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ERRATA SHEET

Page 17 line 4 change "arument" to "argument"

Page 31 line 24 delete next to last word.

Page 39 line 8 change "GOUBB" to CLUBB"

Page 45 line 7 change "Gaghdad" to "Baghdad"

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## CONCEPTS OF GENERAL AND LIMITED WAR

A lecture delivered  
at the Naval War College  
on 18 September 1959 by  
*Professor R. E. Osgood*

It is a great pleasure to be back again and to discover how much more you seem to know since I left. I am going to assume that your general level of sophistication in strategic matters is so great that I can dispense with this terrible semantic bind of defining general and limited war and assume that no very precise definitions are necessary in order to get us off the ground.

Of course, there are a variety of acceptable definitions and I would just as soon settle for a definition of limited war that would make it anything that is not unlimited, because in my mind there is a tremendous variety of possible kinds of limited war, and there is no definition that permits a precise characterization of all of them. All these definitions simply designate points along a spectrum of armed conflict that is differentiated principally by the scope of the political objectives that are at stake, by the dimensions of the conflict (which reflect, in part, the kinds of weapons that are used), and by the geographical scope of hostilities.

I think it is remarkable that we can now take for granted things we could not take for granted when I was here in 1955, because there seems to be a very widespread consensus, in the government and outside the government, concerning the meaning and the significance of both general and limited war. Let me just summarize some of the components of this consensus so that we can start off with a common understanding.

The first part of this consensus seems to be a widespread agreement on the fact that there are many possible varieties of war and that general war is something distinct from, and must be thought about and dealt with differently than, a limited war, despite an area in which one shades into the other.

Secondly, there seems to be a widespread agreement that it is desirable to impose some limits upon all kinds of war, including general war, because war is an instrument of policy and not an instrument of vengeance or retribution; but that the closer war comes to the general end of the spectrum, the more difficult it becomes to control it as a rational and effective instrument of policy.

Thirdly, there seems to be a widespread agreement that it is essential to be prepared for general war in order to deter major aggressions, but that this preparedness is not sufficient to deter a variety of limited aggressions. That is, preparation for general war is not sufficient to deter a great variety of less-than-major aggressions, since the would-be deterrer is himself deterred from responding to limited aggressions at the extreme cost that would be entailed in general war, and since aggressions can be posed in ambiguous and indirect forms that never provide a suitable opportunity for responding with general war.

And, finally, part of this general consensus seems to be the conclusion that, therefore, we must supplement our capacity for massive retaliation with other deterrents, including our capacity for local resistance, and including our capacity for less-than-massive retaliation, based upon a series of graduated reprisals; and that if deterrence fails, we must be prepared to repel limited aggressions by means that are commensurate with the objectives at stake — commensurate with the threat — without precipitating a general or a total war.

Well, this consensus, I think, represents a significant advance over three or four years ago, when I don't think all its elements were widely taken for granted. But this consensus could be quite deceptive if it led one to think that we have solved the problems of general or limited war or that there is a significant area of agreement about the details of strategic doctrine. For this general consensus conceals a crucial area of disagreement on the specifics of strategic doctrine — on the specific requirements of our overall strategy.

What do I mean by overall strategy? I mean a rather complicated thing. You can think of overall strategy as having several components. The first component is the estimate of the nature and the seriousness of the threats to our political objectives. Secondly, there would logically follow an estimate of the kinds of contingencies in which we might have to employ military force to support our objectives against these threats. Then, thirdly, we would determine the kinds of military responses that we would undertake in these various contingencies, and from that would follow, logically, the kinds of capabilities we needed; and, from capabilities, the kinds of weapons and forces. And another component, of course, would be our declaratory strategy, that is, what we would say or not say about all these various elements of overall strategy.

Well, so much for the general introduction. Let me speak about some of the disagreements in the specifics of strategic doctrine. These disagreements come to their sharpest focus with respect to the capabilities, the forces, and the weapons — that is, the tail end of this logical sequence of components in overall strategy — because that is where strategic doctrine really comes to grips with the practical problems that are at the core of strategy in general. That is where it comes to grips with the essence of strategy, which is allocating scarce resources among superabundant and often conflicting strategic functions, none of which is likely to be fully supported.

Now, this allocation can only be made in terms of priorities among the various strategic functions and in terms of the kind of marginal utilities you think you will get by allocating "X" quantity of dollars or other resources to one strategic function as opposed to another. These priorities and marginal utilities, in turn, depend upon what you think the nature of the threat is; they depend upon your estimate of the kind of contingencies that might arise, upon what kind of responses you think will meet these contingencies, etc. So you see that all these components of overall strategy are interdependent, but the disagreements upon strategy

really come to a focus when you come to the payoff, which is translating your overall strategy into capabilities, forces and weapons, and, of course, money.

Disagreements about the specifics of strategic doctrine are inherent in the unprecedented uncertainty that surrounds strategic calculations in this age. Why is there such unprecedented uncertainty? Why these tremendous imponderabilities in making strategic calculations today as compared with other days? There are a number of reasons, I think.

First, of course, is the tremendous rate of technological military innovation. Secondly, there is the dependence of strategic calculations on weapons, and on estimates of their effects, which have never actually been tested on the battlefield. Thirdly, there is the dependence of strategy and strategic calculations on weapons which, if they were used, might destroy all rational relationship between force and policy. And, finally, there is the dependence of strategic calculations upon deterrence as opposed to resistance — deterrence, of course, being a complicated psychological phenomenon which involves a lot of mind reading and a lot of guesswork.

Disagreements upon the specifics of strategic doctrine are intensified by the recognition now that the military establishment must be designed to deter and to resist limited aggressions as well as major aggressions, and that the requirements of general war are not completely adequate for deterring and meeting limited war. The recognition of this fact since the Korean war obviously confronts us with a much more diversified and complex strategic problem than we thought we had before the Korean war. But accompanying this diversification of strategic demands, there has been a relative decline in the resources — economic, material and human — that are available to meet these diverse strategic functions. That is, there are more functions to support, at greater expense, but no proportionate increase in the resources available. This is bound to lead to many disagreements on the specifics of strategic doctrine, since strategy must carry a greater burden of choice.



I won't have time to explore the various positions of different services, individuals, and groups in the United States or abroad on the variety of strategic issues around which these very important disagreements revolve. I will simply content myself with presenting some of my own observations on two issues that are central to the concepts of general and limited war. I am sure that you will detect the controversial elements in my presentation. One issue is the role of our capacity for massive retaliation and the kinds of instruments of massive retaliation, or strategic striking force, that we need; and the second crucial issue is the balance between the capabilities for general and limited war.

Now, let me take the first one. What can we rely upon our capacity for massive retaliation to deter, and what kind of capacity for massive retaliation do we need? A very crucial question! But I don't think you can decide it until you first decide what deterrence is, and what constitutes deterrence. What is deterrence? Deterrence, I would say, is that psychological effect that takes place when "X" causes "Y" to refrain from taking an action because he anticipates "X's" counteraction. One can think of several logical components in deterrence — that is, considerations which a rational person, nation, or regime would logically take into account in deciding whether to refrain or not to refrain from taking an action in the light of "X's" possible counteraction. What are these logical components? First, the value of the objective that is at stake. What is the importance that "Y" attaches to this objective that he intends to achieve by a proposed action? Secondly, the estimated effectiveness of his action in achieving this objective. These two considerations together, constitute the net benefit that "Y" expects; it is a product of the value of the objective and the anticipated effectiveness of his action in achieving it. The third component is "Y's" estimated cost of undertaking this action to achieve the objective. And finally, there is the estimated probability of "X's" counteraction — in other words, the credibility of "X's" threat of counteraction.

Now, weighed together, these four considerations, you might say, compose a benefit-cost-risk calculus. Whether or not a power

making such a calculus is deterred by his apprehension of a counteraction depends upon whether his proposed action seems less desirable than some alternative action or than no action at all; and each of these alternative actions presumably also has its benefit-cost-risk calculus. Now, "Y" will refrain from acting if he calculates that the cost of his action will be too high in relation to his estimated benefits, considering the risk of "X's" counteraction. But "Y's" estimate of the probability or risk of "X's" counteraction depends upon "Y's" estimate of the benefit-cost-risk calculus that faces "X" when "X" considers undertaking a counteraction. Have I left you? It's awfully simple really; but so much confusion revolves around deterrence that I think it is worthwhile analyzing the very obvious component elements that a rational person would take into account.

