles of democracy, human rights, and protection of the environment. American capital, technology, and culture influence the globe. American power and influence is pervasive and multidimensional. All the instruments of national power are deployed. Yet the challenge of strategic integration, of bringing the instruments into coherent effectiveness, remains. Presidents and their national security staffs strive to achieve coherence, with varying levels of success through use of the "interagency process."

The interagency decisionmaking process is uniquely American in character, size, and complexity. Given ever expanding responsibilities and the competition for resources, it is imperative that national security professionals master it in order to work effectively within it. The complex challenges to national security in the 21st century will require intelligent integration of resources and unity of effort within the government. It also is imperative that changes be made to make the system and the process more effective.

The United States first faced the challenge of strategic integration in an embryonic interagency process during World War II. Mobilizing the nation, the government, and the armed forces for war and winning the peace highlighted the importance of resources and budgets, of integrating diplomacy with military power, gathering and analyzing enormous quantities of intelligence, conducting joint and combined military operations, and managing coalition strategies and balancing competing regional priorities, for example, the European versus the Pacific theater in national strategy. From the war and the onset of the Cold War emerged a number of institutional and policy innovations. Among them were the structure of the modern Department of State, Department of Defense (DoD) (from the old War and Navy Departments), a centralized intelligence system, the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe, the unified military command system, the Air Force, the predecessor of the U.S. Agency for International Development (Point Four), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other alliances, military assistance pacts, military advisory groups, and the U.S. Information Agency.

There is probably no period in American history like the late 1940s and early 1950s that demonstrates the kind of national and institutional learning that John P. Lovell calls "purposeful adaptation."



He defines it as “the need to develop and pursue foreign policy goals that are sensitive to national needs and aspirations and to the realities of a changing world environment.”<sup>3</sup> The evolution of the interagency process parallels America’s purposeful adaptation to changing global realities of the last 5 decades. But it is not an orderly evolution because of serious structural and cultural impediments, such as discontinuities from one administration to another and poor institutional memory.<sup>4</sup> Prominent historical markers along the path of learning and adaptation included such documents as National Security Council (NSC) 68, the intellectual framework for the containment strategy against the Soviet Union. Though not a policy document, the Weinberger Doctrine articulated criteria for the use of military power that dramatically influenced the shape of American strategy in the 1980s and 1990s.

There are countless examples of how American statesmen codify in writing the patterns of “purposeful adaptation.” The tragic events of September 11, 2001 (9/11), had such an impact on American national security that the George W. Bush administration created a Department for Homeland Security. It also published a series of strategy documents on counterterrorism, homeland security, military strategy, and infrastructure security. Bush’s National Security Strategy (NSS) dramatically redefined the philosophical underpinnings of the U.S. role in the world. Because the attacks of 9/11 represented an assault on international order and exposed the vulnerabilities of the United States to asymmetric warfare by non-state actors, the NSS of September 17, 2002, spoke of the need to redefine the Westphalian concept of sovereignty for the purpose of reestablishing order and security in the international system.<sup>5</sup>

When the United States reluctantly inherited global responsibilities in 1945, American statesmen faced three challenges: forging a system of collective security, promoting decolonization, and building a stable international financial order. These and four decades of intense threat from the other superpower had a decisive impact on shaping the interagency process. With the end of bipolar ideological and geopolitical conflict, the foreign policy and defense agenda was captured by free trade, democratization, subnational ethnic and religious conflict, failing states, humanitarian contingencies, ecological deterioration, terrorism, international organized crime, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of the technology of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The dawn of the 21st century calls for a relook at the adequacy of the interagency system not only because of the changing agenda, but also because of the nature and extent of the global responsibilities the United States has taken on.

### **The National Security Council: The Permanent Tension between Coordination vs. Policymaking.**

To bring strategic coherence, consensus, and decisiveness to the burgeoning global responsibilities of the emerging superpower, the National Security Act of 1947 created the National Security Council:

The function of the Council shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.

. . . other functions the President may direct for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the Government relating to the nation’s security . . .

. . . assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States . . .

. . . consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security .

The statutory members are the President, the Vice-President, and the Secretaries of State and Defense. By statute, the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are advisors. Other advisors, including additional cabinet members such as the Secretary of the

Treasury, may be invited. The President chairs the meeting; but the Council need not convene formally to function. Formal NSC meetings are rare. Indeed, by late 1999 the Clinton NSC had met only once: March 2, 1993. There are alternatives to formal meetings, such as the ABC luncheons of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Sandy Berger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, or the Deputies breakfasts and lunches. The President himself may at any time meet informally with members of his cabinet. In recent years, televideo conferencing facilitates such senior level consultations.

The “NSC system” of policy coordination and integration across the departments and agencies operates 24 hours a day. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs directs the staff. The emergence of the modern “operational presidency,”<sup>6</sup> brought to the NSC greater authority over the development and implementation of policy, thus creating a new power center that competes for jurisdiction with the Departments of State and Defense.

The NSC staff, known as the Executive Secretariat, has varied in size and function. In 1999 the staff comprised about 208 professionals covering regional and functional responsibilities (101 were policy personnel and 107 administrative and support personnel). Under the George W. Bush administration, the NSC staff was cut to nearly half. Staffers are detailed from the diplomatic corps, the intelligence community, the civil service, the military services (12 military officers were in policy positions in September 1999), academia, and the private sector. The staffing procedures are personalized to the president’s style and comfort level. The structure of the staff, its internal and external functioning, and the degree of control of policy by the president varies. Carter and Clinton were very centralized, Reagan and George Bush, Senior, less so. As examples, the first two Presidential Decision Directives of the Clinton administration, dated January 20, 1993, set forth the structure and function of the NSC staff and groups that reported to it (see Figure 1). The day-to-day policy coordination and integration was done by the NSC Staff, divided into the functional and geographic directorates depicted in Figure 2.

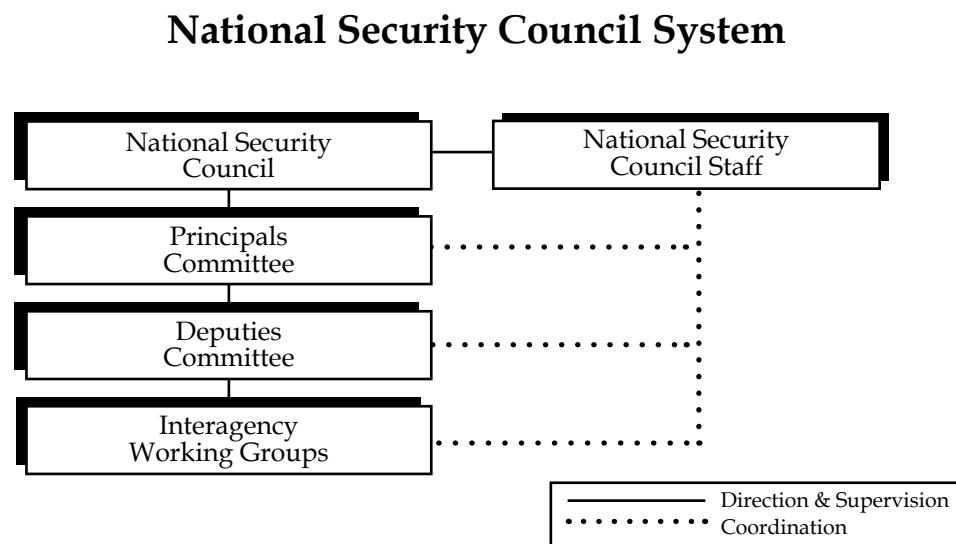


**Figure 1. National Security System Under Clinton.**

## National Security Council Staff

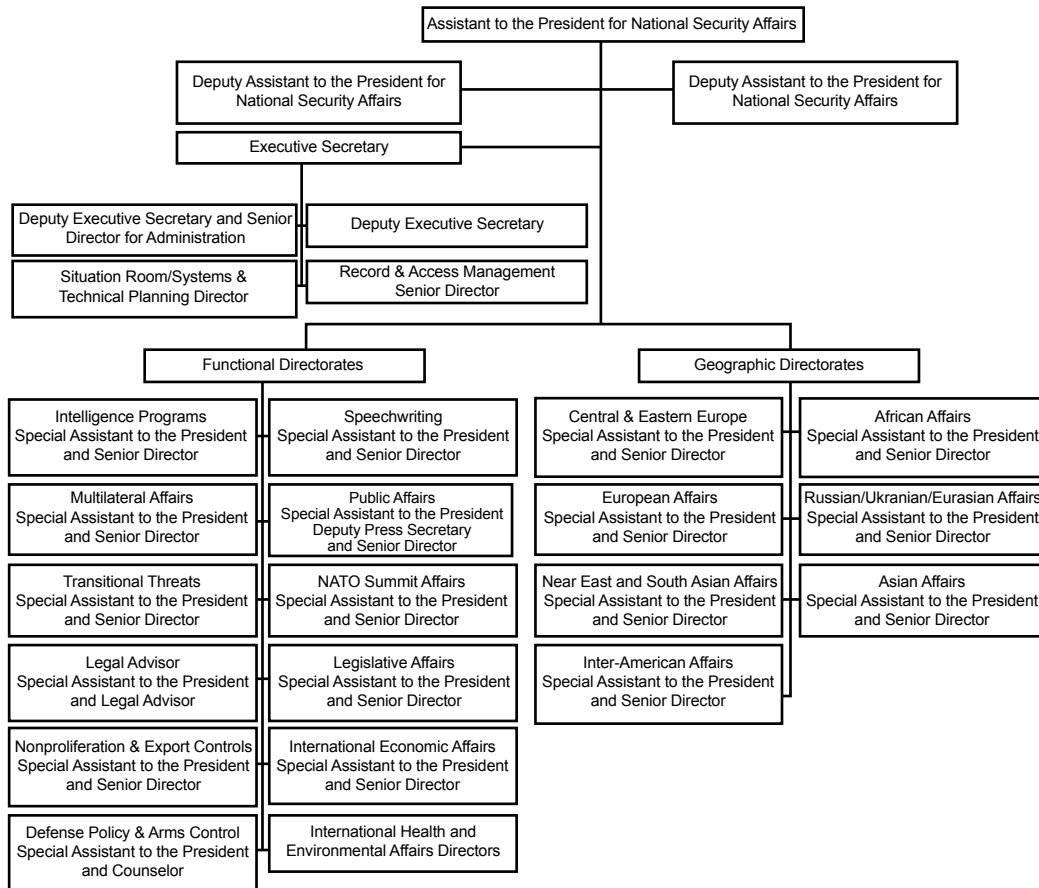


**Figure 2. Clinton's National Security Council Staff.**

The Principals Committee members were the cabinet level representatives who comprised the senior forum for national security issues. The Deputies Committee included deputy secretary level officials who monitored the work of the interagency process, did crisis management, and when necessary, pushed unresolved issues to the principals for resolution. Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) were the heart and soul of the process. They were ad hoc, standing, regional, or functional. They functioned at a number of levels, met regularly to assess routine and crisis issues, framed policy responses, and built consensus across the government for unified action. The fluid nature of the process meant that IWGs did not always have to come to decisions. The system preferred that issues be decided at the lowest level possible. If issues were not resolved there, they were elevated to the next level and when appropriate, to the Deputies Committee. Who chaired the different IWGS and committees varied between the NSC director and senior State Department officials.

Dramatic changes came with the election of George W. Bush. Comfortable with a corporate style executive leadership and surrounding himself with very experienced national security statesmen like Secretary of State Colin Powell (former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and White House Fellow), Vice-President Richard Cheney (former Congressman, Secretary of Defense, and White House Chief of Staff), and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (former Secretary of Defense, Ambassador to NATO, and Congressman), President George W. Bush centralized policy authority by establishing new structures and procedures.<sup>7</sup> (See Figure 3.)

The process began with new nomenclature for presidential directives. National Security Presidential Directive 1 (NSPD1), dated February 13, 2001, established six regional Policy Coordination Committees

(PCCs) and 11 (later 16) PCCs to handle functional responsibilities.<sup>8</sup> In 2005, they consisted of:

Regional PCCs:

- Europe
- Western Hemisphere
- East Asia
- South Asia
- Near East and North Africa
- Africa

Functional PCCs (with department responsible in parentheses)

- Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations (NSC)
- International Development and Humanitarian Assistance (State)
- Global Environment (NSC and National Economic Council)
- International Finance (Treasury)
- Transnational Economic Issues (NEC)
- Counterterrorism and National Preparedness (NSC)
- Defense Strategy, Force Structure, and Planning (Defense)
- Arms Control (NSC)
- Intelligence and Counterintelligence (NSC)
- Records Access and Information Security (NSC)
- International Organized Crime (NSC)
- Contingency Planning (NSC)
- Space (NSC)
- HIV/ AIDS and Infectious Diseases (state and Health and Human Services)

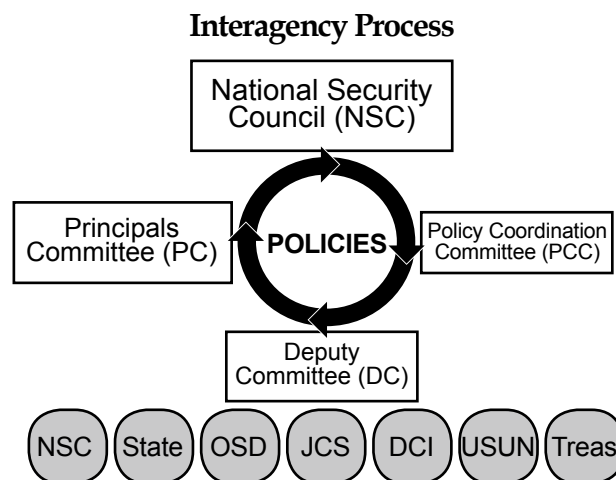


**Figure 3. Bush Administration Interagency Process.**

The plethora of existing IWGs was abolished by NSPD1. The activities of IWGS were transferred to the new PCCs. The PCCs were the most important structural changes made by the Bush administration. According to NSPD1, they were the “Day-to-day fora for interagency coordination of national security policy. They shall provide policy analysis for consideration by the more senior committees of the NSC system and ensure timely responses to decisions made by the president.” The centralization of authority over national security matters reached levels not seen for many years. However, it remained to be seen whether the system would work effectively. In Spring 2003, a senior national security careerist who was involved intimately with policymaking referred to interagency relations as “the worst in 20 years.”

An experienced foreign policy hand commented: “The interagency system is broken” and averred that instead of centralization of authority, there is fragmentation.<sup>9</sup> Explanations for this state of affairs varied. They included the intrusion of group think dynamics among senior neoconservative decisionmakers, the role of strong personalities, the bypassing of Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Condoleezza Rice, as well as the deliberate isolation of the Department of State.<sup>10</sup>

Another important interagency reorganization made by the Bush administration was the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and a unified military command, the Northern Command. The creation of DHS involved the transfer of responsibilities, people, and resources from existing agencies and departments to a new entity. DHS has over 170,000 employees and an anticipated budget of 40 billion dollars. It constitutes the largest reorganization of the U.S. Government since the creation of the Defense Department. DHS combined 22 agencies “specializing in various disciplines” such as law enforcement, border security, immigration, biological research, computer security, transportation security, disaster mitigation, and port security.<sup>11</sup> Though it is a national security department, it will not be involved in power projection, a crucial difference with the Defense Department. Yet, it will use many skills and resources that reside across the agencies: military, diplomatic, law enforcement, intelligence, and logistics. Homeland security also involves the concept of federalism, whereby some 87,000 state and local jurisdictions share power with federal institutions. The challenge of integrating federalism injects into national security planning will be immense.

Policy often is made in different and subtle ways. Anthony Lake, writing in *Somoza Falling: The Nicaraguan Dilemma, A Portrait of Washington At Work*, discusses how the answer to an important letter can help set policy. Hence the importance of interagency coordination and the importance of being the one (bureau, office, agency) that drafts it: “. . . policy flows as much from work on specific items – like the letter from Perez [to Carter] – as it does from the large, formal interagency ‘policy reviews’ that result in presidential pronouncements.”<sup>12</sup> Each action is precedent for future actions. Speeches, press conferences, VIP visits, and presidential travels are important. Lake elaborates “Policy is made on the fly; it emerges from the pattern of specific decisions. Its wisdom is decided by whether you have some vision of what you want, a conceptual thread as you go along.”<sup>13</sup>

The NSC staff does the daily and long-term coordination and integration of foreign policy and national security matters across the vast government. Specifically, it:

- Provides information and policy advice to the President,
- Manages the policy coordination process,
- Monitors implementation of presidential policy decisions,
- Manages crises,
- Articulates the President’s policies,
- Undertakes long term strategic planning,
- Conducts liaison with Congress and foreign governments,
- Coordinates summit meetings and national security related trips.

There is a natural tension between the policy coordination function of the NSC and policymaking. Jimmy Carter’s Director of Latin American Affairs at the NSC, Robert Pastor, argues that:

. . . tension between NSC and State derives in part from the former’s control of the agenda and the latter’s control of implementation. State Department officials tend to be anxious about the NSC usurping policy, and the NSC tends to be concerned that State either might not implement the President’s decisions or might do so in a way that would make decisions State disapproved of appear ineffective and wrong.<sup>14</sup>

The NSC staff is ideally a coordinating body but it oscillates between the poles, taking policy control over some issues while allowing the State or Defense to be the lead agency on most national security

and foreign policy issues. On some key issues, such as the Kosovo crisis of 1998-99, the NSC staff may take over policy control from State. Similarly, policy towards Cuba and Haiti in 1993-95 was handled directly out of the White House because of the deeply-rooted domestic dimension of those issues. In virtually all cases, however, major policy must be cleared through the NSC staff and the National Security Advisor. This process of clearing makes the NSC staff a key element in the policymaking process. In general, the clearance process involves a review by the appropriate NSC staff director to assure that the new policy initiative is consistent with the president's overall policy in that functional or regional area, that it has been coordinated with all appropriate departments and agencies, and that all obvious political risks associated with the new initiative have been identified and assessed. This process makes all the relevant departments stakeholders in the final policy statement. The Oliver North Iran-Contra caper created an autonomous operational entity in the NSC staff. But that was an aberration that does not invalidate the general rule. The salient point is that proximity to the president gives the NSC staff significant policy clout in the interagency process. Such clout must be used sparingly lest it cause resentment and resistance or overlook the policy wisdom and skills available elsewhere in the executive departments.

### **Toward a Theory of the Interagency Process: How Does the President Mobilize the Government?**

The interagency is not a place. It is a process involving human beings and complex organizations with different cultures, different outlooks on what is good for the national interest and the best policy to pursue—all driven by the compulsion to defend and expand turf. The process is political (therefore conflictual) because at stake is power, personal, institutional, or party. The “power game” involves the push and pull of negotiation, the guarding of policy prerogatives, the hammering out of compromises, and the normal human and institutional propensity to resist change.<sup>15</sup> Regardless of the style of the president and the structures developed for the management of national security policy, the interagency process performs the same basic functions: identifies policy issues and questions, formulates options, raises issues to the appropriate level for decisions, makes decisions where appropriate, and oversees the implementation of decisions throughout the executive departments.

It is helpful to view policy at five interrelated levels: conceptualization, articulation, budgeting, implementation, and post-implementation analysis and feedback. Conceptualization involves the intellectual task of policy development, such as a presidential directive. Articulation is the public declaration of policy that the president or subordinates make. It is critical in a democracy in order to engage public support. Budgeting involves testimony and the give and take before Congress and its various committees to justify policy goals and to request funding. Implementation is the programmed application of resources in the field in order to achieve the policy objectives. Post-implementation analysis and feedback is a continuous effort to assess the effectiveness of policy and to make appropriate adjustments. It is conducted by all the agencies in the field. The General Accounting Office of the Congress makes extensive evaluations of the effectiveness of policy implementation. Congressional hearings and visits in the field by congressional delegations and staffers also make evaluations that help refine policy.

The ideal system would have perfect goal setting, complete and accurate intelligence, comprehensive analysis and selection of the best options, clear articulation of policy and its rationale, effective execution, thorough and continuous assessment of the effects, and perfect learning from experience and the ability to recall relevant experience and information (see Figure 4).

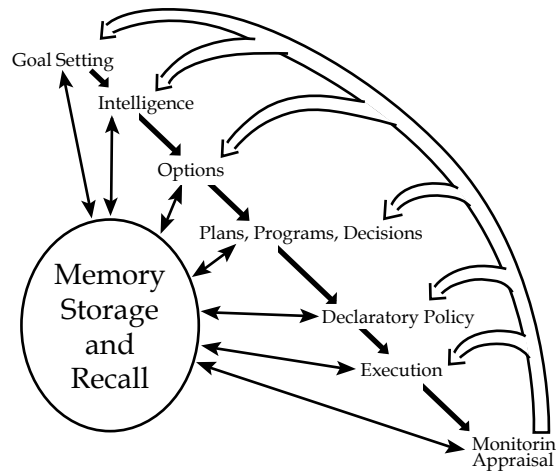


**Figure 4. Ideal Foreign Policy Process.<sup>16</sup>**

Such perfection is impossible. The reality is shown in Figure 5.

| <u>TASK</u>                    | <u>CONSTRAINTS</u>                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goal Setting                   | National interests are subject to competing claims; goals established through political struggle                             |
| Intelligence                   | Always incomplete, susceptible to overload, delays and distortions caused by biases and ambiguity in interpretation          |
| Option Formulation             | Limited search for options, comparisons made in general terms according to predispositions rather than cost-benefit analysis |
| Plans, Programs, and Decisions | Choices made in accordance with prevailing mind sets, influenced by groupthink and political compromise                      |
| Declaratory Policy             | Multiple voices, contradictions and confusion, self-serving concern for personal image and feeding the appetite of the media |
| Execution                      | Breakdowns in communication, fuzzy lines of authority, organizational parochialism, bureaucratic politics, delays            |
| Monitoring and Appraisal       | Gaps, vague standards, rigidities in adaptation, feedback failures                                                           |
| Memory Storage and Recall      | Spotty and unreliable, selective learning and application of lessons                                                         |

**Figure 5. Policy in Practice.<sup>17</sup>**

Effective policy requires control, resources, and a system of accountability. The most compelling challenge for the executive is to retain policy control. Since presidents do not have the time or expertise to oversee policymaking in detail (though Jimmy Carter tried), they delegate responsibility. But “nobody is in charge” is an often-heard refrain of the interagency process. By delegating responsibility, control becomes more diffused and the policy effort diluted. Moreover, the quest for resources brings

in another stakeholder. Congress has the constitutional responsibility to scrutinize policy initiatives and vote monies for foreign affairs and national defense. By then, a literal Pandora's box of players and expectations is opened. The numerous congressional committees and their staffs have enormous impact on national security and foreign policy.

The president begins to mobilize his government immediately upon election. A transition team works closely with the outgoing administration for the purpose of continuity. He begins nominating his cabinet, which must then be confirmed by the Senate. Some 6,000 presidential level appointees will fill the subcabinet positions, staff the White House and the NSC, take up ambassadorships (serving ambassadors traditionally submit their resignation when the occupant of the White House changes), as well as second, third, and fourth level positions in the executive departments. The purpose of these nominations is to gain control and establish accountability to the president and his agenda. In his first administration, President William Clinton faced serious difficulties because he never finished staffing his government.

Thus there is a high turnover and the injection of new talent, at times inexperienced and equipped with new predispositions about national security, at the top echelons of American government every time the part that controls the White House changes. Continuity of government resides in the nonpartisan professionals (neutral competence) of the federal civil service, the diplomatic service, the military, and the intelligence community. The transition to a new administration is a period of great anticipation about the direction of policy. Consequently, the entire interagency produces transition papers to assist and inform the newcomers, and also to protect the institutional interests of the various departments from unfriendly encroachment.

The first months of a new administration are a period of learning. Newly appointed people must familiarize themselves with the structure and process of policymaking. This necessity invariably leads to a trial-and-error atmosphere. In anticipation of the passing of the mantle, think tanks and the foreign policy and defense communities prepare for the transition by writing papers recommending the rationale for policy. These will inform the new administration about the central commitments of U.S. policy and provide opportunities for departments and agencies to define institutional turf and stake a claim to resources. The administration itself also will mandate policy reviews that eventually produce new guidance for policy.

Making speeches and declaring policy and doctrines is another way for the president to mobilize the government. The State of the Union message is one of the preeminent sources of presidential activism that engages the interagency. The congressionally-mandated NSS document, which bears the president's signature and is supposed to be produced annually, is eagerly awaited, though not with equal intensity across departments, as an indicator of an administration's direction in national security and foreign policy.

The NSS is awaited eagerly for another reason; it is the best example of "purposeful adaptation" by the American government to changing global realities and responsibilities. It expresses strategic vision, what the United States stands for in the world, its priorities, and a sensing of how the instruments of national power, the diplomatic, economic, and military will be arrayed. Since it is truly an interagency product, the NSS also serves to discipline the interagency system to understand the president's agenda and priorities and to develop a common language that gives coherence to policy. It also is more than a strategic document. It is political because it is designed to enhance presidential authority in order to mobilize the nation. Finally, the NSS tends to document rather than drive policy initiatives. This is especially true in election years.

The first NSS in 1987 focused on the Soviet threat. The Bush administration expanded it by including more regional strategies, economic policy, arms control, and transnational issues and the environment. The Clinton document of 1994 proposed "engagement and enlargement," promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and security through strength. The 1995 version added criteria on when and how



military forces would be used. By 1997, the integrating concepts of “shape,” “prepare,” and “respond” for the national military strategy came into prominence. To the core objectives of enhancing security and promoting prosperity and democracy were added fighting terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, along with managing the international financial crisis. Homeland defense against the threat of mass casualty attacks and regional strategies completed the agenda.

Another instrument is the presidential national security directives process. Administrations have titled these documents differently, and they have produced them in greater or lesser quantity. The two Clinton administrations produced at least 73 Presidential Decision Directives and the George W. Bush administration issued 44 National Security Presidential Directives by December 2005. Other administrations’ totals and titles are as follows: George H. W. Bush, 79 National Security Decision Directives; Reagan, 325 National Security Decision Memoranda; Carter, 63 Presidential Directives; Nixon-Ford, 348 National Security Decision Memoranda; and Kennedy-Johnson, 372 National Security Action Memoranda. Each administration will try to put its own stamp on national security and foreign policy, though there is great continuity with previous administrations. Whereas Reagan emphasized restoring the preeminence of American military power and rolling back the “evil empire,” Clinton focused on strengthening the American economy, open trade, democratization, conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, fighting drug trafficking and consumption, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation. 9/11 imposed a national defense priority on the George W. Bush administration. In response, the Bush administration—in addition to the NSPDs mentioned above—created a new category of Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD). Some policy documents serve jointly as NSPDs and HSPDs. For example, NSPD 43 on Domestic Nuclear Detection also is HSPD 14.<sup>18</sup>

Presidential national security directives are macro level documents, often classified, that take much deliberate planning to develop. They result from intensive interaction among the agencies. The process begins with a presidential directive to review policy that tasks the relevant agencies to develop a new policy based on broad guidance. For example, Clinton’s PDD 14 for counternarcotics emphasized greater balance between supply and demand strategies. Because of the many constraints placed on the use of economic and military assistance to fight the “war on drugs” and to help Colombia, PDD 14 evolved into the Colombia-specific PDD 73. This, in turn was superseded in the Bush administration by NSPD 18, which, thanks to 9/11 and the terrorism in Colombia, went further and provided support for both counternarcotics and counterterrorism activities in Colombia. The evolution of these policy documents over nearly 10 years nurtured the growth of significant institutional memory in the interagency with respect to the Colombian conflict.

The learning went both ways because Colombian officials had to adapt to the Washington policy process. Because of the global reach of American power and influence, such adaptation is becoming more common. Clinton’s celebrated PDD 25 set down an elaborate set of guidelines for U.S. involvement in peace operations. It became so effective as a planning device that the United Nations (UN) adopted it in modified form for planning its own peace operations, an excellent example of the international transfer of American purposeful adaptation. Other nations also used the terminology and organizing principles for their strategic and operational planning in multilateral peacekeeping.

Another instructive example is the Latin American policy PDD 21. Effective on December 27, 1993, it emphasized democracy promotion and free trade. It was addressed to more than 20 departments and agencies: Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Trade Representative, Representative of the United States to the UN, Chief of Staff to the President, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Director of Central Intelligence, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, Assistant to the President for National Economic Policy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Administrator of the Agency for International Development, Director of the

Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Director of the U.S. Information Agency.

The point of listing departments and agencies is to identify the interagency stakeholders in regional policy, though the size of the stake will vary greatly among them according to the particular issue. The stakeholders are related by functional interdependence; they have different resources, personnel, and expertise that must be integrated for policy to be effective. It is an iron rule of the interagency that *no national security or international affairs issue can be resolved by one agency alone*. For example, the DoD needs the diplomatic process that the Department of State masters in order to deploy forces abroad, build coalitions, negotiate solutions to conflict, conduct noncombatant evacuations (NEO) of American citizens caught in difficult circumstances abroad, and administer security assistance. The Department of State, in turn, depends on the logistical capabilities of the DoD to deploy personnel and materials abroad during crises, conduct coercive diplomacy, support military-to-military contacts, and give substance to alliances and defense relationships. The Office of National Drug Control Policy, a new cabinet level position, must rely on a range of agencies to reduce the supply abroad and consumption of drugs at home. Finally, all require intelligence input to make sound decisions.

These patterns of functional interdependence, whereby departments stayed within their jurisdictions, began to fray in the George W. Bush administration. Press reports in the spring of 2003 focused on the Bush “policy team at war with itself.”<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, there was a “tectonic shift” of decisionmaking power from the Department of State to Defense because of the strong personalities and neo-conservative ideology of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and subordinates, principally Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. Such a shift is unnatural and will likely correct itself in the future. But the prospect of the DoD dominating foreign policy raised concerns about the effectiveness of policy and the standing of the United States in the world. The inattention to functional interdependence was a contributing factor to the ineffectiveness of postwar reconstruction planning for Iraq in 2003.<sup>20</sup> In October 2003, President Bush attempted to improve the Iraq reconstruction effort by placing his National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, in charge. The correction allegedly upset Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Earlier in the year, the president had given authority (via NSPD 24) over the Iraq reconstruction to the Defense Department.<sup>21</sup>

The problems associated with post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq led to an upsurge of recommendations on how to improve the system for the future. For example, the House of Representatives and the Senate proposed the “Winning the Peace Act of 2003,” which would create within the Department of State a permanent office to provide support to the new position of Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization. A comprehensive study published in November 2003 by Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson of the National Defense University advocated major focus on transforming military institutions to perform “stabilization and reconstruction” operations. It also recommended harnessing interagency capabilities via the creation of a rapidly deployable National Interagency Contingency Coordinating Group to meet the need of a national level group to plan and coordinate post-conflict operations.<sup>22</sup> At this juncture it is important to note that in July 2004 the Office of Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization took form in the Department of State under the leadership of Ambassador Carlos Pascual. Yet, one year later the office was still understaffed and under budget, an example of an unfunded mandate. The Congress, which legislated the office and is a stakeholder in national security, by July 2005 had not provided sufficient funding for the Office to do its job properly.<sup>23</sup> By December 2005, as detailed later in this paper, a new National Security Presidential Directive (44) would give the Department of State the responsibility to manage interagency efforts to conduct reconstruction and stabilization.

Ideally, in response to the promulgation of a presidential directive, all agencies will energize their staffs and develop the elements that shape the policy programs. But this takes time and seldom creates optimum results, in part because of competing priorities on policymakers, limited time, constrained

resources, and congressional input. For example, the Haiti crisis of 1992-94 and congressional passage of the North America Free Trade Act (NAFTA) consumed most of the energy of the Clinton administration's NSC staff and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs of the Department of State during 1993-94 to the detriment of other Latin American policy. The Central American crisis of the 1980s also crowded out the broader agenda for Latin American policy.

In theory, once the policy elements are put together, they are costed out and submitted to Congress for approval and funding, without which policy is merely words of hopeful expectation. The reality, however, is that a presidential directive is not a permanent guide to the actions of agencies. Rarely is it fully implemented. The culture of the various executive departments will modify how directives are interpreted. For example, for the military oriented Defense Department, a directive is an order to be carried out. For State, a directive may be interpreted as the general direction a policy should take. Presidential policy can be overtaken by new priorities, new administrations, and by the departure of senior officials who had the stakes, the personal relationships, know how, and institutional memory to make it work. A senior NSC staffer, Navy Captain Joseph Bouchard, Director of Defense Policy and Arms Control, remarked in 1999 that one could not be sure about whether a directive from a previous administration was still in force because the government does not maintain a consolidated list of these documents for security reasons. Moreover, directives and other presidential documents are removed to presidential libraries and the National Archives when administrations change. A senior Defense Department official stated that directives rarely are referred to after they are final, are usually overtaken by events soon after publication, and rarely are updated. In this respect, the interagency evaluation of PDD 56's effectiveness, published in May 1997, is instructive: "PDD 56 no longer has senior level ownership. The Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and the NSC officials who initiated the document have moved on to new positions."<sup>24</sup> The loss of institutional memory is not necessarily fatal. The permanent government retains much of the wisdom for the continuity of policy. That wisdom is always available to an administration. It must learn how to tap it.

### **PDD 56: Ephemeral or Purposeful Adaptation?**

It is useful to examine PDD 56 as an example of an interagency product and as a tool intended to influence the very process itself. Directives normally deal with the external world of foreign policy and national security. PDD 56 was radically different, for it went beyond that and attempted to generate a cultural revolution in the way the U.S. Government prepares and organizes to deal with these issues. PDD 56, The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations, was perhaps the mother of all modern Directives. It is a superb example of codifying lessons of "purposeful adaptation" after fitful efforts by American civilian and military officials in the aftermath of problematic interventions in Panama (1989-90), Somalia (1992-94), and Haiti (1994-95).<sup>25</sup> The intent was to institutionalize interagency coordination mechanisms and planning tools to achieve U.S. Government unity of effort in complex contingency operations and in post-conflict reconstruction. It tried to institutionalize five mechanisms and planning tools:

- An Executive Committee chaired by the Deputies Committee (Assistant Secretaries),
- An integrated, interagency Political-Military Implementation Plan,
- Interagency Rehearsal,
- Interagency After-Action Review,
- Training.

The philosophy behind the document was that interagency planning could make or break an operation. Moreover, early involvement in planning could accelerate contributions from civilian agencies that often are excluded from or culturally are averse to strategic and operational planning. An excellent Handbook for Interagency Management of Complex Contingency Operations issued in August 1998 contains in easy digestible form much wisdom about how to do it right. PDD 56 was applied extensively and adapted to new contingencies, such as Eastern Slavonia (1995-98), Bosnia from 1995, Hurricane Mitch in Central America, the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict since 1998, and the Kosovo contingency of 1998-99. The March 1999 review commented: "PDD 56 is intended to be applied as an integrated package of complementary mechanisms and tools . . . since its issuance in 1997, PDD 56 has not been applied as intended. Three major issues must be addressed to improve the utility of PDD 56." It recommended:

- Greater authority and leadership to promote PDD 56,
- More flexible and less detailed political-military planning,
- Dedicated training resources and greater outreach.

Reflected in the three recommendations were the recurring problems of the interagency: the need for decisive authority ("nobody's in charge"), contrasting approaches, and institutional cultures (particularly diplomatic versus military) with respect to planning, and the lack of incentives across the government to create professionals expert in interagency work. PDD 56 was a noble effort to promote greater effectiveness. It may bear fruit if its philosophy of integrated planning and outreach to the interagency takes root. In late 1999, the PDD 56 planning requirement was embedded as an annex to contingency plans. Bush's February 2001 NSPD1 tried to provide some life support to PDD56 by stating: "The oversight of ongoing operations assigned in PDD/NSC-56 . . . will be performed by the appropriate . . . PCCs, which may create subordinate working groups to provide coordination for ongoing operations." The failures in post-conflict planning and reconstruction for Iraq in 2003 underlined the importance of taking PDD-56 seriously. Fortunately, as mentioned above, there are enough people in government who retain the expertise and who can be tapped as necessary. Much of the wisdom contained in PDD56 and its Handbook is invaluable in the business of post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization.

As the result of the purposeful adaptation engendered by the mistakes made in the reconstruction and stabilization of Iraq, the Bush administration promulgated National Security Presidential Directive 44, on December 7, 2005: "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization." It speaks eloquently of the need for a coordinated U.S. Government effort for harmonizing interagency responses across the spectrum of conflict: complex contingencies, peacekeeping, failed and failing states, political transitions, and other military interventions. NSPD 44 states:

The Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.<sup>26</sup>

The document closes with the statement: "This directive supersedes Presidential Decision Directive/ NSC 56, May 20, 1997, 'Managing Complex Contingency Operations.'" It may supersede, but it cannot erase from collective and personal memory banks the excellent and very useful ideas contained in PDD 56. Such a concept would threaten the notion of purposeful adaptation. A companion to NSPD 44 is the

DoD Directive 3000.05 “Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations,” promulgated in late 2005.

### **The Operational Level of the Interagency Process: Ambassador, Country Team and Combatant Commanders.**

To this point, we have discussed the national strategic level of the interagency process, that is, what occurs in Washington. Actually, the interagency process spans three levels: the national strategic, the operational, and the tactical. In the field, policy is implemented by ambassadors and their country teams, often working with the regional combatant commanders (COCOMs) if the issue is principally security or political-military in nature. Ambassadors and combatant commanders are not only implementers, they frequently shape policy via their reporting to Washington through a continuous flow of cables, after action reports, proposals for new policy initiatives, as well as direct consultations in Washington with senior officials and members of Congress. They also comment on how to shape policy initiatives that originate from Washington.

There is a permanent conversation between the embassy and the respective regional bureau in Washington, which includes a broad distribution of the cable traffic to such agencies as the White House, the Defense Department, the regional combatant command, Department of Treasury, Commerce, the Joint Staff, the intelligence community, as well as other organizations such as the Coast Guard, when there is a “need to know.” The “need to know” almost always includes other embassies in the region or major embassies in other regions, and even at times, for example, the American Embassy to the Vatican. The ambassador and combatant commander often conduct one-on-one meetings over the multiplicity of security issues.

The embassy country team at the embassy is a miniature replica of the Washington interagency system. In the country team, the rubber proverbially meets the road of interagency implementation. Ambassadors and COCOMs rely on each other to promote policies that will enhance American interests in a country and region. COCOMs have large staffs and awesome resources compared to the small staffs and resources of ambassadors. Moreover their functions are different. The ambassador cultivates ties and is a conduit for bilateral communications through the art of diplomatic discourse. He or she promotes understanding of U.S. foreign policy, promotes American culture and business, and is responsible for American citizens in that country. The ambassador is the personal emissary of the President, who signs the ambassador’s formal letter of instruction. The letter charges the ambassador “to exercise full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all executive branch officers in (name of country), except for personnel under the command of a U.S. area military commander . . .” There is enough ambiguity in the mandate to require both ambassador and COCOM to use common sense and, in a nonbureaucratic way, work out issues of command and control over U.S. military personnel in the country. In effect, control is shared, the ambassador having policy control and the COCOM control over day-to-day military operations. Thus it is prudent that both work closely together to ensure that military operations meet the objectives of U.S. policy.

This is particularly the case in military operations other than war. Before and during noncombatant evacuations, peace operations, exercises, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, such cooperation will be imperative because of the different mixes of diplomacy, force, and preparation required. A successful U.S. policy effort requires a carefully calibrated combination of diplomatic and military pressure, with economic inducements added. The security assistance officer at the embassy (often the commander of the military advisory group) can facilitate communication and bridge the policy and operational distance between the ambassador and the COCOM. So can State’s Political Advisor to the COCOM, a senior ranking foreign service officer whose function is to provide the diplomatic

and foreign policy perspective on military operations.<sup>27</sup> The personal and professional relationship between the Foreign Policy Advisor (formerly called the Political Advisor) and the COCOM is the key to success.

The COCOM represents the coercive capacity of American power through a chain of command that goes to the president. He and his sizable staff oversee the operational tempo, deployments, readiness, exercises, and training of divisions, brigades, fleets, and air wings—resources, language, and culture that are the opposite of the art of diplomacy. Since all military activities have diplomatic impact, it is prudent that both work harmoniously to achieve common purpose. Ambassador and Commander interests intersect at the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG, also called Military Advisory Group (MAG), Military Liaison Office (MLO), and Office of Defense Coordination) level. The commander of the MAAG, which is an important arm of the country team since it provides training and military equipment to the host country, works for both the ambassador and the COCOM.

In the spectrum from peace to crisis to war, the ambassador will tend to dominate decisions at the lower end of the spectrum. As the environment transitions to war, the Commander assumes greater authority and influence. Haiti 1994 is an excellent example of how the handoff from ambassador to COCOM takes place. The American ambassador in Port-au-Prince, William Swing, was in charge of U.S. policy until General Hugh Shelton and the U.S. military forces arrived in September of that year. Once the military phase was completed, policy control reverted to Swing, thus restoring the normal pattern of military subordination to civilian authority. In the gray area of military operations other than war or in what is called an “immature” military theater, such as Latin America, disputes can arise between ambassadors and COCOMs about jurisdiction over U.S. military personnel in the country. The most illustrative was in 1994 between Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Southern Command General Barry McCaffrey and U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia Charles R. Bowers and U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Morris D. Busby. The dispute had to be adjudicated in Washington by the Secretaries of State and Defense.<sup>28</sup> Elevating a dispute to such a level is something the system would rather not do. The fact is that ambassador and COCOM must work closely together to coordinate U.S. military activities. Another distinction is that COCOMs have a regional perspective, strategies, and programs, while ambassadors are focused on advancing the interests of the United States in one country.

An important step forward in synchronizing interagency activities at the theater level has been the creation of the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups. These are literally interagency cells located at the combatant commands and staffed by personnel from across the government. Although in their infancy and not endowed with policymaking authority, these groups offer the foundation greater strategic and operational integration in the future.

### **The Continuing Challenges in the Interagency Process.**

The tensions generated by cultural differences and jealousy over turf always will be part of the interagency process. The diplomatic and the military cultures dominate the national security system, although there are other cultures, and even subcultures, within the dominant cultures. The former uses words to solve problems, while the latter uses precise doses of force. Cultural differences are large, but communicating across them is possible.<sup>29</sup> Figure 6 compares the cultures of military officers and diplomats.

| <b>Military Officers</b>                                                                                        | <b>Foreign Service Officers</b>                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mission: prepare for and fight war                                                                              | Mission: conduct diplomacy                                                                                                       |
| Training a major activity, important for units and individuals                                                  | Training not a significant activity. Not important for either units or individuals                                               |
| Extensive training for episodic, undesired events, to think the unthinkable                                     | Little formal training, learning by experience in doing desired activities (negotiating, reporting)                              |
| Uncomfortable with ambiguity                                                                                    | Can deal with ambiguity                                                                                                          |
| Plans and planning—both general and detailed—are important core activities                                      | Plan in general terms to achieve objectives but value flexibility and innovation                                                 |
| Doctrine: important                                                                                             | Doctrine: not important                                                                                                          |
| Focused on military element of foreign policy                                                                   | Focused on all aspects of foreign policy                                                                                         |
| Focused on discrete events and activities with plans, objectives, courses of action, endstates                  | Focused on ongoing processes without expectation of an “endstate”                                                                |
| Infrequent real-world contact with opponents or partners in active warfighting                                  | Day-to-day real-world contact with partners and opponents in active diplomacy                                                    |
| Officer corps commands significant numbers of NCOs and enlisted personnel                                       | Officers supervise only other officers in core (political and economic) activities                                               |
| NCOs and enlisted personnel perform many core functions (warfighting)                                           | Only officers engage in core activity (diplomacy)                                                                                |
| Leadership: career professional military officers (with officers (with the military services and in operations) | Leadership: a mix of politicians, academics, policy wonks, and career Foreign Service professionals at headquarters and in field |
| All aspects of peace operations, including civilian/diplomatic, becoming more important                         | All aspects of peace operations, including military, becoming more important                                                     |
| Writing and written word less important, physical actions more important                                        | Writing and written word very important. Used extensively in conduct of diplomacy                                                |
| Teamwork and management skills are rewarded, interpersonal skills important internally                          | Individual achievement and innovative ideas rewarded, interpersonal skills important externally                                  |
| Understand “humma-humma” and “deconflict”                                                                       | Understand “demarche” and “nonpaper”                                                                                             |
| Accustomed to large resources, manpower, equipment, and money                                                   | Focus meager resources on essential needs                                                                                        |

**Figure 6. Comparing Military Officers and Foreign Service Officers.**<sup>30</sup>

The principal problem of interagency *decisionmaking* is *lack of decisive authority; there is no one in charge*. As long as personalities are involved who work well together and have leadership support in the NSC, interagency efforts will prosper, but such congruence is not predictable. The world situation does not wait for the proper alignment of the planets in Washington. There is too much diffusion of policy control. It is time to implement an NSC-centric national security system, with appropriate adjustments that align budget authority with policy responsibility. It would consolidate in the NSC the functions now performed by the Policy Planning Staff at State and the strategic planning done at Defense. Such reorganization recognizes the reality that the White House is where an integrated approach to national security planning must take place.

