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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Vol. VIII No. 7 March, 1956

CONTENTS

THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM . . . 1
Professor Dexter Perkins

THE NATURE OF WAR 25
Professor Gordon B. Turner

THE NATURE OF MILITARY STRATEGY 45
Professor Hiram M. Stout

RECOMMENDED READING 63

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Issued Monthly
U. S. Naval War College
Newport, R. I.

THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 7 October 1955 by
Professor Dexter Perkins

I am very glad indeed to be here again to talk on this general subject and to offer my views for an exchange of views with members of the Armed Services.

A large part of what I have to say will deal with the various geographical areas of the world. But I want to say something at the outset about what might be described as the technical position of the United States today in the international sphere and to compare it, in a broad general way, with the situation of the Soviet Union.

Of course too much can be made of the bipolar nature of the existing international society. There is a third force to be taken into account; yet, it does ring true that the fundamental fact in international relations today is the rivalry of the United States with the Soviet Union — the differing conceptions of the present and the future and the clashes of interests and ideals which constantly occur.

In some respects, I think the position of the United States today in the international society is a very strong one. It is obvious, for example, that we wield today an unrivaled economic power. We have generated an enormous economic machine in the United States, and for a backlog or for whatever may come in the future this machine has a fundamental value.

EDITORIAL NOTE: It will be noticed that at times the lecturer alluded to conditions extant during the month in which the address was given. These remarks did not prejudice the permanent value of the substance of the address and, therefore, were reprinted without change.

I think we may say, too, that important progress has been made in some other respects in the course of the last few years. One of the things to which I attach importance today is the political unity of the United States in the field of foreign affairs. Traditionally, one of the hampering factors in the conduct of American foreign policy has frequently been partisanship and division. I think we are in a very happy situation today where partisanship has been reduced to a minimum, and I think it is very largely due to the course of events of the last few years.

It seems to me that the election of President Eisenhower in 1952 was on the whole an extraordinarily fortunate event. Of course, I do not speak as a partisan; I speak as an historian. The foreign policy of the new administration in many respects was a continuation of the foreign policy of the preceding administration. But the election of a Republican President brought new elements to the support of that policy.

We have had many striking examples of united action because the new administration did follow in its broad lines the policy of its predecessor. The action of the Congress of the United States with regard to Formosa, for example, is an interesting exhibition of national unity. I am not going to concern myself at the moment with the rightness or wrongness of this particular decision, but I think we all recognize in international affairs that united action is itself fundamental. Sometimes the choice is not so important as the determination with which one follows up the choice. I think that the political unity of the United States in 1955 is a fact of very substantial significance in the field of foreign affairs.

In connection with this political unity, another observation should be added. I am not sure that everyone here will agree with me (and it would really be quite foolish to try to lecture with the idea of unanimity in mind), but to my way of thinking the hysteria with regard to security — fomented by ambitious politicians

in the period from 1952 to 1954 — had an unhappy effect upon the national scene. It was fundamentally destructive so far as foreign policy was concerned. It placed a heavy emphasis on questions which were of secondary significance as compared with the large scheme of foreign policy. The decline of this hysteria is a very important factor in strengthening the position of the United States.

There are two other remarks that I want to make, one which has a little longer historical background but which seems to me of fundamental importance. I might say, parenthetically, that I read with pain Walter Lippmann's recent book, *The Public Philosophy,* in which he seems to come to the conclusion that a democracy cannot conduct foreign affairs at all. In November, I am going to give three lectures on *Popular Government and Foreign Policy* for the Ford Fund for Adult Education, in which I try to show that after all we do rather better than Mr. Lippmann (who was my contemporary at Harvard) seems to think we can do.

One of these ways in which we do better — and it is fundamental — is in the efficient coordination of both the planning and the acting side of the Government that existed a decade ago. There are two elements in this which interest me particularly, but since this is a lecture which covers the high spots over a broad range, I am not going into them in detail. They are the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Council. We were talking about this on the way up here to the College. Obviously, a fundamental aspect of the conduct of foreign affairs — and indeed for that matter of military and naval operations — is knowledge. We need a lot of it. As a matter of fact, some of the major mistakes in the foreign policy of the United States are made through deficient information. For example, I do not suppose that if we had had all the facts at our command we would have done what we did in Korea in 1949.

The Central Intelligence Agency is a highly specialized agency under extraordinarily competent leadership. General Walter Bedell Smith, whom I have the honor of knowing, is one of the great public servants of the epoch. I also think that Allen Dulles, who is now in charge of C. I. A., is another one. I think that one of the most important agencies in the fact-finding side of the Government is in very good hands.

I was interested a little while ago, when reading the *London Economist* (which I regard as the finest weekly periodical I know) in the remark that the forming of a National Security Council might represent an epoch in the Constitutional development of the United States. I think there is something in that. I think that in the National Security Council, in which are represented the Defense services — the C. I. A., the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Treasury, and, of course, the State Department — we have the best coordinating agency we have ever had from the point of view of the field of foreign policy. This Constitutional change which came about in 1947, and which it seems to me has been utilized in a most intelligent and constructive way by the present President of the United States, is to my mind another step forward so far as operations in international affairs are concerned.

I think we may also say — and this, again, is a matter of perspective — that compared with the past the American people are more aware than ever before of the importance of maintaining the physical power of the United States. This is elementary to such an audience as this, but looking at the matter historically it is perfectly obvious that the people of the United States have underestimated the role of force in international affairs. There is such a thing as overestimating it, and perhaps I shall give you some examples of that before I close this lecture. But we are more nearly in a realistic position today with regard to physical power than we have been at earlier periods in our history.

But, on the other hand, there is a negative side to the account. Before I attempt an analysis from a geographical point of view, I want to make two or three points on the negative side. I think we may generally say that one of the issues that confronts us at the present time is the very great prosperity which reigns in the United States and the tendency, therefore, to think in economic terms of a problem that is more than economics in the narrower sense.

I keep thinking, possibly without justification, of Great Britain in the 1930's. Here was a country blessed with great prosperity in the years right after the recovery from the depression. The result was a foreign policy that deceived itself as to the facts of life, of a governmental policy that laid the emphasis on internal matters, and managed to lull itself into a false sense of security at a time when the greatest of world menaces was building up.

I do not say that will happen here. But the gentlemen who at the present time are so insistent upon a balanced budget, and the numerous individuals in Washington who would rather lower our taxes than do anything else (I can understand why, politically, this is an ambition of course) are people to watch because there is no more essential interest than the national security of the United States. This transcends any economic values. Of course it must be rationally interpreted and intelligently developed. But I am a little afraid that in the kind of world we live in today prosperity will make us soft.

It is only fair to say that I was tremendously pleased in this connection with the decision of the Secretary of Defense, Charles E. Wilson, the other day — a decision apparently made with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Treasury — that the military budget would not be drastically cut this next year. To me, this was a fundamental decision.

There is a second limitation on the foreign policy of the United States, looking at the matter from the broadest angle of

vision. We operate — and this has become pretty generally recognized — with our allies in the present world. Only the most unobserving of American politicians would fail to recognize the fact that we have to have allies in the kind of world we live in today. It is hard to operate with other democratic nations. In the international sphere, the United States has to depend upon persuasion in dealing with its allies; it cannot depend upon coercion. This, of course, is increasingly true because back in 1947 there was a leverage in the economic aid we were giving them. But when you go to Europe today and observe the remarkable signs of prosperity in almost every country — I think they are remarkable, even France has done better than it has done in some time — you recognize also the difficulties of our own task. We have to assert a moral leadership without the possibility of coercion, and this makes the problem inevitably difficult.

With regard to the position of the United States, there are two other points that ought to be mentioned. A very important point for us to notice is that our relative position in one respect has of course declined; that is, we were at one time sole possessors of the atomic bomb. We developed the hydrogen bomb. But we are now confronted with the fact that the Russians have both, and we have lost the relative advantage. Though the development of atomic weapons is bound to go on, it seems to me that we may reach the point (I was going to say "we will reach it") where on one side or the other the use of these enormous weapons of destruction will tend to cancel out. We are no longer in a position where we have the absolute superiority. We ourselves are threatened now as we were not threatened, of course, in 1945 and the years immediately following.

Finally, looking at the position of the United States in the international sphere from this broad and general point of view, we ourselves are almost inescapably in the position of being to a certain extent the defenders of the *status quo*. I shall examine that point a little more in detail as I pass through the various

geographical areas. But I will put it in another way. The Communists can promise the earth — their promises will never be fulfilled, but they can promise. We have to deal with an existing society; we have to deal with existing societies in our intercourse in the international sphere, and this creates a difficult problem. So while I think the position of the United States is strong from many points of view, I think we ought to recognize its real limitations.

Let us look for a moment at the Russian point of view and see what their weaknesses and strengths are. As one would expect, there is something to be said on both sides. I think the Russian government has certain great advantages in the international competition. The principal advantage is the advantage that inheres in any totalitarian government. It is not an argument for totalitarianism, but it is one of the advantages of totalitarianism. That advantage is that the capacity for instant decisions and making shifts of policy is far greater in a totalitarian regime than it is in a democratic regime.

Whether Mr. Lippmann likes it or not (and he appears to be very unhappy about it), the foreign policy of a great democratic nation has to be integrated with the public opinion of that nation. This is inevitable, fundamental and inescapable. It seems to be the case to a *substantial* degree — I do not mean to a total degree — that the Russians can manipulate their opinion to a remarkable extent. If they want to be rough, they can be rough; if they want to smile, they can smile; they can do both. They can make instantaneous changes, as they constantly do. They can oppose a treaty with Austria for years on grounds that have not the slightest moral justification. Then, suddenly, they can come to you some day and say: "O. K., we will give you a treaty with Austria." We cannot make those abrupt shifts in the field of American foreign policy. I think there is an enormous advantage that inheres in the nature of a totalitarian state.

The second advantage which the Russian government has in the field of foreign affairs is the advantage to which I have already alluded by a contrast. The Russians can identify themselves with all sorts of movements which it is not so easy for us to recognize. They can talk about "the better world"; they can talk about "the end of colonialism"; they can associate themselves with the discontent of the existing order, as they do. They have a powerful engine of policy. So that is that side of the account, as far as the Russians are concerned.

But the Kremlin has limitations. I think that these limitations are something to be noted. I would say that the principal limitation is the limitation inherent in their economic system. They are in a position where they have an increasingly difficult domestic problem. I would suspect that this domestic problem would become more rather than less difficult from a variety of points of view and would be a seriously limiting factor so far as actual armed aggression is concerned.

It is a most curious fact that neither in Russia nor in China, today, does there seem to be any misgiving whatsoever about the increase in population. An increase in population may be a good thing or it may be a bad thing, according to national circumstances. But if you have a large rate of increasing population and if at the same time you pursue a policy of industrialization on a very substantial scale, as the Russians have done, you have then to face an agricultural problem. It is perfectly clear, as we all know, that the Russians face a serious agricultural problem at the present time.

Sometimes I think that the scope and difficulty of that problem is not entirely understood. One of the most illuminating conversations that I have ever had with anybody in the State Department was some years ago, when it was pointed out to me that the mechanization of Russian agriculture (which is a part of their idea) inevitably involves a tremendous strain on the petroleum resources of Russia and produces the kind of society which

is technologically vulnerable. For the Russians to operate in a large way in the international sphere, in the military sense of the term, would mean a tremendous drain upon their gasoline supplies and this would be accompanied by a difficult problem from the agricultural point of view. I think that this is a matter of considerable importance.