The deterrent effect of a capacity for massive retaliation, you see, depends upon threatening "Y" with a cost that is disproportionate to his anticipated benefit; but the trouble is that when "Y" can inflict comparably disproportionate costs upon "X" in return for "X's" counteraction, then the probability of "X's" counteraction is diminished. For this reason it is now generally agreed that massive retaliation can be relied upon to deter only those actions that threaten the security of the United States most intensely, most directly and most unambiguously, for only then would our costs seem proportionate to the objectives at stake — or at least enough so to discourage the aggressor from taking a chance that we might not massively retaliate.

The next question that arises in respect to this first crucial strategic issue is, "What contingencies might we reasonably expect our strategic striking force to deter?" I think that there are two kinds of contingencies, and again I am not telling you anything new: first, an all-out Soviet attack upon the United States designed to eliminate the United States as a competing center of military and political power; and, secondly, a direct, large-scale but localized Soviet or Chinese attack designed to acquire a major political or strategic area outside American territory, which the United States is probably incapable of protecting with resistance forces.

The next question that follows logically from this, going down the line of the components of overall strategy, is, "What kinds of massive strategic responses — what kinds of capabilities and weapons — are required to deter these two kinds of contingencies?" I think that here it is absolutely essential to establish some definite criteria of minimum capabilities required to deter these two kinds of contingencies. Otherwise, the claims of these capabilities and the strategic functions they are designed to support are logically limitless, whereas the essence of strategy, as I said, is the allocation of scarce resources among superabundant and often conflicting demands, none of which is likely to be fully satisfied.

The next question that arises then is, "What kind of massive strategic response is required to deter this first kind of contingency — that is, a direct all-out Soviet assault upon the United States itself?" By definition, the deterrent of this kind of act must be based upon a second-strike capability; and this second-strike capability, it is generally acknowledged, must be of a kind to convince the Russians that they would receive unacceptable damage, which is merely a shorthand way of saying that the Russians must think that there is an unacceptable risk of our imposing a second strike cost which they will consider disproportionate to their anticipated benefit. Let us assume that the Russian objective in this all-out strike is the elimination of the United States as a competing center of military and political power. I can't conceive of any lesser objective for which they would take such great risks and costs. In order to speculate about what kind of capability for massive retaliation we require in order to convince the Kremlin that the risks and costs of such a strike are too high, we ought to examine the relationship among all the components of deterrence as the Kremlin might see them, assuming that there is a high level of rationality in their calculation and a large element of caution. I don't have time to go through that rather laborious process of reasoning here, so let me just give you my conclusion; and that is that unless the Soviet leaders are sure that the United States is about to launch an all-out attack upon the Soviet Union, they

will not take such a pessimistic view of the opportunities for promoting their interests through "peaceful coexistence" that they would deliberately risk the kind of national disaster that could be inflicted by, say, 40 or 50 megaton-size bombs hitting their targets in the Soviet Union. If you don't think that is sufficient cost to be unacceptable in terms of the kinds of benefit that they anticipate, let's make doubly sure and say that we ought to be able to deliver on a second strike enough damage to obliterate all the major cities and industries of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, if the Kremlin decision-makers are sure of an imminent American attack, I don't think that there is any way we can deter them from striking first, simply by threatening retaliatory costs, since there is no way logically that we can convince them that they would be worse off by striking first then striking second.

Well, if you will accept this argument, it should not be impossible, I would think, to estimate the dimensions of national disaster that a given number of American strikes would inflict, and from this to determine the nature and the size of the American strategic striking force that would be required to achieve these strikes. At least the targets are finite, although the factors that determine the assignment of weapons to those targets are multitudinous and quite variable. If we could make this kind of estimate, then we would at least have a measurable basis for saying we were either over-insured or under-insured in this particular segment of our strategy. The fact that we can't be sure what the Russians will find unacceptable should not be an argument for imposing no logical limits short of hitting every available military and non-military target. To me, that smacks of seeking absolute security, which is certainly a will-of-the-wisp.

Whatever we require in a second-strike capability to deter this hypothetical Soviet assault, I should think it would be substantially less than the first-strike capability that would be required to support a counter-force strategy, even if only one-third of our force could get through on a second strike. By counterforce strategy I mean a strategy designed to destroy a sufficient number of Soviet retaliatory weapons and bases to limit a Soviet second

strike to acceptable levels of damage. The material requirements of the finite second-strike deterrent would be less because the primary targets would not be the thousands of Soviet strategic nuclear bases and installations, from which their missiles and planes would already have left, but rather a finite number of cities and industrial facilities. Furthermore, I should think that the best way to convince the Soviet leaders that Russia will receive unacceptable damage on a second strike, regardless of the damage she can inflict upon us, would be to build a relatively invulnerable strategic striking force, principally by hardening bases, by increasing concealment, by dispersion, and by mobility; and, of course, all you gentlemen will know that mobility means submarines and Polaris as well as SAC.

Therefore, for a second strike, an invulnerable minimum-deterrence strategy should be as good, or about as good, as a counterforce strategy. Moreover, in ten or fifteen years it seems to me that it will be the only kind of strategy that is technically and economically feasible, considering the great proliferation of the number of Soviet missiles, the number of bases, and their invulnerability. But there are other advantages to this conception of finite deterrence, based upon an invulnerable strategic striking force. One advantage is that such a strategy is less apt to invite a pre-emptive or a preventive attack, because its very existence indicates that it is to be used for something besides a first strike and, therefore, it is not so subject to being set off by false information, it is not so provocative, and it does not provide the Soviet Union with such an incentive to strike first. If you accept that argument, I think it follows that the Soviet Union's possession of a relatively invulnerable strategic striking force would reduce the likelihood of a Soviet preemptive or preventive strike by making her less apprehensive of an American first strike, by rendering her striking force less subject to being touched off in full force by misinformation, and by making the Soviet Union less dependent upon striking first. So we both have an advantage in each having a relatively invulnerable strategic striking force, if you grant the premises. There is another advantage, I think, to the kind of

strategic striking force or strategy that I am describing, and that is that this kind of force will relieve the United States from the necessity of launching its full retaliatory strength instantly. Such a force will not only be less provocative; it will be cheaper. And it will also provide an opportunity, which I think will become increasingly important, for terminating a strategic nuclear exchange that might result from miscalculation, or even accident, before both sides engaged in a massive nuclear exchange that neither wanted.

Now let us consider what kind of strategic striking force is required to deter this second kind of contingency? Let us ask what kind of strategic striking force is required to deter a major Soviet ground attack upon Western Europe? This deterrent depends upon a first-strike capability, if, indeed, our capacity for massive retaliation can deter this kind of contingency at all. Applying the calculus of deterrence that I suggested, one can reason that any capability that could impose sufficient cost to deter the Soviet Union from making an all-out attack upon the United States, could also deter her from undertaking a major attack upon Western Europe, since the Soviet Union would place a higher value on knocking out the United States than on the latter objective, and since we would have the advantage of a first strike in this second contingency. But the catch here is that there is a difference in the credibility of our counteraction. In the case of this first strike against a major attack on Europe, the credibility of America's capacity for massive retaliation simply cannot be taken for granted now that we have lost our monopoly of the atomic bomb and delivery capability. With the growth of the Soviet capacity to inflict disaster on the United States, the probability of the United States deliberately incurring the cost of massive retaliation in response to anything less than direct attack upon the United States itself has grown doubtful.

One might argue that in order to counter this depreciation in the credibility of our first strike in response to a major attack upon Western Europe the United States needs to convince the Soviet Union that she can deliver such an overwhelming counterforce first strike that the Soviet Union can inflict on the United

States only acceptable retaliatory damage — say, the destruction of three or four American cities. However, if such a capability exists now, I should hazard the guess that it will become inherently unfeasible in five or ten years. And, in any case, how could either power really know, with sufficient assurance to act on the basis of its knowledge, whether or not the other had such a counterforce capability?

Does this mean that our strategic striking force cannot deter a Soviet attack on Europe, despite the fact that this is NATO strategy? I would say that, depending on the nature of the attack, not necessarily. If we can deliver unacceptable first-strike damage on the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union can, in turn, deliver unacceptable damage upon us, then the Soviet Union will probably, nevertheless, have much less incentive to launch a major attack on Europe, considering the less risky and costly alternatives available to her, than the United States would have to respond massively rather than surrender this crucial objective. At least, this proposition is plausible as long as the Kremlin does not think that it is urgent to eliminate West Germany by military means. Moreover, the credibility of America's massive strategic strikes is greatly enhanced, I think, by NATO's "shield", however, inadequate it may be. For this shield confronts the Soviet Union with the necessity of undertaking large-scale aggression to gain her objective. She cannot simply make a quick grab and confront us with a *fait accompli*, while inherent in any large-scale conflict in a vital strategic area is a great risk of strategic nuclear exchanges. Moreover, this shield has an important supplementary deterrent effect by virtue of its dependence upon tactical nuclear weapons, since tactical nuclear weapons are a more credible response, I think, than strategic nuclear responses; while at the same time they have within them a greater inherent risk of leading to total war than conventional weapons.

