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The Contact Sport Senior Leaders Must Play

I encourage every member of the military to take on the mantle of fearless, thoughtful, but loyal dissent when the situation calls for it.

—Dr. Robert M. Gates, 2008

Proper stewardship of air and space power requires Airmen not only to push the limits in combat but also to emphasize, publically and frequently, what is special and vital about air and space power. No one else can be counted on to do it.

—Dr. Rebecca Grant, 2006

As our nation transitions to a new presidential administration, military, government, and academic professionals concerned with defense matters have an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute ideas that protect our nation's citizens and interests. As denizens of air, space, and cyberspace, Airmen like to think of themselves as occupying the proverbial "high ground." But in national security policy battles, Airmen frequently are not sufficiently embedded in the intellectual processes that define our nation's security strategy today and in the coming years. The results are—and will be—strategies and policies that fail to exploit air, space, and cyberspace power as fully as they might. This is not just a parochial, service battle; the best interests of the nation are truly at stake.

What can Airmen do about it? Well-reasoned advocacy and, especially, professional writing are critical. For its part, Air University has rejuvenated *Air and Space Power Journal* and founded the *Strategic Studies Quarterly* as well as the e-publication, *The Wright Stuff*. Additionally, Air University has strengthened its efforts to develop advanced writing skills.¹ As a result, more Airmen are articulating and sharing their ideas. Beyond service publications, the work of some Airmen is appearing in such important venues as *Armed Forces Journal*, *Parameters*, and the US Naval Institute's *Proceedings*.

We should applaud these vital initiatives while recognizing that there is still more work to be done. Specifically, conspicuous by their absence are a plethora of frank articles by senior Airmen addressing national and international security issues at the highest levels.² This needs to change.

Of course, Airmen have more to offer than merely better ways of employing certain platforms in selected dimensions. Ideally, they have internalized a strategic vision that could be said to reflect an “airminded” approach to national security issues generally, that is, what Gen Henry H. “Hap” Arnold termed the Airman’s “particular expertise and distinct point of view.”³ This is one of the strengths of our national defense architecture—in creating a central Department of Defense after World War II, our leaders sought to create an institution that could leverage the strengths of each service’s perspectives. According to Air Force doctrine, an Airman’s “perspective is necessarily different; it reflects the range, speed, and capabilities of aerospace forces.”⁴ Such a unique perspective would seem to be invaluable given the perplexing dynamics of twenty-first-century security challenges. If it is important that air-mindedness be included in the national discussion, senior Air Force officers should be part of the professional dialogue that finds its way into influential journals and other outlets.

There are many examples of the proper way to engage openly in public debate about defense policy. The classic example is Gen Colin Powell. Prof. Michael Desch points out that while still serving as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Powell “published an opinion piece in *The New York Times* and an essay in *Foreign Affairs* arguing against” the humanitarian intervention policy of President Clinton.⁵ According to Desch, Powell advocated “on behalf of more restrictive criteria for the use of force, which became known as the Powell Doctrine.”⁶ Despite the ensuing controversy, both pieces proved to be influential, and Powell’s career hardly suffered.

Gen David H. Petraeus penned a number of articles, including a much critiqued op-ed in the *Washington Post*.⁷ In that essay, then-Lieutenant General Petraeus claimed that Iraqi security forces were making great progress in developing their capability, a conclusion that “was criticized as an overly optimistic portrait.”⁸ Moreover, because it appeared shortly before the elections, some detractors viewed it as “blatantly political.”⁹ Be that as it may, Petraeus was promoted again despite the controversy.

Gen Peter W. Chiarelli, the Army’s current vice chief of staff, has a collection of scholarly yet provocative writings.¹⁰ Significantly, he published them as a colonel, major general, and lieutenant general. As a full general, he continues to appear at widely attended open forums, where he offers fresh thinking that challenges the status quo and then subjects himself to on-the-record questions.¹¹ He is something of a model of the Rooseveltian

archetype of the man who willingly puts himself “in the arena” to advocate his ideas.¹²

Examples of intellectual leadership at the senior level also exist in the Air Force. Consider the uncompromisingly frank article by the Air Force’s current chief of staff, “Don’t Go Downtown without Us: The Role of Joint Aerospace Power in Urban Operations,” which he wrote as a lieutenant general.¹³ Among other things, then-Lt Gen Norton A. Schwartz and his co-author challenged those who viewed urban operations as necessarily “extremely manpower intensive, with a focus on seizing and occupying urban terrain, close-quarters infantry combat, and ‘low-tech’ solutions to urban battle-space management.”¹⁴

General Schwartz instead argued for a vigorously joint approach that leveraged airpower’s unique features. In doing so he forthrightly—and presciently—argued that “by using this approach, one may control an adversary without necessarily introducing a large ground-combat force, thus minimizing casualties while achieving the desired effect.”¹⁵ He also included a blunt warning that the “failure to bring the advantages inherent in joint aerospace power to bear against our adversaries in the urban environment puts operational success seriously at risk.”¹⁶

What is especially remarkable about this essay is that it was written in 2000, well before US forces began their struggle in Iraq. Interestingly, it was not until the United States fully embraced in 2007 the very concepts General Schwartz wrote about seven years earlier that it began to achieve real success in its Iraq operations. The five-fold increase in air strikes in 2007,¹⁷ along with the “staggering” increase in the demand for aerial intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR), is ample evidence that he and his co-author were advocating the right approach—and did so long before it became popular.¹⁸

Importantly, Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley seems to be encouraging Airmen to engage. At the Air Force Association meeting in the fall of 2008 he said:

[W]e need to be prepared to engage—and if necessary debate—the major issues facing our Air Force. Good stewardship demands developing a deep understanding of the macro-level trends affecting the Air Force. . . . As we do so, we will cultivate reasoned, carefully considered perspectives. We will be able to present these views not by digging in or staking out turf, but from a careful analysis and a seasoned appreciation of the many joint and national influences affecting today’s strategic decision making.¹⁹

Of particular note in the secretary’s exhortation is his emphasis on “developing a deep understanding of the macro-trends.”²⁰ Too many military personnel

have immense knowledge of their functional areas but rather less familiarity of the larger political, social, and economic contexts in which our nation calls upon the military to engage. Secretary Donley, in essence, is pointing out the need for officers to “do their homework” to be able to express “reasoned [and] carefully considered perspectives.”²¹ Thus, it is imperative that those of us involved in formulating and executing national security policy educate ourselves *broadly* about our service and our agencies, about other services, and about national security matters writ large.

Advocacy is not, however, a risk-free enterprise; it is an intellectual contact sport of the first order. Leaders should expect their views to be hotly contested. In many instances the counterpoints will be expressed thoughtfully and at length—but also unsparingly.²² Such exchanges nevertheless can be productive, because it is often through engaging opposing perspectives that truth can emerge. Spirited debate is a hallmark of America’s military success.²³ Other times, the feedback is markedly less civil. In an era of anonymous blogs, it is especially easy for nameless detractors to spew venom without accountability. This new anonymity runs counter to the core value of integrity that is common to all our services.

Unquestionably, advocating a particular service perspective (or even just suggesting, for example, that issues ought to be analyzed in an air-minded way that may not even call for the use, *per se*, of airpower) just might result in dire career consequences.²⁴ It may require a certain kind of courage, especially for line officers aspiring to attain senior leadership positions, to take up the ordeal that advocacy can become.

There are, of course, different kinds of courage: physical and moral courage. In his study of military heroism, Max Hastings concludes that “physical bravery is found more often than the spiritual variety. *Moral courage is rare*” (emphasis added).²⁵ Our military is blessed in that Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines seldom lack for physical courage; it is moral courage that is needed today. Summoning moral courage is not as easy or as simple as it might sound. The reality for senior officers is that their advocacy puts more than just the individual officer at risk. It is the family, as well as all of those within the organization who are looking to that person for leadership and mentorship, who will likely suffer if a penalty is to be paid.

For all the well-intentioned rhetoric about encouraging “out of the box” thinking, it is naive to believe that the “system” necessarily protects innovators or intellectual iconoclasts. Being “right” is no insurance policy either.²⁶ In the real world, happy endings are not guaranteed. In his speech

to the Air War College in the spring of 2008, Secretary Gates was candid about this truth.²⁷ Using the legendary Air Force reformer Col John Boyd as a “historical exemplar,” the secretary eulogized Boyd’s contributions to airpower thinking while recognizing that he was “a brilliant, eccentric, and stubborn character” who engendered much resistance in the Air Force’s bureaucracy.