*Asymmetries in resources* are another impediment. The Department of State, which has the responsibility to conduct foreign affairs, is a veritable pauper. Its diplomats may have the best words in town in terms of speaking and writing skills and superb knowledge of foreign countries and foreign affairs, but it is a very small organization that has been getting smaller budget allocations from Congress. The corps of foreign service officers equates in number to about an Army brigade. The Department of

State's technology is primitive, and officer professional development of the kind that the military does is not promoted. Moreover, unlike the military, State lacks a strong domestic constituency of support. The military has more money to conduct diplomacy than does State. Secretary of State Colin Powell began to improve the Department's budget. But the inability to hire personnel because of previous budgetary constraints effected hundreds of positions in the middle ranks of the diplomatic service. It will take decades of adequate funding to grow the foreign service officers to fill authorizations at the appropriate grade.

The *resource barons*, those with people, money, technical expertise, and equipment reside in DoD and the military services. Consequently, the military, especially the Army, is constantly being asked to provide resources out of hide for nation-building purposes, for example, in Haiti and Panama. It is tempting to reach out to it because it is the only institution with an *expeditionary* capability, and fungible resources and expertise. It can get there quickly, show the flag, bring significant resources to bear, stabilize a situation, and create an environment secure enough for other agencies to operate. On a much smaller scale, the Agency for International Development is a baron because it has money and technical expertise to promote development and institution building. Other baronies exist, such as intelligence, Department of Justice, Commerce, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Finally, the personnel systems of the various agencies of the U.S. Government *do not promote professionalization and rewards in interagency jobs*. What is needed is a systematic effort to develop civilian and military cadres that are experts in interagency policy coordination, integration, and operations. Some of this takes place. Military officers are assigned to various departments. For example, until 2002, 35 officers from all military services worked in the regional and functional bureaus of the Department of State. Senior diplomats (some of ambassadorial rank) also are allocated to military and civilian agencies such as Foreign Policy Advisors at the regional unified commands, the Special Operations Command, to peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, various key positions in the Pentagon, and the war colleges. These programs must be expanded. Unfortunately, the opposite was occurring in 2003. In order to convert military personnel slots to warfighting positions, the DoD recalled most of its officers from the civilian agencies, to include the State Department, which, in turn, reduced to 30 the number of diplomats posted to military organizations. An important element for interagency integration and harmony was weakened.

Moreover, there ought to be incentives for national security professionalism, as there are for joint duty in the military. For civilian agencies, something akin to the Goldwater-Nichols Act is needed to encourage interagency service, to include the Department of State. Promotions should be based not only on performance at Foggy Bottom and in Embassies abroad, but on mandatory interagency tours as well. Similarly professional development incentives should apply to civil servants that work in the national security arena.<sup>31</sup>

Admittedly, mandatory interagency tours would require significant changes in personnel systems and career tracking. The Report of the National Defense Panel of 1997, *Transforming Defense: National Security in the Twenty-first Century*, recommended creating "an interagency cadre of professionals, including civilian and military officers, whose purpose would be to staff key positions in the national security structures."<sup>32</sup> This would build on the jointness envisioned by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act. The Report also recommended a national security curriculum for a mix of civilian, military, and foreign students. The Defense Leadership and Management Program of the DoD, a Master's level initiative in national security studies for civilian personnel, is an important step in this direction. The Department of State, under Colin Powell's guidance, began to invest in educating its personnel in strategic planning. Accordingly, the Department published *The Department of State and Agency for International Development Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004 to 2009*. The document sets forth directions and priorities and supports policy positions enunciated in the President's National Security Strategy.



This is potentially an intellectual breakthrough for strategic integration. Also, more State Department personnel were allowed to participate in War College courses, thereby adding to the opportunities for mutual learning and strategic integration in the professional development of civilian and military leaders. In early 2005, there was serious discussion among senior Pentagon officials about creating a national security career path. At State, diplomats were now required to have interagency tours for advancement.

### **Implications for the Military Professional.**

There are critical implications for the military warrior. The nature of future warfare is likely to be more military operations other than war, requiring more mobile, flexible light forces. Future war also will require a more intellectual military officer, one who understands the imperative of working with the panoply of civilian agencies, nongovernment organizations, the national and international media, and foreign armed forces. It is a commonplace of strategy that American forces rarely will fight alone again; they will do so in coalition. Thus, the strategic Clausewitzian trinity of the people, the armed forces, and the government now encompasses the global community. The implications are clear; the military officer will have to develop greater diplomatic and negotiating skills, greater understanding of international affairs, capability in foreign languages, and more than a passing acquaintance with economics.

Moreover, the warrior likely will work with civilian counterparts across a spectrum of activities short of war. These include strategic planning and budgeting, humanitarian assistance, peace operations, counter narcotics, counterterrorism, security assistance, environmental security, human rights, democratization, civil-military relations, arms control, intelligence, war planning and termination strategy, command and control of forces, continuity of government, post-conflict reconstruction, technology transfer, crisis management, overseas basing, alliances, noncombatant evacuations, and homeland defense.

Therefore, the future officer also will need greater appreciation of the institutional diversity and complexity of government, because of the need to advise a diverse audience of civilians on the utility of military power in complex contingencies that are neither peace nor war as Americans are accustomed to think of them. He or she will have to work in tandem with civilian agencies and non-government organizations unaccustomed to command systems and deliberate planning, and that often do not understand the limits of military power.<sup>33</sup> Lastly, instruction on the interagency system and process should be mandatory for civilians and military alike. Such education must have a sound theoretical foundation in national security decisionmaking, strategic planning, and organizational behavior, expanded by sophisticated case studies of relevant historical experiences. Because the United States will be heavily engaged in the spectrum of activities entitled humanitarian intervention, stabilization and reconstruction, and the transformation of societies, the curriculum of senior service colleges must emphasize the strategic integration of the instruments of national power to a much greater degree than they have in the past.

What attributes should the military officer bring? Above all, holistic thinking—the ability to think in terms of all the instruments of national power and respect for the functions and cultures of diverse departments and agencies. Communication skills are paramount. The effective interagency player writes and speaks well. He or she will be bilingual, able to function in military as well as civilian English. Bureaucratic jargon is the enemy of interagency communication. The military briefing, though an excellent vehicle for quickly transmitting a lot of information in formatted style, is not acceptable. One must be less conscious of rank because ranks will vary among the representative around a table. Someone of lower rank may be in charge of a meeting. A sense of humor, patience, endurance, and

tolerance for ambiguity and indecisiveness will help. The ability to “stay in your box” and articulate the perspective of your department will be respected, though the temptation to poach on other domains will be there. The ability to anticipate issues, to consider the second and third order effects from the national level down to the country team and theater levels, will be invaluable. Finally, the interagency requires diplomatic and negotiating skills, the ability to network, and mastery of the nuances of bureaucratic politics and language.<sup>34</sup>

The most evolved democracy in the world has the most cumbersome national security decisionmaking process. Inefficiency is the price the founding fathers imposed for democratic accountability. But some of the inefficiency is the result of American strategic culture, with its multiplicity of players, plentiful but diffused resources and the penchant to throw resources at the problem, and the propensity to segment peace and diplomacy from war and military power. (See Figure 7.) Frederick the Great cautioned: “Diplomacy without arms is music without instruments.” So did John F. Kennedy: “Diplomacy and defense are not substitutes for one another. Either alone would fail.”<sup>35</sup> Major structural changes must be made in the interagency system in order to harness human talent and resources intelligently.

Democracy is defined as a process of mutual learning and adaptation. Accordingly all institutions of government learn, adapt, and make appropriate changes. This is even more imperative for the national security agencies and personnel, where the stakes are high. The distempers in the interagency process evidenced in 2001-04 created new opportunities for learning and for adaptation. Fortunately, in time American democracy will make those adaptations. The question will be at what price and how quickly.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>White House</b><br>National Security Council<br>Office of the Special Trade Representative<br>Office of National Drug Control Policy<br>National Economic Council                                                                                   | <b>Department of Transportation</b><br>Federal Aviation Administration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Department of State</b><br>U.S. Foreign Service<br>Agency for International Development<br>Overseas Private Investment Corporation                                                                                                                  | <b>Department of Energy</b><br>Asst Secy for Defense Programs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Department of Homeland Security</b><br>Coast Guard<br>Immigration and Naturalization Service<br>Border Patrol<br>Secret Service                                                                                                                     | <b>Department of Labor</b><br>Dep Under Sec for International Affairs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Department of Defense</b><br>Office of Secretary of Defense<br>Joint Chiefs of Staff<br>Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines                                                                                                                              | <b>Department of Education</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Department of Treasury</b><br>Internal Revenue Service                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Department of Health &amp; Human Services</b><br>Social Security Administration<br>Public Health Service<br>Centers for Disease Control & Prevention<br>Customs Service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Department of the Interior</b><br>Asst Sec for Territorial & International Affairs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Department of Commerce</b><br>Foreign Commercial Service<br>Travel and Tourism Administration<br>National Oceanic & Atmospheric Agency<br>National Marine Fisheries Service<br>International Trade Administration<br>International Trade Commission | <b>Office of National Drug Control Policy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Department of Justice</b><br>Federal Bureau of Investigation<br>Drug Enforcement Administration<br>U.S. Marshals Service<br>Foreign Claims Settlement Administration<br>U.S. National Central Bureau, International<br>Criminal Police Organization | <b>Department of Agriculture</b><br>Foreign Agricultural Service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Independent Agencies</b><br>Central Intelligence Agency<br>Environmental Protection Agency<br>Export Import Bank<br>Federal Communications Commission<br>Federal Maritime Commission<br>Federal Trade Commission<br>National Aeronautics & Space Administration<br>National Science Foundation<br>National Transportation Safety Board<br>Nuclear Regulatory Commission<br>Peace Corps<br>U.S. Postal Service |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Congress</b><br>General Accounting Office<br>Assorted committees                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

**Figure 7. U.S. Departments and Agencies Involved in Foreign Affairs.**

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 20

1. The development of this chapter has been enriched by the insights of practitioners and colleagues in the interagency. Special thanks goes to Anthony Williams, David Bennett, Frank Jones, Gary Maybarduk, Dennis Skocz, Erik Kjonnerod for helping to illuminate the labyrinthine ways of Washington. Joseph Cerami and Robin Dorff, chairmen of the Department of National Security and Strategy of the Army War College, provided the time and the support for research.

2. Chas. W. Freeman, Jr., *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1007, p. 3.

3. John P. Lovell, *The Challenge of American Foreign Policy: Purpose and Adaptation*, New York: Collier MacMillan, 1985, p. 7. For an excellent analysis of how the generation of Pearl Harbor dealt with differing goals, concerns, and interest in developing the National security Act of 1947, see Douglas Stuart, "Constructing the Iron Cage: The 1947 National Security Act," Carlisle, PA: Dickinson College, draft, 2005.

4. A 1987 report of the National Academy of Public Administration noted: "... the institutional memory of the United States Government for important national security affairs was worse than that of any other major world power and had

resulted in mistakes and embarrassments in the past which would be bound to recur." *Strengthening U.S. Government Communications: Report of the National Academy of Public Administration*, Washington, DC, 1987, p. 227, cited in Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, "Institutional Memory: Improving the National Security Advisory Process," in James Gaston, ed., *Grand Strategy and the Decisionmaking Process*, Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1991, p. 194.

5. For understanding the philosophy behind the Bush *National Security Strategy*, see Richard Haass, "Sovereignty: Existing Rights, Evolving Responsibilities," remarks made at the School of Foreign Service and the Mortara Center for International Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, DC, January 14, 2003. Haass advances the concept of conditional sovereignty. From another direction, Stephen D. Krasner, Director of Policy Planning at the Department of State under Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, argues for alternatives, such as shared sovereignty, to conventional Westphalian sovereignty for weak and failing states. See Krasner, "Sharing Sovereignty: New Institutions for Collapsed and Failing States," *International Security*, Fall 2004, pp. 85-120.

6. Anthony Lake, I. M. Destler, and Leslie Gelb, *Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985.

7. The best analysis of how the Bush NSC system works is the brilliant paper by Alan G. Whitaker, Frederick C. Smith, and Ambassador Elizabeth McKune, "The National Security Council Process: The National Security Council and the Interagency System," Washington, DC: National Defense University, September 2004. See also David J. Rothkopf, "Inside the Committee that Runs the World," *Foreign Policy*, March-April 2005, pp. 30-41; an article based on his book *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power*, New York: Public Affairs, 2005.

8. The single best analysis of the NSC and the interagency process in the George W. Bush administration is Alan G. Whitaker, Frederick C. Smith, and Elizabeth McKune, "The National Security Policy Process: The National Security Council and the Inter-Agency System," Washington, DC: National Defense University, September 19, 2002, draft.

9. James Harding, "Weakness in the White House: As Costs and Casualties Mount in Iraq, the Fingerpointing Begins in Washington," *London Financial Times*, September 15, 2003, p. 17.

10. On these matters, see Glenn Kessler and Peter Slevin, "Rice, Rifts and Rivalries: Cabinet Infighting Complicates the NSC Adviser's Role in Foreign Policy," *Washington Post*, National Weekly Edition, October 20-26, 2003, pp. 6-7.

11. On the challenges of establishing DHS, see U.S. General Accounting Office, *Major Management Challenges and Program Risks, Department of Homeland Security*, GAO Performance and Accountability Series (GAO-03-102), Washington, DC, January 2003. See also George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, Washington, DC, White House, July 2002.

12. Anthony Lake, *Somoza Falling: The Nicaraguan Dilemma, A Portrait of Washington At Work*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989, p. 32.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

14. Robert Pastor, *Condemned to Repetition: The United States and Nicaragua*, Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 81.

15. Hedrick Smith, *The Power Game: How Washington Works*, New York: Random House, 1988.

16. John P. Lovell, *The Challenge of American Foreign Policy: Purpose and Adaptation*, p. 26.

17. Adapted from *ibid.*, p. 32.

18. A good source on formal presidential policy papers is the Federation of American Scientists Intelligence Resource Program at [www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm](http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm), accessed December 23, 2005.

19. Warren P. Strobel and Jessica Guynn, "Bush Policy Team at War with Itself," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 4, 2003, p. A21. See also Sonni Efron, "The War Within the War: Pentagon vs. State Department," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 11, 2003, p. A8. A former staffer in the Office of Secretary of Defense's Under Secretariat for Policy commented that the interagency problem was intensified by "functional isolation of the professional corps of civil servants and professional military," "cross-agency cliques," and "groupthink." See Karen Kwiatkowski, "Flawed Decisionmaking: Cliques, Groupthink Dominate Work of Defense Department," *Charlotte Observer*, August 1, 2003, at *Charlotte.com*.

20. On this point, see Jonathan Landay and Warren P. Strobel, "Plan B for Post-War Iraq Didn't Exist," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 13, 2003, p. A1.

21. On the problems of post-conflict planning, see Thomas L. Friedman, "Bad Planning," *New York Times*, June 25, 2003, [www.cnn.com/2003/US/06/25/nyt.friedman/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2003/US/06/25/nyt.friedman/index.html). Seldom have the post-conflict planning requirements and the prospect of a military occupation been so clearly debated and identified before going to war. On the imperative for pre-planning, see the excellent piece by John J. Hamre and Gordon R. Sullivan, "Toward Postconflict Reconstruction," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2002, pp. 85-96. See also Karen Guttieri, "Post-Conflict Iraq: Prospects and Problems," Strategic Insights, Center for Contemporary Conflict, National Security Affairs Department, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA,

February 20, 2003. An excellent analysis is George packer, "War After War: What Washington Doesn't See in Iraq," *New Yorker*, November 24, 2003, pp. 58-85. The most sophisticated, historically grounded, and strategically sound was Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill, "Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario," Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, February 2003.

22. For more information, see Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson, *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Washington, DC: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, November 12, 2003.

23. Christopher Lee, "New State Dept. Office Aimed at Postwar Aid," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2005, p. A17.

24. Institute of National Strategic Studies, "Improving the Utility of Presidential Decision Directive 56: A Plan of Action for the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Washington, DC: National Defense University, March 1999, p. 16.

25. For an excellent analysis of lessons learned and prudent policy recommendations from recent U.S. military interventions, see John T. Fishel, *Civil-Military Operations in the New World*, New York: Praeger, 1997; Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama*, Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, April 15, 1992. A penetrating analysis of the operational and tactical dimensions of the interagency process, particularly as they apply to the U.S. Army at the operational and tactical levels, is Jennifer Taw Morrison, *Interagency Coordination in Military Operations Other than War: Implications for the U.S. Army*, Santa Monica: RAND Arroyo Center, 1997.

26. George W. Bush, "National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44," White House, December 7, 2005, p. 2; [www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44](http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44), accessed January 6, 2006.

27. Excellent advice on how the ambassador and the regional unified commander should work together is found in Ted Russell, "The Role of the Ambassador, the Country Team, and Their Relations with Regional Commanders," *Course Directive: Regional Appraisals*, AY 97, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1997, pp. C1-C9. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of State and DoD covers the function of the Political Advisor. The MOU "recognizes the valuable role POLADs render to the Department of Defense and the Department of State in assessing the political implications of military planning and strategy and in serving as the principal source of counsel on international issues to their respective Commanders-in-Chief . . . the deep level of commitment and cooperation acknowledged by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense in executing foreign and security policy established by the President." For how an embassy functions, see Shawn Dorman, ed., *Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America*, Washington, DC: American Foreign Service Association, 2003.

28. For specifics, see the telegrams from USCINCSOUTH, June 6, 1994; from Embassy La Paz, June 8, 1994; and from Embassy Bogota, June 9, 1994.

29. The classic study of the role of culture and turf in government is James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, New York: Harper Collins, 1989. Pertinent are the excellent studies by George T. Raach and Ilana Kass, "National Power and the Interagency Process," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Summer 1995, pp. 8-13; Douglas A. Hartwick, "The Culture at State, the Services, and Military Operations: Bridging the Communication Gap," Washington, DC: National War College, April 12, 1984; Rosemary Hansen and Rick Rife, "Defense is from Mars and State is from Venus: Improving Communications and Promoting National Security," Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University, May 1998. Other impediments to sound decisionmaking are groupthink, information overload, insufficient information, lack of time, faulty analogy, insufficient analysis of options, and the personal predispositions of the decisionmaker. The interaction of these factors are explored in the writings of Irving L. Janis, Alexander George, and Graham Allison.

30. Adapted from Robert Johnson, Foreign Service Officer, "Teaching Notes," Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy.

31. These are variants of proposals made to the Joint Chiefs of Staff by the study groups of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), directed by John Hamre, Spring 2005. See Briefing, "Recommendations Under Consideration: Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Phase 2 Report," April 25, 2005, Washington, DC: CSIS, April 5, 2005.

32. *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century*, Arlington, VA: National Defense Panel, 1997, p. 66.

33. There are indications that even the Department of State, the first among equals of the executive departments, is beginning to understand the value of strategic planning. See Secretary's Office of Resources, Plans, and Policy, *U.S. Department of State Strategic Plan*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, September 1997. See also *FY 2004-2009 Department of State and USAID Strategic Plan*, August 2003. Moreover, the U.S. Army and State established an ongoing tutorial to teach strategic planning to diplomats. At the same time, more State students will attend the Army War College course through distance learning. Excellent advice on how military culture should interact with the culture of non government organizations during humanitarian relief operations, peacekeeping, and stability operations is Judith Stiehm, "The Challenge of Civil-Military Cooperation in Peacekeeping," *Airman-Scholar*, Vol. IV, No. 1, Winter 1998, pp. 26-35.

34. Military officers contemplating assignment to the Pentagon or civilians wishing to understand how to work with counterparts there should read the advice in Perry Smith, *Assignment Pentagon: The Insider's Guide to the Potomac Puzzle Palace*, second ed., revised, Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1992.

35. Both quotations are in Chas. W. Freeman, Jr., *The Diplomat's Dictionary*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1994, pp. 40, 100.



## CHAPTER 21

### NATIONAL SECURITY POWERS: ARE THE CHECKS IN BALANCE?

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On the distinction between policy success in domestic and foreign policy, President John F. Kennedy once noted, "The big difference is that between a bill being defeated and the country [being] wiped out."<sup>1</sup> Much is at stake in the formulation and implementation of national security policy. Not only is the achievement of national interests on the line, the preservation of the framers' constitutional allocation of power designed to keep liberty and security in balance also is at stake. As the United States proceeds further in its "Long War"<sup>2</sup> focused on fighting terrorism, its political elite is struggling to define the degree of collaboration that must remain between the different branches of government. Does a state of national emergency or war justify the suspension of deliberation and consultation inherent in the American political system's design? Does Congress retain meaningful powers to resist presidential assertions of power? What role will the courts play in limiting or facilitating presidential overreach and congressional reassertion of its powers? These are key questions of concern to all who participate in and seek to understand the U.S. national security policymaking process. This chapter will review the constitutional foundations of the American political system, explore the adaptation and evolution of this original distribution of power, and assess the impact of the current state of "checks and balances" on prospects for strategic success and the preservation of American democracy.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS

A unique aspect of the American political system is its design feature creating two co-equal principals among the President and Congress. The framers of the Constitution envisioned a national security process that would be dependent on a system of shared and separate powers across the democratic institutions that they created. Embedded in these constitutional foundations are the formal sources of power of the Presidency and Congress, the two key democratic institutions that work together to formulate and carry out national security policy.

Some scholars argue that the Framers' intent to give the Congress a leading role in government is evident in that Article I of the Constitution grants many explicit powers to the Congress in comparison to the ambiguity and vagueness of the President's powers outlined in Article II. Indeed, a survey of the historical record reveals that, over time, presidents have successfully exploited the ambiguity of their formal powers to increase the power of the Presidency vis-à-vis the Congress. A brief review of the constitutional basis of each institution's powers will be useful to strategists seeking to understand the evolution of these powers in the life of the American republic.

The Framers envisioned the Congress as the main preserve of governmental powers. The powers enumerated in Article I, Section 8, touch on the entire scope of governmental authority. Chief among these is the power to tax and spend. This power of the purse, checked by the President's veto power, is the defining characteristic of the Framers' intent to create an energetic central government with a vigorous legislature.<sup>3</sup> The Framers concluded the powers enumerated in Article 8 with the elastic clause, the power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers."<sup>4</sup> The shared vision of their republic was that of a "deliberative legislature, composed carefully to reflect both popular will and elite limits on that will."<sup>5</sup>

The first sentence of Article II clearly designates the President as the Chief Administrator of the government, but the Constitution offers few specifics about how this executive responsibility should be



carried out. The President's role as Chief Executive stems from language in Section 2 that requires the heads of each executive department to report to the President. In the Washington administration, the federal government consisted of only three cabinet departments (State, Treasury, and War) and a few hundred people.<sup>6</sup> Of course, the vast bureaucracy of the United States has grown exponentially since then and is now comprised of 15 executive departments and 136 federal agencies and commissions,<sup>7</sup> backed by a work force of 1.7 million federal civil service employees.<sup>8</sup> As the federal government has grown, the power of the President also has expanded as the statutory and constitutional responsibility for the policies, programs, and expenditure of funds is asserted across the executive branch.

Authority to administer the federal bureaucracy, however, does not necessarily translate into its control. All presidents are faced with the challenge of making the bureaucracy responsive to their leadership. Two key tools to shape the executive branch's outputs into a more coherent administration vision are the use of the appointment authority and the White House Staff. Article II, Section 2 gives the President the power to appoint the department and agency heads within the federal government.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower created the schedule C personnel classification for appointed policymaking positions throughout the executive branch. This represented a shift from party-based patronage that rewarded the party faithful with everything from predominantly uncontroversial government jobs in the field to key policy posts in Washington.<sup>9</sup> Schedule C personnel play critical behind-the-scenes roles, such as setting the schedules and agendas of cabinet members, guiding political strategy, and giving legal opinions and policy advice. These appointees are lower in rank than noncareer Senior Executive Service (SES) officials, who fall just below presidential appointees and who must be confirmed by the Senate. At latest count, SES and Schedule C employees numbered 1,935 in the George W. Bush administration. In all, President George W. Bush has 3,000 political appointees serving in his administration. Although political appointees account for less than 2/10ths of 1 percent of the total civil service, their presence results in significant influence throughout the policymaking process.<sup>10</sup> In the modern presidency, presidents have offered these positions to ideologically compatible people who will work to ensure that their department or agency's policies are in sync with the President's vision.

The Senate's confirmation role is its check on the President's appointment power. While the vast majority of the President's nominations are confirmed, the potential to subject nominees to intense congressional scrutiny and ultimately to reject candidates gives the Senate great influence in the appointment process and, tangentially, in the overall policy process. While the executive sits at the top of the federal bureaucracy, the design of the various departments and agencies is specified in congressional statutes that detail their structure and duties. Though not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, Congress' capacity for oversight can be a tremendous check on the executive when it is employed. Oversight hearings require officials to appear and testify under oath and report what the administration is doing. Oversight programs demanding reports on executive department or agency activity also can have some bite.<sup>11</sup> Congress has the responsibility to keep a careful eye on the administration of its laws to ensure that they are properly interpreted and executed.<sup>12</sup>

Another management tool of relatively recent creation is the Executive Office of the President (EOP), better known as the White House Staff. President Franklin Roosevelt established this "mini-bureaucracy within the bureaucracy" with Congress' consent in 1939 as an attempt to centralize control over the executive branch and to provide unity and direction to the federal government.<sup>13</sup> The EOP includes both the professional staff working in such places as the National Security Council and the Council of Economic Advisers, as well as the president's most trusted advisers in the White House Office.<sup>14</sup> The two tools are closely related as presidential appointments increasingly have become subject to intense vetting in the EOP.

In national security affairs and the conduct of foreign policy that might result in the use of armed force, the President draws on the authority vested in him as Commander-in-Chief. However, the Framers

also were in agreement that significant war-related powers also must reside in the Congress. Indeed, as Figure 1 indicates, Article I, Section 8 lays out extensive and explicit war-related powers granted to the Congress. The Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights both reflect the Framers' distrust of standing armies unaccountable to a legislature. Their design of American democratic institutions separating the power to declare war from the power to command or direct military forces in wartime was meant to ensure that the President was unable to make war alone. It is important to note that rather than giving the President the power to declare war with the "advice and consent of the Senate" as they had done with the treaty power, the Framers deliberately elected to give Congress the sole authority to declare war.<sup>15</sup> The historical record shows that, in practice, Congress has not been the initiator of all significant military actions, and that there has been a struggle for power between the two branches over war powers.

This brief survey of constitutional powers relevant to the conduct of national security policymaking highlights the Framers' intent for policymaking and implementation to be a shared process across the legislative and executive branches. The Framers' design of shared and separate powers resulted in a policymaking framework that requires both cooperation and coordination to achieve anything of real significance in national security affairs.

## **INSTITUTIONAL COMPETENCIES**

The Framers' final product reflected an understanding that the institutions they created had distinct and complementary institutional competencies. While Congress was granted important powers ensuring it a significant role in the conduct of national security policy, its institutional design also meant that it almost never would move quickly on such matters. The requirement for legislation to clear both the House and the Senate after potentially lengthy deliberations in each body subject to the influences of public opinion and the media, favored the role of Congress as the branch of government that considered diverse viewpoints, deliberated between them, and remained accountable to the public.

The Executive branch, on the other hand, was designed to move with speed and dispatch, with an appropriate amount of secrecy in order to conduct day-to-day foreign and security policy in peacetime, and to act decisively in crisis situations. Congress' design, meanwhile, affords it significant oversight checks, as well as policy influence in the power of the purse. The Framers' deliberate consideration of institutional competencies when deciding which powers should be shared, which should be held alone, and in which branch the power should be put is evident in the Framers' debate on the distribution of war powers at the constitutional convention. Early deliberations argued that Congress should be given the power to "make war." However, it eventually was agreed that this should be changed to "declare war" to clarify and ensure that the actual conduct of war remained an executive function and that the institutional competencies of the Presidency were maximized during wartime.

## **PRESIDENTIAL POWER AND PERSUASION**

Formal powers contribute to and limit the influence wielded by the President and Congress in any specific policymaking scenario. Informal powers of each branch, on the other hand, if astutely employed, can enhance significantly the influence of either institution. The struggle for influence is characterized neither by all-out competition nor by perfect consensus. Congress can be both a potential adversary and key partner in the formulation and conduct of national security policy. Conversely, the President and his team cannot sustain any national security policy course without the support of Congress and the American people. Dominating the political agenda requires that the President build popular support, work effectively with Congress, control the vast federal bureaucracy, and know when

Formal Powers of the President Relative to National Security Policymaking As Stated in the Constitution

"The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America."<sup>16</sup> Article II, Section 1.

". . . he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed . . ." Article II, Section 3.

"Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it becomes a Law, be presented to the President . . . If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it . . . If after such reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent . . . to the other House . . . and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become Law." Article I, Section 7.

"The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States." Article II, Section 2.

". . . he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices . . ." Article II, Section 2.

"He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law." Article II, Section 2.

Formal Powers of the Congress Relevant to National Security Policymaking As Stated in the Constitution

"The Congress shall have Power to . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, all other Powers vested by this Constitution . . ." Article I, Section 8.

"The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the debts . . ." Article I, Section 8.

"No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law." Article I, Section 9.

"The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the common defense and general Welfare of the United States, . . . declare War, . . . to raise and support Armies . . . , To provide and maintain a Navy; To make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces; To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States . . ." Article 1, Section 8.

"He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law." Article II, Section 2.

**Figure 1. Key National Security Powers as Enumerated in the Constitution.**

and where to invest political capital. Presidential leadership and the administration's articulation of a vision underpinning its foreign policy, in general, and its national security policy in particular are keys to success as well.

The President and Congress are at once so independent and so intertwined that neither can be said to govern save as both do. And even when they come together they face other claimants to a share in governing: the courts, the states, the press, the private interests, all protected by our Constitution, and the foreign governments that help to shape our policy.<sup>17</sup>

Although the President is the single actor in the American political system granted the greatest range of formal powers, the ability to make his will prevail among the competing wills of actors also vested with significant powers depends on skillful presidential leadership. President Harry Truman once remarked that presidential power really just boils down to the power to persuade.<sup>18</sup> The renowned presidential scholar, Richard Neustadt, in his classic text, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, equates presidential power with influence and seeks to explain its sources and the contexts where presidential power is more or less dominant.

Scholars differentiate between situations where the President essentially can command and those in which he must rely on his powers of persuasion. If the issue involves presidential authority that is not shared with a competing entity, then the desired result may be achieved without resistance. Examples include the relief of a military commander, the use of an executive order to advance unpopular policy, and the deployment of military forces to protect American interests.

President Truman's relief of General Douglas MacArthur in 1951 is probably the most well-known dismissal of a military commander in the modern presidency. Truman was careful to consult the Joint Chiefs in the matter and implemented the order in a successive delegation of authority from him through the appropriate military authorities. Truman and the Chiefs viewed MacArthur's public interventions in the face of strict orders not to publicly comment on administration policy as the open defiance of the Commander-in-Chief and consequently justified his dismissal as essential to maintaining civilian control of the military. There was no question in the MacArthur affair, with regard to the assertion of formal constitutional powers, that the President had the authority to dismiss a commander in the field. However, congressional critics of Truman's Korean Policy and MacArthur's Republican supporters used the opportunity to conduct a full-fledged congressional investigation of the government's foreign and military policies against a domestic backdrop that featured a grand tickertape parade honoring the relieved general, MacArthur's address to a Joint Session of Congress, and an adoring public passionately opposed to the ouster of an American icon.<sup>19</sup> Truman's actions consequently were offset by the exertion of informal powers inherent in the Congress, the press, and the people whose inputs account for and shape the ultimate political impact of the President's actions.

The issuance of an executive order is another strategic tool that presidents can use to achieve desired policy outcomes and to assert presidential authority. Eisenhower's use of federal troops to enforce the orders of a Federal Court to desegregate Little Rock schools in 1957 illustrates a President's prerogative to assert his constitutional power over the state militias, a power that is not shared with another constitutional entity. The President's decision to federalize the Arkansas National Guard troops originally called into action by Governor Orval Faubus to halt the integration of Central High School was clear, unambiguous, and highly public. The President's assertion of power featured a "sense of legitimate obligation, legitimately imposed"<sup>20</sup> As in the MacArthur case, to not have exerted the authority would have resulted in its erosion and the prevalence of less legitimate sources of power in the American political system.

Executive orders mainly have been used in three areas: to combat various forms of discrimination against citizens, to increase White House control over the Executive branch, and to maintain secrets.<sup>21</sup> When Congress perceives that executive orders are taken to bypass Congress on controversial issues, they may elicit great political controversy and be a source of conflict between the two branches. This is why the congressional reaction to President George W. Bush's series of executive orders authorizing the National Security Agency (NSA) to eavesdrop on the conversations of Americans without warrants as required in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) has been uncharacteristically strong. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle saw the action as a challenge to the Congress' power vis-à-vis the executive.

Even the prospect of an executive order being issued can erupt in major political controversy as was the case with President Bill Clinton's proposal to lift the ban on gays serving in the military. There was

no question that the President had the legitimate authority to issue such an order as President Truman had done to integrate the armed forces in 1948, but the political backlash was so strong in 1993 that President Clinton abandoned the idea in order to salvage his domestic agenda before Congress.<sup>22</sup>

While the President's formal powers are significant, presidential leadership more often is dependent on the President's power to persuade others that what he wants of them also is compatible with the pursuit of their own interests. The successful launching of the Marshall Plan is an example of a President with minimal political capital achieving a critical foreign policy goal through the effective use of the informal powers of his office. Truman faced the uphill battle of convincing a Republican and traditionally isolationist Congress and a Treasury department focused on controlling spending, that massive European aid deserved their support. The domestic political context in 1947 was characterized further by animosity over Truman's veto of the Republican leadership's key legislative initiatives and the assumption that Truman would be easily defeated in the upcoming 1948 presidential election.

He had a key advocate in the figure of General George C. Marshall pushing for the plan that bore his name from State and the support of the Republican Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Arthur Vandenberg. All the resources of the administration were unleashed to back the plan, and special care was taken to meet the terms Vandenberg insisted on to maintain his support, which included frequent personal meetings with the President and Marshall and extensive liaisons between Congress and the agencies involved with implementing the plan. Truman even deferred to Vandenberg's choice of a Republican to head the new agency created to administer the program. These "bargains" subsequently resulted in key players lending their prestige and influence to make the proposed European Recovery Program a reality.<sup>23</sup>

The few cases discussed here highlight the linkages between presidential power and effective presidential leadership. The American political system's institutional design, with its unique blend of shared and separate powers, means that key actors often have divided loyalties, a result of serving multiple masters in government. Even players within the Executive branch also are responsible to Congress and have allegiance as well to their staffs and departments to represent their bureaucratic interests. Fulfilling the President's policies, in addition, necessarily involves interagency cooperation and overcoming the disparate bureaucratic interests of each. Presidential power is as much a function of personal politics as it is of formal authority or position.<sup>24</sup>

## CONGRESS: DOES AN EFFECTIVE CHECK REMAIN ON PRESIDENTIAL POWER?

Most texts examining the extent of the presidential-congressional partnership in national security policymaking cite constitutional scholar Edwin Corwin's musing that the Constitution "is an invitation to struggle for the privilege of directing American foreign policy."<sup>25</sup> What does the historical record suggest about the President's capacity to dominate national security policy? Is the American political tradition that Congress defers to the Executive in foreign and security policy, weighing in with countervailing powers only by exception? Can Congress regain its lost clout and limit presidential overreaching?

An objective assessment of the congressional-executive struggle over the control of national security policies will reveal several findings. First, American history is replete with examples of serious congressional quarrels with the President over the conduct of foreign policy. Second, periods of deference to the executive have been limited, and even then included at least tacit approval of the basic parameters of U.S. foreign policy. Third, as a result of congressional reforms in the 1970s, Congress gained an increased capacity to challenge presidential policies with the creation of the Congressional Budget Office, the Congressional Research Service, and the expansion of personal and committee staffs. These tools boosted Congress' analytical ability and contributed to more enhanced oversight of foreign policy and a greater trend toward legislating specific aspects of foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> Finally, the

congressional-executive relationship on use of force issues seeks a comfortable equilibrium. Periods of congressional acquiescence often are interrupted by perceived executive overreach that leads to the reassertion of congressional authority. Such was the context for the passage of the War Powers Act in 1973.

However, the net result of this struggle over time has been what one report called “the executive’s slow-motion coup” made possible by Congress, itself, which has been complicit in its own diminution of power instead of guarding its institutional prerogatives.<sup>27</sup> Even though Congress periodically fought back with such measures as the War Powers Act and the enactment of FISA in 1978, enforcing the oversight provisions mandated in these initiatives has been uneven, amounting in the overall concession of power to the executive. Some question whether it is even possible in the current political environment of polarized politics favoring partisan loyalties over institutional obligations to correct the imbalance between congressional and executive power.

## **ENTER THE JUDICIARY: WILL IT ACT TO RESTORE THE BALANCE?**

Beginning with George Washington, presidents have drawn on the institutional competencies of the executive and formal powers to play an active and assertive role in foreign affairs and national security issues. President Thomas Jefferson essentially conducted the Louisiana Purchase on his own; Abraham Lincoln, citing war powers, governed without Congress and suspended the courts; while Franklin Roosevelt oversaw the establishment of a plethora of federal agencies empowered to make policy in their realms in order to lift the country out of the Depression. In debate in President George W. Bush’s second term over the limits of presidential power, the 1952 decision of Justice Robert H. Jackson has been cited. Justice Jackson rejected President Harry Truman’s claim that, as Commander-in-Chief, he had the inherent power to seize the nation’s steel mills. This decision has been cited as precedent for future Supreme Court deliberations of the issue. Justice Jackson’s framework for judging the constitutionality of assertions of executive power is outlined below and was at the center of the recent confirmation hearings of the newly seated Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito.<sup>28</sup> Many believe that many aspects of the question of presidential overreach will come before the Supreme Court, giving the Court a unique opportunity to reshape the balance between the executive and Congress.

### **Three Political Contexts.**

Justice Jackson laid out three possible political contexts characterizing congressional-presidential relations in the national security arena. First, *presidential power is maximized when the President acts pursuant to the express or implied authorization of Congress in a given area.* In such periods of concordance, presidential leadership virtually is unchallenged. Such cooperation may be attributed to agreement over the major policy decisions in play. Presidential power also has been at its height during times of national crisis and war. Lincoln largely got his way in the conduct of the Civil War. In the 20th century, Woodrow Wilson, until 1919, and Franklin Roosevelt after 1941, enjoyed an advantage over the control of foreign policy. The postwar era through the mid-1960s was another period of presidential dominance rooted in broad agreement over policy. Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson all governed during major wars or at the height of the Cold War, and each had relative control over national security and foreign policy.<sup>29</sup> President George W. Bush contends that the 2001 congressional resolution authorizing the president “to use all necessary and appropriate force” to respond to the September 11, 2001, attacks and to prevent such attacks in the future served as implied authorization for detention and surveillance programs incident to the use of force in wartime. This controversy remains unresolved at this writing; however, it is clear that a sharp difference of opinion exists between the Administration and Congress over the matter.

Each period of perceived presidential overreach was followed by a backlash or resurgence of congressional power. Following the Civil War, powerful Congresses dominated the Presidency in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Congress handed Wilson the devastating political and personal defeat of rejecting the Treaty of Versailles with a reassertion of congressional power that resulted in the domination of foreign policy until World War II.<sup>30</sup> The War Powers Act of 1973 was the culmination of Congress' break with the President over the conduct of the Vietnam War and its reemergence in national security affairs.

Second, *presidential independence is possible if Congress is indifferent or acquiesces in a particular policy area*. In this political context Congress falls short of playing the role of constructive partner to critique, build support for, and improve on the President's foreign and security policy. Many factors contribute to such a scenario. There is a tendency in Congress to view foreign and security policy through domestic political lenses or from the perspective of special interests, which may both be barriers to judging foreign policy initiatives on the basis of the national interest. Presidential independence may also be possible simply because Congress is not paying attention to the administration's policies. Domestic issues often dominate the congressional agenda in peacetime. Furthermore, Congress may neglect its responsibilities in foreign affairs by devoting too little time to rigorous programmatic oversight.<sup>31</sup> In both the concordant and acquiescent political contexts, the President's leadership is not essential. However, in the third context to be considered, presidential leadership is critical.

*Presidential power in security and foreign policy is at its lowest ebb when the administration's desired action is incompatible with the expressed or implied will of the Congress.* An analysis of congressional-presidential relations in the Vietnam War illustrates a dramatic conversion of Congress' perception of its role in checking presidential war making powers. Its 1964 passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution essentially ceded to President Johnson the "blank check" he sought to deal with the crisis in Southeast Asia. The near unanimous backing in Congress (there were only two dissenting votes in the Senate) gave the President authority to take all "necessary measures" to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and "to prevent further aggression." President Johnson's interpretation of his Commander-in-Chief powers, which President Richard Nixon took to even greater heights as his successor, was an open-ended doctrine permitting the President to order armed forces into combat whenever the President determined that the security of the United States was threatened.<sup>32</sup>

As the administrations' prosecution of the war continued, Congress retreated from its role of presidential cheerleader and gradually began to reassert its authority. Congressmen increasingly traveled to Southeast Asia in the mid-1960s to take stock of the war, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held televised hearings in 1966, and by the early 1970s, Congress changed its rules for considering defense appropriations bills so that individual amendments attempting to limit or influence the policy could be considered without rejecting the entire defense appropriations package.<sup>33</sup> Continuation of presidential dominance in the face of a growing majority's disagreement with the Vietnam policy in particular, and even broader consensus that the Nixon administration had overreached with the assertion that the executive had unlimited discretionary authority as Commander-in-Chief to send American troops into action around the world, led to the passage of the War Powers Act.

The act established procedures in three main areas: presidential consultation with Congress, presidential reports to Congress, and congressional termination of military action. Congress' intent was to assert its authority via procedural constraints limiting the ability of the President to commit U.S. forces abroad. The act calls for the President to consult with Congress "in every possible instance" before introducing U.S. forces into hostilities or imminent hostilities, declares that the President must report to Congress within 48 hours when such forces are introduced, and mandates that the use of forces be terminated within 60 to 90 days, unless Congress authorizes that they remain.<sup>34</sup>

The continuous shifting between the political contexts discussed above is indicative in the ambiguous role the War Powers Act has had since its passage. President Nixon rejected it out of hand with his veto

of the measure in 1973. Congress shot back with its overwhelming override,<sup>35</sup> asserting its intent to expand its influence in national security policymaking with measures beyond the blunt instrument of withholding funds.

In practice, Congress has not asserted consistently the authority granted in the act. Presidents, meanwhile, have been careful not to acknowledge the law's constitutionality, while avoiding direct confrontations with Congress over its provisions. In fact, Congress has managed to get the President to honor the War Powers Act only once, in an obscure 1975 Marine action to recapture a tanker off the coast of Cambodia.<sup>36</sup> Depending on lawmakers' overall view of the President's proposed intervention, they may sit on the sidelines or strive to be consulted. Presidents continue to insist on flexibility and may seek Congress's explicit authorization for an impending action, but without admitting that such action is being taken in order to comply with the Act. There is, however, an acceptance, if grudgingly, that the War Powers Act stands as a reminder of the ultimate need to get at least congressional acquiescence, and, ideally, congressional approval for the commitment of troops.<sup>37</sup> Since the introduction of the War Powers Act into congressional-presidential relations all three political contexts, enthusiastic concord, indifferent acquiescence, and expressed disagreement with the President's foreign and security policy continue to occur.

President Bush's domestic surveillance program has raised the ire of the usually acquiescent Republican Congress because it sidesteps the oversight provisions outlined in FISA. As of this writing, Republican Chair of the Senate Judiciary committee Senator Arlen Specter is conducting hearings with the purpose of disputing the administration's claim that its broad powers to fight terrorism override specific legislation prohibiting warrantless eavesdropping. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales testified before the Judiciary Committee in February 2006 that the administration reasonably interpreted the 2001 authorization of force resolution as the legal justification for its actions. However, when two laws seem to come in conflict, the law which is more specific tends to prevail unless a law meant to override an earlier one specifically includes language to the contrary.<sup>38</sup> The FISA debate is unique because it brings together elements of wartime presidential powers within the context of actions contrary to "the express will of Congress." Indeed Senator Lindsey Graham warned Attorney General Gonzales that the administration's expansive interpretation of the 2001 resolution may make it "harder for the next president to get a force resolution if we take this too far."<sup>39</sup> Thus far, the Bush administration has not indicated any interest in going back to the Congress to change the statutory language in order to have Congress play a role in the program's oversight. Congressional angst notwithstanding, the current balance of power between the Executive and Congress is likely to stand unless the courts intervene in the unlikely event that one of the subjects of the domestic surveillance program successfully brings suit.