I think, too, we may see (this is a matter on which we cannot get the facts too clearly) that there are some of the satellite states who are in many respects unreliable. After all, even under communism, they have their national ego. From the Communist point of view there is a very bad example of the success of a more independent type of social organization in Tito's Yugoslavia. While it would be romantic to assume that the satellite states can break away from Russia, or possibly even that they want to break away at the present time, it is not romantic to assume that they will not be entirely at the command of the Kremlin.

Furthermore, in speaking of these general elements in the international situation, there seem to be indications that there is growing up in Russia a larger and larger relatively prosperous class that puts the emphasis on internal improvement and a raising of the standard of living. How far this process will go one cannot say, but it is factor that it is desirable to take account of from a long-term point of view.

These are general considerations with regard to the position of the United States today. Now let us look at the position of the United States in regard to geographical areas of the world.

I am going to begin by taking that area in which our problems are relatively simple — I do not mean that any international problem is child's play — and that is the field of Latin America. In the field of Latin America we have our difficulties. But I do not suppose that today they are anywhere nearly as great as the difficulties connected with our position in Europe or with our position in Asia.

There has been a tendency in recent years to minimize the significance of Latin America. In speaking in relative terms, it is right to put it in a place far inferior to that occupied by Europe, and perhaps by the Far East. But, still, Latin America is important to us. For one thing, it is important to us because there is a special tie with Latin America that involves the defense of the Panama Canal. In other words, it is important in part from strategic reasons: for reasons of grand strategy and national security. I suppose that it is not so important as it was in the Second World War, when the Germans were moving down toward Dakar. I suppose (and I am willing to be corrected if I am wrong) that if there is a Third World War the lines of attack will be over the Pole to the northward of the United States rather than in any way through the south. But there is still a certain strategic importance.

There is also a certain economic importance. We have attained such an enormous development that we are today dependent upon the economic resources of other parts of the world in varying degrees. But, as you know, we have had economic development, for instance, in the oil industry in Venezuela. We have a very substantial stake in Chilean copper. In the field of the specifics, like quinine, we have an interest which cannot be satisfied within the borders of the United States. There are economic factors in Latin America which weigh upon and must influence the development of American foreign policy. And, finally, we have an ideological interest in Latin America. The victory of the Communist regime within any part of the world shakes the authority of contrary systems and is naturally opposed to the interests of the United States.

Looking at the Latin American situation as a whole, what are the weaknesses and strengths in our position relative to Latin America? Let me take the strengths first. In what respect are we in a favorable position with regard to Latin America? I should say there are three points that I want particularly to mention.

One of these points is the fact that there is an important element there in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is likely to be the foe of Communist-oriented governments. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding on the role of the church in Latin America. When I wrote my little book, *The U. S. and the Caribbean,* published in 1947, I was interested to observe that in some parts of Latin America, which are normally Catholic, the indifference with regard to the church is very strong. If you know Guatemala, for example, this is a case where this statement might be made. But in the larger states of Latin America, the Catholic Church is a substantial influence. I do not suppose we are ready to make an historical judgment with regard to recent events in Argentina, but it seems not at all unlikely that it played a very large part in the overthrow of Juan Domingo Perón. The influence of this church should be cast against Communist policy.

With regard to the previous history of Latin America, I think an interesting thing to observe is that whenever American States deviate from a democratic course and are not democratic in their organization (with regard to some of them, it might rather be put the other way and be said that they occasionally deviate *into* the democratic course), the kind of government that seems to exist there is usually military government, and it is a military government of the Right rather than a military government of the Left. There is, for example, such a regime as the regime of Jimenez in Venezuela at the present day. It is not a lovely government, but it certainly is not a Left-wing government. The government in Colombia at the present time, that of President Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, is a government which the *New York Times* does not like very much (and that is understandable), but it certainly is not a Left-wing government. Indeed, there has not yet been amongst the military class in Latin America any substantial attachment to the Communist ideology. Of course the exception, I suppose, was the Arbenz regime in Guatemala. I think, incidentally, that this points to the need of something: I think that a greater degree of understanding and of association between the

Latin American military class and that of the United States is in our interest, and it might be a very important factor in the long run.

So far as the United States and Latin America are concerned, in the third place there are very wide areas in Latin America which are, if not economically dependent upon the United States, closely associated with the United States. In the Caribbean, for example, our economic interests play an enormous role. When I saw Mr. Braden in New York two or three years ago, I remember his remarking to me that the Communist regime in Cuba could be starved out very readily indeed and that the economic liaison between the United States and Cuba was so close that it would be hardly possible for a regime of the Left to subsist. If you will think back, as some of you can I am sure, to the Revolution of 1932, which brought Ramón Grau San Martin into power for the first time, you will remember that this regime was simply not viable. We would not recognize it and it was not viable in part certainly because of the hostility of the United States. Even some of the larger states have a tremendous economic tie with the United States — Brazil, for example. Here, again, we have a factor of substantial significance from the positive point of view.

There is, however, another point of view, and I want to say what the limitations are on our policy with Latin America. Incidentally, in making some of these comments on one side or the other, I think we have to avoid the notion that all difficulties are easily curable. There are inherent problems in international affairs, and even with intelligence and good will they are likely to remain for some time to come.

One of our limitations — and one which may or may not be in sound policy — is the limitation which we have imposed upon ourselves by the protocols of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. As you know, we have solemnly pledged ourselves not to intervene

by physical force in the domestic affairs of the Latin American States and it would be a serious matter to violate this pledge. We have also pledged ourselves at the Conference in Bogota' to take a stand against collective intervention. I suppose that the direct physical pressure which the United States has occasionally exerted against regimes which it disliked in the Caribbean area is, today, pretty much out of the question. This is the difficulty inherent in the situation.

There is a second difficulty — and this, again, is very difficult to get around. Latin American States feel today in the main somewhat neglected, and they have been neglected relatively speaking. The policy of our economic aid to Europe and the emphasis placed on the Orient in recent years (quite justifiably, in my judgment) have put the Latin American States in a subordinate position. There is a real resentment in some Latin American States with regard to the United States. They like to be loved, and we find it difficult to love everybody at once. This is, indeed, a large order. This is a serious problem and it is not one that is going to be solved offhand. I doubt if Vice President Nixon solved it in his visit to Latin America.

There is also another matter which I think is of some importance from this point of view: whereas communism *per se* is not certainly so dangerous in Latin America as it is in some other areas the Communists have a useful weapon, and that is the weapon of "nationalism." They can beat the drums with regard to exploitation, as they like to call it; they can beat the drums about the nefarious role of American capitalism. This is an effective weapon. Personally, it seems to me that nothing could be better for Latin America and nothing could in the long run contribute more to a stable and prosperous society than the entry of American capital on a substantial scale.

But you know how it is. You know how in Brazil, for example, there is violent opposition to private industry in oil.

One of the first things which the Lonardi government in Argentina did was to say that it would not go through with the agreements that the Perón régime was about to make with American oil interests. The Communists can beat the nationalist drum in a way that is very embarrassing to our interests. They not only can beat the nationalist drum, but they can beat the drum of social improvement.

I think we have another problem there that is awfully difficult to solve in terms of our own power and capability to act. Reactionary régimes in Latin America may suit us very well for a while. The régime which now exists in Venezuela is very favorable to American interests — and that is nice for the time being. But the difficulty is that these reactionary régimes will produce a popular reaction that is not only anti-American and anti-capitalist but is based upon the craving for social betterment, which is characteristic of the world today. I frankly confess that I do not know exactly how we would deal with a situation of that kind.

Latin America, as I say, is the least important area. But I think we may fairly say that the most important area is Europe. This, of course, has been the consistent policy of our Government (without the cooperation of some very eminent individuals) since 1945. Looking at the matter historically, in order to get our bearings before I analyze the contemporary European situation, there has been substantial progress made. If we think of it historically — and not in the sense of the absolutely contemporary — it seems to me it is perfectly clear that our European policy was based on sound conceptions. I do not see how it can be denied that the Marshall Plan was a great measure of constructive statesmanship. It was based on enlightened self-interest. What was at stake was the integrity of an economic and political system which was in our interest in a part of the world which, subjected to Russian infiltration, would be of all the most dangerous — a region of high technological capacity, of large resources, and the most im-

portant region outside the United States in the world from the economic point of view. The Marshall Plan was a great step. So, too, was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This was a tremendous idea. It was based upon the same inevitable hypothesis: that we need to protect Europe from either military or ideological penetration.

In the third place, in addition to the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, it seems to me it was wise and sagacious statesmanship that emphasized the necessity of admitting Germany to a part in the scheme of things. Of course this policy, too, has been to a certain degree successful — largely due to the fact that probably the most clear-headed, eminent and courageous statesman in Continental Europe today is the Chancellor of the German Reich, Konrad Adenauer.

Now this is all very well. But I think there are many reasons for a little bit of alarm with regard to our European situation at the present time. There are important aspects of our situation in Europe which I want to mention and which must give cause for disquietude. The economic prosperity of Europe is substantial, today. Having been abroad practically every year since 1945, I have been deeply impressed by it. My elder boy just landed in London two or three weeks ago on sabbatical leave there. He writes me that the contrast between 1950, when he was there previously, and 1955 seems to him colossal. But even in Britain — which has made a remarkable recovery and which I think, from the point of view of foreign policy, is most clear-headed in its relation to the problems of the European States — there is some economic difficulty. While I noticed that Mr. Butler this morning tended to take a little more cheerful view than the British press has been taking during the last few weeks, the problem in Britain is a serious problem. Today, there is something like full employment in Britain and there is heavy pressure on the wage structure. The test before Britain — and a serious test it is — is the test, it seems to me, as to whether or not the

British labor unions can grasp the problem that they cannot have wage increases piled on wage increases when Britain is dependent for her prosperity on her exports. The problem of the British social order is one which I can see is not going to be easy. While I do not want to be too gloomy about it — because it is against my principles to be gloomy to the point where it paralyzes the principle of action or hope — I do think that there is a problem there that is lowering before us and that may be of substantial significance.

If the situation is not easy in Great Britain, it certainly is not easy in France. Of course the French have shown an incapacity to act — or a capacity only to act late — during the past few years that is in some senses of the word tragic. We know what the situation is today. It is a very serious situation, though in my way of thinking it is being met with considerable courage and sagacity by Edgar Faure. When I talk to my French friends (and they are generally critical of French policy), the man they throw up their hats about, as you know, is Mendès-France. I think Mendès-France is a great figure in many ways. He is a person of remarkable courage and self-assurance. But in my way of thinking Faure has some of the good qualities in Mendès-France with some others added. I think he has a better tactical sense and that he is a better manager of men. He may be able to pull through this situation. I read the *Providence Journal* this morning and I thought things looked a little better there than they did in the *New York Times*, which I read before that. But, however that may be, there is a serious problem.

You know as well as I do that the French have had to withdraw some of their divisions from NATO in North Africa. This Morocco business is very serious, and it has not been solved as of the present time. Colonially speaking, the French have an awful lot of difficulty ahead of them. France is weak in this sense, and there is a very great weakness in the whole governmental system. I do not take quite as tragic a view of it as some people

do, however. As a matter of fact, I think there is a substantial body of competence in France, politically, which is much hampered by a bad political mechanism. People like Edgar Faure or Mendès-France or of the little earlier vintage of Robert Schuman, for example, are very able, devoted, and patriotic men. But the difficulties in the way of the development of France are very great. The French, too, are feeling the economic pressure. There, too, men like Faure and Mendès-France represent a desire for social reform. This is comprehensible. I know of no city in the world so like what it was in 1912, when I first saw it, as is Paris — the housing problem in France is something to weep about. Where you have the pressure for social reform, you have also a pressure for economy in armament. The French position is not good from that point of view, and I do not think we ought to forget that fact.