The secretary made no secret about the potential career cost for the kind of “principled, creative, [and] reform-minded” Air Force leaders need today. He quoted Boyd with approval as saying:

One day you will take a fork in the road, and you’re going to have to make a decision about which direction you want to go. If you go [one] way, you can be somebody. You will have to make compromises and you will have to turn your back on your friends. But you will be a member of the club and you will get promoted and get good assignments. Or you can go [the other] way and you can do something—something for your country and for your Air Force and for yourself. . . . If you decide to do something, you may not get promoted and you may not get good assignments and you certainly will not be a favorite of your superiors. But you won’t have to compromise yourself. . . . To be somebody or to do something. In life there is often a roll call. That’s when you have to make a decision. To be or to do?²⁸

There is even more to be gleaned from this speech to up-and-coming Air Force officers. Consider that the lengthy quote from Boyd was juxtaposed with an expression of frustration about “people” being “stuck in old ways of doing business” who made it like “pulling teeth” to get more intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets onto the battlefield.²⁹

Who were the “people” he was speaking about? By simply paraphrasing Boyd, one can easily conclude that the “people” to which the secretary was alluding in his speech were the ones who were “members of the club,” who received “good assignments,” who were the “favorites of their superiors,” and who, therefore, were “promoted.” A damning indictment that ought to trouble all senior officers. In truth, it is a call to action.

The entire Department of Defense—and our nation—is at a critical juncture. Unless the full potential of the investments we have made in airpower, land power, and sea power—in all their many dimensions—is understood by key decision makers and the whole joint team, the nation will be denied the fullest ability to defend itself and its interests. I previously tried to explain why this is such a vital concern for Airmen—and for all senior leaders:

Leaders need to lead. In the case of generals especially, that sometimes means speaking and writing about doctrines which they find ill-serve the Nation by failing to fully utilize the capabilities of the whole joint team.

Why do I feel so strongly about this? In my nearly 33 years of service I've experienced some terrible things—I can still recall, for example, the stench of rotting corpses in Somalia. Yet the most heartbreaking scene I've personally witnessed was at the Dover AFB mortuary. To see the bodies of young American Soldiers neatly laid out in their dress uniforms—but forever to be silent—is something that will haunt me forever. Do not we—all of us—owe such heroes our level best to try to find a better way?³⁰

Contrary to what some may think, making an intellectual case from service perspectives is not about garnering slices of “budget pies;” rather, it is about devising ways to avoid putting young Americans at unnecessary risk. As General Schwartz put it in 2000, for example, airpower can be exploited so that “one may control an adversary without necessarily introducing a large ground-combat force.”³¹ In those circumstances where we can do so, we maximize the chance that our precious Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guard members can come home safely to their friends and families. That, however, requires robust and thoughtful advocacy of what airpower—and land power and sea power—can contribute to the joint fight.

Senior officers must lead the effort—at whatever personal cost. If not them, then who? As Dr. Rebecca Grant insists, “No one else can be counted on to do it.”³²



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Notes

1. See for example, Lt Gen Allen G. Peck, *AU Blue Dart System*, <https://augateway.maxwell.af.mil/bluedart/>.
2. There are some exceptions. See for example, Lt Gen David Deptula, “Air and Space Power, Lead Turning, the Future,” *Orbis*, (Fall 2008): 585.
3. See Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 2, *Operations and Organization* (Washington, DC: Department of the Air Force, 3 April 2007), 2, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/service_pubs/afdd2.pdf.
4. Ibid.
5. Michael C. Desch, “Bush and the Generals,” *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 3 (May/June 2007), <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070501faessay86309/michael-c-desch/bush-and-the-generals.html>.
6. Ibid.

7. David H. Petraeus, "Battling for Iraq," *Washington Post*, 25 September 2004, B7, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A49283-2004Sep25.html>.

8. See Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How this Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: PublicAffairs/Perseus Publishing, 2008), 76. Robinson writes that although Petraeus "staunchly defended" the accuracy of the op-ed, he "reluctantly came to regret publishing it due to the controversy it generated."

9. See for example, Danny Kampf, "Petraeus and the Politicization of the Military," *Daily Colonial*, George Washington University, 17 September 2007, <http://www.dailycolonial.com/go.dc?p=3&cs=4452>.

10. See for example, Peter W. Chiarelli, "Beyond Goldwater-Nichols," *Joint Force Quarterly*, issue no. 2 (Autumn 1993): 71–81, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/jfq1102.pdf; Maj Gen Peter W. Chiarelli and Maj Patrick R. Michaelis, "Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations," *Military Review* (July–August 2005): 4–17, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awgate/milreview/chiarelli.pdf>; and Lt Gen Peter W. Chiarelli with Maj Stephen M. Smith, "Learning From Our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future," *Military Review* (September–October 2007): 2–15, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/SepOct07/chiallerienkseptoct07.pdf>.

11. See for example, *Officership in Time of War*, Center for a New American Security panel discussion, Washington, DC, 1 October 2008, <http://www.cnas.org/events/inatimeofwar/>.

12. The man "in the arena" is a reference to Theodore Roosevelt's classic:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; because there is not effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly. So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt, *Man in the Arena*, speech, 23 April 1910, <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/4758.html>.

13. Lt Gen Norton A. Schwartz and Col Robert B. Stephan, "Don't Go Downtown without Us: The Role of Joint Aerospace Power in Urban Operations," *Aerospace Power Journal* 14, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 3–11, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj00/spr00/schwartz.pdf>.

14. *Ibid.*, 5.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, 11.

17. See for example, Anthony H. Cordesman, *US Airpower in Iraq and Afghanistan: 2004–2007* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 13 December 2007), http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071213_oif-oeef_airpower.pdf.

18. See for example, "Some Staggering Data," *Air Force Association Daily Report*, 7 April 2008, <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/DRArchive/Pages/default.aspx>, specifically:

For those of us wondering about the importance of overhead intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities to the ongoing fight, here are some illuminating numbers told to the *Daily Report* by Air Combat Command. Airborne ISR sensors monitored 60

targets in calendar year 2001 for change detection—to observe deviations over time that might indicate threat developments, such as variations in roadside pavement that might warn of the recent planting of a roadside bomb. In 2007, that number grew to 70,542, a whopping increase of 117,470 percent, according to ACC spokesman Maj Tom Crosson. RQ/MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicles logged 4,380 hours in the air in 2001, providing overhead streaming video to support ground forces. In 2007, that number rose to 63,186 hours, he said. Further, E-8C Joint STARS tracked 12,000 moving targets in 2007; they tracked none in 2001. RQ-4 Global Hawk UAVs collected imagery intelligence on 3,687 targets in 2001, and 96,349 six years later, he said. U-2 manned surveillance aircraft collected Imint on 26,749 preplanned targets of interest in 2001, compared to 52,000 in 2007. Finally, in 2001, RC-135 Rivet Joints flew 3,360 hours; six years later, the hours increased to 8,184.

19. Hon. Michael Donley, “A Time of Transition,” remarks to the Air Force Association’s 24th Annual Air and Space Conference and Technology Exposition, Washington, DC, 15 September 2008, *Air Force Link*, <http://www.af.mil/library/speeches/speech.asp?id=400>.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. See for example, Joseph Collins, “From the Ground Up,” *Armed Forces Journal* (October 2006), <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/10/2088164>.

23. See for example, Charles J. Dunlap and John Nagl, “America’s Greatest Weapon,” *Small Wars Journal.com*, 22 May 2008, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/05/americas-greatest-weapon-1/>.

24. See for example, CAPT William J. Toti, USN, retired, “Write—with Your Eyes Wide Open,” *Proceedings* 134, no. 12 (December 2008): 16.

25. Max Hastings, *Warriors: Portraits from the Battlefield* (New York: Knopf, 2005), xvii.

26. See for example, John Andreas Olsen, *John Warden and the Renaissance of American Air Power* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2007).

27. Robert M. Gates, *Remarks to Air War College*, 21 April 2008, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1231>.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Charles J. Dunlap Jr., “Counterpoint,” *The Wright Stuff*, 23 July 2008, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/aunews/archive/0313/Articles/Counterpoint.html>.

31. Schwartz and Stephan, “Don’t Go Downtown without Us.”

32. Rebecca Grant, “The Billy Mitchell Syndrome,” *Air Force Magazine* 89, no. 12 (December 2006), 52, <http://www.afa.org/magazine/dec2006/1206syndrome.asp>.

Policy and Purpose

The Economy of Deterrence

Norton A. Schwartz, General, USAF
Timothy R. Kirk, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

THE 2008 Air Force Association convention chief of staff keynote addressed the subject of deterrence, asserting that it is not a fading construct in national security. On the contrary, deterrence is reemerging and growing in importance as an aspect of US defense policy. The keynote speech invited the audience to think about deterrence in a broader sense and how the US Air Force can contribute in a fashion relevant to twenty-first-century national defense. The purpose of this article is to add to the growing body of literature that seeks a broader understanding of deterrence and how it fits with other forms of policy such as dissuasion, assurance, and insurance.¹

Identifying and understanding the distinctions between these concepts and how they relate to US policy are fundamental to explaining the relevance of deterrence to our collective security. This task is certainly ambitious, but the need demands consideration. Deterrence policy has shown itself an

Gen Norton A. Schwartz is the 19th chief of staff of the US Air Force, serving as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for organizing, training, and equipping nearly 700,000 regular, Guard, reserve, and civilian personnel serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the secretary of defense, the National Security Council, and the president.