## **KEYS TO EFFECTIVE PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP**

The Executive branch's institutional competencies make the President the most important actor in foreign and security policy. The President, alone, has command of the bully pulpit to give him an unrivaled voice in policy debates. The President also is the actor in the American political system best positioned to consider the national interest. Since World War II, control over foreign and security policy increasingly has been centralized in the executive. The government's expertise for formulating and implementing foreign and security policy is largely resident in the Department of State and the Department of Defense, with the National Security Council also assuming an increasing amount of authority and influence—all three components of the Executive branch. Yet effective leadership is not a given. Perhaps the broadest and most common sense recommendation comes from presidential scholar Paul Quirk, who contributes the concept of "strategic competence." Quirk argues that presidents must



have a well-designed strategy for achieving the competencies they need to effectively lead. In this view, the key competencies to be mastered are policy substance, policy process, and policy promotion. An adequate level of policy expertise will result from years of attentive engagement in the major national issues. The development of direct in-depth personal competence in policy areas is necessarily selective, but a base knowledge of the key issues is essential to the president's recognition of the elements of responsible debate and to responsible decision-making.<sup>40</sup> Anything less than this, Quirk argues is minimalist and may impede intelligent decisionmaking,

A minimalist president...will not fully appreciate his own limitations. By consistently neglecting the complexities of careful policy arguments, one never comes to understand the importance of thorough analysis. In politics and government, at least, people generally do not place a high value on discourse that is much more sophisticated than their own habitual mode of thought.<sup>41</sup>

To lead effectively, presidents also must be competent in the processes of policymaking. The President sits atop a system of complex organizational and group decisionmaking processes and must ensure that the administration has put in place reliable decisionmaking processes. The major threats to effective national security policymaking processes are intelligence failures, groupthink and other malfunctions of the advisory process,<sup>42</sup> and failing to coordinate within the interagency process effectively and beyond the executive branch as appropriate.<sup>43</sup> Finally, building coalitions with congressional leaders and key interest groups, and using the bully pulpit to take the case to the public, are essential ingredients for effective policy promotion once policy decisions have been made.

Lee Hamilton offers his advice for effective presidential leadership in foreign and national security policy from his perspective as the former chairman and long time ranking Democrat on the House Committee on International Relations. Presidents must make foreign policy a priority and set forth a day-to-day course that is driven by an overall strategic vision. Hamilton argues that the foreign and security policy arena is uniquely dependent on the President's attention and leadership. Too often an issue receives intense attention and scrutiny for a short time, but then the administration fails to remain sufficiently focused or to expend the requisite resources to achieve success. The President also is uniquely positioned to forge the personal relations with foreign heads of state that are critical to alliance building and to articulate U.S. policies and the associated national interests with clarity to the American people.<sup>44</sup>

In a system of shared and separate powers in national security policymaking, successful policy rarely will be the result of strong-arming the Congress or the American people through the overplaying of formal powers. The Supreme Court is extremely reluctant to check the President's power while a war is in progress. Presidential leadership in national security policymaking effectively blends presidential authority with a consideration of the institutional competencies that the rival branch brings to the development and execution of strategy.

As the most accessible and representative branch of government, Congress can help mediate between the American people and the foreign policy elite. Through the hearings process, Congress also can help to educate the public on complex foreign and security policies. Testifying before the appropriate committees also forces the administration's top officials to articulate and defend their policies. However, some observers are concerned that this check on executive power is being weakened by an administration reluctant to make senior officials available for sworn congressional testimony or to provide documents to relevant committees, citing the confidentiality of Executive branch communications.<sup>45</sup>

Debates over particularly contentious and weighty matters of national security policy, such as whether or not to authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, can engage the public and strengthen the policy process through the inclusion of such measured deliberations. Passing legislation in support of the administration's policies also can help to strengthen

the President's hand before international bodies, adversaries, and allies. In the case of the Gulf War, congressional leaders insisted on being consulted and on debating the issue before authorizing the use of military force. President George H. W. Bush, however, feared that weak support or a split vote would be worse than no vote at all and might actually weaken his hand in the face of Iraqi aggression. President Bush maintained throughout the period of congressional consultation that, regardless of the outcome in Congress, he still had the constitutional right to commit U.S. forces to battle. In the end, the Congress passed the resolution with a clear victory in the House, 250-183, and a squeaker in the Senate, 52-47.<sup>46</sup> Effective presidential leadership in foreign and security policy recognizes Congress' constitutional role in the process and seeks ways to ensure that sustained consultation is a characteristic of the executive strategy for interacting with Congress.

## CONGRESSIONAL-PRESIDENTIAL COLLABORATION IN THE WAR IN IRAQ

The open-ended resolution Congress passed in October 2002 granted the President broad authority to use any means he determined necessary and appropriate—including military force—to respond to any security threat posed by Iraq.<sup>47</sup> Critics contended that, in contrast to the 1991 appeal of President Bush's father to authorize force on the eve of conflict when key conditions related to its prosecution were well known, "The president is asking Congress to delegate its constitutional power to declare war before he has decided we need to go to war, but he has not adequately explained what this war will look like."<sup>48</sup> Others argued President Bush's request was constitutionally inappropriate because it was seeking a conditional grant of power, leaving in the President's hands the decision to change the nation into a state of war. These critics contend that a nonbinding resolution declaring support for the President's efforts to make Iraq comply with United Nations (UN) resolutions followed by the authorization to use force if peaceful means fail may have been more appropriate. Such a two-step approach would have left Congress in the loop up until the point when the President was ready to begin military action.<sup>49</sup>

Although some Republicans had concerns about endorsing the new doctrine of preemption, they deferred to the President. With the mid-term elections only weeks away, many Democrats felt pressure to "get this question of Iraq behind us" so they could return to other issues that they thought would be successful for them in the elections. At the height of the House debate, less than 40 members could be found on the floor. On the Senate side, no more than 10 senators could be found. The resolution passed 296 to 133 in the House and in the Senate 77 to 23.<sup>50</sup>

Observers noted that the debate over the Iraq war was a pale shadow of the Senate's more vigorous role in the past. Congressional scholar Norman Ornstein commented on the Senate's role in foreign policy, "the Senate is struggling to find an appropriate role to play. I think you'd be hard-pressed to suggest the Senate is a great debating body—on anything."<sup>51</sup> The concordant-acquiescent political context that has characterized congressional-presidential relations since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks may have contributed to executive overreach in ways that could weaken the overall prospects for the sustainment and ultimate success of the President's strategy in Iraq.

The political environment in the run-up to the War in Iraq was conducive to the executive "going it alone" vis-à-vis Congress. Although the Congress put up little resistance over the open-ended resolution to use force in Iraq, this support occurred within a climate of some angst on the Hill over the administration's attitude toward the role of Congress in defense policy. Congressmen of both parties complained that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld "tells lawmakers little and demands immense discretion."<sup>52</sup> Complaints also were numerous and continue today, accusing the Administration of thwarting Congress's investigative authority. Some lawmakers were frustrated that their attempts to get more information about the administration's impending war plans and strategy came up empty.

Administration officials were unable to answer with any specificity questions related to the cost of the war or of the reconstruction effort to follow before lawmakers cast their votes.

Some members of Congress demanded to hear the administration's plans for the postwar occupation, but were denied such consultations based on the argument that it would not be proper to plan for the aftermath of a conflict that the President had not yet decided to fight. The "ends" that the President advanced shifted among competing candidates, eventually settling on the need to disarm Saddam Hussein and dismantle the imminent threat that his weapons posed.

Scholars pointed out that the doctrine of preemptive military strikes added a "new wrinkle to the Imperial Presidency," because the trigger for the use of force is classified intelligence.<sup>53</sup> Richard Durbin, a member of the Senate intelligence committee, complained that an insufficient body of the intelligence available to the committee was declassified in the run-up to the vote on Iraq, hindering the ability of his colleagues to make an informed vote.

The choice to maximize the powers of the presidency, while marginalizing the participation of the Congress, may have put the strategy at risk. Congress shares responsibility for the policy due to its decision to support the open-ended resolution. However, the emphasis on regime change through invasion without laying out all aspects of a comprehensive strategy complete with clear strategic ends, a thorough explanation of the ways or courses of action the administration would pursue to achieve the ends, and a good faith estimate of the means or cost to the American people in terms of lives and treasure made it more likely that the administration would be on the defensive when the strategy ran into difficulty.

Indeed, in September 2003, when the Bush administration finally delivered the first major bill for the war to Congress in the form of a request for \$87 billion dollars to fund Iraqi reconstruction and the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan for the remainder of the fiscal year, Congress pushed back mightily. Pent up frustration over the lack of collaboration with the legislative branch was evident. Senator Diane Feinstein remarked, "We want to be good Americans. We want a bipartisan foreign policy. We know the time is tough. We want to be with you. But there's a feeling that you know it all. The administration knows it all. And nobody else knows anything. And, therefore, we're here just to say, 'Yes, sir. How high do we jump?' And at some point we refuse to jump."<sup>54</sup> More direct was Senator Robert Byrd's comment to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, "Congress is not an ATM. We have to be able to explain this huge, enormous bill to the American people."<sup>55</sup>

The administration sustained another wave of attacks in January 2004 when its Chief Weapons Inspector in Iraq, David Kay, concluded that there were no large stocks of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq before the war. "Based on what I've seen is that we are very unlikely to find stockpiles, large stockpiles of weapons. I don't think they exist." "It turns out we were all wrong."<sup>56</sup> Democrats charged this was further proof the war was based on false premises. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle took issue with the certainty of the language that administration officials used with regard to the prewar intelligence, and some questioned whether administration officials misled them.

Members of Congress complained that Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet gave his personal assurance in closed-door hearings that WMD stocks would be found in Iraq. "He was telling the senior people in the administration...that the weapons absolutely were there, that they were certain the stuff was there."<sup>57</sup> Ohio Senator Mike DeWine, a Republican on the Intelligence Committee, told the *Columbus Dispatch* that he was not sure he would vote to authorize war with Iraq if he had to do it all over again.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile, on the campaign trail, Democratic presidential candidates took aim at the administration. "We were misled not only in the intelligence but misled in the way that the president took us to war," the Democratic front-runner, Senator John F. Kerry (MA), said when asked about Kay's conclusions."<sup>59</sup>

The administration's critics fault the lack of consensus building and deride its unwillingness to collaborate with either international allies or its domestic partners in the national security policymaking

process. As the popularity of the Iraq War has waned in the face of its \$233 billion price tag by early 2006 and deaths of American servicemen creep upward of 2,200, the Bush administration stands undeterred in its approach to Executive power. The sweeping assertion of the powers of the presidency is grounded in a belief that the full power of the Executive must be restored in order to prevail in the War on Terrorism.<sup>60</sup> Leaving the Congress and the Courts in its wake, however, is at least politically flawed and may provoke a reaction from these bodies that ultimately cuts back on presidential powers.

Supporters of the administration, on the other hand, laud the resurgence of presidential power and maintain that the administration's approach is merely a corrective action necessary to reverse the erosion of presidential prerogatives in recent decades. According to this view, the administration's approach is to be admired as a model in presidential leadership,

To achieve all this, Bush staged one of the most impressive exercises of presidential power in modern times. He used all the tools at hand: the bully pulpit, TV, personal persuasion in the Oval Office, and the skillful deployment of top officials in his administration. And, not to be underestimated, there was sheer presidential bullheadedness. When a president takes a firm and defensible position and doesn't flinch, he normally prevails . . . One telling result of Bush's full-throttle use of his presidency was a far greater percentage of Democratic support for his congressional war resolution than the elder President Bush won in 1991 after Iraq had invaded Kuwait.<sup>61</sup>

Is President Bush' leadership vis-à-vis Iraq firm, resolute leadership appropriate to the national security challenges inherent in fighting the security threats facing the United States in the 21st century or imperial presidential overreach that, if continued, ultimately will lead to a failed strategy for fighting the War on Terrorism? The historical record indicates that policy is strengthened when each branch understands its proper role, powers, and limitations in foreign policy. An analysis of the case of the war in Iraq suggests that both branches have fallen short of this ideal.

## CONCLUSION

The American republic's very essence lies in its allocation of power across the political system. The Founders envisioned a struggle for power between actors enabled with competing powers to keep each other in check. That such struggles continue is a testament to the continued viability of the founding blueprint. In the current political environment, the backdrop of national security seems to present an obstacle to the balanced interplay of the President, Congress, and the Courts. But the Founders' institutional design was undertaken with a realistic expectation that national security matters could be at the heart of power plays among the government elite placed in each of three empowered branches. Liberty could not be forfeited, the Founders' assumed, unless key actors chose not to employ their countervailing power to preserve it. Security, meanwhile, would depend on the adoption of an effective strategy for victory. The "Long War" may only be beginning. Balancing the quest for security with the preservation of liberty requires a collaborative employment of the national security powers that the President, Congress, and the Courts share.

Effective conduct of national security policy depends on understanding one's power, its limits, and the recognition that other actors' actions also shape the policy battlefield. Successful national security policy exploits the institutional competencies that the Framers' designed into the American political system. Coordinated efforts that link the President's national security policy initiatives with Congress' unique capacity to vet the policy, educate the public, and ultimately lend its support are more likely to lead to successful strategy. Such policy also must withstand the scrutiny of the Courts empowered to rein in the President or Congress when either entity oversteps its allocation of power. Successful policy implementation, furthermore, is reliant on competent executive decisionmaking, efficient bureaucratic processes and the keen oversight of lawmakers, the media, and the American people.

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## CHAPTER 22

### NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGIES: 1990 TO 2005

**Richard M. Meinhart**

The four Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff since 1990—Generals Colin Powell (1989-93), John Shalikashvili (1993-97), Henry Shelton (1997-2001) and Richard Myers (2001-05)—used an unclassified national military strategy to provide advice on the military’s strategic direction to the President and Secretary of Defense, and communicated that direction to Congress and the American people. The Chairman’s responsibilities as the nation’s senior military advisor to provide this strategic advice, along with many other tasks, are specified in Title 10 U.S. Code. These increased responsibilities were a result of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA), considered to be the most significant piece of defense legislation since the National Security Defense Act of 1947 that established the Defense Department.<sup>1</sup> The GNA was the result of almost 4 years of somewhat contentious dialogue and debate among Congress, military leaders, the defense intellectual community, and the Reagan administration on how best to organize the Defense Department to strengthen civilian authority, improve military advice to civilian leaders, provide for more efficient use of resources, and better execute in the field to respond to the nation’s security challenges.<sup>2</sup>

While this author will discuss the strategic environment each Chairman faced in more detail as he analyzes the four strategies, the first three Chairmen were challenged by an environment that began with the Gulf War and continued with an increasing number of other regional military operations across the spectrum of conflict as the decade progressed. They had to meet these challenges while accommodating slowing declining financial resources and a Cold War equipped force reduced by about one-third. Since 2000, and particularly after September 11, 2001, the last two Chairmen faced different security challenges dominated by the focus on terrorism, as most evidenced by the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq, while needing to transform by developing future capabilities to achieve the vision of full spectrum dominance. They had to meet these challenges with greater financial resources and better technology but with no increase in military manpower.<sup>3</sup> The four national military strategies were the key formal way each Chairman advised the nation’s leaders on how best to meet these challenges, which are summarized in Figure 1.

| 1990s                                       | 2000s                                 |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Regional competition and threats            | Global War on Terror                  |
| Gulf War                                    | Iraq and Afghanistan                  |
| Greater number military operations          | Continued global engagements          |
| Declining financial and personnel resources | Increasing financial resources        |
| Need to integrate technology                | Need to transform to capabilities     |
| Robust overseas bases and deployed force    | Less global infrastructure and forces |
| Well maintained Cold War equipment          | Updated but worn equipment            |

**Figure 1. Chairmen’s Strategic Environment.**

This chapter will focus on the Chairmen’s leadership challenges since 1990, and how they developed and used four different national military strategies in 1992, 1995, 1997, and 2004 to respond to those challenges. The chapter describes in broad terms the strategic environment facing each Chairman, as it formed the basis for his subsequent strategy. Then each of the strategies’ key components, which were



organized around an *ends, ways and means* construct, will be examined. The assertion is that formal direction provided by these strategies was an important aspect of each Chairman's leadership legacy. Since each military strategy was part of and perhaps the key integrating component of an overall strategic planning system, the chapter begins by examining this planning system's integrating nature and other key characteristics.

## Strategic Planning System.

The Chairman's strategic planning system integrates the processes and documents of the people and organizations above him (President and Secretary of Defense) and the people and organizations with which he directly coordinates (Services and Combatant Commanders). The Chairman has no control over any significant defense resources (Secretary of Defense and Services control resources) or direct control of operational military forces (Combatant Commanders control operational forces); however, orders to those forces flow through the Chairman. The Chairman formally influences his civilian leaders and those with whom he coordinates through this strategic planning system. In addition to influencing leaders, this system provides specific direction for the many staffs that support these leaders. As such, the Chairman's Joint Strategic Planning System formally evolved four times during this 16-year period in 1990, 1993, 1997, and 1999. It is the Chairman's key system that integrates the nation's strategy, plans, and resources that consist by 2005 of approximately 2.24 million active, guard, and reserve forces and defense outlays of \$465B.<sup>4</sup>

**1989 Status:** Prior to 1990 there were 10 rather large and primarily classified strategic planning products that were described as voluminous, somewhat stove-piped, and highly bureaucratic, but this was indicative of strategic planning products produced in the late 1980s.<sup>5</sup> The Senate Armed Services Committee called this style of strategic planning ineffective, and the former Chief of Naval Operations, in remarking on a strategic planning document, stated it was "... almost as valueless to read as it was fatiguing to write. . . . a synthesis of mutually contradictory positions that the guidance they gave was minimal."<sup>6</sup> Chairman Powell recognized these deficiencies and streamlined the system when he published Memorandum of Policy No. 7 on January 30, 1990.<sup>7</sup>

**1990 Change:** The 1990 change added a front-end leader's guidance while eliminating or combining many other documents as ten products were reduced to four. The front-end guidance was through a formal joint strategy review for "... gathering information, raising issues, and facilitating the integration of strategy, operational planning, and program assessments," that culminated with publishing *Chairman's Guidance*.<sup>8</sup> This concise document (6 to 10 pages) was structured to provide the principal, initial direction to develop the planning system's next three documents: the *National Military Strategy Document*, *Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP)*, and the *Chairman's Program Assessment*. The classified *National Military Strategy Document (NMSD)* was to be produced under a rigid 2-year cycle with several parts, one of which was a *National Military Strategy*. In addition, there were seven functional annexes added to this document, such as intelligence and research and development that in total comprised hundreds of more pages. For example, one annex alone had 11 chapters, 13 tables, and 15 tabs. The part of the NSMD called the *National Military Strategy* (also classified) would be sent to the Secretary of Defense for review and forwarded to the President for approval before returning to influence defense resource guidance.

**1993 Change:** Chairman Powell again revised this planning system in March 1993 by publishing the first change to his earlier Memorandum of Policy No. 7.<sup>9</sup> This change essentially codified what was executed in previous years rather than designing a new system. This revised system included the following guidance: place more focus on long-range planning by requiring formal environmental scanning to determine what challenges the strategy needed to consider; issue the *National Military Strategy* as an unclassified document designed to communicate with the American people rather than

providing internal military direction; establish a *Joint Planning Document* to sharpen the Chairman's advice to the Secretary of Defense on how to resource the strategy; and keep the JSCP, which directs plans to implement that strategy in the field, the same.

**1997 Change:** Chairman Shalikashvili made the next revision to the strategic planning system in September 1997 when he published Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3100.01.<sup>10</sup> This instruction again reflected changes he instituted in prior years rather than formally changing the system before execution. He kept the national military strategy as an unclassified document produced in a flexible manner that looked out about 5 years, but he added the 1996 *Joint Vision 2010* to provide longer range direction not covered by his strategy. He also added the *Chairman's Program Recommendation* to provide leader-focused resource advice to implement both the strategy and vision. Again, the JSCP was left unchanged.

**1999 Change:** Chairman Shelton made the final formal change to the strategic planning system in September 1999.<sup>11</sup> He did not change any major processes or products. Instead, he placed more focus on Theater Engagement Plans to integrate the strategy's shape component and on implementing the 1996 *Joint Vision* to better support the strategy's prepare component. This vision process involved identifying specific 21st century security challenges and the desired operational capabilities to meet those challenges, all of which provided joint direction to conduct operational experiments and influence resource decisions. Overall, this process change resulted in improvements to better execute the national military strategy.

**2005 Status:** While Chairman Myers made no official changes by 2005 to the 1999 operating instruction that describes the strategic planning system, the formal system has not been completely followed since the early 2000s. In execution, General Myers published three new strategy-related planning documents, kept four existing planning products to include the unclassified national military strategy, and cancelled the separate vision and staff-resource advice products. The three new strategy-related products he added were: a classified 2002 and later 2005 *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism* to provide more guidance to the military's effort to execute the national strategies associated with terrorism; a classified *Chairman's Risk Assessment* that identified to Congress the strategic and military risk to execute the national military strategy; and *Joint Operations Concepts* in 2003 (revised to *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* in 2005) that identified future concepts and capabilities associated with implementing the vision of full spectrum dominance now embedded in the 2004 *National Military Strategy*. These strategic planning system changes, along with what they direct or inform and the dates of the most recent products by June 2005, are depicted in Figure 2.<sup>12</sup>

All of these Chairmen's changes incrementally resulted in the strategic planning system evolving from being rigid and Cold War focused at the decade's start to being more flexible, vision oriented, and resource focused at the decade's end. After 2000, the strategic planning system was more focused on the War on Terrorism and identifying joint force capabilities. Throughout this 16-year period with its changing national security challenges, the unclassified National Military Strategy remained the planning system's keystone document.

## **1989 National Military Strategy Document.**

At the beginning of 1990, the formal manner by which the Chairman advised the President and the Secretary of Defense on the strategic direction of the Armed Forces was via a classified and rather voluminous *National Military Strategy Document* (NMSD) and a shorter classified *National Military Strategy* that was part of this document. Admiral Crowe published these in 1989 to provide guidance for the resource time frame of FY 92 to FY97. The process to produce this strategy also was formally linked to the Defense Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System. Hence, this was the strategy and processes that General Powell inherited.



# Strategy: Foundation for all Major Processes

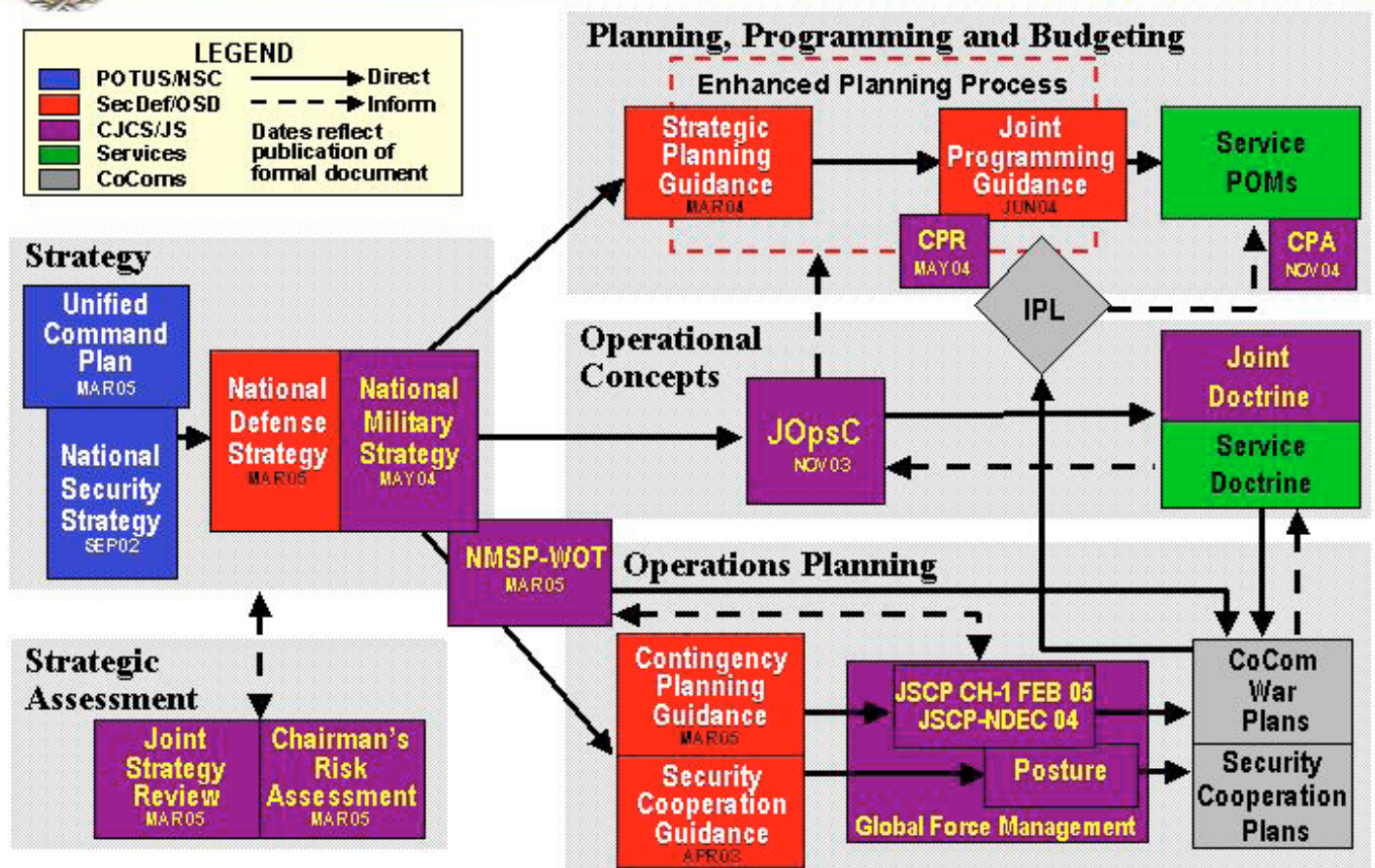


Figure 2. Strategy – Foundation for all Major Processes.

The classified 1989 *National Military Strategy Document* included chapters dedicated to subjects such as national military objectives, national military strategy, appraisal of U.S. defense policy, intelligence appraisal, fiscally constrained force levels, net assessment options and risk evaluation.<sup>13</sup> In addition to this basic document, there were seven separate classified annexes on functional subjects that supported the strategy such as research and development and intelligence. The 1989 strategy focused on the Cold War and the Soviet Union. This strategy, which was underpinned with a robust nuclear deterrent, included a forward defense with many forces deployed forward, particularly in Europe and Korea, that were then backed up by rapid reinforcement to dispersed bases in many nations.

## 1992 National Military Strategy.

The demise of the Soviet Union, a broad retreat from ideological support of communism, and an inclusive international coalition that reversed Iraqi aggression in Kuwait characterized the strategic environment that influenced the 1992 strategy.<sup>14</sup> On the positive side, democracy was growing in many parts of the world. On the negative side, regional conflicts, animosities, and weapons proliferation that the bipolar world and Cold War had previously constrained now had the potential to intensify. In essence this was the “new world order,” a concept articulated by President Bush in his September 11, 1990, speech to a joint session of Congress and repeated many times later.<sup>15</sup>

The 1992 strategy, which was unclassified and only 27 pages long, was a complete change from the previous one in clarity, conciseness, and strategic direction. While this strategy was published in January 1992, its roots can be traced to the President's *National Security Strategy*, the Secretary of Defense's policies in his *Defense Planning Guidance* and *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, and General Powell's development of the Base Force. This strategy represented a "... shift from containing the spread of communism and deterring Soviet aggression to a more diverse, flexible strategy that is regionally oriented and capable of responding to the challenges of this decade."<sup>16</sup> In essence, this was the most fundamental change in the U.S. military strategy since the global containment strategy and Cold War that began in the 1950s. The military's primary objective now was to be deterring and fighting regional wars rather than containing a superpower rival.

This strategy was based on the United States providing leadership to promote global peace and security. It was built on the following four foundations: Strategic Deterrence and Defense, which consisted of a credible nuclear deterrent composed of offensive and defensive capabilities; Forward Presence, which consisted of forces continually stationed or deployed worldwide; Crisis Response, which was the ability to respond quickly to more than one regional crisis; and Reconstitution, which involved the ability to mobilize personnel, equipment, and the industrial base to rebuild military strength. The strategy also specified eight strategic principles that reinforced those four foundations – readiness, collective security, arms control, maritime and aerospace superiority, strategic agility, power projection, technological superiority, and decisive force. In conclusion, the strategy described how to employ forces and listed the broad military force structure, called the "Base Force," to implement the strategy.

This Base Force, which was determined earlier, was composed broadly of strategic nuclear forces, Army divisions, Navy ships, Marine expeditionary forces, and Air Force fighter wing equivalents. When compared to the 1991 force structure, the Base Force was significantly smaller by the following representative systems or organizations: 460 missiles and 16 nuclear submarines from the strategic forces; 4 active and 2 Army Guard Divisions; 80 naval ships and 3 Carrier Battle Groups; and 7 Active and 1 Reserve Air Force Fighter Wing Equivalents.<sup>17</sup> The strategy clearly conveyed to the American people—one of the main target audiences, if not the most important audience—why they needed a military and in what size. The American people and Congress were clamoring for a peace dividend as the end of the Cold War sank in and the euphoria of the 1991 Operation DESERT STORM victory ended.

This strategy's coordination was different than the bureaucratic coordination of other strategic planning documents on the Joint Staff, which illustrated the flexibility in strategic planning General Powell achieved. The strategy, which had undergone a few variations and was interrupted by operational necessity (Gulf War and Soviet internal turmoil) from its conceptual beginnings in 1990 to the end of 1991, was finally published in January 1992. It did not go through the disciplined 2-year cycle with its associated annexes and formal assessments. Joint Staff Officer Harry Rothman, who was part of the process, gave credit to General Powell's personal relationships and strategic vision of the world that broke down the impediments resident in formal planning processes. He stated that "... people and not the process were more important in the forging of the new strategy."<sup>18</sup> General Powell spent considerable energy convincing other senior leaders and converting them to his broad views rather than conducting the detailed coordination at junior or mid levels that usually influenced the document's content.

One other significant aspect about this strategy was the Foreword to the document, which illustrated General Powell's leadership style of both boldness and humility. The Foreword boldly stated that the strategy was his advice, in consultation with other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and commanders of unified and specified commands, and that he presented it to fulfill his responsibility under the GNA to provide such advice. Humbly and emphasizing civilian control of the military, the Foreword also

stated that, in determining this strategy, he listened to his civilian leadership, as the strategy clearly implemented the President's and Secretary of Defense's policies. Clearly, as the first Chairman totally under the GNA, General Powell created a leadership legacy in style and substance, as it was the first unclassified strategy signed by a Chairman. Lorna Jaffe, in her detailed examination of the Base Force's development (a key part of the strategy), concluded that Powell fully used the enhanced authority of the GNA and stated:

While he hoped to win the Services to his point of view, he did not aim for either bureaucratic consensus through staff work or corporate consensus through JCS meetings. He never asked the Service Chiefs to vote on either the Base Force or recommending to the Secretary and the President adoption of a new strategy [NMS]. Rather, he thought it was more important to win the Secretary's approval.<sup>19</sup>

## **1995 National Military Strategy.**

The strategic environment at this time was centered on an unsettled world that exhibited both opportunities and threats.<sup>20</sup> This world was characterized by regional instability as evidenced by conflict in the Balkans, Somalia, and Rwanda; concern about the possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to hostile regional groups or terrorists from the Soviet Union's breakup; transnational dangers associated with fleeing refugees, diseases, and crime syndicates; and dangers to nations undergoing transition to democratic reform, particularly those in the former Soviet Union. The strategy developed to respond to these challenges was one of two produced by General Shalikashvili. They looked very similar to General Powell's in style, but in direction were very different in a few key areas.

The 1995 strategy took guidance from the President's *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* and defined the military's two simple main objectives—promote stability and thwart aggression. While the thwart aggression was embedded in the 1992 strategy, the promote stability objective was different fundamentally than the 1992 strategy. The 1995 strategy described a more active use of the military globally to promote stability rather than to react to instances of instability. To achieve these two objectives, the 1995 strategy defined three components: (1) peacetime engagement, which was the broad range of non-combat activities to promote democracy, relieve suffering and enhance overall regional stability; (2) deterrence and conflict prevention, which ranged from conflict's high end represented by nuclear deterrence to conflict's low end represented by peace enforcement to restore stability, security, and international law; and (3) fight and win, which the strategy described as the military's foremost responsibility and defined as the ability to fight and win two major regional contingencies. In essence, the military was expected to become more engaged in conflict prevention to include missions such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and nation assistance; missions not mentioned in the 1992 strategy.

This strategy also identified the military forces necessary to execute the strategy, but earlier work by the Secretary of Defense's Bottom-Up Review actually had determined the force structure outside the formal strategy development process. While the military missions were growing in noncombat areas, the force structure was decreasing from the 1992 Base Force. For example, active Army divisions declined by two, the Air Force lost six fighter wings, and Navy combatant ships went from 450 to 346.<sup>21</sup> In addition, reconstitution, defined in the 1992 strategy as forming, training, and fielding new fighting units along with activating the industrial base, dropped out of the 1995 strategy altogether. Hence, maintaining readiness became ever more important as the force became smaller and was used more frequently. This readiness focus was emphasized greatly by Chairman Shalikashvili, as he used words related to readiness in his annual Posture Statements to Congress with significantly greater frequency than Chairman Powell.<sup>22</sup>



This strategy's development was different significantly than the 1992 strategy, as it followed the more flexible processes and overall structure outlined in the 1993 Memorandum of Policy. The strategy included information summarized from another strategic planning product, the *Joint Strategy Review*, and reflected the conceptual outline as defined in the memorandum.<sup>23</sup> This illustrated that process, as well as people, drove this strategy's development. This also reflected General Shalikashvili's leadership style, which could be characterized as using interpersonal skills to develop and value consensus and using strategic planning processes to achieve and implement that consensus.<sup>24</sup> In addition, since this strategy was similar in style to the previous one, an existing strategic planning process could more easily produce an evolutionary vice revolutionary product.

### 1997 National Military Strategy.

Opportunities and threats again characterized the strategic environment in 1997.<sup>25</sup> The opportunities were the lower threshold of global war and potentially a more peaceful world. The four principal threats this strategy identified were: (1) regional dangers as primarily represented by Iran, Iraq, and North Korea; (2) asymmetric challenges as represented by state or nonstate actors to include terrorists that might possess WMD; (3) transnational dangers such as extremism, ethnic or religious disputes, crime, and refugee flows; and (4) wild cards that could arise from unexpected world or technology events as yet undefined or by a synergistic combination of the other three threats.

To respond to these challenges, the strategy centered on concepts described by the words *shape*, *respond*, and *prepare*. These words and concepts were articulated more broadly for all elements of a nation's power in the President's May 1997 *National Security Strategy* and also used in the Secretary of Defense's May 1997 *Quadrennial Defense Review*. In integrating advice from the President and Secretary of Defense, these words took the following meaning in the military strategy: "U.S. Armed Forces advance national security by applying military power to **Shape** the international environment and **Respond** to the full spectrum of crisis, while we **Prepare Now** for an uncertain future."<sup>26</sup>

The 1997 NMS built on the work of the previous strategy, but was different in four main areas. First, it more specifically identified the asymmetric and wild card threats, which, in hindsight, conceptually reflect the characteristics of the al Qaeda organization and the subsequent September 11, 2001 (9/11) attacks 4 years later. Second, it strongly made the case for why the military needed to be involved with shaping the international environment. While doing so, it clearly emphasized the warfighting aspect when it stated: "Our Armed Forces' foremost task is to fight and win our Nation's wars."<sup>27</sup> Third, it identified the force structure to execute the strategy in greater detail than previously, which may have been a way for the Chairman to more aggressively identify force structure issues. For example, the strategy identified the required numbers of: Army Corps, cavalry regiments and National Guard enhanced brigades; naval attack submarines and amphibious groups; and defense department civilians, Coast Guard personnel and special operations forces. Fourth, in preparing for the future, the strategy established the foundation for the current joint force and defense transformation when it identified the characteristics for a multi-mission, joint, and interoperable force. This was clearly the greatest joint focus of any strategy to date.

This strategy also was developed within the strategic planning process. It relied on two other 1996 strategic planning documents. The *Joint Strategy Review* influenced the strategy's strategic environment assessment, and the section that covered preparing for the future leveraged the concepts identified in the 1996 *Joint Vision 2010*. Since the strategy came out in September, a short time after the President's May *National Security Strategy* and the Secretary of Defense's first *Quadrennial Defense Review*, it emphasized the interconnectivity and strong collaboration that existed among the military and civilian leadership in the National Security Council, Secretary of Defense, and Joint Chiefs of Staff. While

General Shalikashvili signed this strategy in his last month as Chairman, it was coordinated fully with General Shelton, the incoming Chairman.

## **2004 National Military Strategy.**

Prior to the publication of the National Military Strategy in 2004, the nation experienced a dramatic change in the strategic environment that started with the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and included with the strategic response of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan) in October 2001 and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (Iraq) in March 2003. In essence, the military was engaged fully in the War on Terrorism. A defense strategy being written in concert with this military strategy placed the persistent and emerging security challenges the United States faced into four categories of traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive.<sup>28</sup> A traditional challenge was associated with states employing well-formed militaries and systems that typified the massive state-on-state warfare characteristic of World Wars I and II. Irregular challenges reflected unconventional methods used by both state and nonstate entities against a stronger state, or somewhat akin to what occurred in the Vietnam War. Catastrophic challenges focused on terrorist or rogue use of WMD or methods producing WMD-like effects, which reflected concerns identified in the 1997 strategy. The last category, disruptive, described competitors making a breakthrough by technological means to overcome the U.S. advantage in a particular operational domain. This last category reflected aspects of the 21st century environment that previous strategies had not considered.

This military strategy amplified these four defense challenges when it specified three aspects of the environment that had unique military implications. These three aspects were under the headings of a wider range of adversaries; a more complex and distributed battlespace; and technology diffusion and access. The wider range of adversaries ran the gamut from established or rogue states to nonstate organizations, such as crime syndicates or terrorists networks, and finally to individuals. The complex battlespace included the entire globe, whether in urban or desolated areas; defined physical space or cyber space; or in foreign states or the U.S. homeland. Emphasis on the U.S. homeland was unique to this strategy. The third aspect reflected the global availability and easy access to civilian dual-use technologies that determined adversaries can adapt for military use. The last aspect was, again, very different than seen in previous strategies.

To meet these challenges, the military strategy again built directly on four defense objectives, as it defined three supporting military objectives. These three military objectives were organized around three words: *protect*, *prevent*, and *prevail*. They were defined as “protect the United States against external attacks and aggression; prevent conflict and surprise attack; and prevail against adversaries.”<sup>29</sup>

To achieve these objectives, the 2004 NMS made no reference to specific force structure as had previous strategies. Instead, the strategy emphasized the desired attributes, functions, and capabilities for a joint force. However, it also supported what came to be called a 1-4-2-1 force sizing construct that appeared in the defense strategy. The 1-4-2-1 construct postulated that the U.S. military needed to accomplish the following: defend the homeland (1), deter forward in and from four regions (4); conduct two overlapping defeat campaigns (2); and win decisively in one campaign (1). Overall, this force structure approach provided great flexibility for force structure changes in concert with a capability-vic threat-based approach and clearly had the greatest joint focus to date.

The process to produce this strategy was very different from the other three strategies in many ways. A solid draft of the strategy was produced in 2002 to integrate the advice of the post-9/11 2001 *Defense Quadrennial Review* and the 2002 *National Security Strategy*. However, there was some question whether an unclassified *National Military Strategy* was needed, since a defense strategy was published as part of the QDR, the Chairman provided military specific advice by the 2002 classified *National*

*Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism*, and he provided unclassified operational military advice in 2003 through the *Joint Operations Concepts*. Hence, completing the early draft of the 2004 NMS was not a priority. However, Congress cleared up any ambiguity that existed when it passed the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. That Act required the Chairman to produce a detailed report that is a biennial review of the National Military Strategy in eight specific areas, to include the strategic and military risks inherent in the strategy.<sup>30</sup> This amendment to existing U.S. Code is an example of Congress performing its oversight role. The initial legislation asked for information without specifying how it should be provided. Congress was not satisfied with the information it received, so it got much more specific in terms both of “what” and “how” the Chairman should provide in his report.

The actual writing of the 2004 military strategy followed a very integrated and parallel path as the Vice Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy on the Joint Staff stated: “So we’ve worked hand in glove with the Secretary of Defense’s staff in developing both of these documents.”<sup>31</sup> The Defense Staff focused on writing a national defense strategy, the first time this was done as a separate unclassified document; and the Joint Staff focused on writing the national military strategy. As such, one sees the military strategy directly referencing the national defense strategy in many of its sections that reflects this close collaboration to ensure synchronization and alignment. While the military strategy was completed in 2004 and copies could be located on the internet, it was released officially at a March 18, 2005, press conference when the Under Secretary Defense for Policy and Joint Staff Vice Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy discussed the *National Defense Strategy* and *National Military Strategy* together.<sup>32</sup> The 2004 *National Military Strategy* also has a classified annex that was later sent to Congress that analyzes strategic and military risk in detail.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion.

The National Military Strategy is the keystone document of an overarching strategic planning system that enabled the Chairman as the nation’s senior military advisor to execute his formal leadership responsibilities specified by Congress in Title 10 U.S. Code. Since 1990, each of the four strategies examined identified the broad military ends, ways, and means to meet the nation’s security challenges identified by the President in his *National Security Strategy* and integrated advice by the Secretary of Defense from other documents. The unclassified nature of the strategy and its signature by the Chairman to integrate this civilian advice was a leadership legacy started by Chairman Powell that continues today. Most importantly, this strategy directly communicates to the American people the need for a military, what that military will do, and how it will do it to provide for our nation’s security. It essentially creates a compact between the military and the American people that is so important in today’s volatile and complex security environment.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 22

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**CHAPTER 23**  
**THE APPROPRIATE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE IN THE MAKING**  
**OF NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY<sup>1</sup>**

**Anthony R. Williams**

The purpose of intelligence analysis is to elevate the quality of discussion in this town.

Sherman Kent

What is the appropriate role of intelligence in the making of national security policy? Most members of the national security community bring to their roles a preconceived and mostly subconscious view on this issue, which view seems so obvious to its holders, that they rarely see reason to raise the question. Even within the U.S. Intelligence Community, where the subject is discussed more frequently, it is usually approached as part of an academic discussion, and only rarely as part of the planning and execution of normal support to the national security policy process.<sup>2</sup> In effect, all the players in the process hold opinions on this issue, but those opinions function in the background, much as the operating software for a personal computer runs invisible to the user unless it malfunctions.

Generally speaking, members of the national security community will fall loosely into one of two groups as regards to their attitude toward the appropriate role of intelligence in the policy process. These can best be described as the “unconstrained support to policy” view and the “policy neutral” view. While few will hold either attitude without qualification, it is instructive to imagine these attitudes as opposite poles on a spectrum, along which national security players will tend to coalesce. This difference is more than of academic interest, because it dictates how the players use intelligence and the intelligence apparatus in the development, communication, and execution of national security policy. And that, in turn, has significant implications for the nature of American democracy.

The 1947 National Security Act can be cited in support of the “unconstrained view,” in that it specifically charges the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) (and by extension the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as his executive agent) to act as the principle advisor to the President on intelligence matters relating to the national security.<sup>3</sup> And most would agree that the *State of the Union Address* is very much a matter of national security. Furthermore, the 1947 Act also charges the DCI with the responsibility “for providing national intelligence

- to the President;
- to the heads of the departments and agencies of the executive branch;
- to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and senior military commanders;
- and where appropriate, to the Senate and House of Representatives and the committees thereof.”<sup>4</sup>

But because the 1947 National Security Act leaves so many things undefined, it allows for the widest interpretation and in that context can be cited to buttress any position on this spectrum of attitudes. For example:

- What form or forms exactly is the DCI’s advice and “national intelligence” to take? Does it include only formal reports, either verbally or in writing? Or does it include the review of Presidential and Secretarial speeches, statements, etc.? Does it include only passive review of those instruments or active involvement in their creation?

- Who is to initiate advice? Is it at the initiative of the DCI, or only at the invitation of the President, the National Security Advisor or other members of the NSC, executive departments, agencies, and military commands?
- Is there a difference between advice given by the principle advisor and “national intelligence?”

How one answers these questions determines where one falls with regard to the appropriate role of intelligence in the policy process.

Although most of these questions never have been formally answered through Executive Order, legislation, or judicial interpretation, the government has managed to function more or less well over the past 60 years as if it had answers to them in hand. These questions customarily are resolved on a dynamic basis through a variety of procedures established and modified by each Presidential administration, by each Congress, and through the political process. Generally speaking, as each administration establishes its procedures for dealing with the overall issue of intelligence advice to the policymaking process, the players accept those procedures without challenge. Even in cases where both sides hold differing views as to the answer to one or more of the above questions, the players frequently will find a way to “peacefully coexist” on a given issue.<sup>5</sup> Where they do clash, they customarily do so through the political process, which, regardless of specific outcome, always allows successors the opportunity to challenge again with potentially different outcomes.

The recent furor surrounding the *casus belli* for the Iraqi War provides a case in point. Both the President’s critics and supporters have addressed the veracity of the evidence presented by the President and Cabinet Secretaries justifying the initiation of hostilities against Saddam’s government in Iraq, and the appropriateness of the President’s reference in the *State of the Union Address* to the British report on Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium from Africa.