Of course we have also been having difficulty in the eastern part of the Mediterranean. The Greeks and the Turks are at loggerheads over the question of Cyprus. There again the fabric of international organization, built up so painfully by American statesmanship during the last few years, is in danger. There may be a way out of this. When I feel most gloomy I console myself with a maxim that I have frequently expressed to my classes, and that is: "When things get bad enough, they frequently get better." I think that may be true of the situation in eastern Europe, but still I would not call it a lovely situation.

If I may include quite illegitimately another region in what I have to say with regard to Europe, that of the Near East — which, of course, is really not Europe, strictly speaking — we have a terrible problem there in trying to play both ends against the middle in reconciling our interest in the Arab States and in their economic development with the interest that a very considerable part of our population inevitably feels for Israel. These are delicate problems. They are problems which are hand-made

for trouble on the part of the Russians, and there is no doubt that the Russians are going to play that game.

Furthermore, to emphasize the difficulties, there is the uncertainty with regard to Germany. Konrad Adenauer is a very great statesman and he dominates the situation in Germany, but he is 79 years old. He seemed in good health when I saw him at the Harvard Commencement this year and heard him speak there. I do not think he is on the verge of expiring, or anything of that kind, but 79 is 79. Whether or not there will be in Germany a leader of the same caliber to follow him, I do not know. I think that the position in Germany of the Social Democrats is on about as low a level of partisan politics as I have ever observed in any country, including our own. Looking at the German situation, there are plenty of things to worry about in any long-term point of view.

I want to make two other points with regard to Germany. First, there is a great danger that the Saar question will cause trouble. You know what happened. You know that the French and German governments agreed upon an election of the Saar to take place on the 23rd of October. It is part of the fabric of Franco-German understanding. The local parties are apparently operating in opposition to the arrangement that was made, and a defeat for the Saar statute on October 23 would create again some embarrassing problems from the point of view of the United States.

Finally, there is Geneva. I think there is no question that at Geneva President Eisenhower expressed the point of view of the American people. I see no evidence that President Eisenhower was deluded at Geneva into thinking that kind words and beneficient gestures would alter the whole international scene. But it seems to me that a great many people have taken Geneva far too seriously. I do not see that anything fundamental has changed, and I am worried about the possible relaxation on both sides of

the Atlantic that comes from a false interpretation of what is going on in Geneva.

As you see, this is a rather gloomy picture from some points of view. If we are going to be helped out of it, I think we are probably going to be helped out of it by the Russians. They have done very well at times in making it easier for us — and they may do it again. They have done two things in the recent few weeks that I think we ought to be grateful for. I am sure that they did not do them from that point of view — you understand that I am not suggesting that the Russians are benevolent-minded, but they make mistakes. Sometimes when I listen to some of my friends, you would think that we were the only people that made mistakes. As a matter of fact, with regard to the last decade, I would maintain stoutly that more mistakes have been made in the Kremlin than were ever made in Washington.

However that may be, I think there are two things where they miscalculated. Their vote to debate Algeria in the United Nations seems to me to be a monumental mistake. This is just the kind of feud to inflame French patriotism. You know what happened — how the French got out, whether wisely or not I do not know. But this illustrates the force of the emotions involved. I think this was a tremendous mistake. Even more cynical is this grant of arms to Egypt. But I think even more fundamental and more cynical was the attempt of the Kremlin to build up the East German government into a government instead of a mere satellite. You know what they have done. This is not going to produce a good impression in West Germany. It underlines the cynicism and unchanged purpose of the règime in Moscow. Possibly these things are suggestive. They may suggest, as I say, that the best solution — not 'solution'; I hate that word because it suggest fixity and finality — that the best answer to some of our difficulties may lie in the blunders that will be made in Moscow. I think we may count on blunders. It seems to me that Mr.

Kruschev is also made by nature to blunder. It may very well be that these blunders will adhere to our advantage.

There is one other very important point which I want to make before I leave Europe (I find that I am going on a little longer than I expected to): we have to think also in terms of the health of the American economy. The economy is extremely healthy at the present time. The management of the economy under this administration seems to me to have been remarkably and extraordinarily skillful. But we cannot count on wise decisions as an inevitability. You may be very sure that any serious damage done to the American economy would shake our position in Europe. So there are all kinds of problems ahead from our point of view. While we want to retain the hopeful spirit out of which alone can come positive action, we certainly do not want to underestimate the difficulties. We need to give them a good deal of thought.

Finally, I have to say something of course with regard to Asia (I have left myself less time than I would wish). My fundamental assumption in the Far East is that outside of certain specialized situations the cards are very largely in the hands of the Communists. What I mean by that is merely this: that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was an excellent answer to a Russian threat on the Continent — you understand that I am not a bit squeamish about the building up of physical power, quite the opposite so far as the foreign policy of the United States is concerned, but, on the other hand, the problem of Asia is a very much more difficult problem because there the assertion of the physical power of the United States is apt to run counter to very deep-seated prejudices. It is apt to run counter to the deep-seated prejudice of the East against the West; it is apt to be thought of in terms of colonialism; and it is apt to be thought of in terms of reaction. In a society as wretched as that the promises of the Communists appear by that very token more convincing and more alluring. If you take a relatively well-civilized society, you know

that is the kind of a society that will not accept "pie in the sky" as an answer to its problems. But when you get a wretched society, there is, of course, a little greater chance of that kind of thing actually happening. So I think our problem in the Orient is a very difficult problem indeed.

I, personally, believe that the reluctance of this administration to use physical force in the Orient in Indo-China — on the ground, at any rate — was highly desirable and was necessary. I believe that if we had intervened in Viet Nam we would have almost inevitably identified ourselves with reaction — certainly as long as the French were there — and that we would have to fight the kind of war for which we are least qualified, probably some kind of guerrilla warfare. We have a very serious problem there.

Furthermore, we have a very serious problem in Japan because the economic health of Japan is a matter of fundamental significance to the United States, and this is not easy to secure. I suppose that certainly one factor — not the only factor, not the decisive one, and not the answer to every difficulty — is in permitting the Japanese to export more freely, not exporting arms to China but civilian goods to the United States. Even so, the problem is a very large one.

I think we are doing pretty well in southern Indo-China in the support which we have given to the regime of Ngo Dinh Diem. This régime does identify itself with the national psychology, and it may furnish a useful barrier against communism.

But we can be very certain there is no easy answer to our problems in the Far East. There is no easy answer to the problem of Korea, where we have made substantial progress in build-up a South Korean armed force, but where we can hardly dissociate ourselves entirely. There is no easy answer to the question of Chiang and Formosa, which is likely to be with us for a long time to come. But with regard to the Far East, I think we have to say that both public opinion and thoughtful judgment suggest

the limitation of military action. Indeed, it seems to me that that is the pattern which is forming at the present time.

This has been a very sweeping review of a great many things, but I have tried to place before you, as I see it, the picture of the American position today. I shall be very happy to answer questions. Thank you!

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Professor Dexter Perkins

Professor Perkins attended Harvard University, receiving his A. B. and Ph. D. degrees. He was an instructor in history at the University of Cincinnati from 1914 to 1915, after which he was instructor, assistant professor, professor and head of the Department of History at the University of Rochester from 1915 to 1954.

In addition to his activities at the University of Rochester, Professor Perkins has served as City Historian at Rochester, New York (1936-1948); official Historian for the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information at the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, and Chairman of the Board of the Rochester Association for the United Nations.

He was the first Professor of American History and Institutions at Cambridge University (1945-1946) and in the spring of 1949, he was a visiting professor at the University of Uppsala, Sweden. His latest volume, *The American Approach to Foreign Policy* (1953), was originally given as the Gottesman lectures at that university.

Professor Perkins has been President of the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, Harvard University, since 1950, and the John L. Senior Professor in American Civilization at Cornell University since 1954. He has written widely on American foreign policy and is a specialist on the Monroe Doctrine. He is the author of *The Monroe Doctrine*, 1867-1907; *Hands Off: A History of the Monroe Doctrine; America and Two Wars; The United States and the Caribbean;* and *The Evolution of American Foreign Policy.*

THE NATURE OF WAR

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 17 October 1955 by
Professor Gordon B. Turner

Gentlemen:

The tables are turned. The last time I visited the Naval War College, to attend one of your Global Strategy Sessions, it was primarily to watch the staff and students perform on the lecture platform and in the seminar rooms. I had the distinct pleasure of sitting in the audience thinking up nasty questions to pose to you from the floor. This time, however, I am not only to be on the receiving end of your penetrating questions, but I, a civilian, am to discuss with you one of the most fundamental subjects of your profession: the nature of war. The situation this time is no less pleasant, but for me it is a far more challenging one.

Why, you may legitimately ask, did the staff of the War College select a civilian to lecture on the nature of war? The answer to this question is no less logical than the question itself. It was a realization on the part of the staff that war is an integral part of society; that war is waged in accord with the dictates of the state; and that the conduct of war is subject to the capacities and limitations of civilian life. It was a realization also that to study war apart from the context of society is to misunderstand the very nature of war itself.

Military affairs and civil affairs are so intimately enmeshed, indeed the relationship between war and society is such a close one, that to think of war solely in terms of its military aspects is not only misleading but may lead to dangerous miscalculations. It is not too much to say that the nature of war hinges upon the nature of society. And this is so precisely because the objectives

of war are political in nature, the composition of military forces is dependent upon the ideals and limitations of civilian life, and the strategical, tactical and logistical principles are determined in large measure by political, scientific and economic factors.

I shall have something to say later on about the significance of this relationship between the nature of war and society as it pertains to our current politico-military problems. I shall want to talk with you about the impact of nuclear war on society and to suggest how it may determine the nature of war in the future. But first let me illustrate in more concrete terms the point that military forces and the employment of military forces are reflections of the societies which support them.

History provides us with many examples of this phenomenon, but the clearest and most concise one is that provided by the sudden shift from the 18th to the 19th century forms of war. This change from limited to unlimited war coincided with the transition from dynastic to national structures of government, and was a direct consequence of the French Revolution.

In the 18th century the way of life of western Europe was sufficiently homogeneous so that it is possible to speak of the European military system as a unit. Warfare in that era was characterized by moderation and precision. It was mechanical and rational. Battles were avoided rather than sought, and a victory was seldom pushed to the point of complete destruction of the enemy forces. Defense predominated over the offense, and military targets were primarily supply lines, magazines and the fortifications that defended them rather than the enemy's main army itself. The direct assault was scorned in favor of complicated maneuvers. A partial explanation of the limited nature of warfare in the 18th century doubtless lies in matters purely military, but the basic reasons must be sought in other fields. They are to be found in the social composition and military structure of the armies, in the limited political purposes of war, and in the economic milieu in which the wars were fought.

One principle, indeed, above all others shaped the military forces of western Europe in the 18th century. It was expressed explicitly by French and Prussian military experts, and was implicit in British, Spanish and Austrian thought. The guiding principle was this, and I quote from the French Minister of War, the Comte de St. Germain. "It would undoubtedly be desirable," Germain said, "if we could create an army of dependable and specially selected men of the best type. But in order to make an army, we must not destroy the nation; it would be destruction to a nation if it were deprived of its best elements. As things are, the army must inevitably consist of the scum of the people and of all those for whom society has no use. We must therefore rely on military discipline to purify and mould the mass of corruption and turn it into something useful."