General Schwartz graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1973. He is an alumnus of the National War College, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a 1994 Fellow of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Seminar XXI. General Schwartz is a command pilot with more than 4,400 flying hours in a variety of aircraft. He has served as the commander of multiple organizations, including the Special Operations Command-Pacific, Alaskan Command, Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, and the Eleventh Air Force, and as the director of operations and director of the Joint Staff. Prior to his current assignment, he was the commander of US Transportation Command.

Lt Col Timothy R. Kirk is the speechwriter to the chief of staff of the Air Force. As part of the Secretary of the Air Force and Air Force Chief of Staff Executive Action Group, he has primary responsibility for developing communication among the secretariat, Air Staff, Joint Staff, and other services on behalf of the chief of staff in support of Air Force priorities.

Colonel Kirk graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1993 and is an alumnus of the Air Force Institute of Technology, the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and the Air War College. He is an aircraft maintenance officer with field- and depot-level experience on A-10, C-5, F-15E, and F-16 aircraft, and has served as the commander of the 354th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Prior to his current assignment he was analysis division chief in the Air Force Quadrennial Defense Review office.

exquisitely beneficial tool in obtaining national security objectives. On the other hand, deterrence—either misunderstood or misapplied—can form the basis for incomplete or ill-advised US policy, especially in terms of how and when to use military power to achieve high-stakes national security objectives. A variety of recent and historical examples attests to a vital requirement for understanding how disconnects between military capabilities, national policy, and the value of national purpose can cause unfavorable if not disastrous consequences.²

Such disconnects have often occurred because the policy paradigms or the associated strategies employed were frequently designed for a bygone or mismatched context. This situation has become more apparent as the rate of change in the global security environment exceeds that of policy design, making the disconnects even more pronounced. In recent years, defense strategists persuasively postulated that “the United States needs to develop a more comprehensive approach to deterrence that looks beyond nuclear weapons . . . [and] tailor deterrence strategies and postures to each potential adversary.” Initially, the primary reason for this new requirement was the emergence of a new strategic environment as “the Cold War is now over; the Soviet Union is gone. Advanced weapons capabilities have spread and will continue to spread to other parties . . . the behavior of numerous other parties must be watched and preferably controlled.”³ In addition to this contextual shift, Russia has succeeded the Soviet remnant, subnational extremist groups disrupt the international system, and ascending regional powers contest for resources in an increasingly competitive world. With these and other trends in mind, the implications suggest a need for innovative policy and supporting defense capabilities. It seems clear that Dr. Schlesinger’s following observation applies to arms control in specific terms and more broadly, by implication, to defense policy in general, where “the future of arms control will depend on the willingness of our negotiators to shed obsolescent ideas.”⁴ We suggest the same is true for the future of deterrence policy and the form the military instrument takes to support its purpose.

Our intent is to promote expanded thinking about future deterrence policy’s role and to provide perspective on how US Air Force capabilities can support policy’s purpose. That being said, it is important to have a clear understanding of what deterrence is—and is not. To those ends, we will first identify some limitations of this theory and then address a fundamental question on the nature of national power, followed by a theoretical framework for policy. We will also examine some characteristics of dif-

ferent regions of the framework and the challenges they present to modern strategists. We examine the specific aspects of policy as they relate to both national and subnational actors in deterrence. The article concludes with an assessment of the economy of deterrence policy within the theory framework as we examine the implications for US Air Force strategists, leaders, and Airmen at large.

Theoretical Limitations

Our exercise here is academic, but our purpose is much more meaningful. The consequences of our failure to understand how military capabilities relate to applicable policy are unacceptably severe. When called upon, we must be able to help our civilian leaders design deterrence policies that are credible, supportable, and logical. We must know when and under what conditions deterrence is a likely policy candidate, the requisite supporting capabilities, and how our craft might achieve the desired purpose. The subsequent theory serves as the foundation for understanding policy, purpose, and the economy of deterrence. This construct is not meant to serve as doctrine, dogma, or as a deterrence strategy, nor is it meant to be exhaustive; it presents no proven predictive ability with any degree of certainty. For the purposes of this article, it is limited to the military instrument, with an eye toward an expanded understanding of deterrence's interplay with the other instruments. Our examination will initially limit discussion to nation-state interplay and later will examine the interrelationships between national and subnational forces.

We acknowledge scholarly wisdom that likely applies here. A great strategist once observed,

I am painfully aware that scholars and officials, civilian and military, are apt to be mesmerized by their own conceptual genius. . . . We love our categories and our subcategories. Their invention gives us an illusion of intellectual control. . . . The results all too often are official definitions that tend to the encyclopaedic [*sic*] and are utterly indigestible.⁵

Our sincere hope is to avoid this trap and rather provide some compelling points to ponder for strategists and tacticians alike. If these issues do appear to emerge, please excuse them as unintended by-products of genuine efforts to encourage dialogue on, and consideration of, current and future challenges for military thinkers.

National Power, Legitimacy, and Control

The ideas here consider deterrence in proportion to other policy; however, policy and purpose must always have primacy in these discussions. As Morgan observed, “Understanding [deterrence] means facing up to the fact that it is inherently imperfect. It does not consistently work and we cannot manipulate it sufficiently to fix that . . . it must be approached with care and used as part of a larger tool kit.”⁶ Accordingly, this article attempts to treat deterrence with appropriate care by examining its use with respect to military means and the other metaphorical tools in the policy kit. We should recognize that each policy has some purpose or intent in mind and that the military instrument supports the policy in achieving that objective. The military instrument works in concert with the diplomatic, economic, and information instruments of national power to support policies aimed at achieving specific purposes.

A fundamental question to initiate our discussion is this: What is national power? The question is important because the answer presumably dictates precisely what the instruments of national power should seek to attain. National power takes on a variety of practical forms depending on geopolitical conditions. However, we can identify certain essential character-

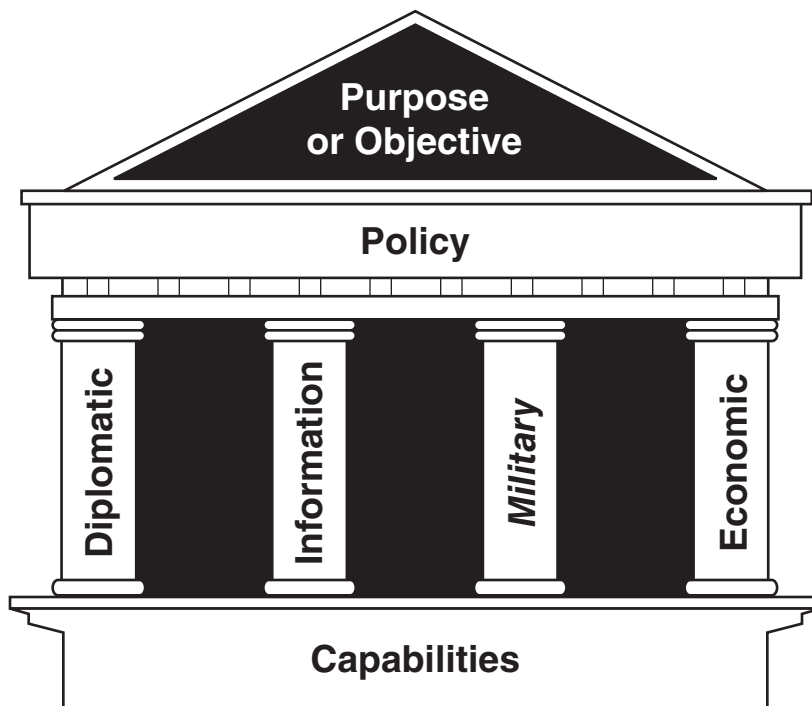


Figure 1. Policy and purpose relationship

istics of national power. History is full of examples of nations mistaking the ability to exert control as a dominant and durable form of national power. Likewise, we see historical examples of weak actors with superior legitimacy and political will defeating materially stronger foes. Perhaps we can estimate what is necessary for national power but not that which is both necessary and sufficient. We offer the assumption that nations seek some purpose or object of value to them, and they leverage their instruments of national power to achieve those ends.⁷ We therefore express national power in terms of the total number of choices available to a nation and the maximum national value those choices are capable of achieving.⁸

Legitimacy and control are contributing components of national power. Nation-states derive legitimacy from their moral, resource, and humanitarian obligations to their citizens and to neighboring nations. Meeting these obligations establishes some level of legitimacy, and international norms and regimes form the basis of international relationships that allow nations to maximize their ability to meet these obligations. Norms and regimes form the basis of international law, economics, diplomacy, and warfare where the expectation of justice between states is founded upon nations meeting their obligations without infringing on other nations' ability to meet their own obligations.⁹

Control, on the other hand, is one nation's ability to affect the cost-and-benefit equation for other nations over time. Nations can reward each other by offering mutual benefits or can exact costs by depriving each other of something of value. The payoff or reward is the ultimate consideration in the exercise. Control leverages some set of ways and means to alter the cost-benefit-reward proposition in some way as to compel an actor to do something it is not naturally motivated or inclined to do.