I conclude that, insofar as any strategic striking force can deter direct Soviet aggression in Europe, the same force and the same strategy required to deter the Soviet attack on the United

States would be adequate to deter a Soviet attack on Europe. However, no strategic striking force, however formidable, can be safely relied upon to deter a variety of more indirect and ambiguous forms of possible aggression in Europe, such as a gradual isolation and absorption of Berlin — aggressions which do not depend upon a large-scale Soviet attack. I think that a direct large-scale attack is the least likely and least profitable alternative open to the Soviet Union. Whatever we may say we are willing to do, or think we are willing to do, the evidence is everywhere, I am afraid, that the threat to precipitate a total war in response to a limited aggression in Europe is becoming more and more implausible to our allies, to us, and presumably to the Soviet decision-makers; and I don't think that any feasible accretion in our strategic striking power can halt or reverse this trend.

From this analysis, then, I think it appears that we should aim to build an invulnerable strategic striking force capable of destroying a finite number of targets, which would constitute a national disaster that no rational Soviet regime would deliberately incur. Rather than try to construct a counterforce strategy, we should try to create within the next five or ten years a situation in which neither the United States nor the Soviet Union believes it has the capacity to strike first and receive acceptable damage in return, and in which neither believes that the other has this capacity. This situation might guarantee what is, indeed, a rather delicate strategic nuclear stalemate at the moment, and it might even mark the decline of the arms race in this particular military sector. If this situation were to come about, then both massive nuclear strikes and instant massive retaliation would be clearly irrational; and it would then be imperative and feasible to have recourse to limited strategic strikes in conjunction with a strategy of graduated nuclear reprisals. The role of limited strategic strikes, I think, would be a very restricted one but, nevertheless, a very important one. It would be the role of persuading the enemy that he has more to gain by peaceful accommodation than by incurring the additional costs of a strategic nuclear exchange. It would provide a kind of a hedge against unlimited strategic nuclear ex-



changes arising from accident and miscalculations, a function that will be especially important in the age of many nuclear powers.

Let me turn now to the second crucial strategic issue that I set forth: What is the proper balance between the capability we seek in strategic striking power and the capabilities that we seek in forces and weapons designed to deter and to wage limited war? As the military planners despair of enlarging the total defense budget pie, the division of the pie among various strategic functions has become more and more a crucial source of disagreement.

I will not, in the time remaining, try to answer this question directly; but I shall state the obvious, to begin with: Despite a widespread consensus on the increased threat of limited aggression since the Korean War and since the growth of Soviet nuclear power, the proportion of resources allocated to the forces and weapons suitable for limited war has been dwindling ever since the Korean truce. Two factors have aggravated this tendency: first, the tremendous expense of maintaining a modern strategic striking force, especially since the post-Sputnik scare; and, secondly, the tremendously expensive transition to tactical nuclear forces, which has been made at the expense of conventional forces.

You may or may not think that the forces of general war have received a disproportionate share of the allocation of scarce defense resources. Differences of view on this question seem to rest on different assessments of the logical components of overall strategy. One can think of such assessments in terms of a series of questions. The first question is, "How serious is the threat of limited aggression?" There is a widespread and comfortable assumption that the Communist powers have abandoned the military realm now and have contented themselves with operating on the political and economic realm, and therefore the military threat, limited or otherwise, is really significantly diminished. Of course, this is clearly not true of Communist China, and the assessment ignores the risk of a conflict arising in the Middle East that is not even initiated by the Soviet Union or Communist China, in

which we might nevertheless become involved. But more important than that I think this comfortable assumption ignores the fact that the Communist tactics and strategy — the choice of whether they pursue their aims chiefly by military or other means and what emphasis they place upon each — is a transitory response to the opportunities that the Communist leaders think they see in any particular phase of historical development. That phase will change when conditions and opportunities change.

Moreover, I think this comfortable assumption ignores the political liability of our being so dependent upon nuclear weapons and upon our general war capacity in a period in which the credibility of our massive retaliatory response is gradually depreciating. This liability is a serious one, even assuming that no military aggression occurs. I am thinking here, for example, of the effect on our allies, who must calculate that we could only leave them defenseless — because we would not assume the costs of coming to their aid — or else precipitate them into a suicidal war (even if it were limited from our standpoint). And I am thinking of our vulnerability, as long as we have this unbalanced military force, to the Soviet skill in manipulating our over-dependence upon nuclear weapons for political and psychological purposes, as in the case of Berlin.

The second question one should answer in making up one's mind about this second crucial strategic issue is, "What kinds of contingencies can be deterred or resisted by limited-war capabilities?" There seems to be a general agreement that strategic and tactical nuclear capabilities are not sufficient to deter many forms of limited aggression and that they are unsuited to resisting them if deterrence failed. Then there seems to be a widespread agreement that limited aggressions outside Europe in the Far East and Southeast Asia and in the Middle East are more likely than inside Europe. I would go along with those two widely-accepted propositions.

But are limited, ambiguous, indirect forms of military aggression impossible in Europe? This question is a crucial source

of disagreement, since calculations of capabilities and forces and weapons depend so heavily upon the answer. Government spokesmen say, "Yes, limited, unambiguous and indirect forms of aggression in Europe are, if not impossible, so unlikely that it is not worth devising forces to meet this kind of contingency, beyond those that could hold a kind of probing action or a border raid." Government spokesmen prefer to speak of a military threat in Europe only in terms of that kind of contingency which would involve Russian troops confronting American troops. Nevertheless, General Norstad has gone so far as to call for some intermediate response in NATO's shield to meet "less-than-ultimate incidents," as he calls them, with the shield's "residual" conventional capacity, if possible, yet he has at the same time, gone along with the government spokesmen in flatly denying the possibility that a limited war in Europe is possible. He has called the NATO shield nuclear and has left the impression that any nuclear war would soon become total. There may be something to be said for denying a limited-war function of the shield as a declaratory policy, given the limited conventional forces that are available; but I think it has a rather overpositive and not too convincing ring. It cannot be reassuring to our allies. I detect signs that Mr. Khrushchev is beginning to think that this is a declaratory strategy and nothing else.

What kind of contingencies outside of Europe should we plan to deter or resist by limited-war capabilities? The official position here, I take it (and I am basing my views here on the latest statements in the Defense Department's appropriations hearings in January or February, 1959) is that the only kind of conflict that can be kept limited is a minor incident like the most recent ones at Quemoy and Matsu and in Lebanon and that, certainly, another limited war of the size of Korea is flatly impossible. Therefore, there is no sense, it would follow, in building limited-war capabilities to counter anything larger than these minor incidents. Does this mean that the government relies upon massive retaliation to deter or meet these possible limited contingencies? I don't think it does. I think rather we are relying upon the deterrent effect of tactical

nuclear weapons. Here again, I suspect we are shaping — in this vast area of uncertainty — our estimate of contingencies to fit our capabilities. In my mind there is a wide range of possible limited wars, including a large-scale limited conventional war outside of Europe, and with this estimate many military men, as you know, agree. Moreover, I think that the efficacy of tactical nuclear strikes as a deterrent against limited forms of aggression outside Europe is quite dubious considering the many opportunities for indirection and ambiguity.

The final question I think one should answer in deciding about the balance between strategic striking force capabilities and limited-war capabilities is, "What capabilities, forces, and weapons are required for limited war — for deterring or meeting limited aggressions?" The official position has been somewhat modified from the time that President Eisenhower held that what was good enough to deter a big war would be good enough to deter and fight a little one. Now Secretary of Defense McElroy says that limited-war and general-war capabilities are about the same thing — not exactly the same thing, but about the same thing — in that limited-war capabilities are applicable to general war and general-war capabilities, with only a few exceptions, are equally applicable to limited-war situations. Conceding that there is some overlap between the capabilities suitable for general and limited war, I would hazard the generalization that no military officer (at least in the Army and Navy) responsible for planning seems to agree with this optimistic estimate of the kind of capabilities that are needed. Again, the official view seems to rest on a confidence in the deterrent effect of tactical nuclear weapons. As for the size of the limited-war capabilities that we need, the official view is that they are quite adequate, and I think that this follows logically from the official estimate of the kinds of contingencies that might be limited, because if a limited war is confined to the Lebanon and Quemoy-Matsu type, we probably do have adequate forces, despite the fact we were stripped awfully thin in at least one of those contingencies and had to get a deficiency appropriation to cover one of them.