You will note that Germain says: "as things are," the army must consist of the scum and the unproductive. He was referring to the fact that western civilization was just coming into a period of productive expansion but that it had not yet reached the machine age, and that skilled labor was in great demand. He was quite correct in saying that if the productive labor force had been conscripted for non-productive military purposes, the nation's economy would have suffered. In the preceding century western Europe had been scorched by a series of highly destructive wars, and now when the economy was just beginning to revive and expand under the impulse of overseas commercial ventures and the Industrial Revolution, skilled labor was necessarily scarce. The guiding principle of Europe's 18th military system was, therefore, to have a strong army without injuring the productive forces of the nation.

This rule applied with equal validity to both officers and enlisted men. On the continent the higher ranks in the armed forces were apportioned among the nobles, who received the top echelon commands as their prescriptive right. To say that they were unproductive is no exaggeration. It was not at all uncommon,

except in Prussia, for a nobleman to be commissioned at birth, and to spend his time idling with the women of the Court, and debauching himself into a fat old age. Although some officers were able, it was inevitable that many were worthless, having been commissioned from the riffraff of the aristocracy just as the privates were shanghaied from the offscourings of the proletariat. The armies of Europe were not, of course, without some capable and resourceful generals, but court intrigue kept them out of responsible commands.

Destined for a military career almost from birth, the officers had a magnificent opportunity to learn their trade. Great care was taken to see that they were properly educated. Those wealthy enough to buy their way into the top ranks soon learned the advantages of employing the finest tailor, the best perfumer, the most splendid carriages and the most expensive liveries in town. They learned that it was expected of them to gamble a great deal, to dance often, and to be seen frequently at the theater. Then they were ready to fight. These officers lived in the army very much as they had at court, accompanied by their carriages and their cooks. Loath to give up the comforts of society, they were certain to obtain an elaborate field kit before entering upon any campaign. This might well consist of a coach, a coupe' and a berline, a half a dozen mules with gorgeous trappings, and a host of footmen and grooms in colorful liveries. It was not unknown for French generals to entertain as many as 200 guests for dinner right in the midst of an active campaign.

This situation, of course, had profound effects upon the mobility of the army. No army could move far or fast with such cumbersome baggage trains when road networks were few and of inferior quality. When officers thought so much of their comforts as to cause the quartermaster-general to mobilize the resources of an entire city to provide for them, as was often the case, it is not surprising that battles were few and campaigns were indecisive.

This relative rareness of battles and inconclusiveness of wars was not, of course, the result of the structure of the officer corps alone. The conditions which made for the predominance of the defensive in war can be understood only in light of the whole social, political and economic pattern of the time. We must take the enlisted man into consideration in seeking to explain the moderation of 18th century warfare. Recruited either from abroad or from the economically useless segments of the population, the common soldier was thoroughly undependable. He enlisted ordinarily only for the most compelling reasons, such as the lure of food and drink held out by recruiting officers. And if sufficient men could not be procured in this way, kidnapping was practiced, and criminals and murderers were given the opportunity to exchange the sure death of prison pestholes for a chance to survive upon the field of battle.

Well, armies so constituted had to take extraordinary precautions against desertion, and tactics were planned with this in mind. Marching during the night and camping in forests had to be avoided. Tight formations were the rule and open fields were the preferred battlegrounds. Soldiers, who were held in the utmost contempt by their officers and scorned by the civilian populace, felt neither loyalty to the army nor patriotism to the state. A general who was rash enough to let his men spread out in the advance or who ordered them to assault with the bayonet, could expect that a large portion of his troops would either go over to the enemy or, not wanting to die, they would simply fade away. For this reason, the advance was slow. Frequent halts were called in order to close ranks; and battles were broken off before decisive action could be taken.

So much for tactics.

The system of supply was similarly affected by the type of soldiers employed. Foraging was strictly prohibited. No army could live off the land when civilians and soldiers were filled with loathing for one another. A soldier who everywhere read signs

posted up on public buildings and garden walls which read: "No dogs, prostitutes or soldiers allowed" could not be expected to treat civilians with respect or courtesy. Under these conditions a centralized ration system had to be established in order to restrict pillage and destruction of the countryside and to keep a check upon desertion. The magazine system was established for this purpose. Grain and flour were stored in magazines to be used to supply the troops in time of war, and these storage houses were placed according to strategic determinations along existing lines of communication. This system in its turn determined the strategy of any major campaign, for all armies were tied to their magazines, and hot pursuit of a defeated enemy was impossible to undertake.

This formal, deliberate, not to say leisurely, way of conducting campaigns in the 18th century may seem incomprehensible to the 20th-century mind, bred as it is on total wars waged for national survival, but it fitted in very nicely with the objectives of 18th century wars. Western Europe had by that time reached a stage of relative political stability. The vicious and bitterly contested religious wars of the 17th century were now over. The normal form of government was absolute monarchy, and wars were fought generally for some minor economic advantage or national aggrandizement with strictly limited objectives. The moderation with which 18th-century warfare was conducted was the result, therefore, not only of the social composition of the armies, but of the economic and political requirements that the civil life must not be disrupted.

Moreover, for two reasons the monarchs of the old régime could not have waged total war even if they had wanted to do so. The first reason is that wars in the 18th century were wars between rulers and not between peoples. The common man had no stake in them, no motive for fighting, and, hence, the human resources pool was limited either to vagrants or mercenaries. The second reason is that under the dynastic form of state the

monarch was in a precarious position with respect to the aristocracy. No matter how absolute the king's power might be in theory, sizable privileges had to be extended to the nobles in order to keep them in line, and these privileges ordinarily took the form of tax exemption and a monopoly on the commissioned ranks in the army. In other words, the monarchs of the dynastic state could not draw on the full material resources of their nations because their powers of taxation were restricted. Total war implies, as you know, the utilization of all resources, both human and material, and this the governments of the 18th century simply could not do. So the wars of the 18th century were limited; they were fought with limited means for limited objectives.

Well, all this was changed after 1789. The national wars in the period from 1792 to 1815 were characterized by mass armies, by lightning operations and by total destruction. They marked a turning point between a type of conflict which had its origins in the early 16th century and the type with which we are familiar today — that is, they marked the shift from limited to unlimited war.

In back of the sweeping transition from moderation to total destruction lay the French Revolution. The military revolution, in other words, was at bottom a political revolution which fused the government with the governed and gave the people a feeling of participation in the state and a sense of loyalty in fighting for its cause. At the same time the government, which now governed in the name of the people, could tap the human and material resources of the nation in a way that a monarch isolated from his subjects had never been able to do. The potential wealth and military manpower of France could now be developed for the first time. With the nobility stripped of its privileges of tax exemption and monopoly on the officer corps, and with the mass of the people raised to the status of citizen, the government found itself for the first time in possession of the two elements essential for the waging of total war. First, it could create a war economy

which could bring all the physical wealth to bear on the national war effort. Second, it could introduce the principle of universal military service which produced an army with national self-consciousness.

The new national state thus at one stroke solved the two major problems which had limited the actions of the dynastic states. The manpower problem was licked by the ease with which mass armies could be raised, and a strategy of mobility and annihilation could be invoked because the citizen-soldier was willing to endure the discomforts of a limited supply train; because he was capable of being trusted as a scout and a skirmisher; and because he was zealous in the destruction of the enemies of Revolutionary France.

These qualities of the new citizen-soldier in their turn produced a revolution in logistics and in tactics. It was now possible to supply the French armies by requisitions rather than by magazines. These requisitions might be made directly by the state upon the national economy, or they might be made by the army on the people of the French countryside. Then, once the army had advanced beyond the borders of France, severe levies could be made upon the enemy in the form of military equipment or in the plunder of foreign treasuries. No longer were civilians immune from military devastation. *This* was something new.

Finally, it was possible to revolutionize tactics because patriot soldiers could be thrown into battle and allowed to act on their own initiative, deployed as skirmishers, firing and taking cover as individuals.

I mentioned a moment ago a change from moderation to unlimited, total, destructive warfare. The French government, as a result of the French Revolution, could now reach directly down to the individual and assess both his person and his property for military duty. This made total war possible, but did it make

it inevitable? What was the reason for the new concept of ruthlessness? Why unlimited objectives in war?

It was in the first place the civilian government, and not the military establishment, which called for unlimited war and which started the large-scale consumption of soldiers. For the civilian government, the strategic objective of the foreign wars was essentially the same as that of the civil war at home; that is, the complete annihilation of all enemies of the state to insure the survival of the state and to protect the gains of the Revolution.

In order to secure as many voluntary enlistments as possible, and to give courage and a common purpose to untrained troops, propaganda techniques were extensively developed and employed by the government on an impressive scale. Propaganda had of course been used before, but its use as a weapon of war against the enemy was new, and the recognition of it as an indispensable tool for the raising and inspiring of mass armies can safely be called an element distinctive to the new military system of the national state. Citizen-soldiers marching to war singing the *Marseillaise* and carrying revolutionary ideas to all parts of Europe were something new under the European sun. Groups of French soldiers mingled with the enemy declaiming the brotherhood of man, and singing the praises of liberty and equality. In short, this was ideological warfare, and out of it grew the cry for victory — total victory — and nothing less than total victory.

Here, then, we have for the first time the two prerequisites of unlimited war: unlimited means and unlimited objectives. And for the next 150 years it was these factors which were to determine the nature of war. Once the nations — that is, the governments and the people — had the *ability* and the *will* to fight on to the point of exhaustion, their military leaders organized their units and framed their strategy with this in mind. In other words, as the nature of society changed, as science and industry produced new and more deadly weapons, and as the objectives of war reached new heights, the nature of war changed to conform.

From what I have already said, then, it should be apparent that there is nothing rigid about the nature of war. It is as flexible and as dynamic as society itself. If the governments of the world do not learn and apply this simple dictum, if they fail to limit their objectives in international affairs, or if they remain so suspicious and distrustful of one another as to prevent effective limitation of weapons of mass destruction, then war can and will destroy society as we know it today. The world has the ability to save itself, but the path to national security is not an easy one.

Indeed, it is made much more difficult by the conviction that is widely held, and incorrectly maintained, that war "is an act of violence pushed to the utmost bounds." This maxim, laid down by Karl von Clausewitz after an intensive study of the Napoleonic Wars, unfortunately caught the imagination of the world's statesmen and soldiers so vividly that even today, when we have the means to destroy ourselves, it is commonly believed that the objective of war is victory — unconditional victory. Gentlemen, this simply is not so.

The objective of war is political in nature, not military; the objective of war is whatever the belligerent powers determine at any given moment. It may be to compel unconditional surrender as it was in World War II. It may be merely to prevent complete defeat — to string the war out until the enemy is willing to negotiate or compromise some of his initial objectives. It may be simply to insure a potential enemy's neutrality in future wars, as was Bismarck's objective in the Austro-Prussian conflict. Or, indeed, the objectives themselves may be flexible and may change during the course of the war as was the case in Korea. In that instance the initial aim of the United Nations was restricted to forcing the North Koreans back to their own boundaries in order to demonstrate that the United Nations would not condone aggression. It was not until after the Inchon landing that the objective was officially altered by the United Nations to the unification

of all Korea by means of a drive north to the Yalu. The objective of that war never did become total military victory over the Chinese Communists.