We assume these two components share an economic relationship. Legitimacy and control coincide to determine the number of national choices available to a nation and the maximum national value those choices can achieve. They work together much like supply and demand. Economics explains how supply and demand determine the market price of a product and the total quantity of products that will be sold. In the exercise of national power, legitimacy and control determine how many choices are available and the value of those choices' outcomes. We will limit our discussion of this point to the relevant portion of our theoretical construct, for much more could be written about the economic dynamics of national power. For our purposes here, it is necessary to recognize that

the instruments of national power work together to achieve something of value; they achieve that value by building legitimacy and exercising control with national resources. This forms an economy of policy; investment of national resources in the instruments of power enables collective action. These actions are choices taken to leverage legitimacy and control to attain value. This suggests that the best policy is one that maximizes value for a minimum investment; poor policy invests more than the value of return. The theoretical framework that follows utilizes the concept of national value in deriving specific aspects of policy and purpose.

At the most elementary level, policy and purpose form proximate considerations, and policy is subordinate to the object it seeks. This purpose provides the value and meaning to any policy associated with it, and all policy should link to some demonstrable purpose or object. This is certainly the ideal rather than consistent reality, and it is important to note that policy forms at the highest levels of national decision making where complexities abound; the practitioners of the instruments of national power are, at most, advisors to the makers of policy on the realm of the possible. The instruments of national power must support designated policy to a prescribed degree in order to achieve the desired object.

If we allow for the assumption that this principle applies to both the conduct of war and the military instrument as constituted by all its ways and means, then we find a prescription for proper conceptualization of defense issues and strategy. We accept the conclusion that “the first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war [application of the military instrument] on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.” This logic serves as a prescription suggesting our examination of deterrence, or any other policy application of the military instrument, should begin not with ways and means in mind, but rather ends—policy’s object—followed by the requisite blend of the instruments of national power. We must also think of the interplay, both by design and coincidence, of interrelated policies and their objects in context.¹⁰

Theoretical Framework for Policy

Our examination deals squarely in theory, and we acknowledge that the question of policy and purpose in the realm of deterrence requires a

stipulation that “in discussing the *theory* it is important to distinguish it from deterrence *strategy* . . . the theory concerns the underlying principles on which any strategy is to rest.”¹¹ This article proposes no strategy but seeks to expand the understanding of strategic potential by illuminating related policy as a whole. Both etymology and political parlance offer the notional purpose of deterrence “to frighten away” an aggressor. Clearly there is much more to deterrence policy’s purpose, but we can understand from this simple consideration that deterrence has a *negative* purpose; deterrent intent is to prevent an adversary’s action. The concept offered here assumes this is the case and posits that each policy is ultimately governed by that primary nature and that any negative policy purpose can share a corresponding positive policy purpose—each aspect offering different features, yet inextricably affecting the other to some degree. In the case of deterrence’s negative purpose in statecraft and strategy, we see an opposing positive purpose of attracting and assuring allies against the ranks of the potential aggressor. These two objectives of policy work together toward our national security, the value of which is enumerated by the rigor of our policy in preserving cooperative friends and preventing adversaries from hostile acts of violence. In a similar fashion, we must consider policy implications on both the nation-state and subnational actor levels while carefully confirming our assumptions regarding the rationality of all the actors involved.

The ways and means available within the instruments of power are sets of capabilities designed to create effects that support the attainment of policy. This point cannot be overemphasized, as capabilities should not substitute for the purpose in policy making; rather they are subordinated to policy’s work in obtaining its purpose.

Failure in recognizing this relationship leads to all sorts of problems as technologically sophisticated capabilities begin to drive policy independent of the purpose or value. To paraphrase Abraham Kaplan’s Law of the Instrument, if all you have is a hammer then every problem looks like a nail.¹² This is not to say that policy is insulated from capability considerations, for no policy can hope to achieve its purpose without requisite capabilities. Military capabilities aid policy makers in deciding which objects can be achieved with acceptable means at reasonable cost; capabilities must remain adjunct to policy and purpose in appropriate fashion.

The theory we offer here is designed to explain the interaction of positive and negative objects relating to deterrence and to help explain the

challenges of moving from Cold War deterrence policy (as it was) to future deterrence policy. The framework is built upon a foundation of the gradient of allies and adversaries along with another of Clausewitz's notions. We will begin with the former and posit that our relationship with other nation-states can be expressed as a continuum of coexistence and cooperative potential. One end of the continuum represents our very best friend—a wholly vested partner committed to peaceful coexistence. The other represents a bitter adversary—one who is devoted to depriving us of our sovereignty and to our ultimate destruction. The latter notion is considered here as a treatment of Clausewitz's assertion that "the more powerful and inspiring the motives for war, the more they affect the belligerent nations and the fiercer the tensions."¹³ The level of *power* behind the motives toward a policy's purpose will theoretically drive the level of *force* behind the policy. There are exceptions to this principle in bluff and blunder, but for the purposes of this examination we will consider that in general the more powerful the motive for the purpose, the more forceful the policy. Furthermore, any policy's force can be generally characterized as fixed or flexible.

Two Types of Policy

Fixed policy is deterministic in nature and is characterized by a declared statement of intent and action, which can take on a variety of forms. We are interested here with the "if . . . then" nature of a fixed policy. Thomas Schelling describes this aspect of deterrence policy distinctly as "setting the stage—by announcement, by rigging the trip-wire, by incurring the obligation—and waiting."¹⁴ In this type of policy, the threat or outcome is clearly and overtly communicated with a rational and perceived credibility in two forms. The first is to an adversary: if your nation does something specified that our nation finds unfavorable, then we will take this specified action against you. The second is to the friend: if another actor does something specified that both our nations find unfavorable, then we will take this specified action on your behalf. Our policy is fixed, we wait, and our response is *determined* by the choices of the other party.

Likewise, we can characterize the flexible form of policy as an associative one that suggests a response may follow to varying degree. Our focus here includes the "if . . . maybe" form of flexible policy. In this type of policy, we associate by movement, posture, procurement, or inference that if another

nation takes any unfavorable action, then we might take some unspecified action in response. The outcome may be *associated* with the choices of the other party but not necessarily so. We set our policy, go about our business, and retain the flexibility to act in response to the choices of the other party. The two policy types are distinct, serve different functions in achieving different types of objects, and derive their places based on the perceived value of policy's purpose.

Once we have defined these regions of the framework by their distinct characteristics, we can see a series of policy relationships form based upon their functions. The region we are perhaps most familiar with in dealing with a negative purpose toward our adversary is the upper-left quadrant.

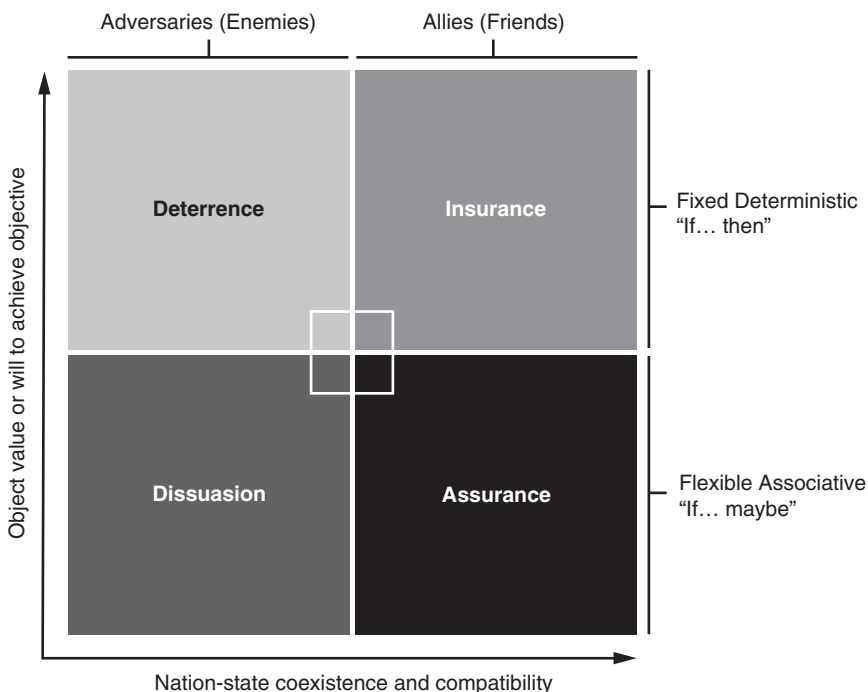


Figure 2. Policy types and relationships

This region is the classic notion of immediate “deterrence.” The far-upper-left portion of the quadrant is the extreme portion of deterrence when “mutually assured destruction” notions exist, and we will look at that portion in greater detail later. For now, we will refer to the deterrence region as Colin Gray describes it: “In its immediate form, deterrence is always specific. It is about persuading a particular leader or leaders, at a particular time, not to take particular actions. The details will be all important, not be marginal.”¹⁵ This

describes the two factors in play in the policy toward a negative purpose, namely the fixed “if . . . then” policy dealing with an adversary nation-state. It features the element of predictable automaticity. The adversary can reliably expect if it performs the act, then it “would be assumed to have [its] address on it. The United States would then return postage. Automaticity of this kind concentrates the mind.”¹⁶