In any case, the forces capable of a conventional ground response have been greatly reduced. The arguments upon which they have been reduced are important to take account of. The first argument is that military assistance to our various allies compensates for the presence of our own troops. I think that this is a half truth, to put it mildly. The second argument is that nuclear firepower substitutes for manpower. I think that this is less than a half truth. Nuclear firepower does not substitute for manpower if it is not credible that you are going to use it, or if you will not use it in a wide range of contingencies; and it doesn't always substitute for manpower even if you do have to use it. According to Army studies, a bilateral tactical nuclear war would actually demand far more manpower than a conventional war. Secretary McElroy has not mentioned these two arguments recently, but in the hearings of January or February, 1959, to which I referred he relied on another argument for the reduction of our conventional ground-resistance forces. He said that the quality of the soldier has been so improved by virtue of the raise in salary that he has received and by virtue of the elimination of the lowest mental grades from selective service that this compensates for the reduction of manpower. No comment.

I cannot help but conclude from this analysis that while the credibility of our general-war capacity to deter anything short of a direct attack upon the United States itself has diminished — has been gradually eroded by the growth of Soviet nuclear striking power — we have at the same time become steadily more dependent upon strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, which are suitable for little else except general war. While the threat of limited aggression has grown more and more serious and more diversified, our capabilities for deterring and resisting limited aggressions by means short of general war have been steadily reduced in order to maintain our strategic striking power. In effect, the government, I feel, has applied very stringent criteria of minimum adequacy to limited-war capabilities on the basis of some optimistic and dubious strategic assumptions, but the only criteria of adequacy it has applied to strategic striking power are those imposed

by the size of the available defense budget and by certain customary conventions concerning the way in which that total pie should be divided among the services, operating against an exceedingly ambitious counterforce strategy.

Well, I am obviously in no position to determine what the exact allocation of resources should be to general-war and limited-war capabilities within this total defense pie. I suspect that both capabilities are inadequate, if one is prudent. But I think that any reasonably well-informed person is in a position to raise some critical questions about the basis upon which the present allocations have been made. I must say in conclusion that I wish that we — the richest nation in the world — would determine the size of the total defense pie with less deference to the alleged demands of a balanced budget and a luxurious standard of living.

## THE THEORY AND PRINCIPLES OF WAR

A lecture delivered  
at the Naval War College  
on 26 August 1950 by  
Professor J. A. Huston

My theme this morning is stated to be "The Theory and Principles of War." I am going to try to consider just a little bit here something of the nature, the types, and the theory of war; something of the interrelationships between the use of force and policy in applying these theories; something as to how these apply to strategic considerations.

In thinking about war and its principles, theories and applications, how do we arrive at these things? How do we arrive at the principles to guide our thinking on war? It seems to me mainly that it is through a study of history — noting the points of similarity and contrast to all conclusions, testing these conclusions, revising our conclusions in the light of any new evidence. These conclusions always must be tentative; the principles must always be open-minded. Even the best established principles should remain open to question. I think we want to avoid the procedure which Admiral Mahan seems to suggest in his *Lessons of the War With Spain* where he says that history should be studied thoroughly to find copious illustrations of the principles. This might suggest a purely deductive approach in which we already have arrived at the principles, and we go out to search for examples to reaffirm them. I do not think that is what we really are after. We want to search for all kinds of examples in order to revise the principles where necessary, and reaffirm them if that is what the evidence points to. Experience is the raw material of imagination, and history is vicarious experience.

We want to look at these things in perspective. In doing so, I think we should apply what you might call two of the fundamental laws of history, if it can be said to have any laws. These fundamental laws which are present in governing any situation

are *continuity* and *change*. If someone says this situation is completely different from anything before, he cannot be right. When he says that this thing is exactly like a previous situation, that could not be right, either. These two things, although contradictory, are going together — change and continuity.

In this way we look, then, at times such as these when we are in the midst of profound change. Sometimes I think we get our thinking a little bit off center. Some people attempt to avoid the responsibilities of the present by retreating into the past in the name of tradition; others evade the demands of tradition by trying to escape into some unreal world of the present without any past or an even more unreal world of the future with neither a present nor a past. But please remember the past is the present — it is our thinking *now* on the past. It is the experience we have gained in the past with the experience which we have *now* based on the past. It is our traditions, our attitudes, our prejudices *now* that have developed out of the past which govern our thinking.

When we turn to war and inquire into its nature, we look at the use of force in the international community, and we can see it both as an instrument of policy and as a determinant of policy. As an instrument of policy, force may be used to defend territory or acquire territory — to defend the status quo. It may be used to support our diplomacy, along with propaganda, with economic pressure and so on. You will recall the oft-quoted statement of Clausewitz, "War is a continuation of policy by other means," and we should think of a war-diplomacy continuum. Force, it may be said, is "the gold reserve behind the currency of diplomacy." Finally, force as an instrument of policy also may be used for indirect or oblique results. For instance, a truculent foreign policy sometimes may be used to gain internal results for the regime concerned. On the eve of the Civil War in this country the Secretary of State prepared a memorandum for President Lincoln in which he proposed that we should go to war with Spain for Santo Domingo; in fact, he was willing to take on Spain and France both. The idea was that this would reunite the country — everybody would rally



around the flag to defend against a foreign foe. Napoleon III had ambition to keep his throne and often it seemed he was willing to engage in foreign adventures in order to do that. Mussolini's foreign adventures seemed sometimes to be aimed at reinforcing his position at home, and with Hitler it was the same way. The more success he had abroad, the more precarious and truculent foreign policy he followed successfully, the more support he could find at home. Perhaps we should think twice on matters of stirring revolution within the communist world on that matter. There is always that danger that the communist regime in the Soviet Union may be tempted to invite foreign adventures in order to unify the country at home to build up support for the regime. Possibly that is the explanation for the belligerent attitude of the Chinese Communists currently.

Moltke in Germany said once on one occasion, "The stock exchange is so very influential that it may use armies in defense of its interests," — so we have war scares and peace scares, etc. — all kinds of references and use of force for indirect results as an instrument of policy.

Force also enters into the international community as a determinant of policy. Let us look into the traditional causes of war which usually are offered in general terms. There will be some kind of listing such as economic rivalry, imperialism, nationalism, national armaments, entangling alliances, militarism, etc., and there are others. Examining these a little bit more closely each may have certain application of its own — certain occasions I suppose where nomadic invasions, going over to get new grass lands or some other such thing when the economic motive may be paramount — but most of the time if we examine these things more closely, they have their greatest validity in the assumption that there is going to be war, thus imperialism, for natural resources, is justified on the basis not that we do not have access to those materials; in peacetime we can trade for resources anywhere, normally speaking. Why must it be necessary to acquire them by colonial acquisition? Because in wartime they may be

cut off by an unfriendly power. We need military bases; we need bases overseas — naval, air bases, and so on. Why? On the assumption that there is going to be war. The Russians looked upon the Dardenelles as being a key to their national interest. They must preserve the free passage of the Dardenelles. Why? In peacetime normally there is no closing of the Straits; they can have access. It is in time of war when they may be cut off that it becomes a matter of great concern, so that they are willing even to go to war, if necessary, in order to get something which they must have if there is a war. This is the sort of thing which you find, then — that the fear of war becomes fundamental in the cause of war itself — it is the very thing which one finds even in going back to— Thucydides — and incidentally, if one would acquaint himself with alliances, with military strategy, naval power *vs* land power, with morality *vs* expediency, I would refer him to Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War*. It reads like yesterday's headlines. There is one place where he writes: "In arriving at this decision and resolving to go to war, the Lacedaemonians were influenced, not so much by the speeches of their allies, as by the fear of the Athenians and of their increasing power." Fear of war itself, fundamentally.

General Tasker H. Bliss was a young army officer who was a member of the staff at the opening of the Naval War College. Later he went on to become Chief of Staff of the Army, served on the Supreme War Council at Versailles, and was a member of the American Peace Commission at Paris in 1919. General Bliss said, "You have noted that the one sole underlying cause of the disturbance is mutual fear." And Sir Ralph G. Hawtrey, British economist wrote nearly thirty years ago in the *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, "When I say that the principal cause of war is war itself, I mean that the aim for which war is judged worthwhile is most often something which itself affects military power."