In virtually every case, however, both supporters and critics have operated from a preconceived and unstated view of the appropriate role of intelligence in the policy process. For example, the *Statement* by the DCI accepting responsibility for the questionable “intelligence” included in President Bush’s 2003 *State of the Union* speech, and a critical article by a former senior CIA officer titled “Intelligence Shouldn’t Exist Just To Serve Policy,”<sup>6</sup> present starkly contrasting views on the role of intelligence in policymaking. Yet neither actually addresses that issue directly.

The DCI’s *Statement* makes clear that he believes the responsibility of the DCI (and the CIA) goes beyond providing intelligence in a policy neutral format, and includes making sure to the extent possible that the President does not make a mistake in developing or communicating policy, whether the President is relying directly or indirectly on intelligence. It should be noted that the current DCI also apparently accepts that “intelligence” plays an appropriate informational role in all aspects of policymaking, both public and private.

The McGovern article, by its very title, makes the case that intelligence analysis should be policy neutral. While the author does not make that statement explicitly and his polemical tone helps to obscure the bottom line in the piece, the clear implications of the article are that intelligence analysis should be neutral regarding policy. Note, for example, the parenthetical reference to the way the author believes intelligence assessments were done in his day, “without fear or favor.”<sup>7</sup> It also would appear that the author shares with DCI Tenet the view that “intelligence” should play an informational role in policymaking without regard to the public or private nature of that policymaking.

By the terms of the “unconstrained” view, because the CIA and much of the Intelligence Community had serious reservations regarding the substance of the British reports on Iraq’s nuclear program, the DCI had a responsibility to make certain that the President was advised by the CIA to remove the reference to those British reports from the *State of the Union Address*. And from the nature of the response to the DCI’s *Statement*, it is obvious that a wide range of policymakers, legislators, academics, and journalists agree that the DCI has this responsibility.<sup>8</sup>

By extension, the holders of this position also generally hold a wider definition of what constitutes the national security policy process than is commonly appreciated. Note, for example, that the “policy” document under discussion was a speech by the President, albeit a very important speech. And in October 2002, the DCI intervened in another Presidential speech of much less moment than the *State of the Union Address*, for which intervention he has been praised, but not criticized, by those policymakers who have chosen to address this issue in public.<sup>9</sup> Apparently those who share DCI Tenet’s view of his responsibility clearly see any Presidential statement (and by extension that of his closest advisors and cabinet members) as part of the policy process that the Intelligence Community is obligated to support. This view at its broadest holds that it is incumbent on the DCI to take strenuous measures to assure the veracity of all policy statements, both public and private, as they may deal with matters on which the Intelligence Community has some information.

One can conclude from the DCI’s *Statement*, and the statements from the White House noting that the CIA reviewed the President’s address, that the current administration accepts the “unconstrained” view of intelligence support to policy. Furthermore, based on statements by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and efforts by members of the NSC and White House staffs to coordinate various parts of the President’s State of the Union Address, it is clear that this administration views the DCI’s intelligence advisory role to include active involvement in both the development and communication of national security policy. Rice stated on July 11, 2003, that the wording used in President Bush’s speech had been reviewed and changed by the CIA, and that some “specifics about amount and place” had been changed, and that after the changes, “the CIA cleared the speech in its entirety.” According to press reporting, detailed discussions were held between a nuclear proliferation expert at the NSC and a proliferation expert at the CIA over the content of the speech relating to the putative Iraqi nuclear program.<sup>10</sup>

If we conclude that the DCI and “intelligence” are to play an active role in developing and communicating national security policy, at whose initiative are they to play this role? To wit, on July 11, Rice said that “if the CIA, the director of central intelligence (sic), had said, ‘Take this out of the speech,’ it would have been gone, without question.” And Senator Pat Roberts, Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence stated “it was incumbent on the director of intelligence to correct the record and bring it to the immediate attention of the president.” And an unnamed Democratic member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) was quoted by the *Washington Post* as saying that DCI Tenet was asked repeatedly in closed hearings on July 16 why the CIA had “permitted” the unfounded Iraqi uranium allegation in the address.<sup>11</sup> Clearly, there would seem to be wide agreement that the initiative lies, at least in part, with the DCI, and is not solely dependent on the initiative of the President or his cabinet members and advisors.

As noted above, the countervailing view of the role of intelligence in the policy process, holds that to the extent possible, the DCI should ensure that the Intelligence Community strives to provide intelligence advice to the President and his advisors in a policy neutral format. While very few would argue that this goal can be attained 100 percent of the time, many see it as a necessary constraining force. The primary argument for this is that anything less undermines the credibility of the Intelligence Community, and particularly the Office of the DCI and the CIA. In general, there appears to be an acceptance of the fact that departmental intelligence agencies<sup>12</sup> are intended to support policymakers within their respective departments or military services, and thus their product, in many cases, will be “policy supportive.” There is, however, a strong expectation on the part of many in the national security community that the national agencies should avoid even the appearance of policy bias in their products.

A good example of a policy neutral approach to intelligence can be found in the famous “missile gap” case in the run-up to the 1960 Presidential Election. Despite the fact that the Kennedy Campaign had used much of the material provided to the press by the Gaither Committee to substantiate its charge that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) held a commanding lead over the United

States in the deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles, President Dwight Eisenhower refused to allow CIA intelligence on the subject to be released. It has been argued that this decision was a factor in the loss of the election by Richard Nixon, since the available national intelligence made clear that there was no missile gap, and there was not likely to be one for the foreseeable future. In this case, President Eisenhower chose not to allow intelligence to become embroiled publicly in the political process. One can argue the merits of Eisenhower's decision, but it is taken by many analysts in CIA and the other national agencies as the proper way to handle national intelligence.

This view has a long tradition within the CIA, and it often has been criticized by members of the national security community as a bar to effective CIA intelligence support to policymakers. For example, as part of the continuing educational effort for analysts at CIA, the Sherman Kent School for Intelligence Analysis at the CIA University has published a series of occasional papers addressing, among other subjects, the proper relationship between the analyst and the policymaker. The author of these papers is at some pains to assure analysts that lowering the wall between intelligence analysis and the policymaking process will not damage intelligence credibility (if proper tradecraft is used) and will make intelligence more relevant to the policymaker.<sup>13</sup>

Criticisms of the "policy neutral" view have a long tradition among policymakers. Current Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz was selected as a member of the so-called Team B, "which challenged the expertise, methods, and judgments of Intelligence Community analysts working on Soviet strategic military objectives (specifically, National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) (11-3-8 for 1977). The underlying issue in this case was the perceived failure of the NIE to address directly the implications for Soviet intentions of the USSR's ongoing strategic buildup. While serving as the Dean of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Ambassador Wolfowitz was appointed to the Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the U.S. Intelligence Community. Throughout this period, he continued to argue for a more "policy actionable" approach to national intelligence. According to press reports, Ambassador Wolfowitz, as Deputy Secretary of Defense in the current administration, has been associated with a large group of policymakers who have argued strenuously that the Intelligence Community, and specifically the CIA, has not produced intelligence on current policy issues that has been helpful in the development, articulation, and execution of policy.<sup>14</sup>

From the policy neutral perspective, the primary concern, as noted above, is that the close involvement of intelligence in the making, communication, and execution of specific national security policies will undermine the credibility of the intelligence itself and the intelligence organizations involved. Often critics attack the intelligence organization, such as the CIA, as "shilling" for a policymaker if the intelligence product is seen as too supportive, or is used openly in the political process. In this case, the intelligence agency itself, or the DCI, becomes sucked up in the maelstrom of political conflict over the policy under debate. The net effect of this, to quote Senator John Kerry, D-MA, does ". . . nothing to make this country safer and will simply further erode the confidence of the American public and our allies around the world."<sup>15</sup>

The caution to the intelligence provider, and to the policymaker who uses that intelligence, may well be Aristotle's axiom, "moderation in all things." If the intelligence player or product is too supportive of policy, or appears to be too supportive, then both will be subject to criticism and a loss of credibility. If, on the other hand, intelligence is too "neutral" and too high a wall is kept between intelligence and policy, then the intelligence will be subject to criticism and a loss of relevance. Complicating this picture for the intelligence player is that critics also will often make the case that they want "objective" analysis, that can be used by all the participants in the policy debate.<sup>16</sup> When that is translated into reality, however, it most often means that the critic's side in the debate is not faring as well as the critic believes it should because the intelligence input favors the other side. Finally, as noted above, even the legislation creating the current intelligence structure does more to complicate than to answer the question as to the appropriate role of intelligence in the policy process.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 23

1. The CIA Publications Review Board has reviewed the manuscript for this chapter to assist the author in eliminating classified information and poses no security objection to its publication. This review, however, should not be construed as an official release of information, conformation of its accuracy, or an endorsement of the author's views.

2. I use the word "intelligence" here to describe two entities: (1) Intelligence in its generic sense of information that has been collected, processed, exploited, and analyzed, and which contains information from both clandestine and open sources; and (2) The U.S. intelligence apparatus, and specifically the Director of Central Intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency, which collect and convert the aforementioned information into intelligence product. I will use the term "national security community" in its most generic sense, to include not only elected, appointed, and career officials currently serving in the government, but also those legislators, press commentators, academics, and journalists who specialize in the study of national security policy. These latter individuals often are former government officers, and many will return to government upon the vagaries of the next round of elections. In addition, those journalists and academics who never serve in government still play a significant role in the formulation and execution of policy by virtue of their influence on public opinion. The Intelligence Community is composed of four "national" intelligence agencies – CIA, NSA, NIMA, and NRO – and 10 "departmental" agencies – DIA, State/INR, the military service intelligence agencies, Coast Guard intelligence, and the intelligence offices in the Departments of Justice, Treasury, and Energy. See, for example of academic approach, Jack Davis, "Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Analysts and the Policymaking Process," *Kent Center Occasional Papers*, Vol. 1, No. 2, September 2002; and Jack Davis, "Tensions in Analyst-Policymaker Relations," *Kent Center Occasional Papers*, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 2003.

3. The 1947 National Security Act as amended is the fundamental founding legislation for the modern U.S. Intelligence Community. See Sec. 101-105 [50 USC]; Sec. 101 [50 USC 402] "Title I – Coordination for National Security: National Security Council."

4. See Sec. 103 [50 USC 403-3] "Title I – Coordination for National Security: Responsibilities of the Director of Central Intelligence."

5. For example, "During the prolonged tug-of-war between the branches of government over Iran-Contra, the Reagan White House held fast to its position that the Constitution permitted the President to defer covert action notification to the Congress indefinitely if he felt circumstances so warranted. Congress did not concur with this assertion but was in no position to do anything about it. In the end, the executive and legislative branches agreed to disagree on the matter." See Marvin, C. Ott, "Partisanship and the Decline of Intelligence Oversight," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 2003, p.79.

6. Ray McGovern, "Intelligence Shouldn't Exist Just To Serve Policy," *Miami Herald*, August 5, 2003. See "Statement By George J. Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence," July 11, 2003, [www.odci/cia/public\\_affairs/press\\_release/2003/pr07112003.html](http://www.odci/cia/public_affairs/press_release/2003/pr07112003.html).

7. *Ibid.*, "It does not speak well for a director (sic) of Central Intelligence to shy away from serving up the intelligence communitys (sic) best estimate anyway ("without fear or favor," the way we used to operate)."

8. See, for example, SSCI Chairman Senator Pat Roberts' criticism of Tenet for "sloppy handling" of the questionable intelligence on Niger, cited in John Diamond, "CIA director Nudged Toward The Plank," *USA Today*, July 14, 2003; or questions such as "Why did CIA permit the allegation in the address" cited in Walter Pincus, "Tenet Says He Didn't Know About Claim," *Washington Post*, July 17, 2003.

9. *Ibid.*; Diamond.

10. See, for example, Tom Raum, "Bush: CIA Approved State of Union Speech," AP 07/11/03, 22:58 EDT; David Sanger and James Risen, "CIA Chief Takes Blame in Assertion on Iraqi Uranium," *The New York Times*, July 12, 2003.

11. *Ibid.*; Raum; Walter Pincus, "Tenet Says He Didn't Know About Claims," *The Washington Post*, July 17, 2003.

12. See note 4 above.

13. The "policy neutral mission" view is associated most closely with Sherman Kent, the first Deputy Director and Vice Chairman (and subsequently Director and Chairman) of the CIA's Office of National Estimates and the Board of National Estimates, both created in 1950 by then DCI, General Walter B. Smith. See, for example, Davis.

14. See Jack Davis, "Paul Wolfowitz on Intelligence Policy-Relations," *Studies In Intelligence*, Vol. 39, No. 5, 1996, pp. 36-37; Ironically, Ambassador Wolfowitz's stated position on this issue was based on his concept that CIA intelligence was not objective because it did not offer alternative hypotheses to explain the observable facts, and therefore such CIA analysis was too policy supportive. See, for example, Warren P. Strobel and Jonathan Landay, "Pentagon, CIA In Bitter Dispute On Iraq," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 28, 2002; Seymour Hersh, "Selective Intelligence," *The New Yorker*, May 12, 2003; and

Julian Borger, "The spies who pushed for war," *The Guardian*, July 17, 2003. These are simply examples of numerous press reports on this issue over the past year.

15. See, for example, McGovern; Richard Cohen, "Sword-Passing," *Washington Post*, July 24, 2003, p. 21; and Jay Taylor, "When Intelligence Reports Become Political Tools . . .," *Washington Post*, June 29, 2003, p. B02. See comment by former Senator Bob Kerry, who noted that the administration had decided "OK, we'll make George Tenet walk the plank"; Raum.

16. See note 13 above.

## CHAPTER 24

### COGNITIVE FACTORS IN NATIONAL SECURITY DECISIONMAKING

George E. Teague

Generally, national security professionals probably would agree that decisions concerning our national security are so important that they ought to be above personal and organizational self-interests and reflect an objective, unbiased approach to selecting actions that are truly in the best interest of the nation. However, for a variety of reasons, this often is not the case. A number of decisionmaking models have been developed and examined to gain insight into the national security decisionmaking process and to identify those factors that often keep this process from being as objective and unbiased as it perhaps should be. In their book, *Essence of Decision, Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow provide three such models for examining the U.S. national security decisionmaking process.<sup>1</sup> The first of these, the rational actor model, is essentially the ideal decisionmaking process – an unbiased, comprehensive examination of the relevant facts and all potential courses of action leading to an optimal choice designed to maximize value in terms of national interests. Two other models, organizational behavior and governmental politics, address some of the forces at work within our national security system – organizational self-interests, bureaucratic resistance, personal agendas of influential individuals, etc. – that often influence the decisionmaking process and lead to outcomes that would not have been predicted by the rational actor model. Even these models, however, do not account fully for why decisionmakers, at times, pursue courses of action that seem to disregard international and domestic political influences, appear inconsistent with national interests, or otherwise seem to deviate from the rational approach. Nor do they account for how decisionmakers sometimes make “good” decisions in the absence of sufficient time or information to adequately develop a rational approach to the issue.

In order to fully understand national security decisionmaking fully, then, a fourth model is required – one that takes into account factors that affect **individual** decisionmaking. Since decisions ultimately are made in the minds of individual decisionmakers, even when working as members of a group charged with making a group decision or recommendation (i.e., a jury or committee), it almost is inevitable that those decisions will be influenced to some extent by such things as personal beliefs, biases, values, desires, experiences, and memories. Further, anything that might affect an individual’s ability to function mentally, such as strong emotions, stress, fatigue, and illness, also will likely affect the decisions he or she makes. Finally, since many (most?) significant national security decisions are made under conditions of great uncertainty, how individuals compensate cognitively for the absence of important information will impact necessarily on the information they consider and the decisions they ultimately reach. It is therefore important that national security professionals understand how individuals make decisions and appreciate the influence of cognitive factors on the decisionmaking process.

This chapter will provide only a brief overview of some of the cognitive factors at work in the national security decisionmaking process. Readers who wish to pursue this topic in greater detail will find a wealth of available material.

#### COGNITION AND DECISIONMAKING

As indicated above, many factors may affect the extremely individual and internal process of making a decision. Some of these represent cognitive processes and tendencies common to most humans, while others are more idiosyncratic. At times, these factors can enhance the decisionmaking process, but



often they pose significant pitfalls. Failure to recognize these potential problems can lead to ineffective or flawed decisions.

## **Cognition.**

The human mind generally prefers and seeks simplicity, consistency, and stability. The mind dislikes uncertainty and mental discomfort and routinely will attempt to eliminate these aspects from decisionmaking. These tendencies usually enable humans to sort, process, and make sense of the vast amount of sensory input efficiently that is received on a daily basis. However, when confronted with the complexities inherent in most decisionmaking situations, these same tendencies may lead one to ignore some information, “fill in the blanks” with other information from memory, and rely on unconscious mental shortcuts or routines known as heuristics (“rules of thumb”).<sup>2</sup> For example, although most people wish to believe that they mentally examine every alternative before choosing the “best” one, this normally is not so. The human mind tends to “satisfice,” that is, to seize upon the first solution that appears to solve the problem without looking past that solution to see if a better one can be found. Decisionmakers consciously must force themselves to identify and evaluate all possible solutions if the optimal solution, versus one that is only “good enough,” is desired. This is easier said than done, particularly when the stakes are high and the decision must be made under conditions of limited time and/or limited availability of relevant information. Such conditions increase the likelihood that decisionmakers will rely on assumptions and heuristics.

Although heuristics generally serve to facilitate mental functioning, researchers have identified a number of flaws in the way minds work when making decisions.<sup>3</sup> Several of these are addressed below.

- **Anchoring.** During decisionmaking, the mind tends to give disproportionate weight to the first information it receives. This information, such as first impressions or initial estimates, “anchors” subsequent thoughts and judgements. Since anchors can set the terms on which a decision is made, negotiators often try to exploit this tendency by submitting initial proposals that anchor negotiations in their favor (e.g., high-end offers).
- **Status Quo.** Decisionmakers display a strong bias toward solutions that maintain or perpetuate the status quo. Breaking from the status quo requires taking increased action and responsibility and opens the possibility of criticism and regret. For example, the United Nations (UN) continued to impose economic sanctions against Iraq for years, despite evidence that the sanctions were being violated and having little effect on Hussein’s regime. The other options, lifting the sanctions altogether or using force to enforce them, were viewed as too risky for many members of the Security Council. Despite considerable criticism, President George Bush broke from the status quo, and it remains to be seen whether or not he or his allies experience serious regret.
- **Sunk Cost.** Decisionmakers tend to make choices that justify past choices, even when they no longer seem valid. People generally are unwilling to admit to mistakes, especially when the cost for doing so is high. Some might argue that President Lyndon Johnson’s unwillingness to withdraw from, or change his method of prosecuting the Vietnam War was due in large part to sunk cost—his political commitment and the potential cost for admitting that he was wrong were too high.
- **Confirming Evidence.** Decisionmakers seek out information that supports their existing point of view, while ignoring or dismissing contradictory information. This is compounded by two other tendencies: to decide subconsciously what we want to do before we figure out why we want to do it; and, to be more engaged by things we like than by things we dislike. Current debates over the accuracy and use of various intelligence reports on Iraqi weapons of mass

destruction (WMD) programs suggest that members of the Bush administration may have been affected by this bias towards confirming evidence to support a course of action they already had decided upon. At a more personal level, people often decide that they want a particular type of car, then seek information that supports their choice, while ignoring or dismissing information that points out reasons not to buy the car (poor safety record, high insurance costs) or to buy a different model (higher fuel efficiency, lower cost).

- **Framing.** The way a problem is framed can influence strongly the decision that is made. Framing can establish the status quo, introduce an anchor, highlight sunk costs, or lead one towards confirming evidence. Further, people tend to accept the frame as it is presented to them rather than restating the problem in their own terms. When framed in terms of potential gains, a given option is more likely to be chosen than when framed in terms of potential costs or losses. For example, surveys of public opinion concerning development of a missile defense system indicate that, when asked if having such a system to protect against missile attacks from rogue states is a good idea, most people respond favorably. However, when asked a similar question that highlights the cost in billions of dollars, the response is far less favorable. When debating whether to spend this much money on research and development of the system, opponents generally frame the problem in terms of the low likelihood of attack and of other programs where the money could be better spent, whereas proponents of the system highlight the costs associated with failure to prevent an attack (how much is your hometown worth?).
- **Overconfidence.** Although most people are not very good at making estimates or forecasts, we tend to be overconfident about our accuracy when doing so, which can lead to poor judgement and bad decisions. This overconfidence can lead decisionmakers to limit the range of possibilities and miss opportunities or expose themselves or others to too much risk. Many critics of the postwar operations in Iraq accuse members of the Bush administration of being overconfident in their estimates of how many troops would be needed and how quickly they would be able to withdraw.
- **Overcautiousness (Prudence).** When the stakes are high, we tend to adjust our estimates “just to be on the safe side.” This tendency sometimes leads to “worst-case analysis,” when efforts to cover every possible circumstance can add huge costs in terms of time and resources with minimal, if any, practical benefit. This is particularly evident in the development of weapon systems; engineers routinely are required to design weapons to operate under the worst possible circumstances, leading to huge costs increases despite the low likelihood of ever facing those circumstances.
- **Availability.** Anything that distorts the ability to recall events in a balanced way will distort probability assessments. People tend to be overly influenced by dramatic events that leave strong impressions on their memories. As a result, we tend to exaggerate the probability of events that get disproportionate media attention or that we personally experience, such as plane crashes or the loss of a loved one to a particular disease. For example, if asked to estimate the percentage of sexual assault charges against U.S. servicemen in Okinawa relative to charges against Japanese men, it is likely that more people would assign a higher probability to U.S. servicemen because of attention given to recent high-profile incidents.

## Memory.

People acquire data through one or more of the five human senses, and the mind must interpret, evaluate, sort, and store this data, as well as determine what is useful and what is not. Generally speaking, the mind sorts data into broad categories (schemas) and encodes it for recall.<sup>4</sup> Entire sets of

data then may be retrieved when only limited bits of information are received. For example, if a person hears a growl coming from behind a fence, that piece of information could lead to the identification of the source of the growl as a dog. The mental picture associated with “dog” may be a generic one, or, if the growl is similar to one experienced in the person’s past, the mental picture may be of a specific type of dog. As more information becomes available, the mental picture becomes more complete. If, a few seconds after hearing the growl, the observer noted an open gate, heard the sound of a chain breaking, and the growl were replaced by a fast-approaching, angry barking dog, a very complete mental picture could be obtained – and several possible courses of action suggested.

This ability to retrieve large amounts of information in response to selected information cues rests in large part on the use of stereotypes. There has been extensive research on this facet of human thought, leading to the general conclusions that stereotyping is “widely practiced as a means of simplifying the world and making perceptual and cognitive processes more efficient” and is “a pervasive human tendency.” Simply stated, stereotypes are used in most aspects of human thought because they offer an easy way of organizing, storing, and recalling data. They serve as a tool for simplifying environmental stimuli.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, stereotypes often are developed with inaccurate information and/or applied inappropriately due to insufficient information. Such stereotyping often is the basis of discrimination and faulty decisionmaking due to misinterpreting or underestimating the intentions and capabilities of others. Many would argue, for example, that the United States grossly underestimated both the North Koreans and the North Vietnamese, in part because of a widely-held stereotype of Asians as inferior to Westerners. Further, the use of some stereotypic identifiers, such as “terrorist,” “fanatic,” “racist,” or “hero,” often may trigger strong emotional reactions from both the labeled individuals and those who interact with them.

## **Perceptions.**

Perceptions (how individuals interpret and understand data presented to them) are among the most important influences in decisionmaking. The decisionmaker’s perceptions of other actors involved in the decision, the perceived consequences of the decision, and the apparent utility of historical parallels, can come to dominate the decisionmaking process. In extreme cases, perceptions can be so strong that the decisionmaker will ignore some facts, twist others, and interpret data as pointing to the presence of trends that do not exist in reality.<sup>6</sup>

Once formed, perceptions are difficult to discard.<sup>7</sup> A famous example involves an experiment in which two different groups were shown an identical tape of a college lecture. The first group was told that the lecturer was warm, humorous, and highly respected. The lecturer was described to the second group as harsh, cold, and reserved. After watching the identical lecture, the groups were asked for their impressions. The first group gave the lecturer a very positive endorsement, while the second group was extremely negative in its response.

Analogies and perceptions are linked closely. As noted behavioral political scientist Robert Jervis states: “Previous international events present the statesman with a range of imaginable situations and allow him to detect patterns and causal links that help him understand his world.” It is human nature to look for patterns in an event, to seek similarities between what is happening now and what has happened before. Once apparent similarities are discovered, an analogy inevitably will be invoked. Examples of such analogies include, “Saddam Hussein is just like Hitler,” or “Haiti is another Somalia waiting to happen.” The analogy may then suggest a course of action, e.g., “Appeasement is out, it leads to greater conflict,” or “The United States can never allow the United Nations to take operational command of U.S. forces.” This mental technique can be extremely useful if the analogy is accurate and its use leads to the quick adoption of a successful course of action. Unfortunately, analogies – especially those that are invoked with little or no thought – rarely are accurate, and solutions based on false analogies can be devastating.<sup>8</sup>

## **Values and Beliefs.**

Personal values and beliefs tend to be forged over time and may reflect the cumulative values and beliefs of one's parents, teachers, community, etc. They are powerful influences on decisionmaking and are tied directly to how individuals perceive situations, other people, and actions. People will tend to reject and distrust data or solutions that seem in conflict with their belief and value systems, while embracing those that do.<sup>9</sup> Of course, the danger is that simply because information runs contrary to a belief, this does not make the information invalid, and vice-versa. For example, in 1941 many senior leaders in the United States believed the Japanese could not mount a surprise attack upon the Hawaiian Islands. These leaders knew the Japanese possessed modern aircraft carriers and planes, and a Pearl Harbor scenario had been wargamed. However, these leaders believed that no one could sail a fleet in secrecy across the Pacific Ocean. They also believed that when the Japanese did start a war, they would limit their attacks to the Philippines, Guam, and other targets closer to Japan. These beliefs, although sincere, did not prevent the air raid on December 7, 1941. The leaders' beliefs caused them to discard, ignore, or dismiss multiple indications that the Japanese were quite capable of mounting such an attack.

A decisionmaker also may tend to believe that his or her personal value and belief systems are universal when they may not be. This can lead to "mirror imaging," i.e., a decisionmaker expecting the "opponent" to react exactly as he/she would, or attributing motives to an opponent's action based on why he/she may have done the same thing. Similar to the pitfalls of stereotyping, when a decisionmaker substitutes his or her own beliefs or values to compensate for a lack of information about—or understanding of—others involved in a national security issue, the likely result will be a poor decision.

Finally, decisionmakers may feel compelled to select a particular course of action based upon their personal beliefs and values regardless of international or domestic political pressures. Sometimes our leaders simply believe that a particular action is the right or wrong thing to do and they act accordingly. President Bush, for example, appears to be firmly committed to development of a missile defense despite widespread international and domestic opposition and doubts about its efficacy.

## **Emotions, Fatigue, and Stress.**

The tendency of the mind to simplify and satisfice tends to be exaggerated when accompanied by strong emotions, fatigue, or stress. Emotions trigger chemical changes in the body that are generated in the same areas of the brain that handle reasoning and decisionmaking.<sup>10</sup> As a result, strong emotions may physically interfere with normal cognitive processing of information during the decisionmaking process, despite one's attempts to ignore or control them. In addition, emotions such as anger, embarrassment, and sadness may cause the decisionmaker to ignore the advice of others deliberately and make decisions for personal reasons rather than out of concern for national interests. However, not all emotions are bad—for example, the presence of fear may cause the decisionmaker to consider more carefully the potential consequences of high-risk courses of action in situations where the stakes are high. The challenge facing a decisionmaker is to recognize emotional influences without being ruled by them.

The importance of proper physical condition in regards to decisionmaking should be readily apparent to anyone who has attempted some complex task after a long and tiring day. Fatigue decreases sensory awareness, limiting the ability to receive sensory data; and it inhibits cortical activity in the brain, limiting the ability to accurately interpret and then process the information. In other words, the senses do not collect information as well, and the mind is prone to misperception and inefficient

processing of the information. People become more likely to misunderstand what they see or hear, to overlook or ignore important information, and to make faulty decisions as a result. Under these conditions, even something as simple as filling out a crossword puzzle may prove impossible. However, given a few hours rest, the same puzzle may be solved in minutes. Sleep deprivation induces extreme fatigue and exacerbates the cognitive limitations described above. Military leaders routinely deny themselves adequate rest during high-stress training and combat operations, often leading to impaired decisionmaking that results in catastrophic operational failure, fratricide and accidental deaths, blind obedience to irrational or illegal orders, and otherwise preventable noncombatant casualties.<sup>11</sup>

Stress also is encountered frequently during the decisionmaking process and deserves special mention. Stress can lead to an increase of satisficing decisions and may strengthen the tendency to unquestioningly accept as accurate pre-existing perceptions, values, and beliefs. Stress also can lead to irritability, anger, and an unwillingness to listen to others. If a team, such as a committee of advisors, is involved with the decision, a high level of stress rapidly can cause dysfunctional and ineffective behavior, such as bickering and emotional outbursts. This is especially true if the team is inexperienced in dealing with stressful situations and becomes even worse if the members of the team are not used to working with each other.<sup>12</sup>

### **Personality and Motivation.**

An individual's personality and personal motivation also will play a role in the decisionmaking process. Imagine the effect a cynical, autocratic, and arrogant decisionmaker would exert on the decisionmaking process, compared to that exerted by an outgoing, affable, and optimistic decisionmaker. The former could stifle opinion easily, instill fear and dislike, and perhaps convince others that the situation was hopeless. The latter's personality very likely would encourage subordinates to offer suggestions, feel comfortable in providing information, and keep belief in success alive. Some decisionmakers are brusque, while others are personable. No specific personality type is "wrong," but each affects decisions. Prudent decisionmakers will understand not only their own personalities, but also those of their closest advisors.

Motivation is also a factor in decisionmaking. A leader who wants a particular decision outcome will be less likely to turn over the process to subordinates. There will be less chance of stalling or delaying tactics. Conversely, a low level of motivation may mean that subordinates obtain an even greater degree of control over the decision or that the decision is continually put off – sometimes, as in Haiti, until it becomes a crisis. The perceived consequences of a decision may affect the decisionmaker's level of motivation directly and the extent to which he or she works for a particular decision. Concerns over such issues as popularity polls, reelection, impeachment, or one's legacy may cause decisionmakers to take actions that they otherwise might not have or that would not have been predicted by the rational actor model. Some might argue, for example, that concerns over possible impeachment compelled former President John Kennedy to take aggressive action in the Cuban missile crisis.

### **Groupthink.**

Groups of people sometimes appear to take on particular identities that arise through the complicity of the group's members and then behave in ways that can have a profound impact on decisionmaking. Behavioral expert Irving L. Janis developed a theory regarding this behavior and labeled it "Groupthink." Typically, as the group identity emerges, members begin to modify their own behaviors in order to conform. Eventually, members may become reluctant to offer any opinions that may be seen as "anti-group." Those that do may find themselves being pressured to return to group norms and ostracized if they fail to do so.<sup>13</sup> When this occurs, recommendations from the group may

be based more on maintaining group harmony than in truly addressing the problem. Many believe that President Kennedy's advisors exhibited signs of groupthink in developing their recommendations that led to the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion.

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO CLEAR THINKING

Having identified potential problems with cognition and decisionmaking, it is appropriate to examine potential methods to reduce or eliminate those problems. These methods include:

- **Seek Out Contradictory Views.** Decisionmakers must guard against hearing only one point of view. When this occurs, unseen biases can intrude into the decisionmaking process. If one organization or individual assumes a disproportionate role in advising the decisionmaker, opposing views might not be heard or considered. Expanding the diversity of views makes the potential influence of biases less likely.<sup>14</sup> The more varied the backgrounds and perspectives of those offering the leader advice, the less likely an important factor will go unnoticed.
- **Use Multiple Advisory Groups.** Although assigning two groups to work separately on the same issue is redundant, this method may ensure that a wider spectrum of alternatives is examined prior to reaching a decision.<sup>15</sup> During the Cold War, the U.S. military carried this process further than most other organizations. Not only were multiple independent groups assigned to large problems, but elite groups of specialists also were trained to look at issues from a Soviet perspective. This technique had the added benefit of reducing the danger of "mirror imaging," as long as the "red" players did not actually "think blue."
- **Assign a Devil's Advocate.** This can be a highly effective technique, as was demonstrated during the Cuban Missile crisis when Bobby Kennedy filled the (unofficial) role of Devil's Advocate. Briefly stated, the role of the devil's advocate is to examine critically other proposals being put forward. This acts as a hedge against biases and groupthink. However, care must be taken in selecting the person to fill this role. This individual must be strong enough to take the mental stress of always being in the opposition and be respected enough by the leader to ensure that the advocate's opinion is not simply ignored. The latter happened during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson. Presidential advisor George Ball filled the devil's advocate role in discussions about Vietnam policy, but his opposing positions grew irritating to the President. Over time the other presidential advisors began to ignore Ball. This was doubly unfortunate because the group continued to believe that the devil's advocate was keeping them safe from groupthink biases.<sup>16</sup>
- **Identify Known/Unclear/Presumed.** In their book, *Thinking in Time*, political science experts Richard Neustadt and Ernest May offer several methods to avoid the traps inherent in using history as a tool in decisionmaking. One of these methods consists of formally writing down what is actually known, unknown, and presumed about the situation and the actors involved in it. This relatively simple exercise may point out potentially dangerous assumptions and blind spots. It also can be used to channel intelligence efforts and resources into activities with the largest potential payoffs.<sup>17</sup>
- **Identify Similarities/Differences.** Neustadt and Also may suggest treating analogies with great care. Recognizing the tremendous allure of an analogy (providing a blueprint for a solution), they strongly recommend that a list identifying the similarities and differences between the current and past situation be compiled. When this is done, it is not uncommon to find the similarities were only superficial or did not even exist at all.<sup>18</sup>

- **Conduct Placement.** Neustadt and May offer a third safeguard known as “placement.” Placement is a method by which the stereotypical view of an opponent becomes more factual and sophisticated as important elements of personality and individual history are identified and placed in historical context. Although not in any way presented as a crystal ball or as a key to predicting exact behavior, placement does seem to offer a better chance of predicting an adversary’s moves and understanding how an opponent thinks.
- **Avoid Stress and Fatigue.** The old folk remedy of sufficient rest being a cure for ailments still applies. Leaders must watch their staffs for signs of excessive fatigue and should schedule and manage meetings and work sessions to ensure that each member of the team can contribute at his/her maximum potential. At the same time, someone must watch the leader. Practicing decisionmaking, preferably under simulated crisis conditions, is a fairly effective method to prepare for, and minimize, the potential effects of stress in an actual crisis.<sup>19</sup>
- **Delay the Decision.** Although not always possible, there may be real merit in postponing the execution of a decision until enough time has passed to allow reassessment. This technique reduces the chance that emotion might play too large a role in the decision.
- **Safeguard Against Groupthink.** Janis discusses several safeguards in detail in his book, *Groupthink*. These include encouraging the discussion of diverse opinions, accepting criticisms and attempting to shed organizational biases. Janis points to the Cuban Missile Crisis and the creation of the Marshall Plan as two instances where these techniques were extremely successful. A strong devil’s advocate was involved in decisionmaking during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the authors of the Marshall Plan solicited advice and input from an incredibly diverse group of experts. Janis also notes that, although the techniques sound easy, they may not be easy to implement. Senior leaders often are unprepared to hear their own judgments criticized, and many have difficulty remaining objective and impartial in this process. They generally are used to being right, they often have more experience than anyone around them, and they may perceive criticism as a personal attack.
- **Establish Reexamination Criteria.** Despite the most conscientious intentions to remain “rational,” perceptions may gain control of the decisionmaker and his/her key advisors. It is therefore useful, at an early stage of the decisionmaking process, to identify specific criteria that will trigger a reexamination of some or all presumptions.<sup>20</sup> Examples could include the spotting of a new behavior or technology on the part of the opponent, or the lack of an expected reaction to certain actions. For example, the Egyptian acquisition of improved air defense systems and long-range missiles from the Soviet Union should have triggered a reexamination of the Israeli assumption that the Arab nations would not attack until the Egyptians had rebuilt their air force to address their air superiority deficiency. Had such criteria been adopted, the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict might have run a very different course.

## CONCLUSION

The human dimension in decisionmaking is inescapable. It applies to all decisionmakers, irrespective of culture, education, or background. Everyone uses stereotypes to aid in memory retrieval, selects analogies to help in decisionmaking, and is affected, sometimes deeply, by personal beliefs, values, and emotions. In order to achieve a more complete understanding of the national security decisionmaking process, it is therefore important to consider the wide range of cognitive factors that may affect the individual decisionmaker. It is equally important to take steps to safeguard against the potentially detrimental effects of these cognitive factors when national security decisions are being made. In a general way, this reading has sought to indicate how this might be accomplished.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 24

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**PART V**  
**STRATEGIC ISSUES**



**CHAPTER 25**  
**AIR POWER THEORY: AN ANALYTICAL NARRATIVE**  
**FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO THE PRESENT**

**Tami Davis Biddle**

The role that airplanes should play in war has been, arguably, the most consistently controversial of all the issues pertaining to modern warfare over the last century.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will explore the ideas and the theories that have served as the foundation for the use of aircraft in war. What was expected of the airplane as an element of the military instrument of power, and what has it brought to the conduct of warfare? How do we assess its record over the last 100 years? While my remarks apply in a general way to most of the industrialized nations that have built air forces, I shall focus principally on the United States and Britain through the end of World War II, and the United States after World War II. And while I shall address tactical aviation in a general way, I shall devote most of my attention to independent air power and the question at the heart of its theory: Is air power an effective coercive tool, and under what conditions can it be used to extract concessions from an enemy and force him to comply with the political terms being sought by the use of force?

Air power can be used in support roles for ground and sea warfare, and, indeed, it has proven itself extremely effective—and essential—in these applications. In addition, it can be used as the primary arm in warfare, with the other services providing support and follow-on capabilities and resources. Most of the major theorists of air warfare have been proponents of the latter role for aircraft, advocating a primary emphasis on aerial bombing as a means of directly influencing an enemy's ability and will to fight a war. But if one believes that bombing can bring an enemy to terms, what assumptions does one make, implicitly, about the enemy? And what assumptions does one make about the ability of aerial bombing to so disrupt and disorient the enemy's economy and society that its warmaking capacity (and will to war) must cease? The century-long experience of air warfare has shown, above all, that one must know a great deal about an enemy (in terms of politics, economics, culture, and social organization) to understand where its weak points are and how they may be exploited by bombing. It has revealed, too, that effective aerial bombing is a difficult, demanding, and technology-dependent enterprise.

**A Long History of Speculation.**

The dawn of the 20th century was accompanied by great speculation about the prospects for heavier-than-air flight. Such speculation had captured the human imagination for a long time, and late 19th century advances in science, technology, and engineering had created an environment pregnant with expectation and anticipation. Those who pondered human flight imagined it in a wide array of roles, including transportation, travel, and warfighting.

As scientific progress continued, notions of air war were modernized and infused with the hopes, concerns, and fears of the day. In the Victorian era, a common and recurring theme was that air warfare would be terrible, thus prompting enemies to mitigate their behavior, or even abolish war altogether—fostering a better, more peaceful world. In 1862 Victor Hugo speculated that aircraft would bring about the universal abolition of borders, leading to the end of wars and a great “peaceful revolution.”<sup>2</sup> Jules Verne's widely-read novel, *Climber of the Clouds* (1886), asserted that the future belonged to aerial warfare machines.<sup>3</sup> In 1893 Major J. D. Fullerton of the British Royal Engineers theorized about an aerial “revolution in the art of war.” A year later inventor Octave Chanute argued that, because no territory would be immune from the horrors of air war, “the ultimate effect will be to diminish greatly the

frequency of wars and to substitute more rational methods of settling international misunderstandings.”<sup>4</sup> In a 1911 essay for *Collier's* magazine, noted military inventor Sir Hiram Maxim argued that there would be no defense against the airplane, the most potent machine of destruction ever invented.<sup>5</sup>

This kind of speculation should not, perhaps, be surprising. After all, human flight opened up the prospect of warfare raining down from the skies, making all those below vulnerable in ways they had never been before. No longer would armies and navies act as the shield for polities, defending the weaker citizens behind the frontlines of battle. And this prospect surely was unsettling to political leaders, policymakers, and military planners alike. Political elites worried that those on the homefront were alienated already, due to the crowded conditions, long work hours, and heavy stresses of the industrialized, urbanized environment that increasingly defined life in the western world. How would these citizens hold up to the increased stresses of aerial bombardment?

## **On the Eve of World War I.**

In 1905 the British War Office's *Manual of Military Ballooning* argued that the balloons dropping gun cotton charges might have a “moral effect” on the enemy that “should not be lost sight of” in estimating their combat value. The “moral effect” (pronounced “morale” but spelled without the “e,” as in the French) reflected a particularly potent and widespread fixation in the European military of the day. It revealed in part the influence of the Prussian, Carl von Clausewitz, whose writings had become particularly popular after the Franco-Prussian war when Field Marshal von Moltke claimed they had influenced him. Clausewitz's *On War* (1832) had been translated into English by the end of the century, and was studied at the Army Staff College in Britain.<sup>6</sup> The work of French military theorists du Picq, Foch, Langlois, and de Grandmaison added to a trend emphasizing the role of “will” and moral factors in warfare.<sup>7</sup> The emphasis on “moral effects” in warfare highlighted the qualities valued by upper middle class Victorian and Edwardian era societies—courage, initiative, resourcefulness, tenacity, and willpower—but it also resonated with prejudices and darker trends therein, including Social Darwinism, anti-intellectualism, a strong emphasis on virility and aggressiveness, and a strict class system.<sup>8</sup>

Speculation was widespread not only about how competing states would stack up against one another, but also about how different races and classes within a state might affect its overall strength, virility, cohesion, and steadfastness under stress. How would the urban working classes hold up under the stresses of modern, industrialized war? Would they be steadfast or brittle? In 1908 the flight tests of Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin's airships were watched closely and anxiously by the British. Lieutenant General Baden-Powell (noted for fostering the Boy Scout movement) made a vigorous call to arms in the *Daily Mail* on July 13.<sup>9</sup> Concern over England's perceived inability to defend itself was at the center of a flurry of invasion literature, peaking between 1906 and 1909.

In both the United States and Britain, civil strife and industrial crises became endemic as laborers struggled for more humane working conditions; the problem was particularly acute on the eve of World War I. In Britain, frequent bitter strikes—especially by miners and railwaymen—were marked by unusual assertiveness.<sup>10</sup> Naturally, this atmosphere fueled speculation about how workers would behave in wartime. Commentators and observers worried that the subhuman conditions present in the nation's congested industrial cities created weaknesses in the national population that might cause fatal vulnerabilities in wartime. In two lectures to the Royal United Services Institution in 1909, T. Miller Maguire associated what he called “the flotsam and jetsam of decaying British humanity” with the perversions of the “factory system.”<sup>11</sup>

## World War I.

These concerns over public robustness formed the context and backdrop for military debate and planning over the role of aircraft in war. But there was no overarching consensus on what aircraft might accomplish in the near term, or how they ought to be assessed against other military resources. Enthusiasts clashed with traditionalists who doubted that a new machine—and a highly unreliable one at that—would change the entire nature of warfare. The only genuine point of agreement concerned reconnaissance: even the most conservative military thinkers were willing to concede that a mobile aerial perspective would change the nature of warfighting to some degree. When war came in 1914, most of the combatant states were still in the throes of working out how to integrate aerial weapons into their force structures. Interservice conflicts and rivalries slowed progress in most states, including Britain, where aerial resources initially were divided between the Royal Naval Air Service and the Army's Royal Flying Corps. The role of aerial defense remained a red-headed stepchild in Britain, unwanted by either service.

The value of aerial reconnaissance, and thus the value of air space—both the enemy's and one's own—became immediately apparent; indeed, this reality was made obvious right away at the battles of Tannenberg and the Marne in 1914. Recognition of the value of an aerial perspective set in train the development and rapid evolution of purpose-built “fighter” aircraft; these quickly became fast, agile, and well-armed. Other roles for aircraft evolved throughout the war, including communication, battlefield attack and assault, and battlefield interdiction. The relatively primitive state of communications technology in 1914 meant that air/ground and air/air contact was sketchy at best, but it improved generally over the course of the war, thus enhancing the battlefield role of the airplane. All of these roles for aircraft were in full development—indeed in rapid, telescoped development—during the course of the war. And the tactics for the employment of aircraft were worked out just as ground combat tactics were worked out, through intensive trial and error. By the end of the war, a fairly sophisticated body of doctrine existed for the battlefield uses of aircraft.