The next region is the upper-right quadrant, where fixed policy is applied to allied or friendly nation-states. This region characterizes formal treaty agreements and mutual security arrangements of a specific nature, much like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) treaty features a signatory agreement to go to war on another nation’s behalf. We can refer to this region of the framework as policy of “insurance,” as it is a stronger form of policy that insures some action on some occasion in the form of “if . . . then.” These arrangements are formed explicitly on the basis of the perceived value of policy’s purpose on our side primarily and potentially on a multilateral basis if other nation-states share a mutual valuation of the purpose.

The lower-right region of the framework is the flexible policy treatment of allied or friendly nation-states. This type of policy is commonly referred to as “assurance,” where the United States presents some nonspecific form of support by agreement or expediency. As an example, consider times when the United States stations military forces in a foreign country at the invitation of the host without an explicit security agreement.¹⁷ The United States is not bound by treaty to act in an “if . . . then” fashion but assures the ally and/or friends in the region with the presence. Obviously, assurance policy can exist without the physical presence of forces and even includes weapons research and development of small forms of shared economic investment at the lower extremes of the region. The flexible property of the policy suggests some value to the purpose worthy only of an “if . . . maybe” association with our willingness to act on another’s behalf.

The final region is the lower-left portion of the framework that characterizes flexible policy toward adversaries or enemy nation-states. We will call this area “dissuasion” policy, denoting the original meaning coined for use in international influence theory minus the certainty of any overt threat communicated in policy statements.¹⁸ It is important to note here the distinction between *deterrence* as a policy and the “deterrent effect” in which a variety of actions result. For our purposes, *deterrence* refers to Schelling’s policy concept of an overt communicated threat with requisite

credibility, capability, and rationality. The dissuasion term refers to the notion of preventing unfavorable adversary actions (the deterrent effect) through a variety of methods unguided by an overt deterrence policy. This allows for a distinction in the level of certainty between the fixed and flexible properties of policy. Dissuasion in this sense includes both the classical notions of “general deterrence” as well as dissuasive moves as described in US defense strategies such as arms development and capability deployment. As a whole, it constitutes the associative effect of any potentially threatening gesture that suggests an “if . . . maybe” potential counter to an adversary nation. As Colin Gray describes dissuasion,

Don't discount general deterrence, or dissuasion . . . the effect upon behavior, and upon the norms that help shape behavior, of perceptions of US military power and of the likelihood that it would be employed. Possession of a very powerful military machine, and a solid reputation for being willing to use it, casts a shadow or shines a light—pick your preferred metaphor—in many corners of the world. That shadow, or light, may have a distinct deterrent effect, even in the absence of explicit American efforts to deter.¹⁹

The distinction should be noted here between the fixed and flexible qualities of policy. Since policy derives its force by the value placed on the purpose, the form policy takes should reflect the relative value of the purpose. The difference is reflected in the certainty of action against the negative ends. In the case of dissuasion, the value of the purpose does not warrant the explicit efforts to deter in a binding deterministic policy. The policy therefore presents the possibility of US action, however slight, with the ways and means supporting it. However, the contrast between these two forms with respect to commitment also tends to affect the policy options for branches and sequels. Fixed policy choices are commitments to action, are subject to tests of will and bluffing, and clearly reduce a policy maker's flexibility for future action. Likewise, associative policy choices keep more options available for follow-on action. It is important to note this relationship, especially when the military instrument is committed to policy's objective. Without careful consideration of the properties prior to enacting policy, events can easily result in misapplication of the military instrument or artificial limits on military capabilities. The strategic context will determine which form is better suited to attain policy's purpose. Perhaps the most sophisticated example of these elements working successfully in concert is the Berlin airlift, where these policy types simultaneously dissuaded, deterred, assured, and insured the relevant actors in the theater

and around the world. The relationship between the elements plays an important policy role discussed later in this article, but at this point it is vital to simply recognize that a distinction exists between the “if . . . then” effects of deterrence policy and the “if . . . maybe” effects of dissuasion policy.

The Intersection

We have defined the regions of the policy quadrant framework and now turn our attention to certain relationships between the regions and the effects of policy in one region upon another. As previously mentioned, there exists an interplay of action between these quadrants, either intentionally or coincidentally. A fundamental example of this is the Cold War relationship between the mutually assured destruction–flavored nuclear deterrence and the insurance-oriented NATO treaty. This protected central Europe with a design offering insurance to allied European nations through an agreement interpreting an attack on any member as an attack on all members. The deterrence counterbalance to this NATO insurance was the unambiguous threat of massive retaliation with nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union in the case of a first strike. The “if . . . then” nature of these two policies coincided with the desired positive and negative objects. The United States held the positive purpose of maintaining a free Europe alongside the negative purpose of preventing Soviet nuclear attack. The question of if these policies had corresponding assurance and dissuasion effects is difficult to prove or disprove.

As Colin Gray asserts, “Dissuasion is at work when a political leader rules out an exciting course of action from serious policy consideration because of the fear that it would trigger an American response. . . . Although common sense, logic, and historical experience all point to the significance of this deterrent phenomenon, it is utterly beyond research.”²⁰ The same can be said of the assurance question when a political leader ruled “in” options of cooperation and mutual interest with the United States. But it seems safe to assume that the insurance and dissuasion policies of the Cold War did not serve in a policy vacuum; other nations had to take heed of how their policy choices would impact the order of the bipolar world, to their benefit or detriment. These effects of second-order nature are open to debate, but the clear relationship is the necessary balance between adversaries and allies in the deterrence and insurance policies. The nature of that balance becomes more complex and challenging as the area

in question is closer to the intersection of the lines inside the quadrant. This is the region most likely to challenge policy makers in the future.

The challenges of policy and purpose are simpler at the extreme corners of the diagram. Questions of existential threat from a mortal enemy, a mortal enemy that poses no threat to anything of value, a friend who is completely vested in mutual interests, or an actor that is a friend though no common interests exist—these are cases that represent the least sophisticated of all policy conditions. On the other hand, the intersection of the elements offers the most challenging policy conditions. Enemies and friends are lukewarm, and loyalties shift easily; threats are moderate or only punctuated by existential-level threats; and allies share a modicum of interests and cooperative motivation. Current and potential policy conditions are closer to the intersection than the bipolar world of Cold War conditions. This is the area in which we must become comfortable and where the Air Force's inherently flexible nature is vital. It is the realm where challenges thrive as the value to our national interests rises to a degree that motivates our involvement but the value is insufficient to warrant our exercise of all the ways and means available to us. The conditions also feature strained alliances, weakened friendships, and inconclusive diplomacy. Within this context, the military instrument must leverage limited ways and means in close concert with the other instruments of power without forsaking maintenance of a backdrop of capabilities with overwhelming potential. Successful policy and purpose achievements in this realm are the fruit of sophisticated strategists, diplomats, economists, and statesmen.

The implications for our military leaders are significant. The intellectual demands in technological advancement, interagency coordination, multinational cooperation, and nuanced public media relations will grow by orders of magnitude as conditions approach the intersection. Each theater of operations will present specific aspects of several points on this notional diagram; each policy point will have some degree of interplay on the other. Policy and purpose achievement at the extreme corners of the diagram are the work of brilliance; achievements at the intersection are the work of collaborative genius. This is relevance's price of admission in the foreseeable future of our nation's military instrument. The ultimate goal is to leverage military capabilities in cooperative fashion to maximize legitimacy and control to the degree necessary for achieving the purpose of national policy.

Policy and Purpose in the International System

If the conditions were not complicated enough at the intersection of our diagram, then the interplay of subnational actors within the nation-state order serves to further complicate. For the purposes of this examination, we will limit this term to a subset of the subnational agency. We do not refer to nongovernmental organizations or transnational bodies of diplomacy and economics. We will consider almost exclusively the groups that present proximate challenges to the military instrument in policy as purveyors of destruction and national anxiety. These are the subnational actors we commonly refer to as terrorist or extremist groups.