Today we have seen war in all kinds of forms. The history of war has been formed in many different patterns. I suggest that we ought to think of a continuum of our policy — a diplomacy-

war spectrum. Thus the first step in ordinary peacetime relationships is in *diplomacy*. We seek the national interest in diplomacy. Diplomacy is concerned with negotiation, accommodation, and agreement, and here, of course, we have to consider the feasibility of negotiations in our time, what assumptions we can make, and the feasibility of such things as coexistence. For some reason that term has acquired an evil connotation. Why do we permit the Communists to take perfectly good words, apply their own definitions to them, and then we have to throw them out? Pretty soon we are not going to be able to be in favor of peace. Coexistence means that we both exist, and it still may have some relevance to the situation. The assumption of non-coexistence, of course, has to be that one of us must disappear; one or the other must survive; there is not room in this world for the two. But, you know, that same kind of assumption has occurred before, and never more with greater violence than with the rise of Islam and its rivalry with Christianity. Both of them preached holy war — holy war, the Crusades, fighting to the death in the name of religion, and there is no more violent war than one fought in the name of peaceful religion. They fought for a thousand years — one of them must go — one must be driven from the earth, so they had the great inroads into Europe, the fall of Constantinople, the siege of Vienna, and so on. Yet they finally found out that neither one could expel the other. They learned to coexist because they had to coexist, and now we find alliances among Islamic nations and Christian nations.

In diplomacy I think there may be some rules which apply, though we will not go into this with much detail as these are things for which you cannot write any strict rule book, but it seems to me that there are certain elementary rules which I may suggest, such as:

(1) Never get yourself into a position from which you cannot back down gracefully — don't put yourself into a position where you are going to lose face — that is not a rule to be applied only by some foreign power; it is for ourselves. By taking an une-

quivocal position on something, and then getting into a position where you have to back down, then you feel you cannot back down.

(2) Next, don't force your opponent into a position where he cannot back down gracefully. Here you see military tactics are not always the same as the diplomatic, for in the military you say you want to cut off the retreat of the enemy — destroy him. In diplomacy the objective is not to destroy him, but to arrive at an agreement, and here we want to help him to arrive at the agreement, not embarrass him. Sometimes we seem to engage our greatest diplomatic efforts in showing him we really stood up to him that time — we got him told — when we really ought to be aiming more in the direction of accommodation and agreement.

(3) Next, I should think we would want to compromise on minor issues in order to save major objectives. Sometimes we find ourselves bogged down on what may be nonessentials. We build up nonessentials until they become things we cannot compromise on. Theodore Roosevelt followed a practical rule. His was "trade the inevitable for a concession." When he saw the Japanese going into Korea in 1905 he saw that he could do nothing about this short of war and he knew that the nation was not in any position for war, but he was very much interested in protecting the Philippines, so he arrived at an agreement with the Japanese. The United States would respect their position in Korea and the Japanese would respect the United States' position in the Philippines. Now he did not lose anything; they were going into Korea anyway, and he gained a Japanese commitment to respect American rights in the Philippines; he traded the inevitable for a concession.

(4) Then, look at matters from the viewpoint of other nations, as well as your own, and (5) don't permit weak allies to make your decisions for you. That has been a dangerous thing from time to time. Athens and Sparta in the Peloponnesian War got involved through their allies; it was not Athens or Sparta that invaded one or the other; their allies got them into it. In World War I, it was not the German invasion of France or Russia, or the British coming in that got that war started; it was Austria and Serbia

— they brought in their allies. We may find ourselves committed in various parts of the world and it works both ways. Alliances are things which have to be handled in broad perspective and in mutual agreements. We may find ourselves in a position where we have given a blank check, and we may find our hand forced to back someone on a policy which we did not approve.

Now let us go on looking down the spectrum quickly. Of course, the next phase which has become common in our time is the "*cold war*," although that is a new name for a thing which has existed for a long time. There we are including such things as economic pressures, propaganda, subversion, armed demonstrations such as the movement of forces, even the application of a pacific blockade on occasion. It is what Churchill has called "All mischief short of war." This can be a very complex thing and requires a great deal of attention to it. Then we go on to the next step and these may run concurrently — it is not necessarily one or the other — you may have aspects of one and another — the *guerrilla war*. This may be a part of a big war, or it may be an independent action, but it seems to me that we have neglected somewhat full consideration of waging or defending against guerrilla war. In World War II General Eisenhower gave it as his estimate that the French maquis were equal to fifteen divisions in assisting the Allies. Tito's partisans or Mahailovic's Chetnicks were said to have tied down some thirty German divisions for a period of years after the Royal Army in Yugoslavia had capitulated in three days. When the Germans went into action they found that guerilla operations against them had taken a great toll. After World War II we have seen a continuation of this kind of warfare. It took nearly 200,000 Greek troops nearly three years to quell some 30,000 guerrillas. The French in Indo-China faced mostly guerrilla warfare. It is said that it cost France more than the total Marshall Plan aid given in four years, and the casualties among the officers were equal each year to most of the graduating class of St. Cyr. The French now are involved in a costly guerrilla war in Algeria. They deployed 500,000 troops and still could not get a decision in

guerrilla war. Now we find the same thing threatening in Laos. Here is something that requires some more of our attention, I think.

Then we go to the limited war — non-atomic. It is a question whether this thing is going to be in the future or not; we have seen some examples. Actually limited wars were generally the pattern of wars up until World War I and World War II, with the exception of the Napoleonic Wars. There were a few world wars, of course — general wars, but usually they were limited — limited in objectives; that is the thing that generally limits them — limited in objective. The objective of the American colonies in the Revolution was their independence, not to conquer England, not to overthrow the government, but simply to slice off a part of the empire, and they could win that by defending themselves. All they had to do was to defend the colonies; they did not have to launch any overseas expedition to get a decision. The war of 1812 was supposedly to protect commerce. Again there was no expedition for conquering England. Some developed an ambition to conquer Canada, but they got over that pretty soon. In the Spanish-American war in 1898, the objective was to free Cuba; it was not to conquer the Spanish peninsula in an overseas expedition to Europe; it was a limited objective. We expanded that a little bit when we took over in the Philippines, but still there was a limited conflict. World War I and World War II — that was a change for us. Now the objective became total destruction of the enemy. Yet we have had a recent great example of a limited war in Korea — limited war undertaken for a limited objective. There has been a lot of recrimination since then; some people expanded the objective in their own minds, but as long as we held to that limited objective, we held steadfastly to a limited war.

The next question is whether we can expect another part of the continuum to include such a thing as *limited war — atomic*. Some think that will be the case in the future. Indeed, we must plan on that sort of thing from the American point of view because therein at the moment, perhaps lies our greatest relative strength; but one question remains where it will be possible to

limit atomic war. With these things we cannot be sure, but we had better be prepared in either case, so again we have to keep this in mind as a possibility of a limited conflict while using tactical atomic weapons.

*General War — non-atomic:* This would be in the pattern of World War II. It is a sort of thing which I would not expect, yet we had World War II without the use of poisonous gases, etc., as people point out, though I think that that is a little bit of a different order of business. I doubt whether we shall go into general war non-atomic, but it certainly is a possibility. I just would not dismiss it without any thought.

Then, of course, we get on to the one which all of these other things are intended to prevent — that is the *total war*. *Total war* — this idea of the nation in arms, really came into prominence in the wars of the French Revolution actually. But now with the thermonuclear weapon it has come into a whole new level, a whole new aspect, and it has become the dread hanging over the world as the sword of Damocles.

In searching for a theory of war, we should focus our attention on the purposes for which it is waged, and the general principles which govern our attitude in its conduct. And to guide our thinking about war, I am going to suggest five principles.

The first of these is what I might call the *principle of political purpose*. In recent times there has been an attitude on the part of many Americans that the purpose of war is simply victory. "In war there is no substitute for victory," we are told. Wars are not fought simply to improve our standing in the won-lost record. They have deep underlying political purposes and these must remain paramount. It is the failure to look beyond the immediate destruction of the enemy to these political consequences which leads directly to the situations where we are repeatedly telling ourselves we win the war and lose the peace. The destruction of enemy forces may be an intermediate objective for military operations, but not always is it the objective of the war. Clausewitz has been read out of context and misinterpreted to support the idea

that the destruction of the enemy forces is the ultimate objective. Mahan has been taken out of context or is misinterpreted to support the idea that the main object of a navy at all times should be to destroy the enemy's fleet. Reading a little further in Clausewitz we find this statement:

"The war of a community — of whole nations, and particularly of civilized nations — always starts from a political motive. It is, therefore, a political act. Now if it were a perfect unrestrained and absolute expression of force, as we had to deduce it from its mere conception, then the moment it is called forth by policy it would step into the place of policy, and as something quite independent of it would set it aside, and only follow its own laws . . . This is how the thing has been really viewed hitherto whenever a want of harmony between policy and the conduct of a war has led to theoretical distinctions of the kind. But it is not so, and the idea is radically false . . . Now, if we reflect that war has its root in a political object, then naturally this original motive which called it into existence should also continue the first and highest consideration in its conduct. Still, the political object is no despotic lawgiver on that account; it must accommodate itself to the nature of the means, and though changes in these means may involve modifications in the political objective, the latter always retains a prior right to consideration. Policy, therefore, is interwoven with the whole action of the war, and must exercise a continuous influence upon it, as far as the nature of the forces liberated by it will permit . . . the political view is the object. War is the means, and the means must always include the object in our conception."