Now, I said a moment ago that the road back to limited wars would not be an easy one in the face of the Clausewitzian dictum that war is an act of violence carried to the extreme. The fact that Clausewitz understood the nature of war better perhaps than we do today, the fact that he knew perfectly well that war was not an isolated act divorced from social life, and that many factors could work to modify its philosophical definition as an act of extreme violence — these facts are too often forgotten today. I shall not deal further with Clausewitz because next month my colleague, Professor Craig, will be here to lecture on this subject. I merely wish to make the point that the Clausewitzian definition has been misunderstood by many historians and professional soldiers, and that this makes the task of limiting wars the more difficult.

But this is not the only obstacle. It has long been the conviction of Americans that war must be fought *à outrance*. They incline to be impatient with delays. When war begins, though the United States may be unprepared for it, they look for an immediate offensive and will accept nothing less than total victory. They like to do things in a big way not only in the realm of civil life but in wars as well. Now, I do not condemn this attitude — far from it. It is probable that without this vigorous spirit our past war efforts would have been less successful. But the idea that we have always imposed our will upon enemies, that we have always compelled unconditional surrender, is not true; and the belief that we must do so in the future is a dangerous doctrine in the nuclear age.

Again I say, the nature of war is flexible, and for our salvation we must keep this in mind. If our military leaders, under the influence of Clausewitz or under pressure from the government and the people, lay their plans *solely* and *exclusively*

on the historical assumption that we must wage all-out war, the United States may find itself faced with the embarrassing alternative of having to wage total nuclear war or no war at all. And, I might add, the ill repute in which most Americans hold the Korean War, because of its limited nature, makes the task of limiting our objectives and formulating flexible plans for military action much more difficult.

Yet, in spite of the extreme dislike for the nature of the Korean War, conflicts of this character may be our only means to escape destruction under the conditions of nuclear holocaust. I think I need say little to this audience about the consequences of an all-out thermonuclear war in the future. We all know that when hydrogen bombs and long-range bombers or guided missiles are in the hands of the Soviet Union in quantity, we shall not escape destruction if it comes to total war between us. We know that the word "victory" in a war of this nature is meaningless.

This, I believe, should be the starting point for our thinking. If there can be no such thing as total victory in the traditional sense of the word, if we must be destroyed in the process of achieving total victory, then we must reset our sights and define victory in more limited terms. I am not of course suggesting that circumstances will never arise when we may have to resort to full-scale thermonuclear war, and we must be prepared for it. I am suggesting that we change our attitude, we alter our politico-military policy, and readjust our military planning so that an all-out war is not the only solution we can advance for every emergency problem. Our sights must be set to avoid the big war, if at all compatible with our interests. We must modify our objectives so that if resort to war becomes necessary, we will not compel our opponents and ourselves to reach beyond the realm of limited conflict.

Let me now turn to the advantages which limited war can hold for us, and then examine the ways and means by which wars may be restricted. I have now, of course, left the field of

history where as an historian I can speak with some authority, and I am turning to a discussion of future events — military events in part — where I place myself at your mercy in the question period that follows. This, however, is a field wide open to conjecture — one requiring a pooling of talents if reasonable solutions to our critical problems are to be found. And I am sure you will receive these ideas in the spirit in which they are imparted — as suggestions only, but constructive suggestions based upon some knowledge of the history of military affairs. I shall sincerely welcome any comments that will either strengthen my argument or which will compel me to adjust my thinking.

What, then, are the advantages of limited warfare? First of all, it may permit us to escape having to make the dreadful decision between thermonuclear war, in which our way of life will be destroyed, or the voluntary surrender of our way of life to the demands of the communist world without firing a shot. The decision to retreat or die is not a pleasant one. It is one which may possibly be avoided by the less unpleasant expedient of fighting limited wars. The protection of our national security is the duty of our national government, and it is the mission of our military establishment. National security is concerned with our ability to maintain our way of life, including our democratic ideals, our economic system and our cultural inheritance. We must therefore frame a policy which avoids forcing us to the alternative of deciding between the end of our way of life through military disaster. The ability to restrict war and the capacity to win limited ones will help to avoid this fatal decision.

The second advantage is a counterpart of the first. Limited wars tend to keep foreign policy and military means in some kind of reasonable balance. If the nation's military leaders know that as a result of a controlled national policy limited wars may be the prospect for the future, they will formulate war plans and develop the conventional weapons with which such wars are fought. The acute military leader today knows that flexibility of

forces, plans and weapons is essential if he is to fight any kind of war that his nation demands of him. If, however, the sole policy of the government is to be one of massive retaliation, the military establishment is immediately faced with the dilemma of expending its limited resources in a rigid strategic pattern, knowing full well that a new administration in Washington or new circumstances in the world may break that pattern and bring on a conventional war which it will not then be prepared to fight.

And if the military is not prepared for this situation, the government may then be faced with the alternative of waging a big war for a minor objective or accepting the loss of an important aim which is not quite vital enough for which to wage full-scale war. Statesmen and soldiers must equally maintain flexibility. If they do, military means and political policy can be kept in balance. It is, as you know, foolhardy to frame a foreign policy which is beyond the military's capacity to execute in case of need. It is no less dangerous to build a military machine which cannot achieve limited objectives without waging atomic war. Limited warfare helps to avoid this quandry.

And, finally, a third advantage of limited war is that it is infinitely cheaper than total war in lives and in property. A hundred Koreas could be waged for the price of one thermonuclear conflict — not in terms of money to be sure, but in terms of human lives and urban-industrial properties.

Now, I think you will grant me this much of my argument. I think you will agree that limited wars are preferable to nuclear holocaust. But, you will ask, how can this be achieved? How can we convince the communist nations that they should join with us in restricting the devastations of modern war? This is a legitimate question. No nation, unless it is overwhelmingly superior to its enemy and has the initiative, can wage war solely on its own terms. And *we* have neither of these advantages. How then answer the question?

In the first place, for the immediate future, and perhaps for the intermediate future as well, we can discard Red China and the satellites from our calculations. We can do this because at present they can only wage conventional war. And if we do not push them too hard, if we do not make greater demands upon them than they can reasonably accept, they will not turn to the Soviet Union for nuclear assistance. Our problem, then, for the moment is to induce the Kremlin to refrain from carrying war to its ultimate extremity.

If we demonstrate wisdom in formulating our politico-military policy, this task may not be so difficult as at first glance it appears. In the first place, the policy of deterence through massive retaliation has not lost all of its validity just because the Russians have found the secret of nuclear reaction and possess the atomic and hydrogen bomb. We still possess the means to retaliate. The major difference in the new situation is that we will be less likely to initiate atomic bombing except for the most compelling reasons because the doctrine of massive retaliation now works both ways. If we use it, the enemy certainly will. To this extent there will soon be something in the nature of nuclear stalemate, and I maintain that if ever a situation suggested local, limited, conventional wars, nuclear stalemate does.

Moreover, the Communists have throughout their brief history shown an extraordinary willingness to be flexible, and they have demonstrated an equal facility to limit and control the nature of war. I should judge that their diversity in the use of violence is no more than a reflection of their flexibility in political affairs. They are adept at beating strategic political retreats, in temporarily limiting their objectives, in turning on and off their propaganda for peace and war. Their use of force is no less unorthodox. They employ it to gain information; they use it in guerrilla and subversive actions, and they employ their satellites' forces in wars of limited intensity. In short, if we apply to

the Soviet Union the theory that the nature of war is but a reflection of society, we can gauge a fair prospect of limited wars in the future.

Of course, we should not depend upon a theory alone or upon a guess as to the Kremlin's reaction to the doctrine of massive retaliation. There are several positive steps we ourselves can take to contribute to the limitation of warfare in the future. First of all, we must keep our political objectives within reasonable bounds. This is an obvious prerequisite for limited wars. If we demand too much of a potential enemy, he will fight with every means in his power. We must not then seek any sudden redistribution of power between the Communist and the Free World. We should speak softly about liberation of the satellites, and confine our employment of military force to the settlement of specific issues rather than to long-range policy objectives. If we do this, and we hit the enemy hard at the same time, we permit him to extricate himself from a difficult position without too great a loss of face. If we do not, we force him to use his desperation weapons.

Second, having determined on a national policy of limited objectives, we should frame a military policy in accord with it. During peacetime, we must develop armed forces capable of supporting our limited objectives. These forces must be immediately available to move swiftly into the battle area with sufficient strength to stabilize the military situation. This will ensure us at least an equal position at the bargaining table no matter how early negotiations are begun. In Korea, we were so weak for several months that we could not consider negotiating, and heavy casualties were suffered while we built up our strength. If we had not then raised our objectives and crossed the 38th parallel at the height of our power, we might have induced earlier and more profitable negotiations on the part of the North Koreans.

Third, having decided upon a military policy, we must frame a strategic concept which will be in harmony with it. Our

strategic aim should be to stop the enemy in his tracks as quickly as possible, *but,* and I emphasize the *but,* we should be extremely careful not to force the enemy into an unlimited war by engaging in a strategic offensive so vigorous as to leave him no room for choice. This is doubtless an unorthodox concept, but when we are engaged here in an unusual policy and an unorthodox war. We must suit our actions to our policy of limited wars by showing the enemy that this is our intention. Now this is merely saying that strategy should follow policy. It is simply advocating that an attritional strategy is far superior in this case to a strategy of annihilation. Such a concept is as old as military history. And it is as new as General Ridgway's policy of inflicting enormous casualties on the Chinese in Korea by blocking and holding operations. This had the tremendous advantage of forcing the enemy to ponder on his losses while letting him turn to the bargaining table as a way out. It did not carry the war to the Chinese homeland, where he could not have quit without first resorting to a supreme effort.

Fourth, it is of extreme importance that we develop a wide range of weapons to fit the wide range of wars in which we may become involved under this policy. These weapons, if they are not to extend the conflict, must be capable of precise employment in restricted areas, and they must be accepted as normal and conventional weapons of war. They must be able to operate effectively against front-line troops and forward supply lines rather than against the enemy's main sources of supply. In my opinion, we should be extremely chary about employing tactical atomic weapons on the battlefield. War is so dynamic a process that a resort to increasingly destructive weapons becomes the natural evolution of events. Once started, this race for comparative advantage in destructiveness is almost impossible to stop.

Furthermore, it is not at all certain that it would be to our advantage to engage in tactical atomic warfare with the Russians. Our heavily weighted rear echelons and our large supply

lines and facilities offer better targets than do those of our enemies. In addition, our tremendous advantage in industrial know-how is decreased relative to that of the enemy by the use of a small number of weapons of supreme destructive power. The way to offset their advantage in manpower is to confine the conflict to the use of large quantitnes of highly diversified weapons. This is one in which we can put our industrial complex to the maximum use.

These, then, are the measures we can pursue to limit warfare in the future. You will note that in thinking this process through we began by talking about policy (national policy and military policy); we then moved on to consider strategy, and, finally, took up the question of weapons. This is the proper method of approach. The weapon should not choose the strategy, and strategy should not determine policy. It should be the reverse.

Now, gentlemen, I know that a policy of limited warfare is open to criticism. It will be objected that this can slowly bleed us to death. I answer that if we are prepared to stop these local attacks in their tracks and prevent the enemy from attaining his objectives, such attacks will cease because the enemy will find that they don't pay off. I answer also that the alternative is sudden death.