The question of how to deter extremist subnational actors has been addressed in recent works that present well-reasoned and elegant strategic thinking in fashion that ranks with Galula.²¹ Other works focus on the form of warfare termed “irregular” in contemporary dialogue and illuminate the subject of strong states contending against weaker adversaries, including subnational actors.²² It seems clear that no consideration of policy and purpose can be relevant without accounting for the interplay of subnational actors within the international system. However, the framework we have considered to this point deals only with how policy relates to nation-states. We must consider how effectively policy can achieve objects associated with subnational actors.

Deterrence and the Subnational Actor

The classic notions of policy deal primarily with nation-state rational actors. Contemporary issues demand a method of addressing subnational actors in the exercise of policy—no small feat in statecraft. Subnational actors now threaten the relevance of our contemporary nation-state system. It may turn out that the nation-state system is destined to go the same way as the medieval city-state system did long ago, but until such a time arrives we must assume the purpose of future policy will be to secure the requisite objects for preservation of a stable international system. Deterrence policy of the Cold War served the same purpose seeking to secure the negative purpose of preventing mutually assured destruction of nation-states within a bipolar context.

Deterrence policy in the future must continue to achieve that negative purpose, though apparently on a smaller scale in this modern, multipolar context. However, it must also achieve the requisite objects for preventing

mutually assured chaos where subnational actors significantly damage or displace the international order with weapons of mass destruction (WMD). We choose the “mutually” moniker, recognizing that some nation-states (a milieu of rogue, failed, or phantom states) cooperate with subnational actors for some duration in pursuit of perceived common interests. Taking a longer-run view, however, opens the mind to the temporary nature of these shared interests, and the fact emerges that the ideologies that compel many subnational actors with a willingness to use WMD can conceivably lead those same actors to turn on their national sponsors at some point in the future. It is impossible to know with any certainty if this is the case or not, but the implication for future policy seems clear. In attracting nation-states to cooperate and coexist with us, we must present the possibilities of a better state of peace than the alternatives. For those nations that do not accept, we must carefully craft policies to deter and dissuade their collaborative efforts with subnational actors that threaten a stable international system. In sum, the purpose of our policy remains unchanged, the objects are suitably similar though different in number and degree, and the number of relevant actors in the game is increasing.

These elements combine in various contexts to dictate their own form of policy requirement, and each friend or adversary demands its own carefully crafted policy of a type designed for the particular context of national fear, honor, and interests. The positive and negative objects create a dynamic environment in which each act supporting policy design in one aspect may also create a concurrent effect in the other. Astute theorists have previously observed that “coercing powers must also recognize when it is appropriate not to use an instrument . . . an instrument can fail, and it can also backfire . . . the failure of an instrument in one instance can undermine the credibility [in another].”²³ This dynamic interplay suggests that no act of policy to achieve the negative purpose fails to affect the positive purpose, and vice versa, in varying degrees. This interplay is part of what makes coercion so complex; every act taken to enhance our own security paradoxically decreases an adversary nation’s security, and every act bears a potential for catastrophic outcomes. This in turn impacts the relevant threat potential of subnational actors. While it may seem unlikely that a policy our nation considers rational could succeed against an actor we deem as irrational, the complex nature of these actors does offer some promising potential for success.

Subnational actors can best be deterred in one sense but not in another. They can be deterred from acting outside the economy of policy with a fixed policy resembling “if you leave this system and act outside of it, then we will seek to deny you the means to do so and to constrict your influence.” This type of policy is often tangentially referenced with a metaphor of draining the swamp. The ability to do so depends upon manipulating legitimacy and control in all four regions of the policy quadrant for insurance and assurance of cooperative nation-states to join the effort as well as dissuasion and deterrence of uncooperative nations from supporting subnational actors. This also suggests a need to offer legitimate courses of redress for subnational interests within the nation-state system in addition to building partner capacity to deal with subnational actors who resist. A successful deterrence strategy should address each of these elements in a carefully orchestrated effort to deter subnational actors from willfully acting outside of the international system.

Subnational actors cannot be deterred as though they were national actors playing inside the international system. These groups act subnationally in order to divest themselves of the obligations that come with legitimacy and sometimes seek to exact control based on a reward system that includes the afterlife. This is what we mean when we refer to these groups as extremist or irrational. Rationality in the international system is based on a this-life reward system. For example, when Hamas acted subnationally against Israel, it did so without the moral, legal, or humanitarian obligations of a nation-state and used tactics like suicide bombing that leveraged rewards in the afterlife for destructive control effects in the present. Death and destruction are viewed as rewards in and of themselves; destroying such actors rewards and legitimizes them (in their own system). However, once Hamas leaders were elected to national office, they crossed a line; they incurred the obligations that come with nation-state status. Ultimately, these obligations erode legitimacy quickly when afterlife rewards are included in national policy. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People’s Army (FARC) is another example of this principle without the afterlife reward system. The FARC struggled with the obligations of legitimacy as the organization achieved territorial gains and had to meet the peoples’ needs in addition to their criminal pursuits. This phenomenon should be viewed as a positive motive for bringing subnational elements back into the economy of policy but is also evidence that extremist subnational actors cannot be deterred as though they were a nation-state.

So What?

What has changed about the security environment, and how does the environment change our policy paradigm? How should we design deterrence strategies for the twenty-first century? How should we think about military capabilities in order to support national policy purposes in general? We offer that the regions of the policy quadrant in which the Cold War challenged us are represented by the extreme corners of the diagram, and the post–Cold War environment tends to offer challenges at the intersection of the quadrants—a much more complex policy proposition. We must approach deterrence not as an entity by itself, but rather as a policy component from a larger palette; assurance, dissuasion, insurance, and deterrence blend together to achieve policy’s purpose. Ways and means are still important, but the proportional mix will shift based upon policy’s purpose. For example, nuclear weapons remain a vital capability, but some contexts will undoubtedly require conventional means where nuclear means were once sufficient. Likewise, new contexts may emerge where nuclear capability is vital to the policy, but the policy is dissuasive rather than deterrent. Our challenge is to recommend to policy makers the proper identification and application of capabilities to support new strategies, which are relevant to the context, policy, and purpose.

The strategic environment will likely dictate policy portfolio engineering in place of traditional deterrence policy.²⁴ If the environment continues to emerge consistently with recent trends, we can expect a requirement to engineer policy that includes a mix of deterrence, dissuasion, assurance, and insurance with respect to three contexts. Major global powers, regional powers, and failing states will each demand a specific blend of these policy types in order to achieve US policy purposes. In addition, we must engineer global and regional policy portfolios designed to motivate subnational actors to work within the international system while denying them the means to act outside the system. Each of these contexts will present challenges in all four quadrants, and any successful strategy must address each quadrant’s contribution to achieving the purpose.

This is where the economy of policy informs our recommendation. We must recognize the relationship between legitimacy and control, the impact they have on the number of choices available to policy makers, and the value prospect they generate. Additionally, each quadrant of this theoretical diagram presents different aspects, sources, and demands on legitimacy and control. Detailed economic analysis of these relationships

is not within the scope of this article except to note: the higher the value for policies like deterrence, the higher the required value point generated by legitimacy and control. This illustrates an important point in expressing that it is not enough for us to simply add ways and means to the mix without building legitimacy in the context. This helps explain the need for recent initiatives designed for building partner capacity and irregular warfare as well as interagency and multinational cooperation. But there is so much more to this principle; each context will present lines with differing slopes and elasticity, depending on whether the context is conventional or irregular. The important lesson across the board is the special relationship between legitimacy and control. We can build all the capabilities known to man, but their contribution to national defense diminishes rapidly if we fail to build legitimacy in a corresponding fashion. Likewise, capabilities designed to exert control will be more effective if we design, produce, and employ them with greater legitimacy.

The US Air Force is working diligently to develop game-changing war-fighting capabilities for combatant commanders in today's fight and for future challenges. Likewise, we are developing new concepts, programs, and methods for building national legitimacy in the interest of preventing wars and promoting our ability should war become unavoidable. The global vigilance, reach, and power we provide the nation will continue to be a vital contributor to national defense. Our challenge is to think about deterrence in a broader sense than the limited Cold War application, including the related policies that support deterrence. Also, we simply must expand our thinking from a purely control-oriented focus to include both legitimacy and control in every case. Think about precision weaponry, the global positioning system that guides that weaponry, the humanitarian assistance we provide, the global mobility system that delivers that assistance, and the provincial reconstruction teams we serve—these are all cases where Air Force capabilities build legitimacy through precision and reliability. The same is true of our nuclear capabilities; weapons of this kind require precision and reliability with no margin for error, and our adherence to the highest nuclear mission standards builds legitimacy. That legitimacy is fragile; we can easily lose it should we fail to perform to those exacting standards.