If this were the whole of the story, then the history of air power theory would be much simpler than it is. It was, not, of course, the whole of the story since there was another powerful, compelling, and intensely controversial role for aircraft: the use of long-range or “strategic” bombers to produce a coercive effect on the enemy homefront. Most states possessing aircraft had shown some interest in this prospect, but the development of bombers and bombing doctrine varied. The French, who were in relatively easy reach of some German industry, began attacking elements of that industry as a way of eroding the German ability to make war. This was part of an integrated campaign, and was not seen as truly separate from the Army effort. As the French found themselves increasingly overwhelmed by the demands of the ground war in 1916, they had fewer resources to devote to the air war; they increasingly concentrated their aerial efforts on the battlefield, where their fighter pilots won acclaim and honor in what was, contrary to popular memory, a brutal, exhausting, and very deadly struggle with Germany's equally determined fighter pilots.

In Germany the Kaiser gave in to public pressure to use Zeppelins (airships) in an aerial offensive designed to undermine the war-making capacity and will of their British enemy. Germany's great strategic problem in the west was the strength of the Anglo-French alliance, and they sought a means to break the will of one or the other of those allied states. The airships had been, for the German people, a symbol of power and pride: they were viewed as a manifestation of German technical and aerial prowess. Throughout 1915 and into 1916, the Germans expanded the range of targets in Britain open to airship attack. At first, the British were vulnerable to the onslaughts. Air defenses were poorly organized and underfunded, and early British fighters did not have the engine thrust to intercept the high-flying airships before they could get in and out of striking range. Over time, though, the trends

shifted as British defenses improved rapidly. Better fighters, special incendiary bullets, and much more efficient signals and defensive communications made flying zeppelins over England a very risky task by late 1916. In addition, the Royal Naval Air Service launched an aerial offensive against zeppelin sheds on the European coast.<sup>12</sup>

In 1917 the Germans made another attempt to use strategic bombing to break the will of the British. That spring and summer “Gotha,” and later four-engined “Giant” bombers (*Riesenflugzeuge*), began menacing British cities, including London. Two small daylight raids on London (June 13 and July 7) managed to cause significant casualties and to raise the indignation and anger of the British, especially in response to bombs that hit a kindergarten. The British public demanded better air defenses, and retaliation in kind against the Germans. This public outcry—the very fact of the public’s demand for a voice in the prosecution of the war—was unsettling to British elites, who were already on the lookout for signs of domestic unrest. Coming in a year when strikes and industrial actions had become commonplace once again and when the Russian Revolution was in full gear, the public agitation was worrying. Field Marshal Douglas Haig found himself forced, against his will, to send fighter squadrons from the western front back to England. And a commission established by Prime Minister David Lloyd George concluded that Britain’s aerial performance in the war could be improved most effectively by the creation of a separate service. Indeed, the commission, under South African general and statesman Jan Christian Smuts, came to some radical conclusions: “As far as can at present be foreseen, there is absolutely no limit to the scale of its future independent war use. And the day may not be far off when aerial operations . . . on a vast scale may become the principal operations of war, to which the older forms of military and naval operations may become secondary and subordinate.”<sup>13</sup>

It is no small thing to change one’s defense structure in the midst of a major war, and yet the British did it during World War I. It reflected their anxiety about the domestic front, and the perceived need to respond to public pressure. The internal politics of the newly-independent Royal Air Force (RAF) were bumpy at first, since neither Haig nor Major General Sir Hugh Trenchard, then commanding the Army’s air offensive on the western front, was the slightest bit interested in creating a new service. But Trenchard found himself, in May 1918, in command of a long range bombing force referred to as the “Independent Force” (IF). France’s Marshal Ferdinand Foch queried indignantly, “Independent of what, God?”<sup>14</sup>

Though promised a sizable force, Trenchard never received it; indeed, the aircraft he had were hardly up to the task they were given. After making requests for more and better aircraft (especially fighter escorts), Trenchard decided to make do with what he had. For the most part, he stayed with what he knew, attacking targets selected to affect the ground war. He was well aware, though, that the eyes of the public were upon him, and he was expected to achieve results. Thus, he directed attacks on cities and industry when such opportunities presented themselves. Trenchard’s rather haphazard approach to the strategic campaign caused no end of exasperation among the newly-formed Air Staff planners back in London. They had devoted considerable effort to analyzing German war industry and identifying strategic targets of consequence. One analyst in particular, Lord Tiverton, authored a theory of strategic air war that sought to identify “bottlenecks” in the German war economy. A sophisticated plan, it was a precursor to the “industrial fabric” theory of bombing that would be stressed in the United States during the interwar years.

But Trenchard felt no obligation to heed his own staff and carried on as he pleased. Because he could produce little in the way of physical results in Germany, he stressed instead the indirect results and the psychological impact of his air campaign. He argued that his bombers produced strain on workers and citizens, and lowered factory production due to ongoing air raids and alarms. He argued that the “moral effect” of bombing was 20 times the physical effect. Though his math was haphazard, the language of the “moral effect” was resonant at the time. Needing to justify his operations, Trenchard waged a rhetorical offensive designed to achieve what his actual air offensive could not.<sup>15</sup>

From the time of their entry into the war, the Americans had shown a strong interest in the prospects for air warfare and long range bombing. But they were not able to produce the aerial armada they had envisioned early on; indeed, they discovered that in the industrial era one could not simply create a fighting force overnight. While General Billy Mitchell oversaw the air offensive at the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne campaigns, the Americans engaged in no long-range bombardment (or “strategical bombardment” as they called it at the time). They did, however, keep a keen eye on the bombing efforts of their allies, and they produced a plan—based entirely on one drawn up by Tiverton—to wage an aerial offensive on German industry. Though it was never implemented, the Americans did engage in an evaluation—a bombing survey—of the British and French efforts. The Americans were attentive to the critiques of Trenchard by the British Air Staff, and they, too, criticized his unsystematic application of air power; while they appreciated the “moral effect” of bombing, they did not feel it achieved all Trenchard had claimed for it. Instinctively, they preferred a more analytical approach.<sup>16</sup>

The experience of long range bombing in World War I was rushed, imperfect, and marginal: air warfare remained a sideshow, ancillary to the tremendous effort taking place on the ground. The most impressive result was the body of ideas that emerged quickly from those analysts, like Tiverton, who devoted energy and effort to the key questions. But the ideas were well ahead of the actual weapons required to implement them. While the Germans managed to produce an impressive four-engine long range bomber by the end of the war and while the British were working on a plane capable of reaching Berlin, most World War I bombers were limited in size and lift capacity, had primitive navigation tools, and were prone to unreliability. All this meant that there was no full test of long range bombardment and its effects on the enemy. There was, however, just enough experience to allow interested parties to make claims—and to stake out positions—with respect to it.

For the Germans, the experience of bombing England had been largely disappointing. While they stirred up anger and indignation among the British, that unrest did not translate into military or political gain. While the British were forced to bring fighters back from the front and invest more heavily in air defenses, the timing was such that the entry of the Americans into the war made good the shortages that would otherwise have been felt more keenly. And the Germans found themselves frustrated by the improvements in British air defenses (against both airships and bombers), and by the difficulty of flying and bombing accurately in cloudy, rainy north European weather. By the spring of 1918 the Germans had largely abandoned the strategic air campaign against England, and had refocused all their aircraft on the ground war.<sup>17</sup>

The English interpretation of their experience was quite different, however. As noted, British elites were unsettled by the public demand for a voice in the war, by the need to bring fighters back to the homefront, and by the indirect effects—mainly production losses—from overflight and air raid alarms. Indeed, so grave were Lloyd George’s concerns about the stability of the homefront that in the spring of 1918 a scheme was drawn up to provide for marshal law in the event of full-scale domestic unrest.<sup>18</sup> After the war, RAF officials argued that, in exchange for a limited offensive effort, the Germans were able to tie up considerable resources in the United Kingdom (UK). Indeed, the first commandant of the RAF Staff College pointed out in 1924 that, in response to 452 German aeroplane flights over England, the British put up 1,882 defensive sorties.<sup>19</sup> In this environment, Trenchard, who had become the postwar Chief of Air Staff, was able to make a persuasive case that Britain must be in a position, should war come, to wage a prompt and incessant air campaign against the enemy, designed to push him on to the defensive before that enemy could do the same to Britain. The argument was useful to Trenchard because it enabled him to argue that the RAF deserved to maintain its institutional autonomy after the war.



## The Interwar Years.

Trenchard proved himself a master of the bureaucratic arts: he fended off claims on RAF resources, and he continually built the case – to military planners and policymakers – that the RAF was essential for deterrence and future warfighting. During the interwar years, public views on warfare tended to embody extremes – either a determination to avoid the topic altogether, or a tendency to articulate it in the most apocalyptic terms. Perhaps this should be unsurprising in the aftermath of the unremittingly grim experience of World War I, but its effect was to leave little room for rigorous or considered analysis. Dark forebodings in the realm of popular culture resulted in a flurry of books addressing the apocalyptic side of the spectrum: *The Poison War*, *The Black Death*, *Menace*, *Empty Victory*, *Invasion from the Air*, *War Upon Women*, *Chaos*, *Air Reprisal*, and *What Happened to the Corbetts*.<sup>20</sup> The impact of these was augmented not only by the futurist scenarios being played in the (increasingly popular) cinemas, but also by the ominous and troubling events of the 1930s, including the Japanese attack on Manchuria, the Italian attack on Abyssinia, and the Spanish Civil War.

By this time as well, the ideas of Italian air enthusiast General Giulio Douhet were becoming more widely known in English-speaking countries. Douhet's 1921 book, *The Command of the Air*, had painted a graphic vision of societal collapse in the face of air attack. Indeed, it was the futurist drama he conveyed rather than the analytical rigor of his ideas that gave Douhet a lasting place in the canon of air warfare.<sup>21</sup> A poet, painter, playwright, and amateur novelist, Douhet brought to bear on his work "the intense modernist fascination with the latest advances in science and technology – with the automobile, with electricity, with gas, and finally with the aeroplane – prevalent in prewar Italian protofascist *avant-garde* culture."<sup>22</sup> Though both British and American airmen had developed indigenous theories of air warfare that did not depend on Douhet – and though there is no evidence that Douhet was read widely in Britain or the United States before the 1930s – his ideas were cited thereafter and used to support apocalyptic visions of air warfare. His prose seemed to capture an important element of the mood in the West, and it seemed to capture, as well, a kind of archetypal image of the airplane as weapon.

Douhet's vision stressed the offensive, indeed he referred to aircraft as the offensive weapon "par excellence." Postulating that vast destruction could be wrought by 50 squadrons of bombers, he asked his readers, "How could a country go on living and working under this constant threat, oppressed by the nightmare of imminent destruction and death?" Douhet was impressed by the possibilities of attack against those of "least moral resistance," such as factory workers.<sup>23</sup> His vision was one of technological determinism: "The brutal but inescapable conclusion we must draw is this: in the face of the technical developments of aviation today, in case of war the strongest army we can deploy . . . and the strongest navy we can dispose . . . will provide no effective defense against determined efforts . . . to bomb our cities."<sup>24</sup>

Though Douhet believed that technology had given the defensive a permanent pride of place in ground warfare, he argued just the opposite with respect to air war. Douhet believed that the vastness of the sky made defense against the airplane virtually impossible: defender's inability to know the exact position and timing of air attack gave the attacker a tremendous edge. Douhet also largely dismissed the potential of ground defenses. As historian Phillip Meilinger has noted, "Douhet sarcastically concluded that ground fire might down some aircraft, much like muskets shot in the air might occasionally hit a swallow, but it was not a serious deterrent to air attack."<sup>25</sup> Douhet noted several target categories of primary significance: industry, transport, infrastructure, communication, seats of government, and the will of the people. Douhet emphasized the latter in particular, since he argued that wars in the future would see no distinction between combatants and noncombatants, and that urban targeting would do the most to collapse enemy will.

Because he saw airplanes as strategic rather than tactical weapons, Douhet did not advocate the use of aircraft in support of armies or navies. He did not believe, either, that ground forces would be

required to occupy enemy territory. While he admitted that a strong and wealthy nation might opt to build both tactical and strategic air forces, he still believed that the utility of the latter vastly outweighed the former.<sup>26</sup>

But Douhet's perspective was narrow, and he saw only the evidence that supported his view. As historian Michael Sherry has pointed out, his idea of the future rested on crude extrapolation, and like many other interwar prophets of air power, he failed to see how it "might evolve unpredictably, strengthening the defense as well as the offense, creating its own futile charges and bloody stalemates."<sup>27</sup>

Much of the power of Douhet's vision came from his linkage of airplanes and chemical warfare. Gas weapons, though not terribly effective on the battlefield, nonetheless had brought to the surface a sense dread in the public mind that was felt throughout Europe. Much earlier, the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson had tapped into this foreboding when he, in his poem, *Locksley Hall* (1842), "dip into the future, far as human eye could see," and postulated a "ghastly dew" raining from the heavens as "the nations' airy navies" grappled in "the central blue."<sup>28</sup>

Douhet's intense focus on the aerial offensive was also emblematic of the interwar years. In Britain the popular memory of the air war focused on the early raids, when defenses were disjointed and ineffective. By contrast, recollections of the later—and far more effective—defensive efforts seemed to fade. A full and rigorous analysis of the wartime experience would have supported conclusions quite different than those in the public mind, but such an analysis was never undertaken. Thus, in 1932, when once and future Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin declared, "the bomber will always get through," it was taken rather as an article of faith. To be fair, bomber speeds had run well ahead of fighter speeds in the early interwar years, and it seemed that bombers—which would be able to take advantage of the vastness of the air—might always have the advantage. But changes in fighter speeds, and especially developments in defensive technology (radar), should have caused the entire issue of bomber penetration to be rethought entirely in the mid-1930s. It never was, however, setting up the first of many World War II clashes between expectation and reality in air warfare.<sup>29</sup>

When Trenchard handed the RAF off to his successors in 1929, it was secure in its autonomy. It was not, however, in a position to carry out the offensive policy it had touted so consistently. Trenchard did not give center stage to the questions and issues that should have dominated the service agenda: Can the bomber always get through? Under what circumstances? How do bombers find and hit targets accurately and reliably? What kinds of bombs are most effective under what conditions, and against which targets? How well can bombers fare in poor weather? But Trenchard's interwar traction rested on two elements besides his skill at bureaucracy. The first was a postwar environment that was still traumatized by the horrific experience of the stalemated ground war on the Western Front. So disturbing had been that episode that anyone who seemed to offer an alternative to it was given a hearing, at the least. The second was a claim that he, like other airmen of the day, truly understood the future of war. Setting themselves up as visionaries and men of the future, the air power enthusiasts could cast a certain disdain upon the stubborn, Luddite visions of those in the traditional services. Indeed, Billy Mitchell frequently referred to his Army colleagues as "the longbowmen."<sup>30</sup>

While Hitler set about renouncing the terms of the Versailles agreement and rearming the Luftwaffe, the RAF found itself increasingly insecure about its own capabilities. Indeed, the new head of Bomber Command, Sir Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, discovered, to his disquiet, in 1937 that Bomber Command was "entirely unprepared for war, unable to operate except in fair weather, and extremely vulnerable both in the air and on the ground."<sup>31</sup> A year later, during the Munich Crisis, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain would facilitate the handing over of a piece of Czechoslovakia to Hitler in a desperate act that stemmed from an overwhelming desire to head off war—and the terrible aerial bombardment it was expected to entail. Whatever effect it had on the enemy, the RAF's interwar rhetoric surely had been a deterrent to British statesmen as well.

Without any actual experience in long range bombing and with a parent service that was hostile to notions of independent air power, the U.S. Army Air Service/Air Corps made only incremental interwar progress toward autonomy. If mavericks—led by Billy Mitchell—championed the cause, they did not win the day. Without an immediate threat to menace their nation, the American people saw no need to restructure the national defenses after World War I. But even in the absence of rapid institutional progress, American airmen began to define and hone a doctrine of aerial bombing. It rested on assumptions like those that Tiverton had used as the building blocks of his own air theory.

By 1926 William C. Sherman, who had gone from the Air Service Tactical School (later the Air Corps Tactical School, ACTS) to instructor in air tactics at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, had taken the lead in articulating American air doctrine in his book, *Air Warfare*.<sup>32</sup> Explaining the future of the bomber, he pronounced enthusiastically: “The bomber now stands forth as the supreme air arm of destruction . . . When nations of today look with apprehension on the air policy of a neighbor, it is the bomber they dread.”<sup>33</sup>

Building on a traditional interpretation of the importance of interdiction in war, Sherman asserted that “the military objective of bombardment aviation, par excellence, is the hostile system of supply.” Therefore, “The long range of the bomber should be utilized to the full, and every sensitive point and nerve center of the [supply] system put under pressure, in an effort to paralyze the whole.” Sherman cogently articulated a set of ideas that would shortly thereafter take on a central doctrinal role at ACTS as the “industrial fabric” or “key-node” theory of targeting:

Industry consists . . . of a complex system of interlocking factories, each of which makes only its allotted part of the whole. . . . Accordingly, in the majority of industries, it is necessary to destroy certain elements of the industry only, in order to cripple the whole. These elements may be called the key plants. These will be carefully determined, usually before the outbreak of war. . . . On the declaration of war, these key plants should be made the objective of a systematic bombardment, both by day and by night, until their destruction has been assured, or at least until they have been sufficiently crippled.<sup>34</sup>

Sherman’s theory rested on a more rigorous and analytical foundation than Trenchardian doctrine, but it depended upon two important and ultimately problematical assumptions: that intelligence work would be able to identify the “key plants,” and that bombers would be able to find and strike them without suffering prohibitive losses. In general, the Americans were not so inclined as the British to assume that an aerial *guerre de course* might be possible, and they devoted a considerable amount of time to considering bomber escorts. Upon failing to find their way to a solution, they opted instead to give bombers self-protection by arming them heavily. The long range escort problem was a hard one to crack: how do you build a fighter that can keep pace with a bomber deep into enemy territory and then, on arrival at the target, fight on equal terms with fast, agile, enemy defenders? The Americans side-stepped this technological challenge, for a time at least, by arguing that the interlocking fields of fire created by bombers flying in groups would facilitate a reasonably safe entry into (and return from) enemy airspace.

The Americans also focused their energy from the outset on the accurate bombing of specific targets. The authorization of the B-17 bomber had been based on a coastal defense mission, the B-17 would intercept ships at sea. And the Norden bombsight, the brainchild of the Navy’s in-house designer/engineer, Carl Norden, would give the Americans the tool they would need to make the bomber a precise instrument. The Americans’ lean toward a bombing doctrine that was oriented to the identification of specific significant targets in the enemy war industry was driven, as well, by the prevailing cultural and intellectual climate, in particular: the influence of the industrial efficiency movement and Taylorism; a rational/economic approach to military problems facilitated by the nation’s distance from immediate enemies; and the impact of the Great Depression, which hit the United States particularly hard and seemed to underscore the idea that complex economies are fragile and subject to ready disruption.

Through the 1930s, the industrial fabric theory would be refined at the Air Corps Tactical School, by then based at Maxwell Field in Alabama. Careful not to overstep their bounds and raise the suspicions of Army officials in Washington, ACTS instructors and students nonetheless worked quietly on a doctrine that was ready for implementation when President Franklin D. Roosevelt and General George C. Marshall began to turn their attention to air power as a means of warfighting.<sup>35</sup>

## World War II.

By the time that the *Wehrmacht* and *Luftwaffe* launched their war, they had taken the doctrinal lessons of modern combined arms—worked out slowly and painfully between 1914 and 1918—and refined them into a mode of warfighting that looked, for a time at least, unstoppable. The “Blitzkrieg” of 1939-40 was nothing more than the intelligent application of armor and air power to the ground war breakthroughs of 1918. But, for states that had not concentrated so effectively on tactical and operational integration, it seemed daunting to say the least. In Britain, where the RAF had focused nearly all of its energies on strategic bombing and home defense, air-ground cooperation had fallen by the wayside. Indeed, as historian Sir Maurice Dean has argued, “between 1918 and 1939 the RAF forgot how to support the Army.”<sup>36</sup> The fault belonged to both services—but fault it was, nonetheless, and it revealed itself glaringly during the Battle of France. Air-ground cooperation on the battlefield would be relearned by the Allies on the deserts of North Africa. Though much doctrinal ground had been lost, it was made up for relatively quickly by talented airmen like “Maori” Coningham of New Zealand, Sir Arthur Tedder of Britain, and Carl Spaatz of the United States. With their survival at stake, the Russians, too, learned the methods of effective air-ground interoperation.<sup>37</sup>

The problems of air-ground cooperation are relatively easy to grasp, but not always easy to solve. Because it requires cooperation between two different organizations operating in two different realms, communication is an on-going issue. Air and ground must be able to communicate effectively without jeopardizing their own indigenous operations. In addition, the structure of air support to the ground is tricky. Overcentralization of resources leads to a lack of responsiveness. But too much decentralization means that there is little ability to concentrate at a point. It means, as well, that many airplanes are likely to be left in locations where they can do little good at all. Finding just the right balance is crucial—and yet it is difficult to achieve.

*Luftwaffe* commander Hermann Goering launched his pilots into the Battle of Britain with an optimism unsubstantiated by the reality of the situation. While some Germans air theorists had shown interwar interest in long range bombing, their ability to translate it into something robust fell victim to the early death of a leading theorist, Walter Wever, and the tendency of Third Reich bureaucracy towards overweening insularities and inefficiencies. The *Luftwaffe* was controlled largely by the fighter pilots, to the detriment of bomber doctrine.<sup>38</sup>

In the meantime, the British had developed an effective communications net into which radar, when ready, could be inserted successfully. A late-in-the-day push to build adequate numbers of fighters—and very good ones—enabled the British to hold out against the aerial onslaught of an overconfident enemy. But the failure of the Germans in the Battle of Britain did nothing to dissuade the British from trying their own air offensive against Germany. The decision reflected the desperate straits the British found themselves in by 1940-41. Without allies, and with only one potential offensive tool against Hitler, the British could not afford to countenance the possibility that bombing might not work. After all, in May 1940 Churchill had made bombing a main pillar of his argument that the British ought not to seek terms with Hitler, and ought, instead, to follow an economic and peripheral strategy against the enemy.

But the interwar lacunae in analysis and training all came painfully to the surface in the early years of the war. Bomber Command’s initial missions—dropping propaganda leaflets—pointed out just how

woefully unprepared the organization was for full-scale war. The long sorties told of the difficulties of finding distant cities, of the constant battles with weather, and of the physical discomforts crews would encounter in such operations. The effectiveness of German defenses pushed operations increasingly into the nighttime hours, when darkness could afford some protection. Crews were sent out with maps, astro-sextants, and directional radio. With these means, which required a high degree of skill to use effectively, they were expected to find their way about; in essence, crews were expected to navigate at night by observation – an all but impossible task under the weather conditions so frequently prevailing.<sup>39</sup>

Having been pressed into serious thinking about targeting, the RAF's Air Staff came up with a list that identified critical nodes in the German war economy: transport and oil figured prominently. If German defenses had forced the British to fly under cover of night, this, in turn, only exacerbated the navigational and target-finding problems. The first vigorous analysis of British accuracy, undertaken in the summer of 1941, produced results that the leaders of the RAF could barely believe: only one in five bombers was getting within five miles of its target. The Chief of Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal, saw the handwriting on the wall. There was little choice but to turn to the only targets that crews could find and hit reliably in darkness, cities. In mid-February 1942, Bomber Command came under a new directive, calling for an attack on area targets; the objective was to undermine "the morale of the enemy civil population and in particular, of the industrial workers." This step, an expedient, removed any doctrinal underpinning that counted on precise targeting of specified industries or resources. While it did not abandon an economic rationale entirely, it shifted the emphasis back to Trenchard's point of focus, the morale of the enemy.

One week after the new directive was issued, Sir Arthur Harris became the head of Bomber Command. While the directive for city bombing predated him, he was an adherent of the strategy – and would remain so, stubbornly, until the end of the war. Harris believed that cities contained, and concentrated within them, everything important to modern industrial nations. Harris's own view of city bombing hinged on the idea that he simply could overwhelm the Germans by smashing their infrastructure, eroding their confidence in their leadership, and demoralizing them. The theoretical underpinning rested in part on "brute force" – the destruction of infrastructure and thus the erosion of the war economy – and in part on "coercion." Harris assumed that when the Germans began to believe they could not stop Bomber Command's overwhelming offensive, the prospect of seeing their entire nation in ruins would cause them to seek terms.

Harris set about making his crews technically proficient, skilled, and consistent in their new task. His was an immense job – both the public and the bomber crews themselves had begun to wonder if the investment in bombing had been sound – but Harris brought great energy and dogged determination to Bomber Command Headquarters. By 1944 he had under him an air force that was the most powerful and proficient of the war, able not only to devastate cities, but to find and destroy specific targets such as marshaling yards and synthetic oil plants.<sup>40</sup> Whatever Harris's flaws and blind spots, his proficiency as a field commander and a problem-solver was matched only by that of the young American general, Curtis Emerson LeMay.

In 1942 the American entry into the air war, as in 1917, had been painfully and frustratingly slow. While Harris waged thousand-bomber raids on British cities, the Americans flew 12-bomber raids to the coastal edges of France. Fearful that the American determination to employ "precision bombing" would fall victim to the same nemeses the British had faced, Prime Minister Churchill tried to intervene, imploring the Americans to join the nighttime area offensive. But the Americans would have none of it. They were, for a variety of reasons, committed to attacks on the German industrial fabric by groups of self-defending bombers flying in daylight.<sup>41</sup> The heady, unshakeable American faith in their bomber doctrine finally came a cropper in the late summer and autumn of 1943, however, when raids into Germany proved so costly as to be unsustainable. In four raids carried out over 6 days in October, 148

American bombers failed to return to their bases.<sup>42</sup> These raids were aimed in part at the supply of German ball bearings – an element of the enemy war economy the Americans assessed as pivotal.

At this point the Americans, too, were forced to re-evaluate. But instead of changing targets like the British had done, they changed tactics. They embraced the long-range escort fighter, now equipped usefully with droppable self-sealing auxiliary fuel tanks, and sped them into production. During the winter of 1944, the Americans fought a sustained, force-on-force battle for air superiority in Europe. Taking bombers to targets the Germans felt compelled to defend, they set up duels between American escorts and German short-range defenders. Backed by a powerful industrial base in full swing and a steady supply of pilots, the Americans began to chip away steadily at *Luftwaffe* dominance. This was not what interwar theory had predicted: the Americans figured that they would win air superiority by attacks on the German aircraft industry on the ground. But the operational changes were effective, and by placing heavy pressure on the supply of German pilots, they relieved much of the strain on Bomber Command, too.

In the spring of 1944 the Anglo-American bombers came under the control of General Dwight Eisenhower and his deputy, Tedder, who used the strategic bombers operationally – to great effect – to pave the way for the Normandy invasion. Heavy attacks on railways and bridges in France considerably reduced Germany's ability to move men and supplies to the new front as the amphibious assault gained a foothold. Though both Harris and Spaatz (by then the head of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces, or USSTAF) had hoped that the invasion would be unnecessary and considered the tactical preparation a diversion from their main task of bombing the heart of the enemy, both men complied proficiently with their orders. This work, along with the attrition of the *Luftwaffe* carried out by the Americans, did as much as anything else to ensure the success of D-day and the Anglo-American ground war that followed it. After D-day, full exploitation of tactical air greatly aided the fortunes of the Anglo-American ground forces.<sup>43</sup>

Convinced that his city raids would bring about a German collapse, Harris sought to recommence them once he was out from under the demands of the Normandy campaign. But the Air Staff now was increasingly unconvinced that Harris's campaign made the best possible use of British bombers. Instead, they supported General Spaatz's prioritization of Germany's remaining (and dwindling) oil supply. This led to an intense debate between Portal and Harris in the winter of 1944-45. Portal, who suspected that the lure of cities drew Harris to them even when weather conditions would support an attack on oil, encouraged Harris to embrace a new bombing directive designed to exploit Germany's Achilles' heel. Harris countered that he went to oil targets every time it was feasible to do so. There could be no victor in the debate since it all depended on differing interpretations of weather data. As it was, Harris and Portal were debating only the close calls – those nights when the weather conditions might support an attack on a specific target. But these were the minority; much of the time area bombing was the only real choice. Such was the technology of the mid-20th century.

In order to maintain American operations at something approaching a consistent tempo, head of the U.S. Army Air Forces General "Hap" Arnold had authorized, by late 1943, bombing "on instrument" through cloud cover. Though he eschewed the term "blind bombing," Arnold was prepared for his crews to abandon the visual sighting and aiming of "precision bombing" when weather conditions did not support it, and to rely instead on imperfect navigational aids. Since they identified themselves as a visual force and had trained that way, the Americans did not adapt easily to the change. Indeed, in the winter of 1944-45, 42 percent of American bombs dropped through cloud fell more than five miles from the target. In order to increase the collateral impact of these poor weather raids, the Americans began adding incendiary bombs into their ordnance mix. Aimed typically at railway marshaling yards (big targets that often can be spotted through even a brief break in cloud cover), these raids did not differ much in their practical effects from British area bombing. Marshaling yards were attacked by the American air forces more frequently than any other target in Europe.<sup>44</sup>

The bombing theories motivating the British and the Americans remained distinct: the latter went to specific targets whenever weather would support it, and they did not ever embrace, in Europe, a focus on the fire-bombing of cities. But the constraints and limitations of the technology of the 1940s had pushed the two air forces in a similar direction. Bombing in Europe was a blunt instrument that pounded the body of the enemy; it was not a rapier that impaled central organs. By the end of the war, the Americans—perhaps frustrated by the limited impact of their “precision” bombing—became more amenable to targeting for psychological effect, and targeting to hasten the progress of the ground war.

At the end of the day, two targets did provide an important payoff: by the end of the war, Germany’s dwindling oil supply badly compromised her ability to continue to fight a war of maneuver dependent on tanks and aircraft. And attacks on German transport hubs increasingly compromised Germany’s ability to distribute the fuel central to her war industry, coal. The American quest for a silver bullet—for the key card in the house of cards—did not yield a payoff until the very end of the war, when, in conjunction with the high-tempo ground war and the westward movement of the Red Army (which denied Germany the oil of southeastern Europe), it finally found a degree of vindication in the oil campaign. And Harris, by forcing the dispersal of German industry, had helped set the conditions that would make the late-war attacks on German railways quite devastating to the enemy. These achievements, however important and significant, came late in the war and did not follow the pattern of claims made by the most assertive interwar air theorists.

Though the Americans would make much of the oil campaign in their postwar survey (U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, USSBS), it was not a truly “independent” victory for air since its effectiveness rested on the enemy’s cooperation in continuing to fight an intense, resource-demanding ground war. But if the industrial fabric theory of bombing had not worked out in quite the way that its proponents had expected, the Air Force and its supporters could—and did—claim that this was not an indictment of the theory itself. If, they argued, a bigger and better air offensive had commenced sooner, independent air power might have won the day. Harris’s defense of Bomber Command was similar in tone, if somewhat different in detail. Harris argued that, if only he had been able to fight his war on cities—focused solely on the air and free of “diversions” like the Normandy campaign—he could have proved the war winning capability of bombers. He never accepted what the evidence had revealed by the end: that, in a police state, it was hard to translate popular dissent into political pressure. The German people fought under and successfully endured the impact of a weight of bombs that any interwar air theorist would have predicted as paralyzing to an enemy state. And German leaders were not so convulsed by the thought of their cities in ruins as to seek terms.

Much of the prewar speculation about the fragility of civilians and the frangibility of economies was simply wrong: both were more robust than the interwar writing had anticipated. Prior to the war, the British had expected 30,000 casualties per day; in 1939 authorities handed out one million burial forms to local authorities. But these figures were way wide of the mark, having been based on a faulty interpretation of the World War I experience, combined with the impact of apocalyptic interwar rhetoric. During the Blitz against London in the winter of 1940-41, the British population revealed stability and robustness instead of the flightiness and panic that many specialists had predicted. Hospital admissions for neurosis declined, suicide rates fell, and incidents of drunkenness declined by half.<sup>45</sup> To their credit, the psychologists admitted they had been wrong during the interwar years. Writing in the *Lancet* in 1941, Dr. Felix Brown explained: “The incidence of genuine psychiatric air-raid casualties has been much lower than might have been expected; the average previously healthy civilian has proved remarkably adjustable.” He added that women had not been a “weakening element” in the general population, as they had been expected to be.<sup>46</sup>

There was certainly disruption after some raids, but this almost always was related to perceived inadequacies in relief efforts: people generally behaved well when they believed the government was

making concerted efforts on their behalf. In response to a Gallup poll asking what had made them most depressed that winter, Londoners early in 1941 ranked the weather over aerial bombing.<sup>47</sup>

Even at the end of the war, when the bomb tonnage dropped in 1 month could equal the tonnage dropped previously in an entire year, popular pressure did not cause the Germans to sue for peace. To some extent, this represented commitment to the cause, and to some extent, it reflected the fact that people feared retribution for protest even more than they feared bombing. The former was more certain and swift than the latter. And propaganda indicating that the enemy would have no mercy in unconditional surrender surely was an element in the starch that kept the Germans fighting till the last. Culture mattered, too. In Japan, for instance, Hirohito was able to turn his entire nation into a kind of human shield. The Emperor was perceived by the people as divine, and they felt it their obligation to protect him—to the last—with their lives. This enabled them to endure the fire-bombing of over 60 of their cities without losing their commitment to fight on.<sup>48</sup>

Speculation about popular reaction to bombing rested partly on faulty assumptions about the likely behavior of the masses—especially the working classes—under the fall of bombs. And it rested partly on extrapolation from experience with the bombing of troops in the field. Heavily bombed troops often reacted with panic and flight. This same behavior—and worse—was expected of civilians; after all, the civilian population had no formal training, and (according to elites) little self-discipline. But attempts to predict the homefront on the basis of the battlefield were erroneous. After all, troops under fire are pinned in place. Exposed, or sheltered in shallow trenches at best, they have little to protect them from the full brunt of aerial attacks. Civilian populations, however, are not like fish in a barrel; they generally are not “trapped” since they continue to have some say in their actions—some ability to avoid potentially dangerous places or to take shelter if they are caught under attack. Thus, their psychological state does not parallel the psychological state of the soldier who must endure a bombing raid on the battlefield.

Many of the economic assumptions underpinning the theories of World War II bombing also proved wide of the mark. Substitution and stockpiling (the latter explaining an ongoing ball bearing supply) could make up for many of the shortages caused by bombing; slack in the Germany economy meant that increased production could occur through expansions of the workforce and work hours; and dispersal of industry could reduce vulnerability to bombardment. The German economy was nowhere near full stretch at the outset of the war (as intelligence analysts thought it was).

The experience of the Anglo-American bombing campaign pointed to one lesson above all: it is necessary to have highly accurate and highly detailed intelligence information about the enemy—and about the enemy’s ability to adapt—in order to have any hope of using aerial bombardment as an effective tool of war.

Some of the lessons of the war came to the surface in the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, but the Survey was so vast and unwieldy (consisting of well over 300 separate reports) that the “Summary” reports were the only ones that garnered very much attention in the end. Committee products that ended up largely defending the big investment in strategic bombing, they did not contain the rigor or subtlety to guide future policy in an effective way. In Britain, Churchill’s nervousness about the potential backlash against area bombing caused him to prevent any full-scale survey from taking place.<sup>49</sup>

The record of World War II strategic bombing has been intensely controversial, in part because of the ethical ramifications of the late-war raids (the American firebombing of Tokyo on March 9-10, 1945, killed over 100,000 persons), and in part because there is no way to calculate satisfactorily the cost and effectiveness of the bombing versus the military alternatives that might have been pursued. Many of the most recent histories have tended to give credit to strategic bombing for keeping at least some cap on German economic and military might during the course of the war. Historian Richard



Overy has pointed out, for instance: “By the middle of the war, with the whole of continental Europe at her disposal, Germany was fast becoming an economic superpower. The harvest of destruction and disruption reaped by bomb attack, random and poorly planned as it often was, was sufficient to blunt German economic ambitions.”<sup>50</sup> Bombing, he added, allowed the Allies to rely on their preference for bringing economic and scientific power (as opposed to large armies) to bear on their enemies, resulting in lower Allied casualties.<sup>51</sup>

What is clear is that neither the British nor the Americans were prepared to hazard a repeat of World War I’s Western Front. They were powerfully inclined, therefore, to turn to air power as a warfighting tool. Once they had done this and had made the investment, they surely foreclosed other options: the investment in long range bombing meant that the United States would never build a 200-division ground force. And the same was true, albeit on a different scale, for the British. Indeed, the U.S. manpower crisis on the autumn of 1944 saw all sorts of specialist soldiers—including airmen—transferred unceremoniously into the infantry.

In addition to keeping a ceiling on German production and aiding greatly in the collapse of the German war effort in 1945, the strategic bombing campaign provided the air superiority that made the Normandy invasion feasible. The actual process had not cleaved very closely to prewar doctrinal expectations, but the Americans showed themselves adaptable (and blessed by a vast productive capacity well behind the front lines); their willingness to learn and change in real time proved crucial to a victorious outcome.

### **The Early Postwar Years, and the Korean War.**

For the United States and its allies in Western Europe, the only threat on the horizon was the former Eurasian ally, the Soviet Union. Though there had been no lack of tension between the Anglo-Americans and the Soviets during the war, postwar conflict was by no means foreordained; indeed, it took several years before the hostility and mistrust became intolerable and laden with policy consequences. In the years between 1945 and 1950, the American military largely was preoccupied with demobilization, restructuring, and the working out of postwar roles and missions. The Air Force, in particular, had invested a great deal of energy in finally winning its autonomy from the Army—an event formalized as part of the National Security Act of 1947.

Aside from reorganizing and fighting for its independence, the new U.S. Air Force (USAF) focused on being able to help halt a possible Soviet advance across Europe. This meant that its doctrinal energy was shifted largely to the problem of delivering the small number of nuclear weapons the United States had available at the time. In eschewing a large standing army (and universal military training for its young men), the American people opted to rely on air power as their deterrent to war and their main tool against the enemy, should war come. General Curtis LeMay, who had run the devastating air campaign in Japan that culminated in two atomic attacks, became the head of the USAF’s Strategic Air Command (SAC) in 1948 following his orchestration of the Berlin airlift. SAC became the dominant institution within the USAF, and it held its position for many years.

Naturally enough, the airmen’s case for autonomy rested on the argument that the Air Force was best qualified to undertake a mission central to future warfare: long range bombing. This meant defending the wartime record, and asserting—as the British had in the aftermath of World War I—that a powerful strategic bombing force would be essential to deterring wars and to fighting them if they came. The advent of nuclear weapons, and the role of the USAF as the only service able to deliver them, only reinforced the tendency to focus on long range bombing to the exclusion of other missions. But this meant that the USAF was underprepared for other contingencies. In the 1950s and 60s, as Americans found themselves fighting limited wars in Asia, the ideas underpinning Anglo-American World War II strategic bombing had little relevance to the circumstances at hand.

At the outset of the Korean War in 1950, SAC bombers were moved overseas to supplement the existing assets of the Far Eastern Air Force (FEAF), under the overall control of General Douglas MacArthur, commander-in-chief in the Far East. The commander of SAC's Fifteenth Air Force, Major General Emmett O'Donnell, became the commander in chief of FEAF Bomber Command (Provisional). In consultation with SAC chief, General Curtis LeMay, he quickly requested MacArthur's permission "to do a fire job on the five industrial centers of northern Korea." He thought MacArthur should announce that the communists had forced him, against his wishes, to use "the means which brought Japan to its knees."<sup>52</sup>

In the early stages of the war, though, MacArthur was unwilling to escalate so dramatically. O'Donnell chafed under orders that saw his big bombers "diverted" to tactical support missions on behalf of the hard-pressed United Nations (UN) ground troops. In the late summer, bomber missions were expanded to include broader scale interdiction and attacks on industry in North Korea. Following Chinese entry into the war in November, MacArthur permitted attacks on a wide range of targets—including fire raids on North Korean cities—in order to do everything possible to stem the tide of Chinese advance. He held back on striking North Korean hydro-electric plants, though, hoping they might prove useful bargaining chips in the negotiating process. Incendiary attacks on Pyongyang in early January 1951 burned out 35 percent of the city. Training for atomic missions went forward, but authority for actual use of A-bombs was withheld.<sup>53</sup> The wider use of bombers, however, did not translate into discernable progress toward victory, and, as time passed, American B-29s became increasingly vulnerable to North Korean air defenses: by the end of 1951 they were forced to fly almost exclusively at night.<sup>54</sup>

Airmen were frustrated by the politics of the limited war, which ensured that enemy supply sources outside of North Korea remained permanently off the target lists, and that, therefore, the industrial fabric theory would remain a poor fit with the reality of the situation. General LeMay would later say about the war, "We never did hit a strategic target."<sup>55</sup>

After General MacArthur was fired in April 1951, General Matthew B. Ridgway assumed command of UN Forces. Though he generally restrained the use of bombers, he continued to use them to maintain pressure on Chinese troops. Such pressure included interdiction-oriented attacks on Pyongyang (on July 30 and August 14). But little headway was made in diplomatic negotiations, and, in the meantime, overworked air crews began to suffer morale problems and high abort rates.<sup>56</sup> In May 1952 Ridgway was replaced by General Mark Clark, who was interested in using aircraft to compel movement in the negotiations. Clark authorized a FEAF-designed "air pressure" campaign designed to destroy military targets so situated as to have a "deleterious effect upon the morale of the civilian population actively engaged in the logistic support of enemy forces."<sup>57</sup> Pressure would now be applied to civilians as well as to combat troops. The rhetoric attempted to frame it carefully and to identify it under the rubric of a logistics campaign, but the emergence of the "air pressure" campaign signaled a familiar pattern of an air force, in frustration, turning to an increased emphasis on civilian morale.

The first targets were the previously off-limits North Korean hydro-electric power plants. The attacks saw FEAF destroy 90 percent of all North Korea's hydro-electric power potential in less than a week. The air pressure campaign also renewed full-scale attacks on Pyongyang and other North Korean cities, beginning in July. The August 29 attack on Pyongyang was designed to "punish the enemy with air power," yielding a psychological payoff during the Moscow Conference between the Chinese and the Russians.<sup>58</sup> Following a course similar to the one the USAAF had followed in World War II, FEAF's Bomber Command was, by early 1953, attacking small cities and towns deemed important to the communist supply and distribution system. Still, however, negotiations dragged on with little apparent change in the enemy's determination to hold out against UN pressure.