It will be objected that such a policy entails great cost. This is true. There is no cheap and easy answer to national defense. Large-scale conventional forces in addition to a nuclear deterrent force will be expensive to maintain, but the cost of a nuclear war will be far greater. The United States, with its stable and expanding economy, should be able to bear the burden of a large peacetime military establishment. And we already know that it absorbed the $70 billion cost of the Korean War without any appreciable effects upon the civilian requirements.

My time is up. The question period may elicit other objections which I shall try to answer. I do not hold this concept

out as a panacea. This course, if followed, will be a difficult, and at times a frustrating, one. But if we remember that the nature of war is flexible and that it is a product of the will and capacity of society, I see no reason why we can't make it work. And if we remember also what the horrible alternative is, we will know that we must make it work.

Thank you very much.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Several of the ideas presented in the last section of this lecture were suggested by a manuscript prepared for publication by William W. Kaufmann, Research Associate with the Center of International Studies at Princeton University.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

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Professor Turner received his A. M., and A. M., and Ph. D. degrees from Princeton University. During World War II, he served in the United States Army.

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THE NATURE OF MILITARY STRATEGY

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 18 October 1955 by
Professor Hiram M. Stout

Our topic this morning, *The Nature of Military Strategy*, is one on which a great many books and articles have been written, a fact our library catalogue will confirm. I suppose there are at least two reasons for this voluminous literature. One is that the subject is of great importance — indeed, often of vital importance — to organized communities of men. And, secondly, dealing as it does with warfare, it always requires new and revised interpretations.

We are all familiar with the changes in warfare that have occurred since the dawn of recorded history. Some of these changes have been matters of degree — larger and faster ships, more accurate weapons, quicker and more reliable means of communication. Others have been changes of kind, changes so revolutionary that all states maintaining military forces have had to adopt them or accept a condition of permanent inferiority and perhaps even extinction of the state itself. I suppose we would list in this group such innovations as gunpowder, the armored steam vessel, and the airplane.

We are now in a period of radical change. Some students of the subject assert that the advent of nuclear weapons has wrought such a revolution that all concepts of the past are obsolete. For example, Mr. Bernard Brodie in the current issue of *Harper's Magazine* declares that the road of military thought, stretching in time from antiquity to our own day, terminates just over the next hill in a dead end. The concluding paragraph of his article reads:

> "In a world still unprepared to relinquish the use of military power, we must learn to effect that

use through methods that are something other than self-destroying. The task will be bafflingly difficult at best, but it can only begin with the clear recognition that most of the military ideas and axioms of the past are now or soon will be inapplicable. The old concepts of strategy, including those of Douhet and of World War II, have come to a dead end. What we must now initiate is the comprehensive pursuit of the new ideas and procedures necessary to carry us through the next two or three dangerous decades."

Obviously, some of the old definitions of military strategy are of little relevance to modern conditions. We read in 19th century textbooks such definitions as: "Strategy is the conduct of military operations out of sight of the enemy, while tactics is their conduct after the rival forces are in view." Or, "Military strategy is the conduct of military operations on a map or chart." Modern students of strategy have given us newer and broader definitions. According to Liddell-Hart, it is: "The art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy." You are familiar with Admiral Carney's definition: "Strategy is a plan of action best to employ resources toward the achievement of aims." Let me add one more, for which I am indebted to Admiral Eccles: "Strategy is the comprehensive direction and control of power toward the attainment of broad objectives or aims."

It seems to me that these definitions contain ideas of permanent validity, ideas as useful for the nuclear age as for earlier periods of history. Consequently, this morning I would like to comment on the ideas which are suggested by modern definitions of strategy; then, I wish to consider the relationship of military strategy and national strategy, examining briefly our American institutions for formulating and conducting military and national strategy; and, finally, to apply some of these thoughts on strategy to an historical episode.

It will be helpful to recognize in the beginning, I believe, that "strategy" is the surname of a family of strategies. There is a parent strategy which Liddell-Hart calls "grand strategy," but which we refer to more commonly as "national strategy." Then there are at least four children in this family — namely, military strategy, political or diplomatic strategy, economic strategy, and psychological strategy. All have a contribution to make to the parent strategy and it is incomplete without consideration of their special functions and roles. Moreover, each is shaped and conditioned by the hereditary characteristics and the environmental influences imparted by the parental strategy.

A military strategy consists, I suggest, of a plan composed of three elements: objectives, power, direction. The objectives are the aims or goals we wish to achieve through the plan. The power is the force we dispose. The direction is the control and manipulation we exert on the power to reach the objectives. It is the link between power and objectives; it gives sense and purpose to our strategy.

These elements are present in national strategy and in military, political, economic, and psychological strategy. Each has objectives to be attained, each has power to dispose, and there is a direction, a control seeking to organize, channel, and project this power toward the attainment of the objectives.

Let us examine these elements as they pertain to military strategy. To begin with, where do we get the objectives of our military strategy? There are three sources, it seems to me, from which these objectives are developed. In the first place, the military strategist receives guidance from national strategy. National strategy will give him both general and specific goals that the nation is seeking to achieve in its relations with foreign states. It will identify for him certain areas or positions which are deemed vital to the security of the country. Drawing on these, he has guides for the identification of military objectives.

In the second place, he determines objectives from his professional knowledge and experience. He knows that if certain national objectives are to be achieved there are concomitant military objectives which must be realized. There are present positions to be safeguarded; there is territory to be seized and held; there are enemy forces to be countered, reduced and defeated.

The third source from which he draws is intelligence. Intelligence — by giving him an appraisal of the opposing forces, actual and potential — will assist him in identifying the proper objectives of his strategy and in arranging them in a logical priority. I would like at this point to emphasize the importance of the effective use of intelligence by the strategical planner. Intelligence agencies can collect a great deal of information, analyze it and organize it, and prepare reports and estimates, but much of it is only of marginal usefulness unless it is related to plans under consideration. The intelligence officer needs guidance and direction just as does the logistical planner of whom Admiral McCormick was speaking the other day. The intelligence officer can deduce from the information available to him what situations are important and what our strategy is likely to be. But without guidance, his timing on the production of relevant intelligence is apt to be faulty, and he may fail to deal with critical questions.

The security problem is a serious one in this relationship of strategical planning and intelligence, and I do not wish to dismiss it as unimportant. I do contend that the fence between may be so high that little guidance to the intelligence staff surmounts it, and I think that such a condition is detrimental to the strategical planning process. The point is that the strategical planner is going to formulate objectives in terms of some estimate of foreign capabilities, vulnerabilities, and intentions, and that he is better equipped if he calls on professional assistance.

Our second element of strategy is power. For the military strategist, this element consists of the forces in being and the potential forces that can be raised. As we know, he must be

concerned not merely with numbers, but with organization and disposition, with equipment and weapons, with state of training, and with the vast problems of the logistical support of forces. He takes into account those relatively permanent elements of power — what we discussed in one of our courses as the "objective bases of power." These include geographical situation, natural resources, and population characteristics. In these days the military strategist would certainly give attention to the civil defense problem. Although labelled "civil" defense, the relationship to military power is so obvious as to require no amplification.

Coming to our third element, direction, we are concerned with a headquarters so organized, staffed and controlled that it can develop the proper objectives for military action, can estimate the resources of power available to it, and can intelligently direct these forces to the attainment of objectives.

One of the many Lincoln stories relates that the President was handed one day a military dispatch from General Hooker. Across the top it read, "Headquarters: In the Saddle." "That's the trouble with Hooker," Lincoln said, "His headquarters are always where his hindquarters should be." Effective strategy requires a thinking center capable of clear perception, accurate estimation, and resolute decision.

This headquarters must have means for dealing with and assimilating that updraft of information and advice which flows toward the top of our organizational pyramid and for issuing the directives and guidance which become the basis of strategical planning on lower echelons as well as orders for action.

Let us now consider the relationship between national strategy and military strategy. I have already mentioned that national strategy is one of the principal factors determining military objectives. It is this connection that makes war and the use of force in international relations a rational proposition. Military strategy by adapting its objectives to those of national strategy seeks to obtain ends which have value and importance to

the state. There are other connections no less significant. National strategy determines the weight and character of the power which will be wielded in accordance with military strategy. National strategy makes the determination of what proportion of a nation's resources will be allocated to the armed forces, and it often carries that allocation to the principal services. It decides the extent to which the mobilizable base to support military forces will be expanded when deemed necessary, and how this shall be done. National strategy frequently determines the geographical distribution or disposition of military forces and thus places limits on military strategy. As another factor in this relationship, national strategy provides the higher direction and coordination of military strategy with political strategy, economic strategy, and psychological strategy. It arranges these substrategies in ways leading toward the attainment of national objectives and provides for their mutual support. National strategy, finally, coordinates the strategy of one nation with its allies and endeavors to assure a coalition strategy. In this respect, it tries to develop a common strategical plan whose objectives will include those deemed most important to itself and which disposes of forces adequate to the attainment of these objectives.

There are equally important ways in which military strategy influences national strategy. Military objectives will determine in part what national objectives are selected as reasonable and attainable. Moreover, military power, being such a tremendous and potent aspect of national power, will by its presence or absence and its effectiveness determine in large measure the extent to which national objectives are achieved. So the two strategies work upon each other. Military strategy must be devoloped and carried out in consonance with national strategy, but at the same time national strategy is greatly conditioned by military strategy.

I have spoken of direction as being an element of strategy, and I have described it as headquarters which provides the working link between power and objectives. This headquarters may be the

commander and his staff in the realms of military strategy, and the chief executive and his staff organs and agencies for national strategy. Until recent years we in the United States were deficient in this sort of strategical control mechanism, particularly, for the development and implementation of general military strategy and even more so for national strategy. Above the level of the individual military services and the separate departments of government, we relied upon such organization and procedures as successive Presidents might devise and be disposed to use. National objectives were largely declared in messages which the President sent or delivered to the Congress or in speeches which he gave on other occasions. From these the military departments and the Department of State could draw such objectives for their own strategies as seemed appropriate. We scarcely had what one would call an economic strategy, fcr the actions we took with respect to the outside world were little directed by government policy — and when they were, they were reflections of the push and pull of domestic forces. As for psychological strategy, it usually had no recognized place in the way in which we conducted our relations with other states. The United States was certainly an influence in world affairs and what we said and did had great impact upon other governments and upon the peoples of other countries. There was little conscious planning, however, in the wielding of this influence, and it was rarely coordinated with the other aspects of national strategy.

Such coordination as took place between military, political, economic, and psychological strategy occurred almost literally at the President's desk in the White House. He saw the Secretaries of State, Navy, and War and other members of his official family who might be concerned with the foreign policy of the United States and our military posture, and he worked out with them plans and programs for the achievement of our aims. It was all very informal and unsystematic. Some Secretaries had more success than others in seeing the President and convincing him of their point of view. Occasionally, through sheer inadvertence or

neglect, an important consideration would not get presented to the President before he was called upon to give his approvel to a strategical concept or a line of policy.

This informal system was quite inadequate to the demands of World War II. Very early military strategy was brought under direction by the establishment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Consisting of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Chief of the Air Force, although the Air Force was not at that time an independent service, this group was able to give strategical direction to the American war effort. Through Admiral Leahy, as the President's personal representative on the committee, it had a direct link with the Commander-in-Chief. The JCS quickly developed a considerable staff to support it in its work. Joint committees on plans, intelligence, logistics and other matters came into existence. In the circumstances, a very large share of the planning and directing of the total war effort gravitated toward the JCS. Given the importance of fighting a global war of the magnitude of World War II, this was a natural development. Undoubtedly, however, some affairs were devolved upon the JCS because it was the best organized, best directed, and most closely linked institution with the Presidency that then existed in the United States Government.