This is the fundamental risk and reward of deterrence in the economy of policy; conventional and nuclear capabilities that support deterrence form a double-edged sword requiring constant vigilance. These capabili-

ties contribute to purposes of the highest national value, yet negligence in safeguarding their constituent elements represents one of the most costly of national security errors because it so easily diminishes both legitimacy and control. When used appropriately, deterrence policy offers a maximum value for given investment; yet deterrence incurs the highest obligations for the service that provides the necessary capabilities. We Airmen must think of our contributions to all forms of national security policy whether in dissuasion, deterrence, assurance, or insurance; and we must likewise consider how our performance directly impacts national legitimacy and control as part of the military instrument.

The ideas presented here offer a way of thinking about policy, purpose, and the economy of deterrence. These ideas invite further study on many aspects of the elements, their interaction, and the economic relationship between them. This serves as a challenging area of research for our Air Force strategists and defense academia. We need a more comprehensive view of how deterrence works with other policy to achieve its purpose, and that view must accommodate the ever-increasing complexity of the security environment. If we do so, we will succeed in improving the rigor and relevance of our thinking and the delivery of effective national security strategies now and in the future. **SSQ**

Notes

1. The latter two terms are used in a novel sense here with respect to policy, and we will expound on this later in the article, but consider these the soft-power attractions that go with coercion ideas of compellence and deterrence.

2. Examples of this are numerous, and we avoid acute contemporary examples as a matter of discretion, but view the Korean War (1950–53), wars in Indochina (1947–79), the Bay of Pigs invasion (April 1961), the Yom Kippur War (October 1973), and US legitimacy crises in Lebanon (October 1983), Somalia (October 1993), and those ongoing since the Iraq Survey Group Interim Report (October 2003) as candidates for consideration.

3. Leon Sloss, “The New Arms Race,” in *Contemporary Nuclear Debates: Missile Defenses, Arms Control, and Arms Races in the Twenty-First Century (Washington Quarterly Readers)*, ed. Alexander Lennon (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 240.

4. James Schlesinger, “The Demise of Arms Control,” in Lennon, ed., *Contemporary Nuclear Debates*, 252–55.

5. Colin S. Gray, “Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 37.

6. Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 285.

7. In the case of national power, we use the term “value” not in a mathematical sense but rather as an expression of significance, utility, or importance.

8. Credit for the idea of power from the number of choices available is due to Everett C. Dolman for a compelling discussion of power in strategy in *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2007). We expand the case to include some relative value to a choice's outcome.

9. For more on sources and forms of legitimacy, see Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1947).

10. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 88.

11. Morgan, *Deterrence Now*, 8.

12. Abraham Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Science* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), 28.

13. Clausewitz, *On War*, 87.

14. Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 70–71.

15. Colin Gray, *Maintaining Effective Deterrence* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 30.

16. Charles Krauthammer, "What Will Stop North Korea," *Washington Post*, 13 October 2006, A-14.

17. Any number of examples serves where US forces are permanently stationed overseas where no formal incurrence treaty exists nor is there a commitment to fight on a nearby nation's behalf.

18. J. David Singer, "Inter-Nation Influence: A Formal Model," *American Political Science Review* 57, no. 2 (June 1963): 424.

19. Gray, "Maintaining Effective Deterrence," 29.

20. Ibid.

21. Dan Green, "Winning the War against Religious Extremism," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 120.

22. Gray, "Irregular Warfare;" and Jeffrey Record, *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2007).

23. Daniel Byman and Matthew C. Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might*, Rand Studies in Policy Analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 124.

24. This policy portfolio engineering concept naturally occurs at the most senior levels in government, but the process will demand especially cogent military advice.

Waging Deterrence in the Twenty-First Century

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IN RECENT years many national security policy scholars and practitioners have questioned whether deterrence remains a relevant, reliable, and realistic national security concept in the twenty-first century. That is a fair question. New threats to American security posed by transnational terrorists, asymmetric military strategies and capabilities, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by adversaries who see the world in profoundly different ways than do we have called into question America's reliance on deterrence as a central tenet of our national security strategy. Some experts advocate a move away from deterrence—and particularly the nuclear element of our deterrent force—toward greater reliance on other approaches to provide for our security in a complex and dangerous environment.

In our judgment, deterrence should and will remain a core concept in our twenty-first-century national security policy, because the prevention of war is preferable to the waging of it and because the concept itself is just as relevant today as it was during the Cold War. But its continued relevance does not mean that we should continue to “wage deterrence” in the future in the same manner, and with the same means, as we did in the past. As a starting point, it is useful to reexamine the fundamentals of deterrence theory and how it can be applied successfully in the twenty-first century. Next we should consider how deterrence does—or does not—apply to emerging

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twenty-first-century forms of warfare. Finally, we should carefully consider the role that US nuclear forces should—or should not—play in twenty-first-century US deterrence strategy.

Reexamining Deterrence Theory and Practice

In 2004, Strategic Command was directed by the secretary of defense to develop a deterrence operations joint operating concept (DO JOC).¹ In response the command reexamined both the academic literature on deterrence theory and the history of deterrence strategy and practice. We concluded that deterrence theory is applicable to many of the twenty-first-century threats the United States will face, but the way we put the theory into practice, or “operationalize” it, needs to be advanced.

One insight gained from our research and analysis is that a number of the “general” deterrence lessons we thought we learned in the Cold War may, in retrospect, have been specific to the kind of deterrence relationship we had with the Soviet Union. For example, many argue that deliberate ambiguity about the nature and scope of our response to an adversary’s attack enhances deterrence by complicating the adversary’s calculations and planning. Arguably, this was the case vis-à-vis the Soviet leadership after the Cuban missile crisis. However, the impact of ambiguity on deterrence success is likely to be a function of the target decision makers’ propensity to take risks in pursuit of gains or to avoid an expected loss. Risk-averse decision makers tend to see ambiguity about an enemy’s response as increasing the risk associated with the action they are contemplating, thus such ambiguity tends to enhance deterrence. The deterrence impact of US ambiguity about our response to an attack by a *risk-acceptant* opponent, however, might be quite different. Risk-acceptant decision makers might well interpret such ambiguity as a sign of weakness and as an opportunity to exploit rather than as a risk to be avoided. Our deterrence strategies and operations need to take our potential opponent’s risk-taking propensity into account.

A second difference from the Cold War experience is the potential for a lack of unity of command in certain twenty-first-century opponents (e.g., regimes with competing centers of power or transnational terrorist organizations). If there are multiple individuals in the political system capable of making and executing the decisions we seek to influence, our deterrence strategy will need to have multiple focal points and employ multiple

means of communicating a complex set of deterrence messages that in turn take into account the multiplicity of decision makers.

Throughout our Cold War deterrence relationship with the Soviet Union, the focus of US grand strategy was to contain Soviet expansionism, in part by frustrating Soviet efforts to overturn the international status quo by military or political means. However, in the twenty-first-century security environment, the United States may at times find it necessary to take the initiative to alter the international status quo in order to protect our vital interests. Deterring escalation while proactively pursuing objectives that may harm an opponent's perceived vital interests poses a different, more difficult kind of deterrence challenge. As Thomas Schelling noted, such circumstances may require a deterrence strategy that pairs promises of restraint with threats of severe cost-imposition.² For example, to deter Saddam Hussein from ordering the use of WMD during Operation Desert Storm in the first Gulf War, the United States issued a threat of devastating retaliation but also made clear that the coalition's war aim was limited to the liberation of Kuwait.

Finally, the United States and the Soviet Union each recognized that in an armed conflict between them, the impact on each side's vital interests would be high and symmetrical (i.e., the survival of both nations and their respective political systems and ideologies would be at stake). In the twenty-first century, the United States could face a crisis or conflict in which our opponents perceive they have a greater national interest in the outcome than does the United States. This circumstance has the potential to undermine the credibility of US deterrent threats, especially if opponents have the capability to inflict harm on US allies and/or interests that they believe exceeds our stake in the conflict. Thus, we must devise deterrence strategies and activities that effectively address such situations.

How Deterrence Works—Achieving Decisive Influence over Competitor Decision Making

Deterrence is ultimately about decisively influencing decision making. Achieving such decisive influence requires altering or reinforcing decision makers' perceptions of key factors they must weigh in deciding whether to act counter to US vital interests or to exercise restraint. This "decision calculus" consists of four primary variables: the perceived benefits and

costs of taking the action we seek to deter and the perceived benefits and costs of continued restraint.

Understanding how these factors interact is essential to determining how best to influence the decision making of our competitors. Successful deterrence is not solely a function of ensuring that foreign decision makers believe the costs of a given course of action will outweigh the benefits, as it is often described. Rather, such decision makers weigh the perceived benefits and costs of a given course of action *in the context of* their perception of how they will fare if they *do not* act. Thus, deterrence can fail even when competitors believe the costs of acting will outweigh the benefits of acting—if they *also* believe that the costs of continued restraint would be higher still.