"War is simply the continuation of politics by other means."  
If you asked who said that, I'm sure you would say Clausewitz.



In fact, I just said that he said it a little while ago, but this quotation happens to be taken from the lectures of Mao-Tse-Tung *On the Protracted War*, and he is quoting Lenin. War is simply the continuation of politics by other means.

Now, getting back to General Bliss again, he said after World War I, "We whipped Germany not for the mere sake and pleasure of whipping her, but in order to destroy an iniquitous system and to bring about a better condition in the world."

Our concentration on the enemy forces as the object of war has led to what Liddell Hart has called the "Napoleonic fallacy." That is the failure to recognize that the emotional and economic attachments that a nation may have for a particular area or city may be so great that its loss can mean the loss of the war. This has been true of Paris. Whenever Paris has fallen, France has fallen. In 1814 when Napoleon left Paris only lightly guarded in order to pursue the enemy in eastern France the allies made straight for Paris, and a week after they entered the capital, the emperor abdicated.

In World War II the decision to turn away from Berlin was because it had lost its military significance. It lost its significance as a military objective, but we overlooked the political significance of Berlin. General Patton was turned away from Prague and General Eisenhower gave it as his recommendation that we do not go to Berlin at the time that Prime Minister Churchill was urging such steps. It was of the greatest importance for the western allies to enter Berlin. As a nation we have failed to keep in mind the political significance. In the Far East the decision to go for Luzon rather than Formosa was partly political. During the Korean conflict a number of decisions had political implications, and though we liked to draw a distinct line and say that the military commander makes military decisions and the political authorities make the political decisions, so therefore the military commander has no responsibility for the political objective, yet we cannot make any such line. The decision to cross the 38th parallel, the decision to go to the Yalu River, the decision to bomb North

Korean power plants along the Yalu while truce negotiations were going on — all these had essential political implications.

The second guiding principle that I want to suggest is the principle of *indivisibility*. We must look at war in its total setting. Action in one part of the world cannot be isolated from implications in other parts of the world. When the communists struck in Korea, we not only took action in the Far East, but we also sent reinforcements to Europe. Military operations cannot be isolated from the political - diplomatic - geographic - economic-technological-psychological factors. All must be considered as a part of the whole.

Operations in one theater affect those in another in global conflict. Even before our entry into World War II we had taken the strategic decision that if war came we should beat Hitler first. Nevertheless, after our entry into the war, competition among the major theaters for manpower, supplies, and facilities quickly developed. On the one hand there was the alleged "pull to the Pacific" which was said to be delaying operations in the European area, though in fact the Pacific war did not turn out to be really a major drag on the war in Europe. On the other hand, there was the supposed de-emphasis on operations in the Pacific in favor of the war in Europe. But now it seems quite likely that the Japanese were defeated as quickly as if it had not been the declared purpose of the Allies to defeat Germany first. The limiting factors on the campaigns of Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur in 1943 and 1944 were aircraft carriers and land bases for aircraft, and these depended in turn upon the substantial rebuilding of the United States fleet. It is doubtful that the war in Europe seriously delayed the shipbuilding program, and until the new carriers and supporting vessels were ready, the diversion of additional ground forces and supplies to the Pacific could have had little effect. After the new Essex-class carriers began to arrive in the Pacific in 1943, we could resume offensive operations.

The third principle I should like to suggest is the principle of *relativity*. In war all things must be considered relative to the time, the place, the situation.

Timing is of the essence in war and diplomacy. Look at Hitler's activity before World War II — the timing of the reoccupation of the Rhineland, the Czechoslovakian crisis — they seemed to be examples of masterful timing. They were for the moment; of course, in the long run Hitler had some difficulties, but at the moment it was a great triumph.

In logistics timing is essential. In procurement the decision to standardize and go into mass production is a critical matter of timing. If it is taken too early we find ourselves using obsolete equipment; if we take it too late we may find that we may have developed superior equipment, but not enough of it to do any good. We can judge that timing, of course, only by looking at the situation as a whole.

In this matter, of relativity, I think it depends again, as I said, on the time, the place, the situation. Sometimes in our thinking we tend to go on overemphasizing one thing against another from time to time. We become air-minded at one point and all the maps become obsolete; this is the air age, and the shrinking globe, and we are much impressed by the use of air transportation such as in the Pacific airlift in support of the Korean conflict. But the air age really had not arrived yet insofar as normal transportation was concerned. Sometimes examples intended to emphasize how the world has shrunk in point of time-distance seem to be a little exaggerated. It might be suggested, for example, that Tokyo is now is closer to San Francisco, in time, than Philadelphia was to New York during the days of the Revolution. This was held to be true because an airplane in 1950 could span the Pacific more quickly than a horse-drawn coach could go from New York to Philadelphia in 1780. But this comparison is not altogether a fair one. It compares a very special method of transportation with a common method of transportation. An army might march from New York to Philadelphia in a matter of five to seven days in 1780, but in the 1950's no army could reach Tokyo from San Francisco in anything like that time. It took nine days after the first warning for the first elements of the 2nd Infantry Division to begin moving

from Tacoma in July 1950, and it took twenty-nine days for the whole division to complete preparations and sail, and it was thirty-four days from the time that the first ships sailed from Tacoma until the last tactical unit arrived at Pusan.

Now, air transportation commonly is considered rapid transportation, but during the Korean conflict the amount of aircraft that were available made air transportation very much slower for general purposes than the Victory ships. For example, let us say that we wanted to deliver some 15,000 tons of high priority cargo needed within thirty days to support the Inchon landing. Two Victory ships could deliver that in the required time — thirty days — allowing time for loading, sailing, unloading. The airlift with the available aircraft could not have delivered this in less than five months. The C-54 could carry about five tons on Pacific flights; about 200 could be counted on for sustained operations at the peak; each could make about three round-trips a month.

The relative cost was even more exaggerated. For each five tons of air cargo the C-54 carried across the Pacific, it consumed about eighteen tons of gasoline. Two Victory ships transporting 15,000 tons of cargo from San Francisco to Yokahama would consume approximately 7,000 barrels of fuel oil — 14,000 for the round trip. C-54 aircraft carrying the same tonnage over the same route would consume about 1,140,000 barrels of high grade aviation gasoline for the flights in both directions. The Victory ships carry enough fuel to make two such round trips; aircraft had to refuel frequently at bases served by tankers. Thus, to move 15,000 tons of cargo to Japan by sea required two ships; to move it by air required 3,000 air flights, plus eight ships to carry the gasoline.

Even success in battle is relative depending on the point of view. For example, the British and the Americans were so impressed by the German airborne invasions of Crete that this led directly to the expansion of the airborne effort in the United States and Britain. The Germans considered the Crete operations so costly that they never attempted another major airborne operation during the war. On the other hand, the Allies considered the airborne

attack upon Sicily a near failure — that is when we got into a little bit of trouble between the surface and the air of our own forces. General Eisenhower then stated frankly after this experience, that he did not believe in the airborne division, and several officers had similar recommendations. Yet the German general, Kesslering, commander in the area, reported that the paratroops had seriously delayed the movement of German reserves. General Kurt Student, commander of German paratroops, gave it as his opinion that the Herman Goering Division would have hurled the initial seaborne units back into the sea if airborne troops had not blocked it. He may have been trying to excuse himself, but that was the opinion which he stated.

For the Germans, Crete was the end of major airborne operations. For the Allies, Sicily was very nearly the end, but more hopeful counsel prevailed, and later came the great invasions of Normandy, Holland and across the Rhine.

Again, this principle of relatively applies to preparedness. Military preparedness never can be absolute. It always must be relative, for no one can foresee the future sufficiently to foretell exactly what is going to be required, or what the enemy is going to be, or what the situation is going to be. As Walter Mills has pointed out, the French Marshal Leboeuf in 1870 was "ready to the last gaitor button," but he lost the war. The German general staff had achieved total preparedness by 1914, but still lost the war. Estimates of preparedness will have meaning only relative to the capabilities of a potential enemy, and relative to the time and place of anticipated operations.