After the war, it was plain that the JCS was an institution of permanent worth in the American system of government. We were rapidly demobilizing our tremendous war establishment, but our military responsibilities were still heavy and world-wide in scope. There was still business for such a high level inter-service committee if the United States was to discharge its responsibilities effectively. What was lacking in the American system was some body or group composed of officials of high authority and with access to all relevant information who could advise and make recommendations to the President with respect to national strategy. Many people were firmly of the opinion that we could not return to the rather haphazard and unsystematic methods of pre-war days.

Our interests and responsibilities had grown enormously, and strategy had to be framed and policies determined in a more conscious and deliberate fashion. I suppose the person who felt most deeply that the United States government should be better organized to guard its security and to discharge its international responsibilities was Mr. Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy in the latter days of the war and the first Secretary of Defense. On November 23, 1944, he recorded in his diary:

> "I talked with Harry Hopkins tonight about the necessity for creating something similar to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the civilian side of the American government. I said I felt that if we did not create something similar to the British system for coordinated and focused government action we should not be able to deal with the problems and relationships arising during the postwar period. I said I thought the function he had discharged while in the White House during the early years of the war should be continued on a partially formalized basis.
>
> ". . . I told him that I considered there is nothing more important in the coming four years than creation of some such machinery."

I might digress a moment at this point to say that the British example had considerable influence on the thinking of Mr. Forrestal and others of like interest in respect to this matter of organizing our military and civilian institutions in better fashion to plan and execute strategy. They learned that since 1904 there had been a committee of the British Cabinet, first called the Committee of Imperial Defense and later the Defense Committee, which had met regularly to study and devise national strategy. Composed of the Prime Minister as chairman, the Foreign Secretary, the civilian heads of the service departments, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and such other ministers who might be required from time to time, it brought together in a small,

manageable group those high officers of the government who had the principle responsibility in the field of national security. The committee was served by a secretary and a few assistants. During a span of about forty years two men, Sir Maurice Hankey and Sir Edward Bridges, successively held the post of Secretary, giving the committee a continuity of records, advice, and method that did much to bridge the gaps in planning which occur in a democratic system through changes of administration. Shortly after the First World War the military heads of the Army, the Royal Navy, and the R. A. F. were formed into a Chiefs of Staff Committee for the purpose of providing professional advice to the Cabinet committee. The chiefs of staff met with the civilian group on many occasions, and the plans and estimates produced by a military joint staff were available to it. The system insured that national strategy was formulated after full consideration of the military aspects involved and that the military strategists were informed of the objectives of national strategy and the resources to be counted on.

As a consequence of the study and advocacy of Mr. Forrestal and others of like mind, the National Security Act of 1947 provided for the creation of a National Security Council. Under the chairmanship of the President, it was to be composed of those high officials of our government who bore the major responsibility in the field of national security. It was designed to devise and formulate national strategy and, by so doing, give guidance to and influence the objectives of our other strategies — military, diplomatic, economic, and psychological. By its composition there was an assurance that before the President gave his approval to any major matter in the field of national security all interested parties had had their day in court and that a decision was being taken in the light of the relevant factors. The council was to receive regular and direct military advice from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the best intelligence the government could provide through the Director of Central Intelligence, an office established by the Act.

How has this system worked in practice? I think we can say without question that the National Security Council has been a very successful institution. After its founding in 1947, it developed considerably under President Truman and by all evidence has played an even more responsible role during Mr. Eisenhower's administration. It has provided a forum where national strategy could be developed; that is, where national objectives could be identified and decided upon and where the power to achieve those objectives could be provided for. The Council itself has supplied the element of direction — the link between objectives and power.

Much of the work of the Council deals with two kinds of policy papers. First there are rather general, long-range papers which attempt to set forth objectives of at least semi-permanent importance and to provide the resources which will be required for the achievement of these objectives. In the second place, there are specific, limited papers which deal with a great variety of security problems. Both types are of interest to the military services. The first kind provide the context in which long-range and basic military strategy must be formulated. Moreover, they affect the supply of military power which will be available. The second type are also of importance to military planners. They are often the guides to regional or local strategies, and they set national objectives which will be sought in particular situations.

In the preparation of both types of papers, national strategy and military strategy react upon one another. Moreover, diplomatic, economic and psychological strategies make their contribution and, in turn, are influenced in important respects by both national strategy and military strategy. What emerges either at the national level or at the level of these more functional strategies is a composite in which many influences have been brought to bear.

Now, I do not wish to leave the impression that all problems have been solved since we have the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the numerous committees, subcommittees, and working groups that have grown up to guide and

coordinate the activities of our departments concerned with national security. I am sure that many of you have had the experience of greatly desiring and needing guidance that was not to be had, or of trying to interpret for your own military planning statements of objectives that were hazy and equivocal. I think the reason for this occasional state of affairs — perhaps it occurs more frequently than occasional — is to be found in the complexity of the problems that confront the Government of the United States. There are Chinese puzzles in more places than the Far East. For some of our problems, solutions are terribly hard to come by. It is easy enough to state objectives in terms of freedom, self-determination, and international brotherhood — all good and worthy aims — but it becomes difficult to translate these into objectives specific enough for the planning of strategy in this world of nation states with their many competing interests. Furthermore, if our intelligence could inform us, without fear of contradiction, of the capabilities and intentions of the Soviet Union, Communist China, and of several other greater and lesser powers, our task would be infinitely simplified. We must also keep in mind that, committed as we are to a coalition strategy, our national strategy, and with it all our sub-strategies, takes on an added dimension and that the elements of our strategy are often conditional, both with respect to objectives and power, on the aims and resources of our Allies. It is well for us to realize, therefore, that there are real handicaps to the formulation of strategies so clear and consistent that subsequent planning and execution is a simple and satisfying occupation.

There is another consideration which we might note. The quality of the product of these institutions concerned with the formulation of strategy is as much dependent upon the quality of people who staff them as upon good organizational principles. What is required in these security organizations, it seems to me, are persons of high professional competence who have in addition an awareness of the nature of other strategies than the one of their special interest. The naval officer has a great deal to learn

in becoming a master in his own professional field, but as a strategist he needs to know the capabilities and limitations of diplomatic, economic, and psychological strategy, and be able to make a contribution toward the development of national strategy. I take it that we in this College are attempting to gain that awareness.

I thought I would conclude this talk with an account of a minor war which occurred just a hundred years ago because I believe it illustrates some of the aspects of strategy that I have been speaking about this morning. The Crimean War was a conflict between Russia on one side and England, France and Turkey on the other. As wars go, it was an unsatisfactory affair for all concerned, and more reputations were lost than made during the course of the conflict.

A great deal of diplomatic maneuvering preceded the outbreak of hostilities, the chancellories of Europe having been preoccupied with the Eastern Question for many years. In essence, though, the war arose over the encroachments of Russia on the Ottoman Empire, as Turkey was then known. The Czar decided that this empire was ripe for the plucking, and he chose a dispute over the protection of some Christian monastic orders in Turkey to deliver an ultimatum. This, the Turks rejected. The Russian reply was to attack the Turks in the Balkans and push them back across the Danube and to destroy a Turkish naval squadron harboring at Sinop. At this point, Great Britain and France intervened.

Now for a long time before this it had been an objective of British national policy to maintain the security of her routes to India. The digging of the Suez Canal was still a few years off, but nevertheless the establishment of the Russians in the eastern Mediterranean was regarded by the British as a serious threat to the security of their position in South Asia and the Far East. The French objectives were less simple. Napoleon III had recently won his crown as Emperor of the French, and to the Bonapartists a successful war would establish the dynasty in public favor

and, in particular, a war against Russia would be a measure of revenge for the first Napoleon's disastrous campaign of 1812. In addition, Napoleon III was eager to display himself as a Roman Catholic champion of the Christian interest in the Near East against the pretentions of the Czar and the Orthodox Church. The Turks had the simple objective of defending their feeble empire.

The Russian military strategy was to destroy the Turkish naval forces in the Black Sea, defeat the Turkish armies in the Balkans, and to occupy Constantinople and the Straits. This could be expected to deliver a mortal wound on the "sick man of Europe."

The strategy of the Allies was to obtain naval command of the Black Sea and to land an expeditionary force to strengthen the Turkish army in the Balkans. These objectives were quickly attained. The Russian fleet retired to its base at Sebastopol in the Crimea, and the army abandoned its attempt to invade the Balkans. The Allies now faced a decision. Should they consider their objectives achieved, or should they adopt a new strategy involving a new set of objectives? Urged on by political leaders, who had generated a war fever at home, the military commanders proposed that they invade the Crimea for the purpose of destroying the Russian naval base at Sebastopol and thus remove the threat of a superior Russian fleet to the Turks. Having embarked upon the war, and having sent fleets and armies to the Near East, the British and French governments found the new strategy to their liking.

We may note at this point that British and French intelligence concerning the region in which they were conducting military operations was incredibly bad. The British and French commanders were very ill-prepared for the primitive conditions they found at the place of their original landing, in what is now Bulgaria. They knew even less about the Crimea. Looking at their charts, they observed that the Crimea was a peninsula connected by two narrow necks with the mainland, and it seemed reasonable

to plan to isolate the forces in the Crimea by covering these isthmuses with the guns of their fleets. Unfortunately, it was discovered that the water was only about three feet deep for long distances on either side of these natural causeways. Their maps of the terrain were equally inadequate. By cruising along the coast, the commanders finally chose a place for invasion, and they succeeded in getting the British and French armies ashore — about 25,000 men each. The water where the troops landed was brackish, but eventually the forces were organized and they set off to the capture of the Russian fortress at Sebastopol. This proved to be a much more difficult operation than had been anticipated. The Russian fleet made its contribution by sinking itself in the mouth of the harbor and thus preventing the British and French warships from giving support by bombardment from the sea. Several bloody and hard-fought battles occurred — Alma, Balaklava and Inkerman. They were characterized by the poor tactical direction of the British and French forces and by inadequate cooperation between the two armies. The height of tactical futility was reached in the famous charge of the Light Brigade, a maneuver which was launched by an incredible series of mischances in the wrong direction and upon the wrong target. Eventually, after a winter of fearful hardships, Sebastopol was captured and the Russians cleared from the Crimea. Both sides by this time were ready for negotiations, and a peace conference held in Paris in 1856 brought the Crimean War to an end. By the terms of the treaty the Turkish dominions were kept intact, and Russia was barred from stationing warships in the Black Sea, a restriction which remained in force for about fifteen years.

Now for the application of this excursion into history for our subject of military strategy. For Great Britain, given what she conceived to be her national interest in preserving freedom of movement in the Mediterranean and containing encroachments on her Indian Empire, the objective of her national strategy was sound. It was a valid objective to keep the vast area between the Straits and the Persian Gulf in the hands of a weak and pliable

power like Turkey and to prevent the Russians from advancing further. Her government correctly estimated that she had the force to carry out this objective. Much smaller in territory and in population than Russia, she was still a match for the Czarist empire in the effective elements of national power. Moreover, her navy gave her the mobility to project power and to maintain it on the back doorstep of her enemy. For the French, the national objective was a less clear one. France could claim that she had some national interests in the Levant to protect, but there was a strong element of military adventurism in the French participation in this war. France was a comparatively rich country and could support the force required for her participation, but it is doubtful that her objectives were worth the ultimate cost of the war.