The last phase of the air pressure campaign manifested itself in a particularly dramatic way. In March 1953 FEAF planners began to study the North Korean irrigation system. Out of patience, General Clark told the Joint Chiefs that he was prepared to breach 20 dams, which would flood areas producing

approximately 250,000 tons of rice. In the event, the campaign went forward a bit more modestly, with mid-May attacks on three dams situated near railway lines. (Officially, the attacks could be designated “interdiction” attacks against those railway lines – although neither FEAF planners nor the communists perceived them in that way.) The raids produced dramatic effects, flooding nearby villages and rice fields. The North Koreans engaged in vigorous repair efforts at the Toksan dam site in particular: 13 days later they had repaired the dam and the railway lines around it, and had placed anti-aircraft artillery all around the dam itself. Two more dams were struck in June, and planning went forward for further strikes. These, however, were delayed, pending the outcome of armistice negotiations. Those talks resulted, shortly thereafter, in a truce.<sup>59</sup>

There has been no consensus on the impact of the dams raids. Historians recently have tended to argue that they probably had some effect on the negotiations, even though that impact is difficult to specify and separate from other factors bearing on the outcome, including, in particular, the death of Stalin. Conrad Crane’s recent conclusion is representative: “The resort by the UN to such extreme measures as the dam attacks might have alarmed the enemy enough to influence their negotiating position to some degree, though there were many other factors involved in their decision to sign the armistice.”<sup>60</sup> If the exact impact of the raids was hard to specify, however, its effect on Korean civilians was not. In 1954 Brigadier General Don Z. Zimmerman, FEAF Deputy for Intelligence, argued that, “The degree of destruction suffered by North Korea, in relation to its resources, was greater than that which the Japanese islands suffered in World War II.” He believed that “[T]hese pressures brought the enemy to terms.” Many others in the USAF came to share his view, and the Air Force interpretation cast events in a positive light.<sup>61</sup>

By 1954 the USAF was anxious to put the Korean experience behind it. FEAF’s 1954 final *Report on the Korean War* repeated a conclusion that General George Stratemeyer already had drawn in 1950: the Korean conflict contained so many unusual factors as to make it a poor model for future planning. In particular, the USAF wished to distance itself from the successful close air support operations that had been a main feature of the war. The final report stated: “Because FEAF provided UNC ground forces lavish close air support in Korea is no reason to assume this condition will exist in future wars.”<sup>62</sup>

Air Force leaders instead were anxious to reassert their priority: preparing for a strategic bombing campaign against the Soviet Union. The funding allotted to the services as a result of the Korean War had increased greatly the size and strength of SAC; now, more than ever, the SAC mission reigned supreme in the USAF. General LeMay was appointed Vice Chief of Staff in 1957 and Chief of Staff in 1961; in 1964 three-quarters of the high ranking officers on the Air Staff came from SAC. Between 1954 and 1962, the total U.S. nuclear arsenal grew from 1,750 weapons to 26,500 weapons. SAC, which controlled the majority of them, planned to deliver them in a “massive preemptive bomber assault.” Planning for other contingencies received little attention. Despite the political upheaval in Southeast Asia in the 1950s, the *Air University Quarterly Review* published (in the whole of the decade) only two articles relating air power to insurgency movements in that region.<sup>63</sup>

## **Vietnam.**

When President Lyndon Johnson and his advisors dramatically increased the U.S. commitment to South Vietnam, they hoped that air power might facilitate a relatively quick and painless campaign that would not divert too many resources from the broader national agenda. They hoped that air strikes would demonstrate U.S. resolve, bolster morale in the South, erode the morale of Viet Cong cadres, and generally intimidate the leadership of the insurgency – convincing them that they could not win.<sup>64</sup>

In April 1964 the Joint Chiefs had compiled a list of 94 bombing targets in North Vietnam. The Air Force wished to see these targets attacked immediately and heavily, so as to impose psychological shock as well as physical damage. But the administration instead chose a more graduated approach

that would punish by reprisal acts of terror committed by the Viet Cong, and would hold enemy targets (of presumed value) at risk. After Viet Cong guerillas struck a U.S. Special Forces camp at Pleiku in February of 1965, American policymakers implemented Operation ROLLING THUNDER, an aerial interdiction campaign that eventually would run for 4 years and would be characterized by increasing pressure on the enemy. In August 1965 Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara rejected a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) recommendation for attacks on North Vietnam's strategic oil facilities and electric power plants. The Hanoi government began to disperse the nation's limited industry and to erect passive and active air defenses; their efforts were aided by supplies and workers from the Soviet Union and China. In light of this, the JCS called for an expanded bombing program late in 1965. The Johnson administration did, in fact, expand the air campaign in 1966 and 1967: in June 1966 North Vietnam's oil storage facilities were bombed for the first time; in May 1967 Hanoi's main power station was attacked.<sup>65</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the Air Force chafed at the early restrictions: both during and after the war the Air Force claimed that the ROLLING THUNDER campaign had been undermined by the intervention of civilian planners and analysts who interfered with both the timing and the nature of the bombing sorties flown. While it is true that the destruction of all major targets was not completed until 1967 (whereas the Air Force would have preferred an all-out assault in 1965), the civilian intervention may not have been so consequential as it has been made out to be. The JCS list grew from 94 targets to 242 targets shortly after ROLLING THUNDER began, and the latter number changed little through the rest of the campaign. In 1965, 158 of these targets were destroyed (nearly all of them military targets below the 20th parallel); in 1966 22 more were destroyed. The president released nearly all the remaining targets for attack in 1967, and by December, almost all of North Vietnam's industrial war capacity had been destroyed. The Air Force had the air campaign it wanted, but did not achieve the end it sought. There was, by the end of the war, virtually no target left unattacked that might have been bombed. Indeed, during the course of the war, the USAF dropped some 6,162,000 tons of bombs—vastly more tonnage than had been dropped by the Allied powers in all of World War II.<sup>66</sup>

The insurgents required little in the way of supplies, and they could often move what they needed through territory that was off limits to the bombers. In addition, the insurgents could fight the war at their own pace, backing off when their losses became costly, and recommencing when they had recovered. The slow pace—and the inability of the Americans to either drain the enemy's will or to build an effective government in the south—eroded American public support for the war.

Robert Pape has argued that there is “no evidence that executing the sharp knock in 1965, instead of 1967, would have produced better results.”<sup>67</sup> Structural factors (including the economy and geography of Vietnam) and the nature of the war itself helped insulate the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong against the effects of interdiction and coercive air power. Finally, even if an earlier all-out air assault had convinced the North to stop supporting the Viet Cong insurgency, this is no guarantee that the Viet Cong would not have continued the war on their own, and at their own pace.<sup>68</sup>

President Richard Nixon instituted a program of “Vietnamization”—a means of reducing the increasingly unpopular American commitment to the war by placing the main responsibility for the ground war back into the hands of the South Vietnamese. Along with this, he allowed the JCS to give more freedom to U.S. air commanders in Vietnam. Operation LINEBACKER, designed to halt Hanoi's 1972 spring ground offensive, largely achieved its purpose and appeared to put a settlement within reach. But North Vietnamese negotiators stalled late in the day, prompting LINEBACKER II, an 11-day campaign (December 18 to December 29) to bring enemy negotiators back to the table to sign a final accord. The latter concentrated on military assets in and around Hanoi. On the 29th, communist leaders indicated willingness to resume serious negotiations. This outcome reflected the impact of both LINEBACKER campaigns, which were—by that point in the war—oriented to fundamentally different circumstances and goals than the ROLLING THUNDER campaign had been.<sup>69</sup>

Many observers, both civilian and military, argued that if a LINEBACKER-style campaign had gone forward from the outset, the war would have been brought to a successful conclusion promptly. Frustrated over the political constraints placed upon them, airmen argued – in the tradition of Harris – that they might have won had they been free to prosecute the war as they saw fit. Writing in the June 1975 edition of *Air Force Magazine*, General T. R. Milton, USAF (Ret.) argued that LINEBACKER II was “an object lesson in how the war might have been won, and won long ago, if only there had not been such political inhibition.”<sup>70</sup> But this perspective overlooked the crucial differences between 1965 and 1972. The success of the LINEBACKER I campaign was facilitated by the fact that, when it took place, Hanoi had shifted to a conventional war strategy that was far more vulnerable to the effects of strategic air power than the earlier guerilla war had been. And when LINEBACKER II commenced, the Hanoi leadership already had achieved most of its political goals and was prepared to sign an accord that would put it, ultimately, within easy grasp of the final aims it was seeking. These important distinctions often were glossed over or ignored, however, and this had the effect of vindicating broad claims about the decisiveness of bombing and reinforcing proclamations about its future application in war.<sup>71</sup>

The Air Force’s response to criticism implying that it had not lived up to public expectations was not to try to modify those expectations, but rather to insist that bombing could be decisive – if only it could be freed from political restraints affecting the timing and targeting of air strikes. Those air leaders who had held important positions during World War II particularly resented the constraints placed on them later. But two observations are worthy of mention here. First, there were few important targets in Korea or Vietnam that were not hit hard by bombers (often multiple times). And second, World War II was the exception rather than the rule: most wars in history have been fought within distinct political parameters – not to mention legal and ethical ones. For political reasons, it very rarely, if ever, will be possible to carry out what air forces have traditionally believed to be the most effective form of a bomber campaign: an immediate, all-out strike on those assets most valuable to the enemy. Even in World War II – the most “total” of all modern wars – limits on Anglo-American bombers were lifted only slowly, over a period of years. And, even though the war was later considered a “good war” fought for the right reasons, the Anglo-American public has sometimes shown uneasiness with the unconstrained bombing undertaken at the end of the war.

After Vietnam, defensiveness inhibited USAF dialogues, and, for time at least, proscribed a thorough and searching analysis of doctrine (and the applicability of that doctrine to differing circumstances). There was still no satisfactory understanding of the crucial relationship between bomber raids and desired political outcomes. In the conclusion to his 1989 book, *The Limits of Air Power*, Mark Clodfelter wrote:

The tremendous rush of technology – which has produced gargantuan B-52s and sleek B-1s capable of carrying 30 tons of ordnance, and supersonic fighters capable of directing laser-guided bombs into a single warehouse in the heart of a densely-populated city – has not guaranteed military success. What it has done, however, is to create a modern vision of air power that focuses on the lethality of its weaponry rather than on that weaponry’s effectiveness as a political instrument.<sup>72</sup>

His critique was notable not only because it was perceptive, but because it was delivered by a serving USAF officer.

### **Air Power in Operation DESERT STORM.**

The “Persian Gulf War,” as it came to be called, saw the first extensive use of post-Vietnam era U.S. troops and equipment. U.S. Army General Norman Schwarzkopf, who led the military operation, envisioned it in four phases:

1. a strategic air campaign against Iraq;
2. an air campaign against Iraqi forces in Kuwait;
3. an attrition phase to neutralize the Republican Guard forces and isolate the Kuwaiti battlefield; and,
4. a ground attack to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

The first three of these would be carried out by coalition air forces, and the final phase would be conducted by ground forces.

The air campaign in the Kuwaiti theater of operations had three primary objectives: suppression of Iraqi air defenses, preparation of the battlefield for coalition ground attack, and support of the ground attack.<sup>73</sup> The strategic air campaign over Iraq was designed to support the war aim by pressuring Saddam's regime directly on a number of levels. A primary intellectual influence on the strategic air campaign was Colonel John A. Warden III, USAF, who had been in charge of the Deputy Directorate for Warfighting Concepts within the Air Staff Directorate of Plans. A strong advocate of independent air operations, Warden had conceived of a targeting theory based on five principal categories, envisioned as five concentric rings (like the rings in a bull's eye) that increase in value as they approach the center. The focal point—his designated "center of gravity"—was the enemy leadership. Just outside of that, in the position of second priority, was the enemy state's energy sources, advanced research facilities, and key war-supporting industries. Beyond that, in the third ring, was enemy infrastructure, such as transportation systems. The fourth ring was comprised of the enemy's population, and the fifth ring designated the enemy's fielded military forces. Warden's ideas, which he promulgated effectively and energetically, brought back to the surface some heated service debates over the primacy that should be accorded to independent air operations.<sup>74</sup>

Warden was counting on developments in precision targeting to herald a new kind of air war. He went beyond the idea of targeting government buildings and communications nodes, instead, he thought in terms of cutting the enemy leaders off from the people. His was a targeting theory resting on assumptions about an enemy leader's control of his polity. Warden's book, *The Air Campaign* (begun when he was a student at the National Defense University), argued that air power allows for strikes against the full spectrum of enemy capabilities, with leadership first and foremost. The five rings model was an extension of the operational concepts he had first explored in his book. "Decapitation" might or might not be possible, but it was only one of several approaches to largely the same end: targeting leadership directly to seek "strategic paralysis" of the enemy. It was not entirely clear, however, how this paralysis would translate into surrender.<sup>75</sup>

Only days after Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, American military aircraft began landing in Saudi Arabia. Schwarzkopf sent Air Force Lieutenant General Charles A. Horner into the theater to receive incoming American air forces. The plan that Warden and his staff developed for the crisis in the Middle East, called INSTANT THUNDER, focused on strategic air attacks on Iraqi centers of gravity; it was designed to pit American strengths against Iraqi weaknesses, while minimizing U.S. casualties, collateral damage, and civilian deaths. Warden sought to target the heart of Saddam's regime—the key structures, institutions, and resources that facilitated his control of the state. INSTANT THUNDER aimed, ultimately, at regime change. It rested on a body of assumptions about the nature of the enemy—and on confidence that U.S. intelligence could support an intricate air campaign with ambitious goals. It was designed to place intense pressure on Iraqi leadership in a period of 6 to 9 days.

INSTANT THUNDER won Schwarzkopf's endorsement, and Warden went to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to brief Horner. Uneasy with the plan's failure to consider fully the offensive capabilities of the Iraqi army, Horner modified it somewhat, changed its name, and appropriated several members of Warden's staff to comprise a secret, elite "Central Air Forces Special Planning Group": the "Black Hole." As historian Richard G. Davis has pointed out, "If Lieutenant General Horner rejected the form, he kept the substance of INSTANT THUNDER." The main objectives of Warden's plan remained, and

these “continued to emphasize leadership; electrical, nuclear, biological, and chemical facilities; and the other target sets derived from the five rings.”<sup>76</sup>

Following in the tradition of some of the World War II air power advocates who believed that strategic bombing might preclude the need for a ground campaign, Warden believed that his plan could stand alone. The 700 aircraft that were ready on the eve of war, would, Warden hoped, achieve Coalition political aims. Schwarzkopf, following in the tradition of World War II ground commanders, saw the air plan as the first phase of a larger, integrated air-ground liberation of Kuwait.

Even though the aircraft coming into the theater comprised the vast majority of the USAF’s precision delivery capability at the time, the force was not ideally suited to the task Warden had set for it. Technological evolution throughout the Vietnam War had yielded some promising results in highly precise, guided-bomb technology. But the USAF had been leisurely in appropriating it and integrating it into doctrine and mission statements: most of the combat aircraft procured between 1972 and 1990 (the F-15C, F-16, and A-10 series) did not include guided bomb unit-delivery capability.<sup>77</sup> Still, the USAF had the capacity to employ air-delivered, precision-guided munitions with hard-target penetrating capability, and this would become a centerpiece of its war effort. A dramatic new delivery system in the U.S. arsenal was the F-117A “Stealth” fighter, introduced to the public in late 1988.

The Black Hole planners, led by Lieutenant Colonel David Deptula, updated the air war plan right through the opening hours of the war on January 17, 1991; they emphasized simultaneous attacks on target sets that would have overlapping and linking effects. Weeks before the kick-off of the war, General Horner combined the Special Planning Group with CENTAF’s tactical air planners in a newly-formed Directorate of Campaign Plans. The Black Hole planners became the Iraqi Target Cell, and the tactical planners became the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations (KTO) planners. The latter, departing from the practice of identifying individual targets, prepared to send packages of strike and support aircraft (guided by an airborne controller) to hit all targets of opportunity within its allocated “kill box.”

Many hours before bombs began falling over Baghdad, seven hulking B-52Gs took off from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, to begin a 14,000 mile round-trip delivery of air-launched cruise missiles into Iraq.<sup>78</sup> The Air Force, anxious to prove its “Global Reach,” did not wish to be overshadowed by the Navy’s ship-based *Tomahawk* missiles about to launch from the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Even though Baghdad was a heavily-armed city with plenty of time to prepare for combat, the massed Coalition air attacks largely overwhelmed the defenders. Throughout Iraq, Coalition forces struck command and control targets (including Baath Party headquarters), electrical facilities, and Scud missile launchers. Anti-radiation missiles homed in on radar facilities and anti-aircraft defenses while both British and American planes cratered the runways on Iraqi airfields. Iraqi oil refineries and storage facilities came under attack as well. At the end of only 2 nights, Coalition aircraft had struck nearly half of 298 identified strategic targets. They had won air superiority, and had cut off Iraqi electricity. The stealth fighter-bombers proved their worth early on; indeed, one F-117A with two bombs could do the same work as more than 100 World War II-era B-17 bombers carrying nearly 650 bombs.<sup>79</sup>

The great abundance of Coalition air power facilitated parallel attacks on arrays of targets. Rather than attacking targets in sequenced priority order, Coalition air forces were able to carry out simultaneous counter-air, interdiction, close air support, and strategic missions into Iraq. By mid-February, Coalition bombers had struck the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, the Baghdad Conference Center, TV and press buildings, and the Military Intelligence Headquarters. As the month went on, strategic attacks were waged against airfields, nuclear and chemical targets, communication facilities, and mobile Scud launchers. Fearing that Iraqi Scud missile attacks into Israel would prompt Israeli entry into the war and thus fracture the carefully-constructed Coalition, the Bush administration placed a high priority on targeting Scuds. No less than 15 percent of CENTAF’s strategic effort went into attacks on Scuds, including launchers, as well as manufacturing, assembly and storage centers.<sup>80</sup>

The ground campaign, which had been planned all along as the final phase of major combat operations, finally kicked off on February 23. Simultaneously, coalition aircraft struck Iraqi airfields, aircraft, and bridges near the front. Strategic raids continued to target leadership, and industrial facilities in Iraq. Newly-developed GBU-28 penetrator bombs were used against high priority targets, including the Al Taji command bunker.

In an interesting inversion of roles, B-52 bombers — so long associated with strategic missions — were employed almost exclusively in ground support missions inside Kuwait. In postwar debriefings, Iraqi soldiers readily attested to the unnerving effect of the B-52 strikes. Indeed, General Schwarzkopf so valued the B-52 strikes inside Kuwait that he resisted their use elsewhere. In the end, only a handful of B-52s operated outside Kuwait against targets that the Black Hole planners designated as “strategic.”<sup>81</sup> But the attacks on troops proved responsible for the profound weakening of the morale and cohesion of segments of the Iraqi Army, thus contributing directly to a shorter ground war.<sup>82</sup>

The B-52s required 40 percent of the USAF’s tanker force, as well as large packages of support aircraft. By contrast, the F-117 fighter bombers, which were the only planes authorized to strike targets in downtown Baghdad, required no support aircraft. One F-117 with two laser-guided bombs could achieve the same level of destruction as 108 World War II B-17s with 648 bombs.<sup>83</sup> Other fighter bombers, including the F-111F and the F-15E, helped carry the bulk of the strategic missions, with air-to-air refueling facilitating their range and effectiveness. This efficiency impressed the Air Force, prompting high and sustained attention to precision systems through the 1990s.

Attacks on Iraqi communication targets had a corrosive effect on the speed and efficiency with which Saddam could conduct his war. Rarely, however, were communications cut totally since the regime resorted to more primitive means such as message delivery by bicycle or motorcycle. And fiber optic nets were more redundant and elusive than the Black Hole planners had anticipated. The precise military and political impact of raids on leadership targets — the focus of Warden’s theory — has been difficult to discern. As Richard Davis concluded, “little solid data is available to connect the bombing of leadership or command and control facilities with specific consequences.”<sup>84</sup> And air planners who had hoped to integrate and implement a program of psychological warfare found themselves stymied by concerns over the sensitivities of Coalition partners, and by interagency conflict over the program.<sup>85</sup>

Strikes on Iraqi oil saw the collapse of refinery capacity by the end of the war. But the very fact that the war was so short in duration meant that Iraq was able to rely on stored supplies for military operations. Thus, in the end the oil campaign had no impact on the outcome of the war itself. Pressure placed on the Iraqi population due to strikes on the electrical net and fuel more generally may have contributed to the postwar uprisings by the Kurds and the Shi’ites, but did not lead to a weakening of the Sunni commitment to Saddam’s regime.<sup>86</sup> This failure of pressure to create political effects was of course assisted by the strength of the Iraqi internal security forces; this paralleled, to some degree, the situation in Germany during World War II, when air planners in England and the United States hoped that deprivations might turn the population against an already unpopular leader.

The 5 months between the invasion of Kuwait and the commencement of Operation DESERT STORM gave Saddam time to further disperse and hide his weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capability — a set of resources already dispersed in reaction to the Israeli strike in 1981. The targets proved to be elusive, and postwar inspections revealed that many facilities had been missed by target planners (who had operated with limited and out-of-date intelligence). Attacks on mobile Scud mobile launchers failed to destroy any more than a handful of them, and, while attacks on known production sites achieved some effect, the Iraqis had removed the bulk of it prior to the war. Thus, the considerable effort dedicated to Scuds yielded results that were less fruitful than planners hoped or expected.<sup>87</sup> As Richard Davis has pointed out, Scuds present air force planners with many of the same sorts of challenges Army officers face in counterinsurgency warfare.<sup>88</sup>



The Coalition achieved its main aims, including the withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait, and the right of the UN to install peacekeepers on the border, and to inspect and eliminate any WMD in Iraq. The speed and apparent ease of the victory prompted many commentators to proclaim that a “Revolution in Military Affairs” (RMA) had occurred, based on the sophisticated technology employed by American forces. Indeed, the one-sided outcome had resulted from the *interaction* of American proficiency and Iraqi incompetence. Poor skills and training ensured that Iraqi armies would be punished disproportionately by the enemy’s modern military toolkit.<sup>89</sup> Perceptive analysts warned against reading too much into the victory, and called for more nuanced interpretations of the war and its outcome.<sup>90</sup>

At the end of the day, the political result of the war was mixed: Saddam Hussein remained in power and worked to quickly reassert and consolidate his authority within his borders.

### **Air War in the Balkans.**

Out from under the thumb of communism, the ethnically-mixed regions of what had been the state of Yugoslavia began to pull away from their center. Slovakia and Croatia escaped to independence in the summer of 1991, quickly winning recognition from European states. But the Serbians sought a halt to the disintegration, and took up arms to hold on to a new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Strife followed, heightened and inflamed by extremist rhetoric. President George H. W. Bush was not anxious to wade into the complex ethnic entanglement that was post-Cold War Yugoslavia, but the situation continued to fray badly.

In 1992 the Serbs began to shell Sarajevo, the capital of the new state of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Bosnian Serbs sought to displace the Muslim population and claim land for themselves. By the end of the year, some 150,000 were dead from the bloody fights. During his campaign, President Bill Clinton criticized the Bush team for not doing enough about the humanitarian crisis in Bosnia. Many analysts in the United States feared the entrenched nature of the ethnic strife, and worried about how the United States might get out of the Balkans once it got in. They also believed that the Europeans ought to take a leading role in settling a fight taking place in their own backyard. After a particularly bloody Serb attack on a marketplace in Sarajevo in early 1994, American planes flew in to evacuate the wounded; thereafter the United States began to take on more a more aggressive role, helping to enforce the limits and constraints that the international community tried to impose on the Serbs.

In 1995, in the Muslim town of Srebrenica, Serbs massacred thousands of Bosnian men and boys. Bosnian Serbs routinely raped Muslim women and girls. Later in the summer, the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies commenced air strikes against the Serbs, while the Croats turned on their former Serb ally and began a ground campaign to help drive them out of Bosnia. Fearing a possible loss of power and a Serb collapse, Milosevic agreed to seek terms. The peace, arranged during an extended conference in Dayton, Ohio, included the establishment of an International Implementation Force (IFOR) to keep the peace in Bosnia; U.S. forces took a leading role in what eventually proved to be a worthwhile operation. The U.S. public, however, remained largely unmoved by the intervention, and the House at one point toyed with cutting off the funds for U.S. troops in Bosnia.<sup>91</sup>

The 1995 Dayton accords did not, however, persuade Milosevic to confine himself to acceptable standards of international behavior. In 1999, NATO went to war in an air-only operation to try to halt the Serbian annexation of the province of Kosovo. Ethnic Serbs formed a small part (about 10 percent) of the population of the province, which consisted mainly of Albanian Muslims, or Kosovars. The Serbian minority long had dominated the politics of the province, spurring a movement for independence led by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The failure to bring the opposed parties together at the Rambouillet conference in early 1999 led to a NATO decision to try to coerce Milosevic and the Serbs

into accepting terms. Perhaps relying overmuch on a faulty interpretation of why Milosevic signed the Dayton accords when he did, the Clinton administration expected him to cave in under air strikes in a few days. Quite to the contrary, however, he encouraged his forces to run amok in Kosovo. Muslims poured out of the province and into refugee camps in neighboring states. Air strikes, waged from high altitude so as to minimize the risk to NATO pilots, could not halt events on the ground, and the strikes seemed only to unify the defiant Serbs behind Milosevic. NATO was cautious in all regards, and there was considerable anxiety about whether the alliance would hang together long enough to solve the problem. Clinton, who could hardly escape recent memories of the American public's ambivalence about Bosnia, would not agree to the use of ground troops, even as the situation worsened, and Milosevic carried out ethnic cleansing. In May an increasingly alarmed NATO took advantage of improving weather and intensified the bombing – attacking rail lines and bridges in Kosovo and Serbia, and striking the electrical net inside Serbia. Significantly, NATO began to discuss the use of ground troops. This put the Russians – old allies of the Serbs – in a particularly awkward situation since they had no intention of ending up in a shooting war with NATO. Pressure from the Russians surely helped convince Milosevic that he had to accept defeat. The bombing ceased in June, and the United States and NATO sent a force of 60,000 troops (Kosovo Force, or KFOR) into Kosovo. Milosevic, who in the meantime had been indicted as a war criminal by the International Criminal Tribunal, was ousted from power in the autumn of 2000.

The air war over Kosovo led to a rekindling of the debate over whether or not airplanes can coerce successfully enough to win wars on their own. Clearly, air strikes had not been able to halt the ethnic cleansing and, indeed, hastened it. But the relationship between the intensification of NATO strikes in May and the acceptance of terms by Milosevic in June suggested that the strikes on Serbia proper had a role in the outcome. RAND analyst Benjamin Lambeth stated, appropriately, that “We may never know for sure what mix of pressures and inducements ultimately led Milosevic to admit defeat.”<sup>92</sup> Any historical outcome is driven by a particular interleaving of events and perceptions of events, and those seeking to explain it must identify the contributing elements and arrange them into a structure that is logically coherent and robust relative to other possible explanations. But fitting together all the puzzle pieces is a complex process that tends to develop slowly, as additional bits of evidence are brought to light over time, and as the perspectives of all the key actors are brought to bear on the story.

The very fact that NATO managed to sustain a 78-day campaign that – Milosevic believed – might have continued indefinitely must have convinced the Serb leader that his opponents were committed to the cause. As another RAND analyst, Stephen Hosmer, has pointed out, Milosevic and others in his circle seemed to fear that there might be no limit to the level of destruction NATO might be willing to impose; indeed NATO, led by the United States and Britain, might continue escalating to the point of “carpet bombing” Serbia.<sup>93</sup> As much tension, political wrangling, and inefficiency as there was within NATO, the members of the Alliance held together in a campaign that grew more intense over time. (Milosevic himself contributed immensely to NATO's level of commitment through behavior that was reprehensible and deeply offensive to the international community.) Clear evidence that NATO was preparing to authorize the use of ground troops was an unmistakable sign of this continued commitment. Not only did it spur the Russians to pressure Milosevic into accepting terms, but it signaled to the Serb leader that his political and personal fortunes were more at risk from a continuation of the war than from a cessation of it. In addition, the playing out of the campaign revealed as well that Milosevic had miscalculated on virtually every important strategic issue concerning the war.<sup>94</sup>

The escalation of the air campaign was driven by frustrated policymakers who increasingly reached the conclusion that the only way to influence Milosevic via an air campaign would be to place pressure directly on the leader himself, in part by bringing hardship down upon Serbian citizens within Serbia. A main feature of the latter was the inclusion of attacks designed to damage to the electrical power net in Serbia and to turn the lights out in Belgrade. The pattern of commitment and intensification

seems likely to have been more significant to the outcome than the total level of physical damage and disruption suffered by the Serbs in the air campaign. The pressure placed by the 1999 air war on Serb civilians came nowhere close to the levels of pressure imposed on them by the earlier economic sanctions resulting from the Bosnia crisis. Those economic sanctions essentially had destroyed the Serbian economy in the early 1990s: Serbia's industrial output and retail sales fell by 40 percent and 70 percent respectively, and inflation reached the almost unfathomable level of 116 trillion percent. Sixty percent of Serbia's labor force was laid off, and by December 1993, 80 percent of the population had fallen below the poverty level. None of this had budged Milosevic. By the time of Dayton, the Serbian economy was actually in recovery.<sup>95</sup>

The suffering imposed by the 1999 air campaign at no time approached this level of intensity. Neither the overall level of pain imposed nor the striking of any specific target is likely, therefore, to have more explanatory power in this case than the fact that Milosevic saw all the trends aligning against him, and that the Russians made it clear that they would not continue to support him. It would therefore be risky to attempt to draw specific targeting lessons from the Kosovo case—a case entailing a range of idiosyncratic characteristics that, in the end, came together in a unique way. Still, in the years after the Kosovo war, some in the USAF suggested that the laws of war regarding aerial targeting be revisited to allow more expeditious clearance of targets in the enemy's civilian infrastructure, in particular, to allow “tremendous destructive power to be applied discretely and efficiently against a wide range of objects that opportunistic, materialistic societies like Yugoslavia value.”<sup>96</sup> Aside from the thorny ethical issues raised by loosening constraints on targeting civilian infrastructure (especially since even the most precise targeting of civilian infrastructure does not preclude the deaths of innocents), it rests on assumptions that not only tend to mirror American society in problematical ways, but also may not hold up across different cases. Under some circumstances, air pressure on civilian infrastructure may produce a desired political effect; in other cases, however, it may have no effect at all other than to bolster enemy cohesion, or to erode international support for the attacking force. More recent literature has been more judicious. One USAF author recently argued: “The danger of Allied Force's success is that politicians could now view airpower as a panacea and substitute for jointness. . . . An actual invasion obviously was not necessary, but Milosevic may have complied sooner had he faced NATO's *joint* military might.”<sup>97</sup>

## **Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.**

In an attempt to go after the perpetrators of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President George W. Bush sent U.S. forces to Afghanistan in the autumn of 2001. Because of the nature of al-Qaeda, targeting information with respect to leadership was slim. The Air Force struck such infrastructure as there was in Afghanistan. When this did not coerce the various elements of the Taliban (including al-Qaeda), the USAF joined the effort to use U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF)—working in conjunction with indigenous friendly forces in Afghanistan—to attack elements of the enemy dispersed through various regions of the country. In addition to flying some battlefield interdiction, the USAF flew lots of close support missions on behalf of soldiers on the ground. This inverted the Air Force's traditional mission preference, but pilots and aircraft proved up to the task, despite some occasional problems centering on the Air Force's strong preference for having its own forward controllers direct fires (as opposed to Army controllers).<sup>98</sup>

During the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, the USAF flew against its traditional set of targets in the opening phases of the war. Enemy air defenses were crippled, and communications were degraded. Due to American strength and preponderance, the USAF was able to attack a wide range of targets simultaneously, including an attack on the Dora Farms complex when intelligence indicated that Saddam Hussein might be located there. The USAF quickly won air supremacy, clearing the path for

the ground forces that moved quickly into the battle. The Americans encouraged Iraqi troops to stay in their garrisons and decline to fight. If they did attempt to maneuver, they came under prompt air attack. When the ground war slowed due to a blinding sandstorm, USAF troops—with all-weather capability—were able to pound Republican Guard units located mainly in the Karbala Gap region. This facilitated an easier move into Baghdad by the Third Infantry Division, and a rapid capture of the capital city.<sup>99</sup> Possessed of far more precision-guided munitions (PGMs) than it had had during the first Gulf War, and with improved target acquisition technology, the USAF was able to engage in an overwhelming offensive that, once again, included effective support of ground troops. With excellent air-ground communication and ever-improving responsiveness, the USAF has proved itself highly capable of doing a mission that it traditionally would not prioritize. Indeed, so proficient is the Air Force in close air support at the moment that a new defense debate centers on whether USAF close air support ought to largely substitute, in the future, for ground-based indigenous fire support. The question is a difficult and emotional one, and part of the question to be answered is whether Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF), with its highly-permissive environment for aircraft, is a reliable model for future conflict. If the air defense threat were greater, would the USAF still be willing to fly aggressive close air support? The Army is not convinced on this point, and the debate is likely to continue.

Currently, the USAF is engaged in many internal and external doctrinal debates. Some of these continue long-standing conversations about the effective identification and exploitation of enemy weaknesses. Others however, relate to space power theory (including the protection of vital military assets in space), and to the effective use of air power in counterinsurgency campaigns. One of the major debates at the moment pits proponents of the Warden systems approach (with its heavy emphasis on leadership) against proponents of battlefield effects. In his recent book, *Air Power*, Stephen Budiansky has argued that operations in Afghanistan, and in Iraq (2003) have largely discredited the Warden theory, or any “shock and awe” approach, and instead have validated the idea that air power’s greatest contribution is to be made on the battlefield against fielded forces. He asserts: “despite the howls of protest heard from Army partisans, who claimed that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had taken inordinate risks by launching Gulf War II with only two heavy armored divisions...the effect of air power on Iraqi tanks, surface-to-surface missiles, artillery, and troops left little doubt that Rumsfeld was right: far smaller, lighter, and more agile ground forces could now do jobs that once required huge armies.” Budiansky’s argument hardly has gone uncontested, not least because its sweeping language oversimplifies a set of complex issues that require more analytical discernment than he gives them. But he has identified the direction of the debate, and, in the final paragraph of his book, introduces one more challenge: “The great historical joke on airmen was that, having struggled for a century to escape the battlefield in their quest for equal status and independence—having fought so many bitter battles to free themselves from the indignity of providing ‘mere support’ to ground forces—it was on the battlefield where air power finally achieved not merely equality, but its claim to ascendancy.”<sup>100</sup>

Issues of air power are vital to all military services, and should be a subject of sustained attention among professional officers. This is true for many reasons, not the least of these being the strong political appeal of air power. National political leaders who are in possession of air forces are likely to continue to look upon them as a relatively clean and cheap means of wielding force—a means of using the military instrument of power without the level of commitment (and potential entanglement) involved in deploying ground forces. Thus, they are likely to be used first—and increasingly, perhaps, alone—when conflicts arise and lead to military interaction.

## **Conclusion.**

Organizational cultures, the impact and memory of World War I, public fears and pressures, assumptions about technology, bureaucratic politics, and service rivalries all have major roles in this

story. In general, the expectations of the major air power theorists ran well ahead of what could be achieved in wartime, and many who lobbied for independent air power were guilty of over-claiming and over-promising. They tended to assume that enemy states had weak points that could be exploited readily. Their reasons for holding these views were, in many respects, understandable. But advocacy often got in the way of critical thinking, and the theorists were disinclined to examine—or even countenance—those arguments that might challenge their underlying assumptions.

The complexity of modern societies and economies does not make them inherently fragile, as many air theorists assumed they must be. Human beings are adaptable creatures capable of adjusting to and accommodating new circumstances—even very stressful ones—if necessary. It, therefore, is often the case that what planners and analysts identify as readily exploitable weaknesses turn out to be much less exploitable than expected. And, because the *process* of exploitation is itself difficult, often it becomes rather more iterative and protracted than planners assumed it would be. In the meantime, the enemy can continue to learn, to adapt, and to adjust to the pressures imposed. Under these circumstances, the attacking air force often will be tempted to broaden or intensify the campaign in some way.

There is an inherent tendency among planners to mirror-image the enemy: to assume that he is like us, that he values what we value, and that he will respond to threats and punishments as we assume we would respond. But this tendency has proven, again and again, to be a misleading and dangerous one. Precisely because societies are complex, we are prone to misinterpret and misjudge them. The relationship between dropping bombs and producing a desired political outcome (a relationship that one perceptive observer recently has called the “exchange mechanism” in air power theory) still is inadequately understood.<sup>101</sup> There is much to be learned, yet, about how and when different enemies will respond to aerial threats, punishment, and coercion. As they move into their second century, air forces—while more technically skilled and capable all the time—still have much to learn about the use of violence to achieve political aims.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 25

1. My thanks to Boone Bartholomees and Con Crane for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.
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4. On Fullerton and Chanute, see David MacIsaac, “Voices from the Central Blue: The Air Power Theorists,” in *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Peter Paret, ed., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 625-627. Chanute is quoted on p. 626.
5. See H. Bruce Franklin, *War Stars: The Superbomb and the American Imagination*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 84.
6. Moltke’s statement is noted in an essay by Bernard Brodie titled, “The Continuing Relevance of On War” in M. Howard and P. Paret’s translation of Clausewitz’s *On War*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 53. On Clausewitz, see also M. Howard’s essay, “The Influence of Clausewitz” in the Howard and Paret volume, p. 39; Howard, *Clausewitz*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983; Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992; and Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz in English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 104-112.
7. Tim Travers, *The Killing Ground: The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern Warfare, 1900-1918*, London: Unwin Hyman, 1987, pp. 37-97; the Gold Medal Prize Essay of the *Journal of the Royal United Services Institution* for 1913, reprinted in Vol. LVIII, No. 434, April 1914, titled: “How Can Moral Qualities Best Be Developed During the Preparation of the Officer and the Man for the Duties Each Will Carry Out in the War” by Major A. Lawson. On similar ideas in Germany at the time, see Antulio J. Echevarria II, “On the Brink of the Abyss: The Warrior Identity and German Military Thought before the Great War,” in *War and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 2, October 1995, pp. 23-40.
8. Travers, *The Killing Ground*, pp. 37-38, and chap. 2 generally.
9. Alfred Gollin, *No Longer an Island: Britain and the Wright Brothers, 1902-1909*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984, pp. 345, 351. On Baden-Powell, see Travers, *The Killing Ground*, p. 39.

10. There were 399 industrial disputes in Britain in 1908; by 1911, there were 903. In the months before the outbreak of World War I, there were approximately 150 strikes per month. See Allen Hutt, *The Postwar History of the British Working Class*, NY: Coward-McCann, 1938, p. 3. See also Paul Addison, "Winston Churchill and the Working Class, 1900-1914," in Jay Winter, ed., *The Working Class in Modern British History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 43-64; David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, Vol. IV, London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1934, 1926-1927.

11. See two lectures by T. Miller Maguire to the Royal United Services Institution, published in the Institution's journal as "Readiness or Ruin," in Vol. LIII, No. 382, December 1909; and "National Recuperation," in Vol. LIV, No. 385, March 1910.

12. See, for instance, Douglas Robinson, *The Zeppelin in Combat, 1912-1918*, London: G.T. Foulis, 1962.

13. Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, pp. 29-35. The report is quoted on p. 33.

14. See Malcolm Cooper, *The Birth of Independent Air Power*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1986.

15. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 35-48.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-68.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

18. See Brock Millman, "British Home Defence Planning and Civil Dissent, 1917-1918," *War in History*, Vol. 5, No. 2, April 1998, pp. 204-232.

19. Commandant's lecture, "Air Warfare," RAF Staff College, 1924, in AIR 1/2385/228/10, Public Record Office, UK.

20. I. F. Clarke, pp. 169-170.

21. For some overviews of Douhet in English from this period, see "The Air Doctrine of General Douhet," no author given, in *The Royal Air Force Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 2, April 1933, pp. 164-167; "General Giulio Douhet – An Italian Apostle of Air Power," and "Air Warfare – The Principles of Air Warfare by General Giulio Douhet," in *The Royal Air Force Quarterly*, Vol. VII, No. 2, April 1936, pp. 148-151 and pp. 152-168. For a recent authoritative account of Douhet's thought, see Azar Gat, "Futurism, Proto-fascist Italian Culture and the Sources of Douhetism" in *War and Society*, Vol. 15, No. 1, May 1997, pp. 31-51.

22. Gat, "Futurism" p. 39.

23. He asserted that "when the working personnel of a factory sees one of its machine shops destroyed, even with a minimum loss of life, it quickly breaks up and the plant ceases to function." See Douhet's *Command of the Air*, Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983, pp. 22-23. This is a reprint of the 1942 edition translated by Dino Ferrari and published by Coward-McCann Inc.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

25. Phillip Meilinger, "Giulio Douhet and the Origins of Air Power Theory" in *The Paths of Heaven: The Evolution of Air Power Theory*, Meilinger, ed., Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997, pp. 9-10.

26. See Meilinger, "Giulio Douhet," pp. 12-13.

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28. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Works: With Notes by the Author*, Hallam, Lord Tennyson, ed., New York: Macmillan, 1935, p. 98.

29. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 99-127, 164-175.

30. See, for instance, Walter Millis, *Arms and Men*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1986, 3rd ed., pp. 254-258.

31. Quoted in John Terraine, *A Time for Courage*, New York: Macmillan, 1985, p. 82.

32. William C. Sherman, *Air Warfare*, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1926, p. 6.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 197. Sherman also recognized that gas bombs might be a feature of any future air war. See pp. 203-205.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

35. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 153-164.

36. Dean, quoted in John Terraine, "Theory and Practice of Air War: The Royal Air Force" in *The Conduct of the Air War in the Second World War: An International Comparison*, Providence, RI: Berg, 1992, p. 469.
37. See B. F. Cooling, ed., *Case Studies in the Development of Close Air Support*, Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1990.
38. See, for instance, Williamson Murray, *Luftwaffe*, Annapolis: Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company, 1985; James S. Corum, *The Luftwaffe: Creating the Operational Air War, 1918-1940*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997.
39. Sir Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany*, London: HMSO, 1961, Vol. I, pp. 105-106; Brereton Greenhous, et al., *The Crucible of War, 1939-1945*, Vol. III, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994, pp. 530-534.
40. Tami Davis Biddle, "Bombing by the Square Yard: Sir Arthur Harris at War, 1942-1945," *The International History Review*, Vol. XXI, No. 3, September 1999, pp. 626-664.
41. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 211-213.
42. Webster and Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany*, Vol. II, p. 39.
43. See, for instance, W. W. Rostow, *Pre-Invasion Bombing Strategy*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
44. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare*, pp. 228-229, 243-244.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110, 190-191.
46. Brown, "Civilian Psychiatric Air Raid Casualties," *The Lancet*, May 31, 1941, p. 691.
47. Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, p. 109.
48. On the air campaign in the Far East, see generally Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power*; and Conrad C. Crane, *Bombs, Cities, and Civilians*, Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993.
49. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 270-288.
50. R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1995, pp. 130-133.
51. Anglo-American losses, he points out, were far lower than those of the other fighting powers. R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1995, pp. 127-128. In the conclusion to his comprehensive history of General Spaatz and the World War II strategic air war, American historian Richard G. Davis credited strategic bombing for ending the war months earlier than otherwise might have been the case—and thereby saving the lives not only of Allied soldiers but also of those suffering at the hands of the Third Reich. See Davis, *Carl A. Spaatz*, p. 596.
52. O'Donnell, quoted in Conrad C. Crane, "Raiding the Beggar's Pantry: The Search for Air Power Strategy in the Korean War," in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 63, No. 4, October 1999, p. 889. On the air war in Korea generally, see Conrad C. Crane's seminal book, *American Air Power Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999.
53. See Crane, "Raiding the Beggar's Pantry," pp. 893-903.
54. Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Air Power*, New York: The Free Press, 1989, p. 21.
55. LeMay quoted in Thomas Hone, "Strategic Bombardment Constrained: Korea and Vietnam" in R. Cargill Hall, ed. *Case Studies in Strategic Bombardment*, Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998, p. 517.
56. Crane, "Raiding the Beggar's Pantry," p. 905.
57. Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 912.
58. On the August 29 raid, see *ibid.*, p. 914.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 918; Clodfelter, pp. 18-20.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 918. Clodfelter argues: "While the May attacks against the dams did not directly produce the Communist's about-face, the raids did, in combination with other factors, contribute to their desire to negotiate seriously." See p. 23.
61. In February 1954, Major General Otto Weyland stated that "We are pretty sure now that the communists wanted peace, not because of a 2-year stalemate on the ground, but to get air power off their back." See Zimmerman and Weyland quoted in Futrell, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine*, p. 177.
62. Futrell, pp. 177, 180-181.
63. See Crane, "Raiding the Beggar's Pantry" p. 920; Greenwood, p. 236; Clodfelter, p. 27; and generally, Dennis M. Drew, "Air Theory, Air Force, and Low Intensity Conflict: A Short Journey to Confusion" in Meilinger, ed., *The Paths of Heaven*, pp. 321-355.

64. Clodfelter, pp. 39-56.
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66. The figure is from Earl Tilford, "Setup: Why and How the U.S. Air Force Lost in Vietnam" in *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1991, p. 327. On Vietnam. see generally Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Air Power*, New York: The Free Press, 1989. Also, Pape, pp. 174-210.
67. Robert A. Pape, Jr. "Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War" in *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Fall 1990, pp. 123-124. See also Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, pp. 174-210.
68. Clodfelter makes this argument on p. 205.
69. A perceptive analysis of the air war in Vietnam can be found in Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997; see also Pape, "Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War" in *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Fall 1990, pp. 103-146.
70. Milton, quoted in Tilford, p. 335; see also Clodfelter, pp. 206-208.
71. Clodfelter, pp. 201-202; Tilford, pp. 334-336, 338.
72. Clodfelter, p. 203.
73. Richard G. Davis, *Decisive Force: Strategic Bombing in the Gulf War*, Washington, DC: Air Force Museums and History Program, 1996, p. 20.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-12.
75. See Lieutenant Colonel David S. Fadok, "John Boyd and John Warden: Airpower's Quest for Strategic Paralysis," in Meilinger, ed., *The Paths of Heaven*, pp. 357-399; and John Andreas Olson, "Col. John A. Warden III: Smasher of Paradigms?" in *Air Power Leadership: Theory and Practice*, London: The Stationery Office, 2002, pp. 129-159.
76. Davis, *Decisive Force*, p. 19.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
78. Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *The Generals' War*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1995, pp. 205-207, 223.
79. Richard G. Davis, "Strategic Bombardment in the Gulf War," in R. Cargill Hall, ed. *Case Studies in Strategic Bombardment*, Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998, pp. 573-575; and Davis, *Decisive Force*, pp. 42-43.
80. Davis, *Decisive Force*, p. 44; Barry Schneider, "Counterforce Targeting: Capabilities and Challenges" USAF Counterproliferation Papers, No. 22, Air University, Maxwell AFB, 2004, pp. 13-15.
81. Davis, *Decisive Force*, p. 40.
82. Gordon and Trainor, pp. 474.
83. The figure is from Davis, *Decisive Force*, p. 41.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 53; Gordon and Trainor, pp. 474.
85. Davis, *Decisive Force*, pp. 53-54.
86. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.
87. Barry Schneider has concluded: "The best that could be said about the intensive Allied Scud Hunt of Desert Storm, even if it resulted in few or zero kills, is that the operation at least kept the Iraqi Scud-launch teams continually moving, hiding, and taking evasive actions." "Counterforce Targeting," p. 14; Gordon and Trainor, pp. 245-246.
88. Davis, *Decisive Force*, p. 61.
89. Stephen Biddle, "Victory Misunderstood: What the Gulf War Tells Us about the Future of Conflict" in *International Security*, 21, No. 2, Fall 1997, pp. 139-179.
90. See, for instance, Andrew Bacevich, "A Less Than Splendid Little War," in *The Wilson Quarterly*, Winter 2001, pp. 83-94.
91. See, for instance, Robert Schulzinger, *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 370.
92. Benjamin Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001, p. xiv.
93. Stephen T. Hosmer, *Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001, p. 94.
94. These included the following fallacious assumptions: 1) that the ethnic cleansing campaign might cause NATO to rethink the bombing; 2) that the elimination of the KLA would be swift and simple; 3) that the fallout from civilian casualties might break NATO; and 4) that Russia would provide steadfast support to the Serbs. See Hosmer, pp. 24-34.