Now, the fourth principle which I suggest to guide our thinking along these lines, is the principle of *flexibility*. We must permit no hard and fast preconceptions to govern our conduct of war. In 1914 the European general staffs seemed pretty much to have forgotten this principle. After the Austrian declaration of war, the Russian foreign minister wanted to limit the action to partial mobilization near the Austrian border, but the generals said for technical reasons this was impossible. The only thing they could

do would be to order general mobilization extending to the German border as well; otherwise everything would be all mixed up. The German ambassador said that if Russia continued her mobilization, Germany would mobilize, and mobilization meant war. But the Russian generals said that any attempt to halt mobilization would disrupt their organization. The Kaiser and Chancellor in Germany suggested that their forces should march only against Russia. The Chief of the general staff said that their plans were the result of years of work. Once planned, they could not possibly be changed.

In the Spanish-American war the American planners figured on the troop-carrying capacity of the transports assembled at Tampa. They figured 23,000 men for them. The way they arrived at their figures was by calculating the capacity of British transports; but this had no relation to the ships which were down there, for they had not been converted for troop use, and they only had room for 17,000. Absolute chaos reigned on the beaches down there. That may be one reason they were so successful in Cuba — even the Spaniards could not figure out what in the world they were doing.

Flexibility means the ability to adjust to the situation, to make the best use of the means available, to apply experience in one field to another.

Finally, the consideration which I think we need to keep in mind in completing our pentagon of guiding principles is the principle of *minimum force*. This is not the old principle of war that you always read about as the "economy of force." That is stated, "In order to concentrate superior combat strength in one place economy of force must be exercised in other places." The idea was to strike with the maximum of force. What I am trying to say is that only the minimum of force necessary to do the job should be used. This has become essential in an age where the thermonuclear bombs stand in the background. It made little sense for the Army Air Forces in World War II to drop fifty times (according to the postwar calculations of the United States Strategic Bombing Sur-

vey) as many bombs on Cologne in December 1944 as was necessary to knock out the transportation system there. On the moral grounds, going back to the principle which St. Augustine gave for a "just war," *only so much force must be used as is necessary for achieving the object.* Moreover, serious political implications are involved, and implications for the economy are involved. The factor of logistical limitation which becomes such a tremendously growing problem every year further demands the use of the minimum of force which can accomplish the mission.

And so, in our strategic considerations as a whole, our national strategy depends on political objectives, depends on the means available, depends on the capabilities of the enemy or potential enemy, depends on the relative factors of time and space. Our national objective must be the safety and well-being of the United States and the protection of political freedom and economic resources. The political purpose must be kept paramount. We are not interested in a contest for its own sake. We must keep in mind all the elements of national strategy and the worldwide implications for the allies, for potential enemies, for neutrals, of what we do and what we say. Flexibility requires forces of multiple capability — a more flexible military defense organization. The very serious consequences of thermonuclear war require the greatest restraint in use of atomic weapons, and adherence to principle of minimum force.

## 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 them of interest.

The inclusion of a book or article in this list does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the Naval War College of the facts, opinions or concepts contained therein. They are indicated only on the basis of interesting, timely, and possibly useful reading matter.

Many of these publications may be found in ship and station libraries. Certain of the books on the list which are not available from these sources may be available from one of the Navy's Auxiliary Library Service Collections. These collections of books are obtainable on loan. Requests from individual officers to borrow books from an Auxiliary Library Service Collection should be addressed to the nearest of the following special loan collections:

Chief of Naval Personnel,  
(G14)

Department of the Navy  
Washington 25, D. C.

Commandant ELEVENTH Naval  
District (Code 154)

937 North Harbor Drive  
San Diego, California

Commandant FOURTEENTH  
Naval District (Code 141)

Navy No. 128  
Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

Commander Naval Forces,  
Marlanas

Nimitz Hill Library, Box 17  
Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

U. S. Naval Station Library  
Attn: Auxiliary Service Collection  
Building C-9  
U. S. Naval Base  
Norfolk 11, Virginia



## BOOKS

Sih, Paul K. T. *Decision for China*. Chicago, Regnery, 1959. 247 p.

With the two major powers of the world in contention for the uncommitted one third, the author finds the situation in Asia the most critical. In this area Red China exists as the Communist base in opposition to Free World advances, and as a threat to universal peace. To offset this menace, Dr. Sih contends that China is not hopelessly lost to Communism; and further, that the solution to its recovery is not through forceful, warring means, but through Christianity. Since Christianity is not new to the Orient, the author traces its advances and reverses throughout the centuries from the arrival of the first Franciscan friar in 1289 to the present. As a Catholic convert, Dr. Sih's coverage of this history is predominantly Catholic in its tracings. From an examination of the setbacks suffered by his faith in China, it is concluded that previous failures were most often largely attributable to presenting Christianity with a Western approach, and to minimal effort to make concessions for Eastern culture. With this in mind, it is advanced that Christianity, a natural foe to Communism, will accomplish the demise of Red China if there is established a synthesis of the Christian faith with native culture.

Raeder, Erich. *Struggle for the Sea*. London, Kimber, 1959. 270 p.

In these memoirs, Admiral Raeder, as Supreme Commander of the German Navy, vividly portrays the resurgence and rebuilding of the German Navy under the restrictions imposed by the Versailles Treaty following World War I and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1936. He gives an accurate account of German naval operations during World War II and of his concept of the over-all strategy for the conduct of the war. His frequent disagreements with Hitler on naval strategy and tactics are interesting, and eventually led to his resignation as Supreme Commander in 1943. His account of

the conduct and outcome of the Nuremburg Trials from the defendant's point of view is undoubtedly biased, but is extremely enlightening to say the least, and should certainly be food for thought for international policy makers of the future. This book is considered to be excellent reference material for matters which pertain to German naval strategy and doctrine from World War I through World War II.

GOUBB, John Bagot. *Britain and the Arabs*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1959. 496 p.

This honest evaluation of the relationships existing between the British and Arabian countries over the time period 1908-1958 was written by Lieutenant General Sir John Bagot Glubb. The history of the Arabian corridor is briefly covered, and the author digresses to a discussion of the strategic value of the area. The meat of the book is a straightforward look at British policy during the period in question. Sir John admits to a policy of vacillation, lack of vision and the absence of a clear-cut objective, but points out that these omissions are not the sins of "unscrupulous imperialism." The author's intention is obviously to dispose of the charges that such vacillations and lack of objectiveness were carefully planned deceptions to exploit the Arab people and/or their resources, and to show that, in fact, they were merely the shortcomings of a popular democracy. The writer has lived in and served the area for some thirty-six years of the fifty under consideration, and has developed a deep affection and understanding of the peoples of the Arab nations. This keen insight does much to bury forever the propaganda that British policy has been deliberate domination.

Veale, Frederick J. P. *War Crimes Discreetly Veiled*. New York, Devin-Adair, 1959. 237 p.

This is a sensationalist, expose'-style British writing in which the "truth" is published for the first time on seven incidents of World War II. Stemming primarily from the political need

to make Stalin into "Good Old Uncle Joe," the action of Communist partisans in France, Italy, Yugoslavia, etc. is finally unveiled to the public for the first time. Showing Stalin in his true colors as one of the greatest butchers of all time, the truth of the Katyn Forest Massacre of the officers of the Polish Army is very grippingly portrayed. The third story, the murder of Mussolini and the robbery of the huge Italian treasure in currency and bullion with which he was attempting to flee, is laid to the Italian Communist partisans. The story of French arch-criminal Dr. Petiot is somewhat out of place; the doctor is a murdering charlatan who appropriated the life savings of French patriots and then murdered them as they attempted to escape to Switzerland via the underground. The final three stories deal with war crimes of German Major Walter Eeder, General Ramoke and Admiral Raeder, and are an interesting and apparently authentic report of certain of the war trials. Although the book is allegedly objective, much of the material is highly critical of the Allies in World War II. Because of the great credit invariably given to Germans and the German Army, the author's bias is quite clear.

Saposs, David J. *Communism in American Unions*. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1959. 279 p.

The manner in which this book is documented with names, dates, places and quotes indicates the completion of a very thorough research project on the part of the author. It would appear that the documentation must be true, or Mr. Saposs would be spending the rest of his life in court answering libel suits. The tactics and progress of Communism into the trade-union movement is traced from the initial trial and error growing pains commencing about the beginning of the present century, through the rise and fall of the Industrial Workers of the World, to the present-day American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. Meticulous descriptions are given of the step-by-step techniques actually used by the Communists in acquiring, or attempting to acquire,

control of the various trade unions. Particular vividness is given to the covert activities among the various trades in the Hollywood film industry, and the reasons for desiring control of this entertainment medium. The concluding chapters deal with the legislative attempts to limit the adverse power of Communism, and their effects on the never-ending effort to control the trade unions.