The military strategy of the Allies was in the beginning well conceived. It was to add their strength to that of the Turks and drive the Russians back into their own territory. They did this by moving naval forces into the Black Sea and by bringing an army into the Balkans to bolster the Turks. The military strategy of the second phase of the war, the invasion of the Crimea, is more questionable. Good intelligence would have given the commanders a better appreciation of Russian capabilities for defense and of the natural obstacles to a campaign in this area. It would have shown that the forces available to the Allies were insufficient, as they proved to be, unless the enterprise was blest with exceptionally good luck.

When we come to the element of direction, or control, we find that it was woefully inadequate at both the national level and the military level. The government in London might select proper strategical objectives and appraise its forces accurately, but it was quite incapable of conducting a war efficiently. The British army in the field was commanded by Lord Raglan, a brave and honest soldier who had lost an arm at Waterloo. He had to spend a great deal of his time trying to maintain good relations with his French allies, a task rendered difficult by his habit retained

from youth of referring to them as "the enemy," and keeping peace among his jealous and quarrelsome subordinate commanders. The French command in the field appears to have been more professionally competent, but it was constantly frustrated by the efforts of Napoleon III to try to direct the campaign from Paris. It might be mentioned that this is the first war in which field commanders were connected to their national capitals by cable and telegraph. The British seem to have used the new communications mostly to relay inquiries from parents, wives, and sweethearts as to the welfare and whereabouts of their menfolk. Napoleon III used them to direct a constant stream of orders to his field commanders. The telegraph also served to convey the messages of the first modern war correspondent, W. H. Russell of *The Times*, and his accounts of the misery and mismanagement of affairs in the field, often arriving before the official communiques, were another reason for the commanders to look upon the telegraph as a doubtful blessing in the conduct of military operations.

In conclusion, then, here was a war in which two of the requirements of strategy — namely, objectives and power — were at times adequately met, but the directing element was woefully inadequate. As a consequence, the power available to the allies was not utilized to the best advantage and their objectives were only achieved at great cost. I would say the moral in all this is that strategic planners must do all things well — they must choose the proper objectives, they must correctly appraise and evaluate the force they can exert, and they must direct that force intelligently to the achievement of the objectives. Czar Nicholas, Lord Raglan, and Napoleon III never imagined an H-bomb or a guided missile, but the elements of military strategy are as valid in our day as in theirs.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Professor Hiram M. Stout

Professor Stout received his B. A. degree from DePauw University in 1926 and his M. A. and Ph. D. degrees from Harvard University in 1931 and 1934. From 1928 to 1937, he was an instructor, assistant professor, and, later, associate professor of Political Science at DePauw University.

After participating in research at the Public Administration Clearing House in Chicago for two years, he was associate professor of Political Science at American University, Washington, D. C., until 1941.

During World War II, Professor Stout served in G-2, War Department General Staff, and as Assistant Military Attaché in London. He occupies the Ernest J. King Chair of Maritime History at the Naval War College during the 1955-1956 academic year.

Professor Stout is the author of: *Public Service in Great Britain* (1938) and *British Government* (1953). He has contributed articles and reviews to the *American Political Science Review*, *The Virginia Quarterly*, *Public Personnel Review*, and other journals.

RECOMMENDED READING

The evaluation of books listed below include those recommended to resident students of the Naval War College. Officers in the fleet and elsewhere may find these of interest.

The listings herein should not be construed as an endorsement by the Naval War College; they are indicated only on the basis of interesting reading matter.

Many of these publications may be found in ship and station libraries. Books on the list which are not available from these sources may be obtained from one of the Navy's Auxiliary Library Services Collections. These collections of books available for loan to individual officers are maintained in the Bureau of Naval Personnel; Headquarters ELEVENTH, FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH Naval Districts; and Commander Naval Forces, Marianas, Guam. Requests for the loan of these books should be made by the individual to the nearest Auxiliary Library Service Collection (see Article C9604, Bureau of Naval Personnel Manual, 1948).

Title: *North African Powder Keg.* 273 p.

Author: Stevens, Edmund. New York, Coward McCann, 1955.

Evaluation: Mr. Stevens presents an introductory picture of the terror, counterterror, and backgound in the tense political and economic situation in the French North African colonies. Then he proceeds to French Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, where in each locality he points up the clashes between the "Colons" and the Arabs. This book is highly recommended for an insight into the roots of a situation which, if it continues to deteriorate, could well reduce France to a third-rate power and threaten the foundations of NATO.

Title: *Brassey's Annual (The Armed Forces Year Book,* 1955). 460 p.

Editor: Thursfield, H. G. N. Y., The Macmillan Company, 1955.

Evaluation: An annual review, semi-official in nature, containing a broad coverage of matters having an impact upon the current and projected defense posture of United Kingdom forces. The **Annual** is a compilation of the work of many authors, both military and civilian. Each chapter covers a separate subject, is treated by a different author, and is complete in itself. As would be expected under the circumstances, the quality and objectivity of individual chapters vary widely. However, the style, readability, and content are generally very good. This issue of the **Annual** is greatly concerned with the impact of thermonuclear weapons, supersonic aircraft, and guided missiles upon military and civil defense forces, present and future. Several chapters are devoted to a treatment of this subject from various service and civilian viewpoints.

Title: *The New Dimensions of Peace.* 391 p.

Author: Bowles, Chester. New York, Harper & Bros., 1955.

Evaluation: A sufficient historical development of Europe, Russia, China, India, Africa and the United States to establish the present situation; to assess the challenge facing the United States; and to propose a course of action for the United States. This is a powerful argument for the adoption by the United States of a rigorous and far-reaching program to align the strength of the United Statos behind the efforts of struggling peoples te achieve political, economic, and spiritual independence. This program is to go forward in the face of the Communist threat and is to be based on the precepts of the American Revolution. Mr. Bowles does not write as a "do-gooder"; he would in no way lessen our military power. He recognizes NATO as essential for the defense of Europe, but maintains that military power alone is largely ineffective in Asia and Africa. Those who believe that U. S. interests can be promoted, or even protected, with little effort will find small comfort in this volume. Highly recommended to all those who would better understand the problems facing the statesmen of the world today.

Title: *How Communists Negotiate.* 178 p.

Author: Joy, C. Turner, Admiral, United States Navy. New York, Macmillan, 1955.

Evaluation: An account of the Communist tactics and strategies at the Armistice conference at Kaesong and Panmunjon, showing how they used the talks to shield activities violating the armistice spirit and employed various devices to gain further concessions from the United Nations. The last chapter contains a well-presented summation of the proceedings, together with a study of the lessons learned therefrom.

PERIODICALS

Title: *Can We Limit an "A-War"? The Lessons of Sagebrush.*

Author: Watson, Mark S.

Publication: THE NATION, December 24, 1955, p. 550-551.

Annotation: The author, a military analyst, draws lessons from the largest Army and Air Force maneuvers since Korea.

Title: *Could a War in Europe be Limited?*

Author: Wolfers, Arnold.

Publication: THE YALE REVIEW, Winter, 1955-56, p. 214-228.

Annotation: Considers the possibility of limiting a war between major powers in Europe, discussing mainly limitaton of weapons and targets.

Title: *How to detect the Activities of the Communists in the U. S.*

Publication: U. S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, January 1956, p. 94-109.

Annotation: Excerpts from a document entitled **The Communist Party in America**, issued by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Title: *Report on the Foreign Ministers Conference.*

Author: Secretary of State Dulles.

Publication: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, November 28, 1955, p. 867-872.

Annotation: An address by the Secretary of State on November 18, in which he reported to the nation on the participation of the United States at the Geneva Conference.

Title: *Getting Hot Again — The War Over Formosa.*

Publication: U. S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, December 23, 1955, p. 70-75.

Annotation: A report on the situation regarding Formosa, in the form of interviews with Vice Admiral A. M. Pride and Major General G. W. Smythe, Head of USMAAG on Formosa.

Title: *Why France Seldom is Free of a Crisis.*

Author: Luethy, Herbert.

Publication: LIFE, December 19, 1955, p. 98-113.

Annotation: An analysis of the problems besetting the French government and a discussion of the political and economic backgrounds of these problems.

Title: *Soviet Missile Program.*

Author: Zaehringer, A. J.

Publication: AERO DIGEST, December, 1955, p. 48-51.

Annotation: Based upon hundreds of related items from foreign press reports, official statements, personal reports and technical publications, the author concludes that the Soviet is progressing rapidly in the missile field and that a powerful missile arm is being forged.

Title: *Reprieve in Viet Nam.*

Author: Mansfield, Senator Mike.

Publication: HARPER'S, January, 1956, p. 46-51.

Annotation: The author, recently returned from Indochina, reports on the chances of saving this key area from communist control.

Title: *The Communist Double-Cross in Korea.*

Author: Armstrong, O. K.

Publication: READER'S DIGEST, January, 1956, p. 37-41.

Annotation: Points out violations of the Korean armistice by the North Koreans and cites evidence that the communist military buildup continues while U. N. strength declines.

Title: *The Human Balance Sheet.*

Author: Glabisz, Kazimierz, Major General, Polish Army.

Publication: MILITARY REVIEW, January, 1956, p. 16-24.

Annotation: A qualitative and quantitive comparison of manpower available to the East and West.

Title: *Defense of the Near East.*

Author: Rustow, Dankwart A.

Publication: FOREIGN AFFAIRS, January, 1956, p. 271-286.

Annotation: Probably the most satisfactory concise unofficial military appraisal of the situation in the Middle East available.

Title: *Letter from Washington.*

Author: Rovere, Richard H.

Publication: THE NEW YORKER, December 17, 1955, p. 74-88.

Annotation: A general survey of the world situation touching on deterrence, measured retaliation, nuclear warfare, Operation Sage Brush, and other topics of current interest.

Title: *Atoms, Strategy and Policy.*

Author: Nitze, Paul H.

Publication: FOREIGN AFFAIRS, January, 1956, p. 187-198.

Annotation: An exceptionally able and coherent discussion of policy and strategy by the former director of the Policy Planning Staff in the Department of State, who was also the Vice Chairman of the U. S. Strategic Bombing Survey.

Title: *Land Power as an Element of National Power.*

Author: Baldwin, Hanson W.

Publication: THE ARMY COMBAT FORCES JOURNAL, January, 1956, p. 16-21.

Annotation: The author, in a thought-provoking article, states that land power is the dominant element in national power in all types of conflict except the nuclear holocaust. He describes in detail the role of land power in Cold War, limited war without nuclear weapons, and limited war with nuclear weapons. The writer concludes that it would be folly to emphasize preparation of our land forces for unlimited nuclear war, and urges that we ". . . prepare the Army to fight conventional wars, to stand guard in the Cold War, and to fight limited nuclear wars . . ."

Title: *The President and National Security.*

Author: Anderson, Dillon.

Publication: THE ATLANTIC, January, 1956, p. 42-46.

Annotation: An account of the origins, functions and achievements of the National Security Council by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Title: *Burke Says Russians Seek to Control Sea.*

Publication: AVIATION WEEK, December 26, 1955, p. 14.

Annotation: Report on remarks made by the Chief of Naval Operations on Russia's naval strength and its implications for the nations of the free world.

Title: *Local Atom War Held Improbable.*

Author: Baldwin, Hanson W.

Publication: THE NEW YORK TIMES, December 5, 1955, p. 12.

Annotation: A brief outline of the lessons and implications of the joint Army-Air Force maneuver, Operation Sage Brush.