95. American University Trade and Environment Data Bast, Serbia Sanctions Case: [gurukul.ucc.american.edu/TED/SERBSANC.htm](http://gurukul.ucc.american.edu/TED/SERBSANC.htm).

96. Col. Charles J. Dunlap, USAF, "The End of Innocence: Rethinking Noncombatancy in the Post-Kosovo Era," *Strategic Review*, Summer 2000, p. 14; Major Jeanne M. Meyer, "Tearing Down the Façade: a Critical Look at the Will of the Enemy and Air Force Doctrine," *Air Force Law Review*, Vol. 51, 2001, pp. 143-182.

97. See Major R. A. Renner, USAF, "America's Asymmetric Advantage: The Utility of Airpower in the New Strategic Environment," *Defence Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 2004, p. 105.

98. On Afghanistan, see Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy*, Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, 2002.

99. See for instance, Williamson Murray and Robert Scaler, *The Iraq War*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

100. Stephen Budiansky, *Air Power*, New York: Viking, 2004, p. 441.

101. See Group Captain Neville Parton, "Strategic Air Power Theory in the 21st Century," *RAF Air Power Journal*, 2004.

## CHAPTER 26

### JOHN WARDEN'S FIVE RING MODEL AND THE INDIRECT APPROACH TO WAR

Clayton K. S. Chun

Military strategists and practitioners develop and execute campaign plans based on a host of factors. Experience, intelligence, force structure, technology, legal, the threat, and environmental factors are only a few elements that affect these decisions. Another key factor is theory. Theory attempts to explain and get a reader to understand the occurrence of an event or state of nature. Theory can provide a framework to consider how to approach a problem. It can help one consider issues or questions to solve before making detailed approaches toward developing a theater strategy or campaign plan. If a theory is sound, then one could use it to solve problems by predicting possible outcomes, identifying potential problems, and finding options to get an opponent to take certain actions or modify his behavior. Theory can provide a foundation to help military strategists contemplate or evaluate potential courses of actions.

Military theory often is criticized, not without justification, for being unrealistic or static. Theory may not seem relevant because it lacks details or does not adequately represent a situation. Additionally, a theorist may have created an appropriate theory for his age or historic context that does not seem to fit the contemporary environment. Societies, militaries, weapons, and political situations may evolve such that the theory may not be relevant. A theorist may have worked during a particular period with certain international conditions or technology available to fight a war. Over time, political relationships change, engineers replace technology, and the character of warfare evolves.

Although compared to other weapons like small arms, aircraft are relatively new weapons; they have changed significantly since the first Italian aircraft appeared in combat over Libya in 1911.<sup>1</sup> Aerial warfare has evolved from simple biplanes that dropped very limited bomb loads, which pilots hoped would land within miles of their targets. Today, aircraft using satellite navigation systems can place precision guided munitions within a few feet of the intended target. Airpower theory also has evolved. Early air power theorists like Giulio Douhet developed ideas about aerial bombardment and predictions about its impact on the battlefield with particular technologies in mind. In hindsight, Douhet's theories on breaking the will of people through bombardment of cities lacked credibility. Douhet argued that the most humane way to end war was a swift attack on the most vulnerable element of society: the populace. Perhaps more of vision than a theory, critics challenged his concept on moral, military, political, and technical grounds. For example, Douhet advocated that air forces could use poison gas against cities that "paralyzed all life" by killing civilians.<sup>2</sup> Still, Douhet's ideas had a great impact on future concepts and ideas during the interwar period and World War II. Many air forces developed bomber fleets with the thought that strategic bombardment would help destroy a foe's ability to fight a war. World War II demonstrated that breaking the will of individuals, let alone a society, by bombing was difficult. The United Kingdom, Germany, and Japan each suffered from massive bombing campaigns, but in each case strategic bombing alone proved inconclusive. Lack of information about targets, bombing effects, and the use of massive, indiscriminate attacks may have contributed to problems attacking the specific industrial and political centers of Germany and Japan.

Since the end of World War II, technology has changed significantly to include jet aircraft, radar, surface-to-air missiles, nuclear weapons, instant communications, improved reconnaissance and surveillance, improved bomb damage assessment, and precision guided munitions. Ideas that were once discounted as unrealistic might now find validity due to improvements in fighting capability, increased urbanization, enhanced intelligence abilities to pinpoint key targets, and other changes. One recent airpower theorist, John A. Warden III, believed that a state would collapse if sufficient pressure

was placed on certain key elements of its government, economy, society, and military. Many World War II U.S. Army Air Forces (AAF) and British Royal Air Force (RAF) officers agonized over what targets would accomplish this same goal. Eighth Air Force B-17 and B-24 bomber crews smashed industrial targets, while losing thousands of crewmembers and creating massive collateral damage, in search of a way to force Germany to capitulate. Warden built many of his ideas on concepts developed during the interwar period before World War II.

Warden believed that advances in technology – precision guided munitions and stealth had made revolutionary changes to the nature of warfare. Instead of using masses of bombers like World War II, a single stealthy plane today, armed with precision guided munitions, could destroy a target. This fundamental change in aerial operations increased the options a commander had available in battle. Aircraft could attack several targets simultaneously with surprise. Precision guided munitions gave aircrews the ability to destroy or disable a target with a single mission instead of returning repeatedly to a target. Modern technology allowed air forces to avoid having to go to battle against the strength of most nation-states, their military. Attacks on several centers of gravity created more chaos and damage to an enemy than a single, direct clash between opposing militaries. Centers of gravity are targets that if destroyed or disabled have a significant impact on a nation's war making capability. Warden thought that technology freed campaign planners to consider more options to strike an enemy. A main concern involved not how many aircraft or systems could attack a target, but what type of target should military forces damage or destroy? Commanders needed to consider what effects that strikes on the targets would have on the enemy. They also had to question whether a particular sequence of attacks made sense.

John Warden was able to employ his ideas directly in a campaign plan without the concern of interpretation or potential misapplication of his ideas. Unlike some theorists, Warden was able to translate his ideas into actual combat planning for operations in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The use of his ideas and concepts for that situation is a prime example of how a military theory guided campaign planning and how to think about what targets to destroy or disable. Although geared toward a state-on-state confrontation, one might ponder how much of his theory may or may not be relevant to the rise of conflict with non-state actors or states that do not have discernable centers of gravity.

### **The Enemy as a System.**

Colonel John Warden believed that nation-states operate like biological organisms composed of discrete systems. In a perfect world these systems function in harmony and the organisms survive and flourish. However, certain systems controlled other systems and were thus significant, while other elements might appear to be vital, they actually were not important for sustaining the organism. Warden believed that, like a biological organism, a nation could be stunned. Military action could produce strategic paralysis. Strategic paralysis in Warden's terms would make an enemy incapable of taking any physical action to conduct operations.<sup>3</sup> The key was to think of the enemy as a related set of systems. By using this rationale, a strategist could distinguish the important systems and avoid wasting effort on less critical targets. How one can attack an enemy depends on the objectives being sought, the enemy's defensive capability and intensity of resistance, environmental conditions, and the effort and resources the attacker is willing to exert to attain his goals. But in every case, Warden believed a systematic approach would produce the most efficient use of airpower. For example, striking targets essential to a nation's leadership or command and control functions might negate completely or at least inhibit the ability of an enemy to defend its cities or other locations. If a country could disable or destroy particular centers of gravity in an enemy nation, then it could stop that enemy from directing its political, economic, informational, and military elements of power. Victory thus was assured. Successful attacks on a particular hierarchy of systems might lead to a target country's downfall.

Warden believed that organizations from nation-states to terrorist organizations have a common critical feature: some type of leadership. An individual or a command group with control capability provides guidance and direction to that organization. Without this system, the organization would flounder, and particular functions cease to exist or become severely limited. This leadership function has become a vital “center” of action against which an attacker should focus its military actions. Once an attacker neutralizes the “leadership” function, other systems become vulnerable for further assault or become neutralized. Ultimately, the goal of striking leadership targets was to destroy the psyche of the enemy’s top command. Determining the level of success against the enemy’s psyche is difficult, if not impossible. Warden reasoned that an attacker could only view the physical manifestations of the enemy that would help identify targets that would comply with this scheme.<sup>4</sup> A prioritized scheme of attacking leadership targets first, then others could provide a blueprint for a campaign plan.

Instead of attacking the “muscle” of the system, Warden advocated striking an enemy through a more indirect approach and creating a similar effect. A military force could clash directly in a conventional battle that could result in an attritional battle or a decisive encounter. However, if the leadership of the state either was disabled or unable to provide guidance to its forces, it might be possible to render those military assets useless much faster. Warden became an advocate for an indirect approach to warfare. This emphasis was developed while Warden was a graduate student at Texas Tech University where he developed an affinity to British military theorist, Basil H. Liddell Hart.<sup>5</sup>

Liddell Hart, a land power theorist, focused on an indirect approach to warfare. A veteran of World War I, Liddell Hart saw the horror of trench warfare and the folly of direct attacks against entrenched positions. Instead of concentrating on an enemy’s strengths, a nation’s land power should focus on a foe’s weakness and then exploit it. If a military force could find an unlikely avenue to approach and defeat a foe’s military, then a country might achieve its objectives with less casualties quicker. Liddell Hart contradicted post-World War I conventional wisdom concerning a direct approach to warfare. His ideas clashed with existing approaches like Carl von Clausewitz’s focus on trying to defeat an opposition’s military forces first. Supporters of the “false doctrine of war” from Napoleon and Clausewitz that saw enemy armies as the primary objective in war created the vast carnage from World War I.<sup>6</sup> Liddell Hart believed a nation’s will was subject to exploitation by attacking elements of the society where they were vulnerable. If the elements that created the country’s peace and security were threatened, then the state could collapse.

Warden, a career Air Force fighter pilot, predicted that airpower could play a pivotal role in conducting operations through an indirect approach. Given the nature of modern aircraft, support capabilities, and precision guided munitions, airpower could destroy or disable systems that range from leadership to economic capabilities. Unlike the World War I and II aircraft that required a mass of inaccurate munitions to destroy a command and control center or other target, technology had improved that allowed a single aircraft to deliver munitions quickly within a few feet of its intended target. Aircraft, if a country attained air superiority were free to attack several different types of targets simultaneously. This ability to strike many targets would confuse an enemy by not letting a foe determine the direction and focus of an attack. This approach allowed aircrews to conduct parallel warfare and a commander could strike fast over a wide range of objectives. Other forces might need to attack in a slower, more linear manner. For example, ground forces would have to defeat a similar military force first, before proceeding to other targets like the rival’s transportation networks or leadership. Aircraft could bypass the enemy’s ground forces and strike directly against the capital, industrial centers, or other targets.

Although airplanes could attack most nation-states independently, Warden was careful to note that airpower alone might not be sufficient or efficient enough to use exclusively to attack an enemy.<sup>7</sup> Warden is an airpower advocate and stresses the value of using that means to achieve military and national objectives. However, commanders can use airpower to support land and naval forces as part of a joint operation. Other military forces could also act as a supporting force for airpower. Whether

a commander uses airpower in a supported or supporting role, Warden believed that one essential element is the attainment of air superiority. Air superiority allows control of the skies that lets a military force attack from the skies while being protected from attack from the air by the enemy. An air force needs the ability to destroy enemy aircraft and support infrastructure, while protecting itself from similar enemy operations. Once a nation controls the air, it can conduct air and other operations without significant opposition.

Warden's theoretical blueprint for using airpower would combine nonphysical (or in his term "morale") and physical effects on warfare. Nonphysical factors include the impact of fog, friction, and other psychological affects on national leadership, military, and civilian populations. Physical targets included military forces and means to fight war. Warden believed that the relationship between the two was defined by the equation  $\text{Morale} \times \text{Physical} = \text{Outcome}$ . He realized that attacking morale was difficult. Modern technology could do much to reduce the impact of friction and fog through better communications and the availability of information; however, a military force could not completely negate friction, fog, or morale issues. A nation could not guarantee its ability to predict perfectly an enemy's intentions and actions. Unexpected enemy actions could also affect any outcome.

Physical damage to enemy forces or economic targets is easier to accomplish. If an attack could reduce the enemy significantly through physical damage, then morale considerations might be moot. This approach assumes that the nation can identify correctly the appropriate physical targets. Alternatively, "morale factors" could change the physical dimension of warfare. Leadership could exhort workers to produce more munitions or the populace to better support the war effort. Conversely, the attacks on physical targets could alter the morale of population and affect the ability of a rival to discern an attacker's intention; this may create the fog of war. Pressure on enemy leadership or the adversary's population, based on physical attacks, could affect morale and may change enemy behavior. For example, the relentless bombing of economic targets could cause significant disruptions in everyday lives of workers. If conditions were bad enough, prominent members of the population might confront the national leadership with demands to negotiate or submit to the enemy. Short of such radical steps, opinion leaders and the general public might begin to openly question national policy.

### **John Warden's Five Ring Model.**

John Warden selected five general areas or systems that he believed were key centers of gravity to exploit against any foe. This model provided a framework to analyze how to disable an enemy using strategic paralysis. The systems Warden picked were leadership, organic essentials, infrastructure, population, and fielded military forces. One could envision this model as a series of five concentric rings with the most important element in the center and progressively less important ones moving outward. A way to think about defeating an enemy was to attack the concentric circles from "inside out." That is, disable the most important center of gravity first and work outward to less important rings. (See Figure 1.)

Leadership was at the center of Warden's ring model. In his biological system analogy, leadership equated to the brain of a living organism. The most important leadership in a state was the government because it could ultimately decide to concede in a conflict to another state. Leadership, above all else, was the primary center of gravity in a state. If the national leadership was isolated, disabled, or destroyed, then the country could not function. Leadership requires an ability to gather, process, and act on information—all functions that an adversary might strike and affect the functioning of a nation-state. Direct attacks against enemy leaders, command and control structures, or headquarters could affect an opponent's ability to continue a conflict. The Operation LINEBACKER II bombing campaign in December 1972 impressed Warden. In his opinion, the campaign forced the North Vietnamese government to return to peace negotiations with the United States.<sup>8</sup> Hanoi had broken off diplomatic

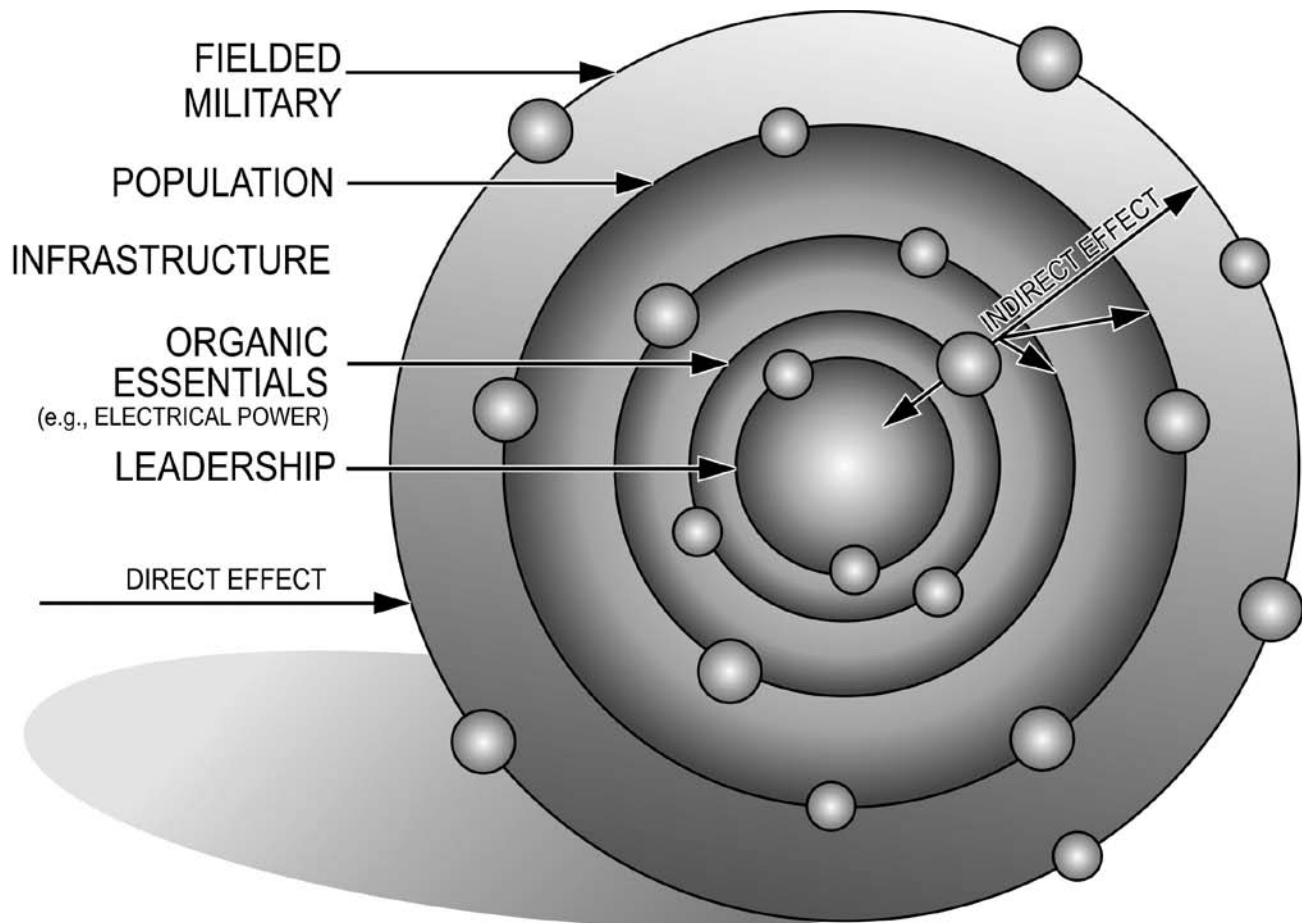


**Figure 1. John Warden's Five Ring Model.**

efforts in the Paris Peace talks until Operation LINEBACKER II. Air campaign planners directed these bombing attacks at Hanoi. Similarly, the combined Air Force and Navy attacks on Libya during Operation EL DORADO CANYON in April 1986 on Muammar al Qadhafi, who supported terrorist attacks on Americans, also impressed Warden. Neither attacks destroyed enemy leadership. However, actual destruction of leadership targets might not be possible since political leaders might be highly mobile, operate in areas that are not conducive to military action, or are too diverse to effectively damage. Instead of direct attacks on leadership, Warden thought attacking other targets might produce enough internal pressure to force the leadership to capitulate.<sup>9</sup> Indirect attacks or effects against the leadership might produce the desired effect on the enemy.

Leadership targets can include executive, legislative, judicial, and other functions. Campaign planners could target physical governmental facilities. Attacking the means these targets use to coordinate or control activities within the nation requires a Herculean effort. Additionally, striking leadership targets of nonstate actors that do not have established facilities or locations can create problems. Conversely, foes with a loose confederation of leadership, such as a cartel or combined revolutionary movements, who are highly mobile, may not lend themselves to a rapid attack.

Living organisms do not exist on their brains alone. An organism needs certain raw materials to live. Organic essentials provide elements to function, grow, and replace damaged tissues. Similarly, a state cannot exist on leadership alone. It needs raw materials that include sources of energy, food, and financial resources to maintain its existence. These raw materials provide energy to the entire state. Attacking such targets, especially food sources, needs careful consideration because of ethical issues and other strategic implications like the national and international opinion. However, industrial countries

require oil to fuel industry and transportation that, if effectively interdicted, could slow industrial and military operations to a crawl. The lack of energy can influence national leadership's behavior and limit severely actions by subordinate actors in the state. Warden believed that successive degradation of a state's organic essentials could lead to the collapse of the entire system; create conditions for a state that make it physically difficult or impossible for the state to continue a policy or fight; and force significant political and economic impacts due to damage to the ring.<sup>10</sup> He thought that destruction of key targets in the energy field, like petroleum refining stations or electric production facilities, could paralyze a modern state. Industrial production, transportation, economic activities, and people's lives would be altered suddenly with massive disruptions rippling throughout the state. Pressure on national leadership to respond or mitigate the damages could force policy changes.

Warden's next ring is infrastructure. Infrastructure is like the vessels, bones, and muscles in the human body that allows an organism to move and take action. Society's infrastructure includes, among other things, road and rail networks, airports, power grids, and factories. Potential infrastructure targets include a long list of activities—some of which are more valuable than others. Attacking rail lines may take months or years to destroy hundreds of thousands of miles of track. Destroying or disabling key infrastructure requires a careful analysis to find vital elements that, if struck, could disrupt operations. For example, instead of trying to bomb rail lines, a single bombing of a key bridge, tunnel, or rail junction might accomplish the same purpose. Commanders may need to consider the post-conflict impact of infrastructure attacks. Reconstruction of needed roads, rail lines, and other targets after the conflict may add time and cost to returning the nation to a normal state after the war. It might be wise to avoid destroying infrastructure you might need for your own purposes or will have to repair after the conflict.

The fourth ring is the population. Attacking the population does not focus solely on bombing civilians, but could also include using psychological warfare or other activities to reduce a populace's morale. Like an organism composed of millions of cells that can survive the loss of many of those cells, a nation can endure some loss of population. However, economic and military support might falter under air attack if the public perceives its losses are too high. The effect of bombing population is extremely unpredictable. Examples of increased morale under bombardment are numerous. Also, if organic essentials are limited, then a reduction in unessential parts of the population may actually improve the state's ability to operate by relieving pressure on limited resources.

The last ring comprises fielded military forces. Fielded military forces represent the "fighting mechanism" that protects the state from attack. Warden makes an organic analogy to leukocytes or white blood cells that ward off viruses.<sup>11</sup> If states lived in perpetual peace they would not require a protective force like a military or even police. Although fielded military forces are a formidable foe, they depend heavily on the other rings for support. Instead of directly attacking this ring, strikes on the supporting rings could sufficiently weaken these forces to the point that they were incapable of resistance. Fighting through the fielded military forces—that is, making a direct military on military effort—could take much time and cause many casualties before breaking through to the other more important rings. Unhampered, the enemy leadership could operate normally and replenish fielded military forces with which to continue the fight.

Commanders should take a systems approach to warfare. Instead of destroying an entire foe, attacks on key system components could render a strategic effect. This type of approach forces one to consider how to derive a specific end—paralysis—using specific ways—attacks on subsystems or rings. John Warden's theory of identifying and creating a priority of subsystems allowed strategic planners the ability to attack in a specific order. However, Warden also stressed that a combination of varying size and scope of attacks could create certain vulnerabilities to the rings themselves. For example, attacking infrastructure, like transportation networks, could alter the ability of fielded military forces to move and

engage against another military force. Likewise, striking industrial targets that manufacture weapons or munitions could also delay or affect the fielded military forces. Thus, selecting the correct targets and assessing the probable effect of their destruction on the system becomes a prime concern.

Many of Warden's ideas had surfaced earlier. Early airpower theories and concepts in the United States were developed as a part of the Air Corps Tactical School (ACTS) at Maxwell Field in Alabama. ACTS writers had advocated the use of precision bombing to strike economic targets to undermine the ability of a nation to sustain itself in war. Writing during the interwar period, the ACTS faculty was influenced by the brutality of trench warfare and the destruction during World War I. Perhaps by using strategic bombers that could hit and destroy specific targets, the nation could avoid another replay of a World War I type of conflict. Although ACTS writers also contended with issues concerning service independence and the tactical use of airpower, the long-range, heavy bomber rose to prominence as a means to influence events in a strategic manner. Army Air Corps bombers would attack selectively targets like transportation, steel plants, ball-bearing manufacture, food sources, energy supplies, and especially electrical production facilities.<sup>12</sup>

ACTS concepts focused on modern states. As a nation became more industrialized it generated complex economic interactions and increased degrees of specialization. Thus, modern nations became more susceptible to disruption by attacks on key nodes. A state could disrupt a foe more quickly, efficiently, and effectively through the air than by trying to conquer its fielded forces. Unfortunately, "precision" attack had not come of age. Low altitude bombing risked the aircraft and crews to air defenses. High altitude bombing forced crews to deliver their ordnance with great inaccuracy that would create collateral damage and cause massive casualties, a result ACTS faculty tried to avoid. Additionally, Air Corps pilots needed current target information. Given the lack of intelligence capabilities during the period, finding exact locations, functions, interrelationships, and impacts of destroyed targets may have overwhelmed the Army Air Corps' ability to accomplish actions ACTS had advocated. Technology was not available to either find the proper targets or to deliver munitions with "precision." However, today's aircrews have access to a host of precision guided munitions, navigational systems, weather reports, intelligence sources for targeting and bomb damage assessment, and other capabilities beyond the wildest imagination of the ACTS faculty.

Warden shared some of the ideas from the ACTS faculty. A common theme was the attack on targets using an indirect approach. Warden and ACTS concentrated on subduing an enemy through a particular center of gravity. Striking economic targets was the primary focus of the ACTS concepts. Warden used a series of targets to affect the will of national leadership. The ACTS approach of assaulting enemy targets by strategic bombardment alone created doubt in many minds throughout the 1930's and into World War II. Warden advocated the use of airpower too, but also recognized the value of other military instruments.

### **Airpower's Value.**

To Warden, airpower offered many characteristics that could hasten the downfall of an adversary, especially if it were susceptible to his five ring model. Airpower offered a number of characteristics that could serve a nation. Aircraft, by their very nature, could provide a very fast, long-range and flexible tool for commanders.<sup>13</sup> Given these characteristics, airpower can conduct parallel attacks against an enemy that can hit simultaneously segments of all five rings. These multiple strikes can cause all types of second and third order effects and create pressures between rings. The leadership ring is especially susceptible to such pressures.

Airpower allows a nation to conduct parallel attacks since airpower transcends geography. Aircraft simply can fly over enemy fielded forces and avoid marching through an enemy. Like other military forces, airpower can mass against particular targets and is flexible enough to change targeting within



minutes. The advent of stealth aircraft, improved battle management systems, precision guided munitions, instant information, and the growing capacity to integrate and use a combination of joint forces in combat operations simply enhanced this capability. Attacking in a parallel manner allows a nation to place demands on the enemy that can overwhelm an enemy's defenses. These missions create confusion and doubt for the enemy's leadership. Military force, airpower especially, can operate on several levels: strategic, operational, or tactical. Although these attacks could deal a direct blow against a foe, Warden recommended concentrated effort aimed squarely at a specific end – coercing the leadership to change its behavior.

For Warden, destruction of key targets had secondary importance to the effects such destruction would have on the adversary's leadership. Since the United States can achieve almost unfettered air superiority and can deliver munitions accurately, the use of airpower seemed logical. Countries around the globe did not have the capacity to challenge the U.S. ability to conduct air and space operations. Although Warden developed many of his ideas while the Soviet Union was a viable nation, his ideas about airpower may have taken on more credence after 1991 when his concepts were tested in Operation DESERT STORM. In some respects, the focus on measuring the impact on a function instead of the physical destruction of a target forced a change in the way commanders viewed combat operations.

Effects-based operations became a key concern. Assessing particular targets for their impact on a larger scheme is not new. During the Combined Bomber Offensive in World War II, AAF pilots attacked ball-bearing plants to stop the manufacture of German industrial and military products. American officers believed that ball-bearings were a crucial center of gravity in German industrial production. Reducing ball-bearing production would severely affect engine production that could limit aircraft and tank inventories. Unfortunately, German industrial production in some cases did not cease but actually increased. For example, BMW 801 aero-engines manufacture jumped from 5,540 motors in 1943 to 7,395 units in 1944.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps due to a shift to full mobilization or use of methods to ameliorate ball-bearing shortages through alternative production or substitution, the predicted outcome did not occur, despite its apparent plausibility. Still, strategic bombardment did disrupt the German economy and reduce production. By January 1945, German Ministry of Armaments officials claimed that strategic bombardment reduced aircraft production by 31 percent, tanks by 35 percent, and trucks a further 42 percent.<sup>15</sup> The Allies attacked targets such as oil, transportation nets, and other activities, but the selection of targets was difficult. Faulty intelligence, limited understanding of the German economy, and the changing nature of that economy made the feasibility of successful economic warfare questionable.<sup>16</sup> Although impressive in size and scope, the AAF bombing attacks could not stop German economic activities. The German juggernaut continued until its dying days of May 1945.

What has changed since World War II is vast improvements in technology that allow one to strike and make pre- and post-attack assessments against targets in a more effective and efficient manner than in the past. Could advances in aviation and other support systems today identify, find, and destroy targets that could cripple decisively an economy or national leadership? The dream of ending the warmaking capability of an enemy, much like the hopes of AAF officers during the Combined Bomber Offensive during World War II, might come to fruition with these advances. Effects based operations require a commander to predict accurately the impact of the destruction of specific targets and their eventual influence on an adversary. Economic activities today are even more complex than those in World War II. Suppose a country wanted to disable an economy. What targets should the nation bomb? With complexity and increased specialization from globalization, this task actually might be easier today than in the past. Many nations today require outside resources and components to take advantage of global markets and comparative advantages in prices, wages, and capital. Weakening key transportation nodes, energy sources, or assembly plants that focus on a few industries might shock a nation's economy. Especially in countries that have found their niche in the world economy due to globalization, John Warden's concepts might still work. However, issues still abound. Does

the nation have alternative sources of products and services that can substitute for the target? Due to specialization of industrial products, would attacks on the economy create hardship on allies who trade with or produce products within the targeted areas? What amount of collateral damage will result from these actions? Suppose a country wanted to disable an economy, what targets should the nation bomb? Reducing electricity could force a slowdown in industrial production, but this could affect hospitals and other services that cause innocent lives to be lost. What if the country has few, if any, visible targets, like non-state actors?

Warden's theory assumes that airpower has almost unlimited access to attack enemy targets. To gain maximum efficiency and effectiveness, a nation must have the ability to gain air superiority. Warden takes great pains to ensure readers understand that air superiority is a "necessity" that allows air forces to conduct operations and allows them to conduct attacks on the centers of gravity that he believes would cripple a foe.<sup>17</sup> Given this assumption, Warden proceeds with his theory, but what if the nation cannot achieve air superiority. That condition may not be a problem for the United States in the near future, but it might not be the case for other states or in a particular region. Additionally, much of Warden's theory assumes a fairly static enemy. A rival can react and might modify its behavior to compensate for attacks on the ring structure. For example, instead of maintaining a strict chain of command leadership, what if a terrorist organization or state fragments its leadership, or it dissolves into a loose confederation of leaders? Disabling one specific leadership center of gravity may not halt significant operations in the terrorist cell or a particular country.

Timing is also a concern. Warden assumed that a country's air force could strike the enemy at the onset of any hostilities.<sup>18</sup> Attacking an enemy at the very beginning of a conflict could produce significant shock value to an adversary. A tremendous level of parallel attacks could cause the foe's leadership to snap. Contrast this situation with one where an air force has a gradual build-up of attacks, as it shifts forces or tries to wrest air superiority from an enemy. A foe could attempt to disperse its economic centers of production (admittedly difficult), build redundant capabilities, or find alternative sources of production. Targeting information, like the flow of activities, could change and cause the air force to bomb unnecessary or counterproductive targets.

Warden's ideas were tested in 1990-91. During Operation DESERT STORM, the United States executed a strategic air campaign plan that reflected much of Warden's theory. The uncontested use of American airpower resulted in an asymmetric advantage over the Iraqi forces that pit U.S. and coalition strength against Iraqi weakness. Iraq could not prevent the U.S.-led coalition from gaining air superiority. Strategic bombers, land-based tactical aircraft, cruise missiles, naval aviation, and multinational partners contributed to a massive attack on Iraq.

## **Planning an Air Campaign.**

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, John Warden served in the Pentagon in the Air Staff's directorate of plans where he was deputy director for warfighting concepts. This position allowed him to experiment with many creative concepts of airpower employment. During the opening days of the August 1990 during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, General Norman H. Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) initiated planning activities that ranged from stopping a possible invasion of Saudi Arabia to immediately pushing Iraqi forces back into their own country. One area that Schwarzkopf found lacking in CENTCOM was the ability to conduct a strategic air campaign.<sup>19</sup> Schwarzkopf sought out the Air Staff. His request allowed Warden to work on a strategic air campaign against Saddam Hussein's government. The Five Ring model would be subjected to the test of action.

Warden proposed a number of approaches within the Air Staff. His final concept was presented as an Iraqi air campaign entitled Operation INSTANT THUNDER. The intent of INSTANT THUNDER was to conduct a very short, 6-day, intensive bombardment that would "incapacitate" the Iraqi leadership

and destroy vital Iraqi military capability. It would not touch “basic” infrastructure that would create undue civilian hardship.<sup>20</sup> Warden cautioned that this action was not designed to be a long-term plan that would turn into an attritional campaign. INSTANT THUNDER would last days, instead of the years of air operations by the Navy and Air Force over North Vietnam. The campaign plan seemed like a great opportunity to demonstrate his ideas. A rapid campaign could allow American air forces to isolate Hussein and attack systematically the centers of gravity of Iraq.

The five ring model capitalized on the strength of American airpower. The United States could launch such an attack immediately as ground forces were building up in Saudi Arabia. If Schwarzkopf conducted the campaign as written, Warden predicted it would minimize U.S. and allied losses and could reduce Iraqi civilian casualties and collateral damage. This campaign, more importantly, could eliminate Iraqi military capability for an extended period.

Warden developed a set of specific targets that closely resembled his model. The first targets were designed to gain air superiority by destroying air defenses, airfields, and the Iraqi air force. After the coalition achieved air superiority, its air forces would concentrate on leadership, command and control, key internal production and distribution centers, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) production and storage facilities, and offensive air and ballistic missile capability. Warden did not include Iraqi fielded land power in the INSTANT THUNDER proposal. Instead, Warden proposed to incapacitate the Hussein regime and tie up its telecommunications, civil and military, in an effort to reduce national leadership effectiveness. The organic essentials ring had several potential targets to include electricity, petroleum and oil distribution and storage for domestic Iraqi use. Warden did not want to destroy the export capacity or damage Iraq’s long-term economic health. Aircraft would attack infrastructure targets that involved railroads and some bridges. Air forces also would use psychological warfare against the Iraqi population, foreign workers, and any forces in Kuwait to reduce Saddam Hussein and his Ba’ath Party’s influence. The elements of the last ring, fielded military forces, which Warden addressed, were strategic air defenses and delivery systems like bombers and ballistic missiles that could use WMD or conduct strategic operations. The attacks would occur in parallel across all five rings from strategic air defenses to Saddam Hussein’s palaces.

The key center of gravity was Saddam Hussein’s ability to lead and control his nation.<sup>21</sup> Each target attacked by Coalition air forces would support this aim. The destruction of telecommunications and command and control capabilities would disrupt any connection between Hussein, his people, and Iraqi military forces. Striking at Iraqi strategic delivery capability would reduce any regional threat posed by Iraq at the time and into the future. Hussein had demonstrated his ability to use SCUD and modified ballistic missiles to hit targets in Tehran in the War of the Cities during his conflict with Iran in the 1980s. Hussein could use the same systems to attack south to Saudi Arabia or west to Israel. Eliminating Iraqi strategic air defenses would open Iraq to continual attacks and reduce a large threat to American air crews. A massive assault on electrical grids would cripple any industrial production and allow chaos to reign among the population. The lack of refined petroleum products could hamper transportation and paralyze civilian and military movements. These targets would underscore Hussein’s weaknesses to his people and the world.

CENTCOM campaign planners modified Warden’s original 6-day INSTANT THUNDER campaign plan. Warden had used the idea of a 6-day campaign as a device to sell the concept to Schwarzkopf.<sup>22</sup> When Warden was asked to develop a campaign plan, the Iraqis had just invaded Kuwait in August 1990. The original plan was an option to strike back at Baghdad. Fortunately, the United States and other powers had sufficient time to conduct an unmolested build-up of air, land, and maritime forces to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The Coalition air forces did conduct a strategic air campaign, but planners dismissed the belief that airpower alone could defeat Iraq. Top military leadership and CENTCOM planners did not believe Warden’s idea that a weeklong campaign that concentrated against 84 strategic level targets was credible. Instead, the Coalition conducted a four-phase campaign after attaining air

superiority, which included a longer strategic air campaign plan, followed by operations against Iraqi air defenses in Kuwait. The third phase featured air support of ground forces to attrite Iraqi forces and isolate enemy forces in Kuwait. The last phase used air and ground forces to push all Iraqi forces out of occupied Kuwait. The first two phases lasted 39 days. The Iraqi government did not capitulate nor did the will of the people erode significantly enough to affect Hussein.

John Warden's theories had a major impact on Operation DESERT STORM and the air campaign. Warden's ideas on precision guided munitions, stealth, parallel attack, and other airpower features did create some strategic paralysis among the Iraqi government. Although Hussein's government did not collapse, it was affected significantly during the strategic bombardment campaign. For example, air strikes disabled communications. In a centrally controlled state like Iraq, unimpeded communications was vital if Hussein expected to control every action in the country. Destruction and disruption of the center "ring" aided the Coalition efforts to reduce Baghdad's military capability and effectiveness. The destruction of key national leadership, command and control, communications, industrial sites, and other sites helped support Warden's ideas. However, Iraq was a nation-state that had these types of targets, and American air superiority really was not challenged. In the future, enemy nations or nonstate actors may not present as lucrative a target to air forces as Iraq did in 1991.

### **John Warden's Impact.**

John Warden focused his ideas on getting commanders to consider attacking the enemy by measuring the impact on those strikes on the enemy's ability to wage war. His five ring model gave campaign planners the ability to focus on a framework to paralyze a foe. Warden linked his ring attack to a plausible scheme against a modern nation-state. The advent of advanced munitions and delivery systems created conditions where these types of attacks might achieve what earlier air power theorist could only dream about.

Warden's ideas led to greater reflection among airpower advocates not only on the planning and actual attack on targets, but also on the more complex factor of the effect of an attack on the enemy. Commanders needed to consider not only the primary, but secondary and tertiary effects on the destruction or temporary disruption of these targets. Commanders through the ages have planned campaigns to meet objectives that require a study of the effects and assessment of target destruction. The advent of greater precision, speed, and lethality has allowed unprecedented opportunities to strike targets that can cripple a nation. Calls to limit damage and reduce human suffering have forced commanders to operate under increased constraints as they seek ways to accomplish their aims. Careful consideration of targets becomes a prime concern. Additionally, the ability to conduct parallel attacks forces commanders to consider how to paralyze a foe arrayed as a network or a complex of indistinct relationships. All these considerations need detailed study as commanders plan operations.

In the future, can national and military leadership gather and analyze sufficient information to implement Warden's concepts on the battlefield? Adaptive foes, lack of understanding about complex economic relationships, and other factors can limit the ability of militaries to conduct set-piece operations. Adversaries that gather information and disseminate it quickly via the Internet or cell phones can thwart efforts to conduct parallel attack schemes even if the strikes occur almost simultaneously and are separated by vast distances. Technologies that enable air and space operations to make John Warden's ideas come true also are available for an enemy to exploit as he develops countermeasures. Similarly, foes that do not operate or react like a nation-state or mirror how this country might respond could make Warden's theories difficult to implement. Still, the focus on what factors make an enemy operate as a system is a valuable way to think about an adversary. Military commanders might not overlook targets or weaknesses that they could now exploit. Warden helped integrate technology and strategic concepts that supported a major change in how nations use airpower in war.

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## CHAPTER 27

### NETWORK-CENTRIC WARFARE: JUST ABOUT TECHNOLOGY?

Jeffrey L. Groh

... the general unreliability of all information presents a special problem in war: All action takes place, so to speak, in a kind of twilight, which like fog or moonlight, often tends to make things seem grotesque and larger than they really are.

Whatever is hidden from full view in this feeble light has to be guessed at by talent, or simply left to chance. So once again for lack of objective knowledge one has to trust to talent or to luck.

Clausewitz<sup>1</sup>

What is all this fuss about network-centric organizations? Is Network-Centric Warfare an “emerging theory of war” or just about technology? Scholars, politicians, appointed government officials and warfighters are lining up to take sides on the utility of information sharing and networking U.S. military forces.<sup>2</sup> The business community continues to grapple with knowledge management, business process management, information technology (IT), and enterprise networking to gain a competitive advantage in the market place.<sup>3</sup> There is a plethora of literature documenting how IT is enabling innovation in business as well as the military.<sup>4</sup> It is time to continue the dialogue and raise the awareness of the benefits of network-centric operations as an enabler to gain a competitive advantage over current and potential adversaries in the 21st century. If we agree that Clausewitz is correct about the unreliability of battlefield information, could Network-Centric Warfare concepts and capabilities improve this situation? The Department of Defense (DoD) has decided to pursue an aggressive policy to develop network centric warfare (NCW) capabilities as a “source of warfighting advantage.”

The author argues that DoD is on the right track to pursue advanced integrated information technology to enable warfighting in the future. He does not argue that information systems and technology are the panacea to solve all the complex issues associated with warfare in the 21st century. This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the fundamental concept of network-centric warfare and the current DoD policy for networking the force. Then, the author will investigate the potential of information and knowledge sharing on the battlefield to provide a competitive advantage against potential adversaries. There are tactical, operational, and strategic implications to sharing information and networking the force within the battle space. This chapter would not be complete without addressing a few of the most prevalent arguments by those who caution against relying on information technology and networking. The final section of the chapter will outline a few recommendations to proceed with the implementation of network-centric warfare.

#### **Network Centric Warfare (NCW): Developing a Concept.**

It should not be a secret that the world is squarely in the age of information. One only needs to view the nightly news, scan the newspapers, or pick up the latest technology books and trade journals to understand the magnitude of corporate investments in information systems. “Worldwide, businesses spend nearly \$1 trillion a year on IT gear, software, and services – more than \$2 trillion if telecommunications services are included.”<sup>5</sup> The enormity of the spending by corporations around the world on new ways to capture, store, and share information inside and outside of organizations continues to increase since the turn of the century. DoD is well aware of the potential benefits of sharing information and knowledge to generate competitive advantage.

There is a significant body of literature that addresses the benefit of sharing information on the battlefield to develop a common operating picture. It is not possible to conduct an exhaustive review of the literature related to NCW in this chapter. However, it is important to review some of the seminal works that establish the fundamental underpinnings of this emerging and dynamic concept. The Office of Force Transformation, Office of Secretary of Defense, as well as the DoD Command and Control Research Program, are two of the conceptual leaders developing the theory of Network-Centric Warfare. The latest publication from the Office of Force Transformation, *Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare*, released in January 2005, establishes the current thinking on NCW by providing “answers to some of the fundamental questions regarding NCW as emerging theory of war in the information age.”<sup>6</sup>

There is a significant body of knowledge published by the Command and Control Research Program that provides the theoretical development of the concepts of Network-Centric Warfare for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.<sup>7</sup> One should begin the journey to examine the potential of NCW by reading the book authored by Dr. David Alberts, Mr. John Garstka, and Mr. Fred Stein titled, *Network Centric Warfare: Developing and Leveraging Information Superiority*.<sup>8</sup> A careful reading of the book will explain the purpose and concept of NCW, how NCW has the potential to leverage information age technologies, and a methodology to implement the concept over time.<sup>9</sup> The authors proposed this early concept of NCW as a point of departure:

NCW is about human and organizational behavior. NCW is based on adopting a new way of thinking – network-centric thinking – and applying it to military operations. NCW focuses on the combat power that can be generated from the effective linking or networking of the warfighting enterprise. It is characterized by the ability of geographically dispersed forces (consisting of entities) to create a high level of shared battlespace awareness that can be exploited via self-synchronization and other network-centric operations to achieve commanders’ intent.<sup>10</sup>

The publications in 1998 set the stage for the intellectual debate on the potential of NCW as a new way to examine the conduct of war in the 21st century with networked forces and enhanced situational awareness.

NCW is about warfighting in the 21st century. It is about warfare in the information age. There are significant new information technologies that enable commanders to know more about the enemy, plan faster, make decisions faster, and synchronize sensors and shooters to create desired effects on the battlefield. David Alberts, in *Information Age Transformation*, conducts a thorough analysis of what warfare will entail in the 21st century; he postulates the challenges with warfare in the information domain. “As the global society enters the information age, military operations are inevitably impacted and transformed. Satellite communications, video teleconferencing, battlefield facsimile machines, digital communications systems, personal computers, the Global Positioning System, and dozens of other transforming tools already are commonplace.”<sup>11</sup> The question then becomes how to transform a military force with the appropriate capabilities to operate in this new environment.