Pfischke, Elmer. *Summit Diplomacy*. College Park, Md., University of Maryland, 1958. 125 p.

A brief but carefully written book describing various types of "summit diplomacy." As the subtitle indicates, the emphasis is on summit diplomacy by the United States, although not limited to it. The author demonstrates that summit diplomacy (negotiating at the highest level) may take several forms. Among the forms discussed are: state visits, personal communications, summit conferences and the utilization of personal diplomatic representatives. None of these is really new, although most of them have been utilized to a far greater extent in the last two decades than heretofore. In a final chapter, the author presents an appraisal of summit diplomacy, and concludes that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, but warns against risks and potentially serious pitfalls. An excellent background for the Eisenhower-Khrushchev talks and such summit conferences as may be forthcoming.

## PERIODICALS

Taylor, John W. R. "U. S. Air Power in the Sixties." *Air Power*, Summer 1959, p. 263-270.

Notes continued U. S. plans for manned bombers as contrasted to Britain's policy of eventual reliance on guided missiles, and goes on to report on how the U. S. Air Force and Navy visualize their future aircraft and missile needs.

Dufek, George J., RAdm., USN. "What We've Accomplished in Antarctica." *The National Geographic Magazine*, October 1959, p. 526-557.

The Commander of Operation Deep Freeze summarizes the results of 18 months of work — what has been learned about Antarctica, and what its significance may be in the near future.

"Tunnel a Base in Arctic Ice." *Business Week*, September 26, 1959, p. 87-88.

Scientists are learning as they go as Army builds a missile base under the Greenland ice cap.

"TALOS Turns Triple Navy Threat: Anti-Air, Bombardment and AICBM." *Missiles and Rockets*, September 21, 1959, p. 24-25.

Gives the follow-up program for TALOS and SUPER TALOS.

"Baltic Manoeuvres." *Foreign Report*, September 17, 1959, p. 5-7.

An instructive pattern in cold war maneuvering is provided in the Baltic region where the Communist bloc is pursuing the three main policies of: a constant build-up in Soviet aero-naval power against NATO; a political offensive for a neutralized and atom-free Scandinavia; and an East German commercial threat to Hamburg.

Jonas, Gilbert. "Burma Moves Toward the West." *The New Leader*, September 21, 1959, p. 16-17.

Thanks in large measure to the heavy-handed blunders of the Russians (and the ruthlessness of the Chinese against the Tibetans), Communist stock in Burma has plunged drastically.

Taylor, Edmond. "The Chinese Invasion of North Africa." *The Reporter*, September 17, 1959, p. 31-36.

Calls attention to steps taken by the Chinese to exert influence in North Africa.

**"Red China — A Split, A Purge." *Newsweek*, September 28, 1959, p. 59.**

Khrushchev's pressure on Mao to call off his offensive activities in Asia and the lack of success of the "communes" have caused a split between Mao and the Chinese Army resulting in firings and new appointments which may indicate a new purge.

**Cabell, C. P., Gen. "The Nature of the Communist Threat." *Vital Speeches of the Day*, October 1, 1959, p. 751-754.**

Presents Communism's triple-threat attack on the West through (1) direct, overt official action by the Soviet Government; (2) subversive programs; and (3) Communist front organizations.

**Labin, Suzanne. "The Communist Plot." *Western World*, September 1959. p. 38-42.**

The writer concludes that the newly-independent Asian states continue to attack a non-existent "western colonialism," and international Communism adapts its propaganda to the various Asian characteristics in preparation of depriving these peoples of their new freedom.

**Tomlinson, Edward, "Communism Resurgent in the Caribbean." *Western World*, September 1959, p. 16-19.**

Warns that the Communists are making every effort to promote political chaos on the United States' doorstep.

**Gullain, Robert, "After Ten Years of Communism." *The New York Times Magazine*, September 27, 1959, p. 11, 76-78.**

A balance sheet of the strengths and weaknesses of the Chinese Communist regime that is playing a growing role in world affairs.

**"Which is the Wave of the Future?" *U. S. News & World Report*, October 5, 1959, p. 70.**

A brief article comparing the operation of Soviet Communism and U. S. capitalism.

**"The Khrushchev Campaign in U. S. — What His Speeches Show."**

*U. S. News & World Report*, September 28, 1959, p. 96-109.

Direct quotations from Khrushchev to the National Press Club, the Economic Club and the General Assembly of the United Nations; includes an analysis of his main points and an interview with Sen. Wayne Morse giving the story of Khrushchev's private session with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Schumann, Maurice. "How de Gaulle Hopes to Save the Atlantic Alliance, and Why." *Western World*, September 1959, p. 10-15.

A French statesman explains the French attitude toward NATO and toward U. S. action in the Atlantic Alliance.

Shepherd, Gordon. "Hungary — Three Years Later." *The Reporter*, October 1, 1959, p. 18-20.

The Communists in Hungary are now trying to coexist with their own people in a two-sided operation.

"Iceland — The Keflavik Incident." *Time*, September 21, 1959, p. 40.

A brief rundown on the recent incident that occurred at the NATO base in Keflavik Airport.

Hensley, Stewart. "India Stands at Ideological Crossroads." *The Magazine of Wall Street*, September 26, 1959, p. 21-23, 49-51.

Open conflict with China would wreck India's second Five-Year Plan with tragic effects on millions in underdeveloped areas who would then believe that Communism offers the quickest path to improved living standards.

Padelford, Norman J. "Regional Cooperation in the South Pacific: Twelve Years of the South Pacific Commission." *International Organization*, Summer 1959, p. 380-393.

Focuses upon the work of the South Pacific Commission which has been breaking some new ground in regional cooperation.

Alan, Ray and Caspar, Johann. "Iraq's Impact on the Middle East." *Commentary*, September 1959, p. 185-201.

Two articles describing the continuing revolutionary turmoil in Iraq and its impact throughout the Arab world: Mr. Alan analyzes the complicated diplomatic maneuvers and shifts which Communist activity in Iraq has set off, and Mr. Caspar provides an on-the-spot report from Gaghdad.

Rhee, Syngman. "Where Korea Stands Today." *Korean Survey*, October 1959, p. 3-4, 12.

President Rhee marks the forward strides taken by Korea on the eleventh anniversary of her independence.

"Asia — Soothing Syrup." *Time*, September 21, 1959, p. 32-34.

Describes U. N. action on the Laos request, and Laos' alternative of turning to SEATO if the U. N. fails.

"The Crisis in Laos." *Congressional Record*, September 5, 1959. p. 16728-16730.

Sen. Dodd reviews the situation in Laos and suggests a course of action for the United States.

Phillips, Thomas R., BGen. "Laos Chances of Survival Are Not Considered Good." *Army-Navy-Air Force Register & Defense Times*, September 9, 1959, p. 23.

Laos is being subjected to the same kind of guerrilla and subversive activity as was used to run the French out of North Vietnam, and the writer remarks on the contrast between U. S. declared policy and actual policy.

Biorklund, E., Adm. (Sweden). "Can War Be Limited?" *Air Power*, Summer 1959, p. 287-293.

Considers problems of limiting war in general and in local struggles, presenting some conclusions formulated from realistic fundamentals.



Sheldon, Courtney. "To Be Safe, Be Prepared to Fight."  
*Congressional Record*, September 4, 1959, p. A7747.

Christian Science Monitor's report of an interview with Admiral Burke in which he discusses the problem of the balance of weapons within budget allotments, selection of targets and decision-making on requirements for cold, limited or general war.

Dupuy, R. Ernest, Col. "Small Navies Play Vital Role in NATO Defense Alignment." *Army-Navy-Air Force Register & Defense Times*, September 26, 1959, p. 21-22.

The role of the small navies is primarily to keep the Soviet submarines from getting out into the Atlantic from their bases in Soviet or satellite territory.

"USAF Gains Major Space Role in Transfer of ARPA Programs."  
*Aviation Week*, September 28, 1959, p. 27-28.

An article on the transfer of ARPA programs to the services, MIDAS and SAMOS satellite projects going to the Air Force, TRANSIT to the Navy and NOTUS to the Army.

Dupuy, R. Ernest, Col. "Should Services Merge?" *Army-Navy-Air Force Register & Defense Times*, September 19, 1959.

Deals with the responses of each of the three services to the idea of unification.

Stump, Felix B., Adm., USN (Ret). "Communist China Today."  
*Vital Speeches of the Day*, October 1, 1959, p. 759-761.

Scores the actions of Communist China and warns that we must be strong and united to resist Communist aggression and to support our free allies in Asia both by military measures and by strengthening their morale through a strong foreign policy and by not recognizing Red China.