The author proposes that the following NCW tenets should guide the adoption of information technologies and transformation:

- A robustly networked force improves information sharing.
- Information sharing and collaboration enhance the quality of information and shared awareness.
- Shared situational awareness enables self-synchronization.
- These, in turn, dramatically increase mission effectiveness.<sup>12</sup>

Alberts presents these tenets espousing the potential benefits of information sharing, networking, and enhanced situational awareness act as an organizing function to transform the force in the information

age. These tenets provide a series of research questions to analyze case studies to investigate the potential benefits of a networked force.<sup>13</sup>

Alberts and Hayes continued to expand the idea of the inherent benefits of sharing information in a networked environment in their next book titled, *Power to the Edge: Command Control in the Information Age*. The book argues that current command and control relationships, organizations, and systems are just not up to the task of executing warfare in the information age.<sup>14</sup> It is critical to push essential decisionmaking information out to the “edges” of the organization. “*Power to the Edge* is about changing the way individuals, organizations, and systems relate to one another and work. ‘Power to the Edge’ involves the empowerment of individuals at the edge of an organization (where the organization interacts with its operating environment to have an impact or effect on that environment) or, in the case of systems, edge devices.”<sup>15</sup> The ubiquitous nature of IT makes the vision of achieving “Power to the Edge” possible. The transition from strictly hierarchical organizational structures is already underway. The Army’s restructuring to smaller more lethal Brigade Combat Teams and *Stryker* Brigades takes advantage of more powerful networks to push information and thus greater situational awareness out to the edges of organizations.

The power of the network has provided new and innovative approaches to command and control organizations. One needs only to review the legendary actions of small Special Forces Teams on horseback during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) to see the power of interdependent edge organizations networked to accomplish desired effects on the battlefield.<sup>16</sup> Small Special Forces Teams operating with satellite communications equipment (data and voice) synchronized joint fires to attack targets. Special Forces Teams adroitly coordinated and laser designated targets for Joint Direct Attack Munitions from F-14, F-15E, B-1, and B-2 airframes during OEF with devastating results and accuracy.<sup>17</sup> The relationship between sensors (Special Operating Forces, *Predator*, and *Global Hawk*) and shooters (AC 130, B-1, armed *Predators*, numerous USAF fighter assets) linked through a network to command and control demonstrates the potential benefits of the concept. This is but one example of the future potential of a networked force that pushes critical information to those that need it when they need to accomplish tasks in the battlespace. The U.S. military is in the early stages of understanding the full potential of network-centric warfare and sharing knowledge out to the edges of an organization, i.e., *Power to the Edge* becoming a reality.

This brief NCW literature review would not be complete without mentioning the Network Centric Operations Conceptual Framework Version 2.0. There are numerous critics of NCW calling for academic rigor to be applied to this emerging concept. There is a need to develop a framework to produce metrics that can empirically measure the efficiency and effectiveness of NCW. It is important to validate where to spend finite defense dollars to achieve the greatest possible return on investment.

As a consequence, OFT [the Office of Force Transformation] and OASD-NII [Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Networks & Information Integration] began collaborating on an effort to develop metrics to test hypotheses in the NCW value chain. The primary objective was to develop a rich and comprehensive set of NCW-related metrics that could be used in experimentation and other research endeavors to gather evidence. This evidence then could be used in experimentation and other research endeavors across the DOTML-PF [doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel and facilities] spectrum. This effort resulted in the development of a Conceptual Framework for Network Centric Operations and a variety of other NCO-related research, outreach and publications.<sup>18</sup>

This document begins to address a more rigorous approach to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of NCW. This framework may provide measures of effectiveness and performance to truly measure the benefits of NCW in the future.

The Network Centric Operations Conceptual Framework (NCO-CF) proposes a series of concept definitions, attributes and metrics to measure numerous elements of NCW based on the NCO-CF:



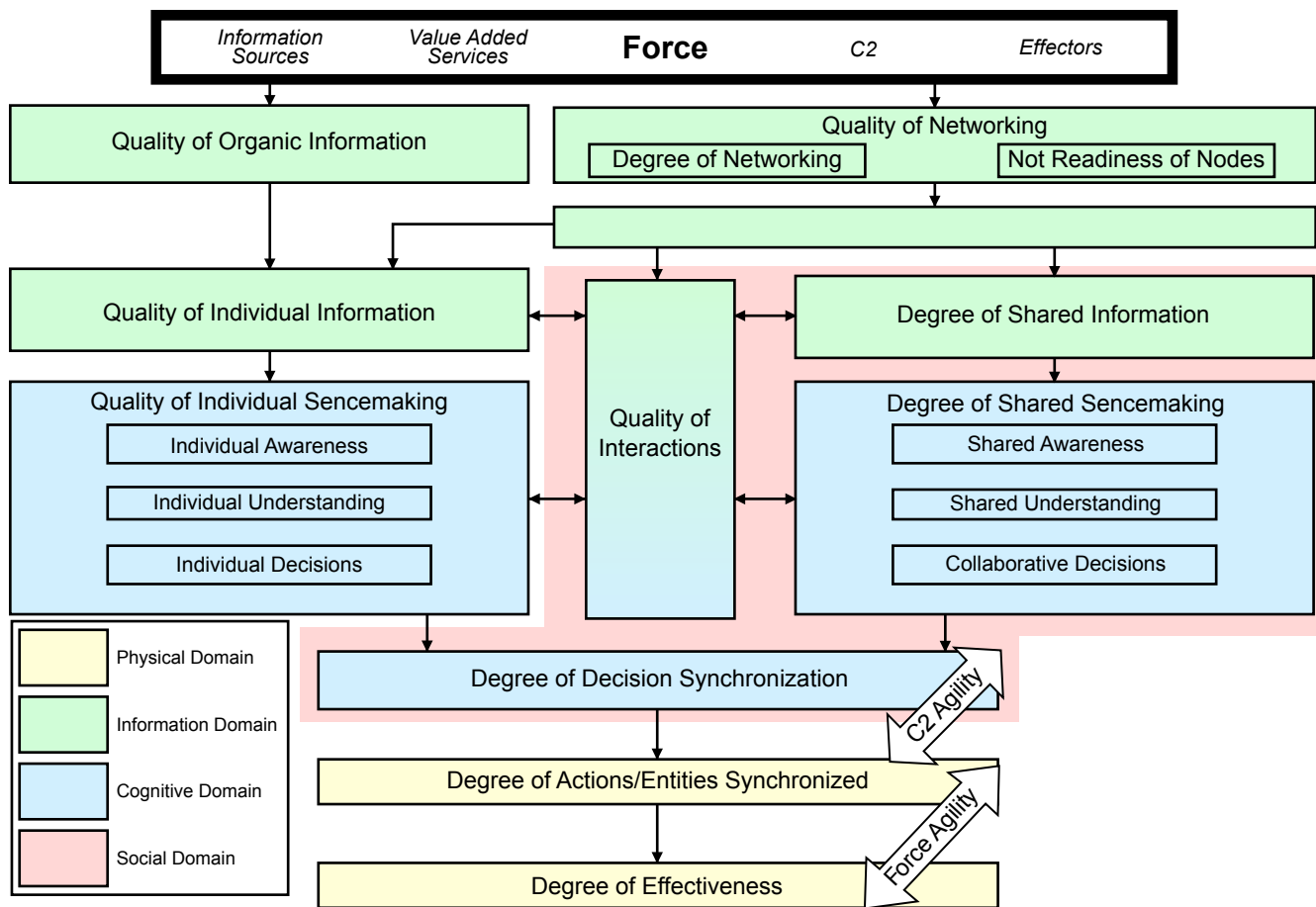


**Figure 1. The Network Centric Operations Conceptual Framework.<sup>19</sup>**

The NCO-CF defines each concept and attribute and recommends a quantifiable metric for each. The draft schema presented in the NCO-CF is complex and untested. It is however, a step in the right direction. This framework goes well beyond the general assertions of efficiency and effectiveness outlined in the NCW Tenets. The NCO-CF “provides basis for quantitative exploration and/or assessment of NCW hypotheses; and investment strategies and other DOTML-PF related issues.”<sup>20</sup>

It will take a substantial effort to validate the attributes and metrics proposed in the NCO-CF. The metrics for many of the attributes are based on a Likert scale, i.e., a scale of 1-5. There is a degree of subjectivity involved with assigning a value to the attribute. How does one truly measure quality, consistency, currency, precision, completeness, accuracy, relevance and timeliness of information? These attributes begin to investigate, experiment, and test metrics. However, the next step must be to gather a committee of experts to further define the attributes and metrics based on more objective criteria. Another approach is to begin gathering data using the proposed attributes and metrics to determine the validity of the framework. This work already has begun with the publication of the *Network-Centric Operations Case Study: the Stryker Brigade Combat Team*.<sup>21</sup> This report along with the NCW Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) case, *A Network-Centric Operations Case Study: US/UK Coalition Combat Operations during Operation Iraqi Freedom*,<sup>22</sup> points out the difficulties of applying the attributes and metrics of the NCO-CF in an empirical study.

The latest publication to explain the potential of NCW and NCO as an emerging theory war is the Office of Force Transformation (OFT) publication, *The Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare*. This publication by the OFT touts NCW as an “emerging theory of warfare in the information age.”<sup>23</sup> The authors bring the numerous concepts associated with NCW, outlined in this compressed literature

review, into a concise framework. The purpose of the framework is to begin to work the fundamental hypothesis of Network-Centric Warfare. "The working hypothesis of network-centric warfare (NCW) as an emerging theory of war, simply stated, is that the behavior of forces, i.e., their choices of organization relationships and processes, when in the networked condition, will outperform forces that are not."<sup>24</sup> It is important to review this work in order to have a meaningful dialogue about the potential of Network-Centric Warfare as an emerging theory of warfare.

The hypothesis stated above focuses on several critical variables prior to discussing the issue of a "networked force." Many critics of NCW focus mainly on the technology aspect of NCW.<sup>25</sup> However, NCW is much more than the information technology. First, NCW entails examining organizational relationships and processes. Then, highly effective and efficient organizations are networked to leverage shared knowledge and information in the battlespace. A balanced and holistic assessment of NCW is called for to determine the potential of this concept on the modern battlefield.

The human behavior variable remains a crucial aspect of NCW. "The implementation of NCW is first and foremost about human behavior as opposed to information technology. While 'network' is a noun, 'to network' is a verb. Thus, when we examine the degree to which a particular military organization, or the Department as a whole, is exploiting the power of NCW, our focus should be on human behavior in the networked environment."<sup>26</sup> This publication goes into considerable detail outlining the numerous benefits of networking humans to share information and knowledge. NCW is all about connecting individuals across the battlespace to leverage information age technologies to reduce the "fog and friction of war." There is no attempt to imply that all of the fog and friction of war can be eliminated through networking forces. "This will not be the case. Rather, the issue is how one creates and exploits an information advantage within the context of the fog and friction of war."<sup>27</sup> However, there is a case to be examined that linking warfighters together on the battlefield may increase speed of command and synchronize dispersed forces to more efficiently and effectively accomplish objectives. Therefore, although the reliance on technology is apparent when discussing the potential of NCW, it is important to examine the literature as it relates to the human dimension of the concept.

The OFT publication, *Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare*, goes further to outline the importance of human behavior in NCW by investigating the tenets of NCW. Figure 2 demonstrates the important relationship between the information domain, the cognitive and social domains, and the physical domains. The essence of the concept can be realized by understanding these relationships. The information domain is where data, information, and knowledge are created, manipulated and shared among warfighters. The cognitive domain is where the data, information, and knowledge are manipulated in the mind of the warfighter. The all important social domain is where the interaction between humans occurs. "This is also the domain of culture, the set of values, aptitudes, and beliefs held and conveyed by leaders to the society, whether military or civil."<sup>28</sup> An understanding of the relationship between the information, cognitive and social domains begins to address the core principles of NCW as they relate to the physical domain, i.e., mission accomplishment.

The human behavior aspect of this schema is central to understanding NCW as a "source of Warfighting advantage." The networked force enables information sharing, shared awareness, and self synchronization within the information domain. The real warfighting and decisionmaking functions remain in the cognitive and social domains. Is there any evidence that units are actually operating within this framework?

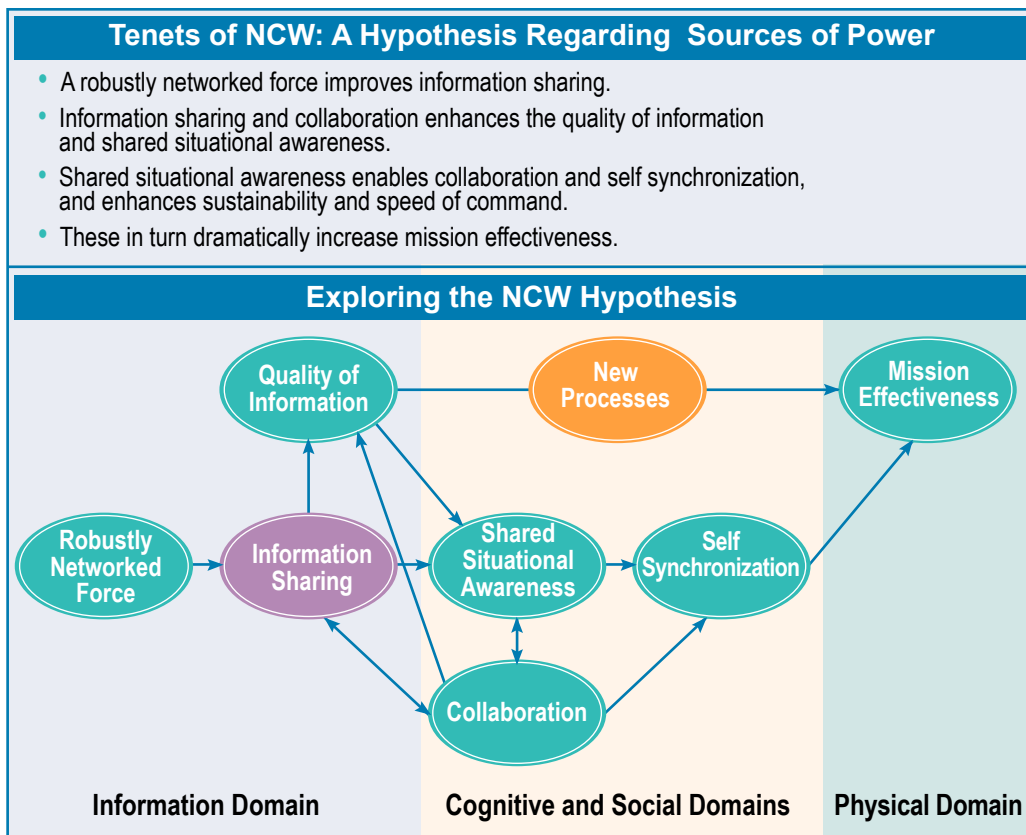


**Figure 2. Tenets of NCW and the Value.**

The OFT has set out to document that units already are operating in a network centric operational framework. OFT is developing seven NCO case studies that apply the NCO-CF, gather data, and analyze evidence. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review all seven case studies. However, the results of Ground Operations (Stryker Bridge Combat Team) will illustrate the potential benefits of NCW. The case study explored the hypothesis that “the NCO capabilities of the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) would enable information and decision superiority and increase force effectiveness.”<sup>29</sup> The conditions for the test were an operational environment (Small Scale Contingency) at the Joint Readiness and Training Center (JRTC) conducted in May 2003. The baseline for this study was to compare the SBCT against a nondigitized light infantry brigade. The study measured the quality of effectiveness of command and control based on the degree of situational awareness, speed of command, quality of decisions, and force self-synchronization.<sup>30</sup>

The results of the study are impressive. It is important to note that 75 percent of the SBCT had networked battle command systems. A few of the most interesting findings are the following:

- Friendly vs. enemy casualty ratio decreased from a normal JRTC rotation with a light infantry brigade from 10:1 to 1:1;
- Acceleration of speed of command from 24 to three hours in engagements; and,
- Increase in individual/shared information quality from 10 percent to 80 percent.<sup>31</sup>

The results only begin to scratch the surface of potential benefits of fully networked forces. One can argue the rigor, conditions, standards, and data gathering methods for this study. However, these results should stimulate additional rigorous experiments to validate the return on investment of maneuvering a networked force. The Army has yet to determine the actual benefits and effectiveness of

the networked SBCTs serving in OIF. It will be interesting to compare the results from this JRTC study, quantitative and qualitative, to the data collected in Iraq in ongoing counterinsurgency operations. It should then be possible to acquire a better understanding of the effectiveness of a networked force in an actual combat environment. Also, there is much more work to be done to analyze the potential benefits of networked forces at the operational and strategic levels of war.

### **Network-Centric Warfare: The Silver Bullet?**

Now that the literature review is complete, it is possible to investigate the potential of NCW. This author has not found any proponents of NCW touting that this concept is the “Silver Bullet” to solve all the problems of future warfare. Many of the same problems that have plagued warfighters in the past exist today and will exist in the future: fog and friction, competing advances in technologies, the unpredictable nature of human behavior on the battlefield, and asymmetric warfare to name only a few. The issue is not the existence of these challenges to modern warfare, but how one exploits the advantages of information to mitigate and exploit strengths in the force to achieve objectives.<sup>32</sup> Are the potential benefits of NCW worth the opportunity costs associated with aggressively moving forward with the implementation of this new concept?

The concept of Network Centric Warfare already has moved beyond the “bumper sticker” stage. NCW is not a fad that will go quietly into the night. There is little doubt that significant finite resources are being expended to pursue NCW capabilities. DoD spending in the area of communications and electronics is approaching the \$60 Billion level for 2006.<sup>33</sup> There may be changes to terminology, shifts in policy, and alterations in implementation plans. However, the core concepts that relate to leveraging the power of information will remain. The DoD and senior military leaders have been consistent in their support of a networked force. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has concisely stated the importance a fully networked force in the *Transformation Planning Guidance*. “. . . We must achieve: fundamentally joint, network-centric, distributed forces capable of rapid decision superiority and massed effects across the battlespace. Realizing these capabilities will require transforming our people, processes, and military forces.”<sup>34</sup> Admiral Edmund P. Giambastiani, former Commander U.S. Joint Forces Command, stated, “A fully collaborative and networked force is an imperative, not a luxury.”<sup>35</sup> Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps General Michael Haggee said, “The capability to connect disparate units spread over the battlefield will help to provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance to commanders who can then call in fire support . . . Information Technology (IT) also will be critical to Sea Basing, a key component of the Navy’s Sea Power 21 Concept.”<sup>36</sup> The Army’s former Training and Doctrine commander, General Kevin Byrnes, remarked that, “The Army is addressing immediate gaps in today’s networks as it continues to develop the essential capabilities for the future—Warfighter Information Network-Tactical, Joint Tactical Radio System, Joint Command and Control, Future Combat system, Land Warrior and the organizations that will fight in this net-centric world.”<sup>37</sup> The question is not if DoD will proceed with NCW, but how.

### **NCW Way Ahead.**

DoD has a plan for the implementation of NCW. The plan calls for a holistic approach to the implementation of NCW that investigates the potential of NCO in joint, multinational, and interagency operations. As previously discussed in this chapter, there has been a significant effort to establish the theoretical underpinnings of the concept. The most recent publication, *Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare*, establishes the outline of the plan to move forward with NCW. The next part of the process was to begin to study the tenets of NCW through case studies. Additionally, the Services are working

to integrate information systems, sensors, and decisionmaking processes and technology to leverage the capabilities of a fully networked joint force. The Air Force Command and Control Constellation network is an example of the integration of C2; ISR; tankers; space, ground, and sea-based systems; and strike platforms to achieve shared battlespace awareness to maximize effects.<sup>38</sup> Constellation works with FORCEnet (U.S. Navy), and LandWarNet (U.S. Army) to achieve synergy on the battlefield.

It is not in the scope of this chapter to examine all of the specific subelements of the implementation plan for NCW. However, there are several key pieces that provide a flavor for the journey ahead. It is important to remember that NCW is, in fact, a journey and not a particular destination. This is a dynamic process. Theories will be tested, concepts will be modified, technology will continue to advance, and budgeting priorities will shift over time. The overall path leads to a convergence of disparate sensor and command and control systems to create synergy among the numerous joint information systems. Many of the critics of NCW focus solely on the technology aspect of the concept. This is a short sighted approach to a complex transformation in thinking about warfare to leverage technology to gain a competitive advantage over potential adversaries. "Progress in implementing network-centric warfare cannot be measured solely by focusing on one dimension, such as technology or doctrine. Rather, progress must be assessed in terms of the maturity of mission capabilities, that integrate key elements of DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel (technology), Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities)."<sup>39</sup>

A program that highlights the potential advantages of NCW is the Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2/BFT) Blue Force Tracking systems. FBCB2/BFT was used extensively during OIF to monitor the maneuver of U.S. Army, U.S. Marine, U.S. Special Forces, and British ground forces during the conflict. FBCB2/BFT uses the global positioning system and numerous sensors to pinpoint units on the battlefield. This capability provided unprecedented situational awareness to commanders at all levels on the battlefield. The qualitative data acquired from interviews with those on the ground validates the utility of acquiring better situational awareness. Leaders from General Tommy Franks, U.S.A. (Ret) down to battalion and company commanders marveled at the ability to track unit progress during major combat operations.<sup>40</sup> The data available through FBCB2/BFT allowed commanders to quickly adjust to changing operational conditions and manage complex logistical situations.

The Global Information Grid-Bandwidth Expansion (GIG-BE) program will provide the backbone to facilitate NCO in the future. It is difficult to discuss NCW without touching on the importance of the GIG-BE. GIG-BE is the technology that will facilitate numerous NCW initiatives in the years ahead. Major General Marilyn Quaglotti, Vice Director of the Defense Information Agency (DISA), described the vision for the GIG as a single secure Grid providing seamless end-to-end capabilities to all warfighting, national security and support users.<sup>41</sup> DISA achieved initial operational capability of the GIG-BE at six locations around the world on September 30, 2004. Final operational capability for the GIG-BE is expected at 92 sites by September 30, 2005.<sup>42</sup> DISA announced full operational capability of the GIG-BE in December 2005.

It is essential to continue the development of the GIG-BE to realize the potential benefits of NCW. GIG-BE provides the necessary technology to facilitate the interaction of sensors, linked to command and control, to effectively engage shooter platforms to achieve desired effects on the battlefield. GIG-BE will provide necessary bandwidth to support requirements at all levels of warfare. "GIG-BE will create a ubiquitous "bandwidth-available" environment to improve national security intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and command and control information-sharing."<sup>43</sup> The warfighters' ability to have access to necessary bandwidth with the appropriate integrated information systems across the services, DoD, joint, and interagency communities has the potential to truly stimulate innovative approaches to solving complex tasks across the spectrum of conflict. DoD is far from achieving this lofty goal at this time. Also, there is no guarantee that as the pieces fall into place that the expectations of NCW will

be achieved. However, the early indications of the potential synergy afforded by networked forces continue to form a powerful augment to continue down this path.<sup>44</sup> This is not to say that there is not room for caution as DoD and the Services invest large portions of their budgets to technology.

## **The Genie and NCW.**

Let us postulate for a moment that this chapter convinced you that the Genie representing the power of knowledge through collaboration enabled by a robust network (information system) characterized by the latest information technology is outside the bottle. The challenge is to ask for the correct wishes that would facilitate achieving the principles and tenets outlined in the NCO-CF. There are numerous potential disadvantages to NCW. One could easily ask the Genie for a worthless wish. There is a fairly substantial list of those who point out the shortcomings of NCW.<sup>45</sup> These authors provide a valuable service to highlight the potential deficiencies in the theoretical underpinnings of NCW as well as outlining the opportunity costs associated with pursuing this extremely expensive transformation of the defense information architecture. The naysayers stimulate dialogue and debate and assist proponents and decisionmakers to better allocate scarce resources in pursuit of NCW capabilities.

The disadvantages of NCW are well-documented in the literature. Numerous scholars and warfighters have taken the time to thoughtfully outline the potential pitfalls in the pursuit of NCW capabilities. It would be impossible to enumerate all of the explicit and implicit disadvantages outlined by the critics. However, it is useful to highlight a few of the major concerns that deserve further attention and study in the years ahead:

- NCW places too much emphasis on tactics and the tactical nature of war.
- U.S. advances in information technology will outpace our allies and potential coalition partners ability to operate together on the battlefield.
- More information and superior information technologies do not translate into information dominance.
- Situational awareness is not going to eliminate the fog and friction of war.
- Too much speed of command can lead to unsound decisions.<sup>46</sup>
- NCW ignores the human dimension of warfare.
- Technology is dictating strategy. “[NCW] driven by its self-centered concern with technology for technology sake.”<sup>47</sup>
- NCW and its reliance on information technology fails to address the emergence of the current and future threat posed by insurgency, terrorists, Netwars, and 4th Generation Warfare.<sup>48</sup>

The articulated disadvantages help to focus research, funding, and execution of NCW in the years ahead. Also, many of these possible negative aspects will be addressed as DoD publishes empirical evidence to refute these concerns.

The proponents of NCW recognize these potential negative aspects of NCW. DoD, headed by the Office of Force Transformation, is working to harness the power of industry, academia, and the military community at large to thoughtfully address each of these concerns with rigorous conceptual and empirical study. Colonel Douglas Macgregor, USA (Ret.), a well-known critic of numerous aspects of Army transformation, understands the potential benefits of technology and acquiring information on the battlefield. “In the pursuit of knowledge, the U.S. Navy has broken new ground in context of network-centric warfare with its cooperative engagement capability (CEC). This system distributes raw sensor and weapons data among warfighting units, enabling them to combine and share composite

data in a coordinated joint defense.”<sup>49</sup> This is why it is critical to proceed with the study and focused conceptualization of how technology can enable and facilitate warfighting in the 21st century.

### **Moving Forward: Course of Action Missouri.**

It should be apparent by now that this author is an advocate of NCW. This should not imply total agreement with the concept. This author supports the continued study of how the principles of NCW will leverage information and knowledge on the battlefield. It is understandable that the academic community and even warfighters want to see solid evidence supporting the need to make large investments of scarce funding to pursue NCW capabilities. Thus, there is a requirement to develop a strategy and course of action that clearly demonstrates the return on investment to stakeholders, i.e., *Course of Action (COA) Missouri*. The designation of COA Missouri was selected based on the state of Missouri’s nickname of the “show me state.” NCW will need to clearly demonstrate value added to the warfighter. Elements of this proposed course of action already are beginning to take shape in the Office of Force Transformation. The empirical evidence and future studies begin to outline the potential of aligning the appropriate technology to support joint warfighting in a collaborative information environment. So what are the key elements of COA Missouri?

### **The Human Dimension of Warfare.**

As previously discussed, many of the critics state that NCW does not address human behavior in warfare appropriately. The NCW literature does address the importance of the interaction of the cognitive, social, and information domains as an essential element of NCW. To address this concern, the Office of Force Transformation should focus future research and publications on the human dimension and leadership issues associated with information age warfare. There is adequate coverage in the current literature to indicate that the warfighter on the battlefield is and will remain the key to success and not the technology. However, the current case studies focus mainly on the enabling technology related to organizational effectiveness. Future studies should examine the effects of technology on human behavior in a combat environment at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of warfare. Academic scholars in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology should work with the developers of the NCO-CF to investigate the potential benefits as well as the negative aspects of NCW in the human behavior domain. The Office of Force Transformation has established transformation chairs at all of the Senior Service Colleges and Service Academies. These scholars would be a good place to begin studies investigating human behavior and leadership challenges to warfare in the information age. The results of this work should be published and disseminated for scholarly examination, critique, and additional study.

### **NCO-CF Attributes and Metrics.**

There is little doubt the developers of the NCO-CF are in the early stages of defining rigorous attributes and associated metrics to conduct empirical studies of the model. Two of the NCW published case studies have stated that attributes and metrics must be further defined.<sup>50</sup> The U.S./UK case study on NCO highlighted several insightful observations and recommendations about the NCO-CF:

- The language of the NCO-CF be changed so it is better understood by combat units and non-U.S. forces.
- Quantifying metrics related to combat operations – as was done for this case study – can be very difficult. Beyond this report, it is recommended that a focused effort be made to incorporate into

the NCO-CF recommendations for improvement and lessons learned from the application of NCO-CF within various case studies.

- Certain definitions and corresponding metrics difficult to translate into meaningful interview questions.
- Many attributes definitions and metrics are liable to variations in interpretation.
- Difficult to identify data sources.
- Weakness in consistency and completeness in descriptions, explanations, measures and metrics for each of the attributes.<sup>51</sup>
- The *Stryker* BCT NCW Case Study called for the development of additional metrics:
- Develop metrics that reflect the degree to which the development, maintenance, and sharing of the Common Operational Picture critically depends on the interaction of technology, training and personnel experience.
- Current metrics do not measure the synergy between net-centric current operations and improved planning in land warfare.
- Metrics do not exist that reflect the degree to which the Military Decisionmaking Process (MDMP) has been properly reengineered to exploit the potential advantages of information networks.
- Metrics are required to reflect the degree to which process design, technology, business rules, training, personnel experience and other factors combine to either enhance or impede effective and efficient collaboration.<sup>52</sup>

These observations highlight the requirement to conduct focused research to develop appropriate new attributes and metrics based on lessons learned in previous studies. This study could provide new insights and directions to develop the appropriate NCW capabilities.

### **Convergence of Services' Information Systems.**

A further defined NCO-CF with appropriate attributes and metrics will assist in selecting the correct enabling technologies. Information technology and systems will remain the cornerstone of the enabling technologies to create the competitive advantage against U.S. adversaries in the future. Currently, there is a proliferation of waveforms, software, and hardware dispersed throughout the current DoD information system. There should be little doubt that the "to be" DoD information system supporting NCW was based on the convergence and interoperability of the enterprise architecture. Voice, video, and data communications must be seamlessly shared between the services in an interoperable information system. This is the essence of transformational communications.<sup>53</sup>

The GIG-BE became fully operational in December 2005 providing the backbone for a DoD information system to support Joint communications and enable NCW. The services must continue to fund initiatives to integrate and upgrade their information systems. FORCEnet (U.S. Navy), Constellation C2 (U.S. Air Force), and LandWarNet (U.S. Army) have the potential to move toward an interoperable Joint communications network supported by the GIG-BE. "Operationally, the foundation of transformational communications rests on four primary supports: the Transformational Satellite Communications System (TSAT), the Global Information Grid Bandwidth Expansion (GIG-BE), the Warfighter Information Network Tactical system (WIN-T), and the Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS)." <sup>54</sup> The JTRS initiative provides the promise of a joint communications system that will support information sharing between the Services. The integration and convergence of Services' information systems and the abundance of disparate waveforms must remain a high priority.



## Network-Centric Warfare: Proceed with Caution.

This chapter has demonstrated that NCW is much more than developing an integrated DoD information system on steroids. NCW is more than just technology. In order to argue the merits of NCW as more than just information technology, it is essential to review the body of literature that supports the fundamental underpinnings of the concept. This chapter has provided a brief literature review of the key documents to bring the dialogue on the merits of NCW up to date. NCW is still an emerging concept yet to be fully developed and validated. The recently published OFT NCW case studies begin to illustrate the potential of leveraging information and knowledge on the battlefield. However, there is still much work to be done to demonstrate benefits of NCW at the operational and strategic levels of war.

DoD should continue to aggressively pursue case studies that investigate the relationships in the NCO-CF that deal with the human dimension of warfare. The interaction between the information, cognitive, physical domains enabled by appropriate technologies should be a priority. There should be collaboration between scholars in the fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology to examine the implications of NCO on human behavior and leadership. Next, this chapter has provided ample evidence that it is time to reexamine the attributes and metrics associated with the NCO-CF. Finally, the Services and DoD must continue to work the “network” in terms of interoperability and convergence of unique applications, waveforms, and information technologies. A clearly articulated action plan for NCW that includes these recommendations will continue to move NCW in the right direction to harness the power of information on the battlefield to support the warfighter.

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## APPENDIX I

### GUIDELINES FOR STRATEGY FORMULATION

#### GENERAL

Strategy is an art and a highly creative one. It is also somewhat scientific, in that it follows certain patterns which require a common understanding of terminology, adherence to certain principles, and disciplined, albeit creative, thought processes. Remember that these strategy formulation guidelines are not formulas. Strategy will be developed in keeping with the particular features of the time, place, and personalities involved. Nevertheless, these guidelines offer an approach to address the complexity of strategy, and are intended for strategists attempting to achieve the coherence, continuity, and consensus that policymakers seek in designing, developing and executing national security and military strategies.

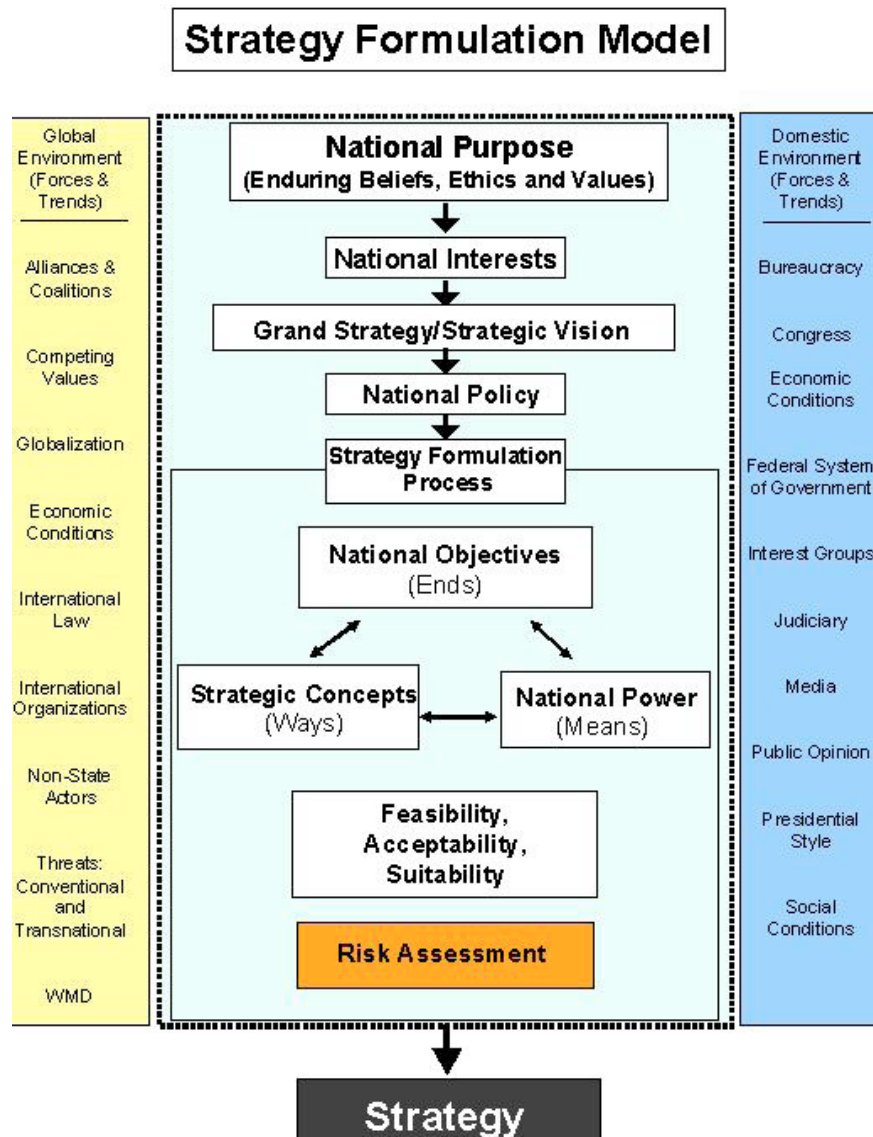


Figure 1. Strategy Formulation Model.

## **NATIONAL PURPOSE**

This is the start point for the entire process. Enduring values and beliefs embodied in the national purpose represent the legal, philosophical and moral basis for continuation of the American system. From the nation's purpose, as well as an understanding of the nation's domestic and global needs, the United States derives its enduring core national interests in the grand strategic appraisal process. The strategist should return to these considerations in terms of risk assessment at every derivative level of strategy formulation.

## **CORE NATIONAL INTERESTS/ENDS**

There are three generally agreed upon core U.S. national interests: physical security, defined as the protection against attack on the territory and people of the United States in order to ensure survival with fundamental values and institutions intact; promotion of values; and economic prosperity. Some practitioners and scholars argue that existence of a favorable world order is also a core national interest and has been since our entry into World War II. However, we will focus primarily on the first three. These core interests are translated into three grand strategic objectives: preserve American security, bolster American economic prosperity, and promote American values. All administrations focus on these objectives, but depending upon the assessments of threats and opportunities, as well as other variables such as personal beliefs and unique circumstances, Presidents establish different strategic visions of America's role in the world, often causing them to choose to emphasize one objective over the others. For the Carter administration, the initial emphasis was on human rights; for the Reagan administration, it was security; and for the Clinton administration, it was the economy. Security is once again the top priority, but in an increasingly globalized world populated by non-state actors with possible access to weapons of mass destruction, achieving physical security paradoxically may require an equal emphasis on promoting democratic values and generating global economic prosperity.

## **GRAND STRATEGY/STRATEGIC VISION**

At the grand strategic level, the ways and means to achieve strategic objectives are based on the national leadership's strategic vision of America's role in the world that U.S. leaders believe will best achieve U.S. core national objectives.

Throughout America's history, this vision has ranged from isolationism to global engagement, containment of Communism, and American primacy. In order to be effective, each new administration has to express a vision for the U.S. role in the world that does not outrun the experience of the American people and thus lose the decisive authority or domestic consensus to implement the strategic vision. Is the vision, in other words, suitable and acceptable?

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, for example, had to act carefully prior to World War II as he moved the American grand strategic vision from isolationism to one of global engagement. And within 5 years after the end of that war, the perception of external threat allowed President Harry S. Truman to gain support for the grand strategic vision of containment—focused on containing the Soviet Union on the Eurasian landmass.

Grand strategic means involve consideration of America's national elements of power at the broadest level. Given the state of the international and domestic environments and the scope of the administration's strategic vision of the U.S. role in the world, a key consideration is the feasibility of employing sufficient U.S. national power to achieve the core objectives.

## NATIONAL POLICY

Based on grand strategic decisions, the U.S. political leadership provides national policy in the form of broad guidance concerning America's global role in pursuit of the core national objectives. This policy is the start point for strategy formulation at the national level. National policy is conveyed in many iterative and cumulative forms ranging from formal national security directives and pronouncements in presidential and cabinet-level speeches to presidential replies to press queries and cabinet-level appearances on current affairs television shows.

## STRATEGY FORMULATION PROCESS

### General.

Inherent in this more detailed strategy process is an appropriate degree of analysis designed to illuminate alternatives in the face of recognized uncertainties. A general outline for this phase of the strategy process follows:

- a. Identify U.S. interests.
- b. Determine level of intensity for each interest.
- c. Evaluate the issues, trends, and challenges (threats and opportunities) in regard to interests.
- d. Determine objectives (ends).
- e. Consider alternative concepts (ways) that utilize available or needed resources (means) to achieve objectives.
- f. Determine the feasibility, acceptability and suitability of the strategic options.
- g. Conduct a risk assessment.
- h. Present policy recommendations.

The analysis must be more than a listing of challenges. To be useful, it must examine and explain which and in what ways U.S. interests are affected. The analysis should seek to identify opportunities and threats to U.S. interests. As a consequence, the strategic analysis not only will be influenced by current national policy, but will help identify recommendations to change existing policies or create new ones. The analysis should address most—if not all—of the following questions:

- a. What is the current U.S. policy or precedent?
- b. Who are the other critical actors?
- c. What are their interests and/or policies?
- d. With whom does the U.S. have convergence or divergence of interest/policy?
- e. What are the other feasible options to employ the U.S. elements of power to achieve the policy options under consideration?
- f. How will the policy be sustained?

The strategy formulation guidelines delineated above can apply equally to all formal national security documents (i.e., National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, National Military Strategy, theater military strategy, etc.). The strategist must be able to develop strategies employing all of the elements of power. Students at the U.S. Army War College will develop and practice these skills

in NSPS, elective courses, and the Strategic Crisis Exercise. Remember, the formulation of strategy at any level employs the strategic thought process based on the balancing of Ends, Ways, and Means.

### **National Interests.**

During the strategy formulation process, the strategist moves beyond the core grand strategic interests to more specific national security interests derived from those core interests in accordance with national policy. These national security interests provide more detail to the nation's needs and aspirations, in terms of the relationship between the foreign and domestic aspects of national security, and are thus the start point for defining strategic objectives for national security related strategies.

As a rule of thumb, interests are stated as fundamental concerns of the nation, and written as desirable conditions without verbs, action modifiers, or intended actions. For example, U.S. national interests might be stated as:

- (a) Access to raw materials – (not “Protect sources of raw materials”).
- (b) Unrestricted passage through international waters – (not “Secure sea lines of communications”).

### **Categories.**

The Army War College groups national interests into three categories derived from the three core interests of the United States. Categories help to organize interests. Keep in mind the breakdown normally is artificial. Thus, while “Unrestricted access to Persian Gulf Oil” as a U.S. national interest has a primary category of “Economic Well-Being” for the United States and its allies, it also ties into the other two categories of national interests used by the USAWC. The three categories are:

- (a) Security of the Homeland: protection against attack on the territory and people of a nation-state in order to ensure survival with fundamental values and political systems intact.
- (b) Economic Well-Being: attainment of the conditions in the world environment that ensure the economic well-being of the nation.
- (c) Promotion of Values: establishment of the legitimacy of or expansion of the fundamental values of the nation such as democracy and human rights.

### **Intensity of Interests.**

Determining the level of intensity helps to determine priority of interests, recognizing that without prioritization, there is the potential for unlimited derivative objectives and the consequent mismatch of those objectives (ends) with resources (means), which are always finite. The degree of intensity of an interest, in particular, should be determined *before* a detailed analysis of threats to those interests. It is important that interests not become a function of a particular threat. If a government begins with a threat assessment before a conceptualization of interest intensity, it may react to a threat with major commitments and resources devoid of any rational linkage to that intensity. Rational cost-benefit analysis should not be allowed to affect the intensity of interest. The three USAWC degrees of intensity are determined by answering the question: What happens if the interest is not realized?

- (a) *Vital*: if unfulfilled, will have immediate consequences for core national interests.
- (b) *Important*: if unfulfilled, will result in damage that will eventually affect core national interests.
- (c) *Peripheral*: if unfulfilled, will result in damage that is unlikely to affect core national interests.

## **Ends-Ways-Means.**

Strategic Objectives are derived from national policy and from a detailed consideration of U.S. national interests by category and intensity against the backdrop of issues, trends and challenges (threats and opportunities) that affect those interests. Based on these objectives, strategists then consider alternative concepts and courses of action for the use of the national elements of power. Note the primacy of the objectives – strategy should be ends-driven, not resource-driven, in order to ensure maximum opportunity to achieve the objectives.

Defining the objective (end), therefore, is a critical first step in the strategy formulation process. If the objective is too vague or poorly understood, no amount of resources or careful consideration of ways to employ those resources will ensure success. On the other hand, defining an objective too narrowly may restrict the ways and/or means available. Finally, understanding of the objective is critical to determining success or failure of any particular strategy.

Once the desired end is identified, strategists consider the range of resources (means) available, then examine potential ways to employ these resources in pursuit of the objectives. While strategy should remain ends-focused, ways are necessarily resource-constrained. Unless a state has nuclear weapons, the concept of nuclear deterrence cannot be adopted in developing its security strategy (there is no “mutually assured destruction”). Therefore, the state must find alternative ways to enhance security or deter attack by a nuclear-capable adversary. Potential alternatives include establishing alliances with nuclear capable countries (i.e., NATO), or securing security assurances in exchange for not pursuing attainment of (or eliminating existing) nuclear weapons (i.e., Cuba). If, however, deterrence is perceived to be the only viable option, the state must either work to attain nuclear weapons (i.e., North Korea) or to develop alternative forms of deterrence (chemical or biological weapons, perhaps?).

Feasibility, Suitability, and Acceptability: Once potential strategy options are identified, each option must be examined to determine its feasibility (Do we have the means to execute the ways?), acceptability (Does it have domestic and Congressional support? Is it legal? Ethical? Worth the cost?) and suitability (Will it achieve the desired ends?). This evaluation process enables the strategist to evaluate the likelihood of success for each option and to select that strategy deemed most likely to attain the desired ends with available means and in an acceptable way. Before a final strategy is recommended or adopted, however, each option must also be subjected to a risk assessment.

## **Risk Assessment.**

Strategies at any level normally lack resources or the ability to employ resources in a manner sufficient for complete assurance of success. As a result, a final and essential test is to assess the risk of less than full attainment of strategic objectives, as well as the risk of second and third order effects that implementation of the strategy could have (i.e., effects on the economy, relationships with allies, etc.). Living with risk is part of the strategist’s business in the modern world, and being able to articulate its character and extent is the first step in reducing its impact. Where the risk is determined to be unacceptable, the strategy must be revised by either reducing the objectives, changing the concepts, increasing the resources, or some combination of these actions. In the deterrence example described previously, the state’s decision about whether to pursue attainment of nuclear weapons rather than entering into an alliance or accepting a security assurance pledge will depend, in part, on the extent to which it is willing to accept the risk associated with each option. In the risk associated with relying on the good faith of its allies and/or potential adversary is unacceptable, then the state will likely try to attain nuclear weapons. On the other hand, if the risk associated with attempting to acquire nuclear weapons (i.e., economic sanctions that might cripple the economy) are too great, the state may have little choice but to pursue other options.





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