Our deterrence activities must focus on convincing competitors that if they attack our vital interests, they will be denied the benefits they seek and will incur costs they find intolerable. It also emphasizes encouraging continued restraint by convincing them that such restraint will result in a more acceptable—though not necessarily favorable—outcome. The concept itself is fairly simple, but its implementation in a complex, uncertain, and continuously changing security environment is not. What, then, is required to implement this concept in the twenty-first century?

The Need for “Tailored Deterrence” Campaigns

Effectively influencing a competitor’s decision calculus requires continuous, proactive activities conducted in the form of deterrence campaigns tailored to specific competitors. Competitors have different identities, interests, perceptions, and decision-making processes, and we may seek to deter each competitor from taking specific actions under varied circumstances.

One of the most important aspects of tailored deterrence campaigns is to focus much of our effort on peacetime (or “Phase 0”) activities. There are several reasons for this. Peacetime activities can make use of deterrent means that take time to have their desired effects or that require repetition to be effective. They expand the range of deterrence options at our disposal. Conducting activities in peacetime also allows time to assess carefully the impact of our deterrence efforts and to adjust if they are ineffective or have unintended consequences. Most importantly, conducting deterrence activities in peacetime may prevent the crisis from developing in the first place or reduce the risk of waiting until we are in crisis to take deterrent action. By the time indications and warning of potential competitor activity alert us

to the fact that we are in a crisis, some of the decisions we hope to influence may have already been made, the options available to us may have narrowed significantly, and our deterrence messages may not reach the relevant decision makers.

Deterrence campaigns start in peacetime and are intended to preserve the peace, but our campaign planning should enable deterrence activities through all phases of crisis and conflict. A campaign approach to deterrence activities in crisis and conflict is necessary because, as a crisis or conflict unfolds, the content and character of a foreign leadership's decision calculus can change significantly. What mattered to a foreign leadership when its forces were on the offensive will likely be irrelevant when the tide has turned, and wholly new factors will enter its decision making. Without a broad and dynamic deterrence campaign plan, we risk discovering that what deterred successfully early will fail later because the competitor's decision calculus has shifted from under our static deterrence strategy and posture.

Conducting multiple competitor-specific deterrence campaigns simultaneously poses a difficult challenge. Targeting a deterrence activity on a single competitor does not mean that other competitors—and our friends and allies—are not watching and being influenced as well. Thus, we need to deconflict our competitor-specific deterrence campaigns to avoid as best we can undesirable second- and third-order effects. The nature of this task requires new analytic capabilities and new planning and execution processes, while the level of effort required means some additional resources must be allocated to the deterrence campaign.

Finally, there is an opportunity presented by the conduct of multiple competitor-specific deterrence campaigns. We may discover that there is a common set of factors that influence the decision calculus of multiple competitors. If true, this would enable the United States to exercise economy of force and effort, addressing those factors with the greatest influence over multiple actors with a common set of deterrence activities.

The Need to Bring All Elements of National Power to Bear

The decisions our deterrence activities are meant to influence are primarily political-military decisions, made most often by political rather than military decision makers. The factors influencing those decisions

usually extend far beyond purely military considerations to encompass political, ideological, economic, and, in some cases, theological affairs. Clearly, a purely military approach to planning and conducting deterrence campaigns is inadequate. Deterrence is inherently a whole-of-government enterprise.

Interagency collaboration is difficult to do well, particularly in the non-crisis atmosphere of peacetime activities—precisely the time that multiple agencies have the most to offer in a deterrence campaign. So how can we ensure that our deterrence campaigns leverage all the elements of American national power, both “hard” and “soft”?³

We must find a practical way to involve relevant government agencies in mission analysis, campaign planning, decision making and execution, and assessment of results. An innovative process is needed to consider and include interagency deterrence courses of action, to make whole-of-government decisions on what courses of action to implement, and to coordinate their execution upon selection.

The Need to Bring Our Friends’ and Allies’ Capabilities to Bear

US friends and allies share our interest in deterrence success. Because of their different perspectives, different military capabilities, and different means of communication at their disposal, they offer much that can refine and improve our deterrence strategies and enhance the effectiveness of our deterrence activities. It is to our advantage (and theirs) to involve them more actively in “waging deterrence” in the twenty-first century.

One of the most important contributions that our friends and allies can make to our deterrence campaigns is to provide alternative assessments of competitors’ perceptions. Allied insights into how American deterrence activities may be perceived by both intended and unintended audiences can help us formulate more effective plans. Allied suggestions for alternative approaches to achieving key deterrence effects, including actions they would take in support of—or instead of—US actions, may prove invaluable. As in the case of interagency collaboration, we need to develop innovative processes for collaborating with our friends and allies to enhance deterrence.

The Need to “Wage Deterrence” Against Emerging Forms of Warfare

At its most fundamental level, deterrence functions in the same way regardless of the kind of action we seek to prevent. Convincing a competitor that the perceived benefits of its attack will be outweighed by the perceived costs and that restraint offers an acceptable outcome remains the way to achieve decisive influence over competitor decision making. Nevertheless, the form of warfare we seek to deter can alter both the nature and the difficulty of the task at hand. Three emerging forms of twenty-first-century warfare pose particularly tough challenges for deterrence strategists, policy makers, and practitioners.

Deterring Transnational Terrorism

The continued application by transnational terrorists of catastrophic attacks on civilians by suicidal attackers suggests that our deterrence concept may have little utility against this form of warfare. How can one successfully deter attackers who see their own death as the ultimate (spiritual) gain, who have little they hold dear that we can threaten retaliation against, and who perceive continued restraint as the violation of what they see as a religious duty to alter an unacceptable status quo through violence? The question is a good one. Answering it requires a closer examination of how the nature of transnational terrorism, and the nonstate actors that practice it, create deterrence challenges not posed by most state actors. While there are many differences between deterring state actors and nonstate actors, two pose particularly important challenges.

First, the task of identifying the key decision makers we seek to influence is more difficult when deterring nonstate actors. For example, al-Qaeda's shift to a more distributed network of terrorist cells in the wake of Operation Enduring Freedom has made “decision makers” out of regional and local operatives. This distributed nature of transnational terrorist networks complicates the conduct of an effective deterrence campaign, but it also offers additional opportunities. A recent Institute for Defense Analysis report highlighted that there are multiple components of the global terrorist network that we can seek to influence in a deterrence campaign.

These components include the following: jihadi foot soldiers, terrorist professionals who provide training and other logistical guidance and support, the leaders of al Qaeda, groups affiliated by knowledge and aspiration (so-called franchises),

operational enablers (i.e., financiers), moral legitimizers, state sponsors, and passive state enablers.⁴

Thus, deterrence could play an important role in the broader campaign against transnational terrorists if it were able to constrain the participation of key components of a movement and undermine support within a movement for the most catastrophic kinds of attacks.

Second, the nature of transnational terrorist movements results in these adversaries valuing and fearing profoundly different things than their state-actor counterparts. Transnational terrorists need to spread their ideology; raise and distribute funds; motivate, recruit, and train new operatives; and gain public acquiescence to (if not active support for) their presence and operations, all while remaining hidden from their enemies. This creates a potentially rich new set of perceptions to influence through deterrence activities, but affecting those perceptions is likely to require the creative development of new means of doing so.

It is not yet clear how important deterrence may be in countering the threats posed to US vital interests by transnational terrorism. However, given that our conflict with these adversaries is likely a long-term one and that the potential benefits of successfully deterring certain kinds of catastrophic terrorist attacks (e.g., the use of weapons of mass destruction) far exceed the costs of attempting to do so, we should work more aggressively on adding deterrence to our counterterrorism repertoire.

Detering Space Attack

The importance of military space capabilities to the effective functioning of modern armed forces will continue to increase throughout the twenty-first century. The development of counterspace capabilities is already underway in several nations, making active warfare in the space domain a real possibility. Detering attacks on US and allied space assets poses several important challenges.

First, we must act overtly and consistently to convince competitors that they will reap little benefit from conducting space attacks against us or our allies. Those who might contemplate such attacks in a future conflict need to understand three things: their efforts to deny us access to our military space assets will likely fail, our military forces are ready and able to fight effectively and decisively without such access if necessary, and we possess the means and the will to ensure that they would pay a price incommensurate with any benefit they seek to attain through such attacks.

As made clear above, the threat of cost imposition is an important aspect of American space deterrence strategy. Our threatened responses to an attack on our space assets need not be limited to a response in kind. Our competitors must clearly understand that we consider our space assets as sovereign and important to our national security interests. Furthermore, the importance of maintaining space as a safe and secure global commons to all nations' future economic development may result in the United States treating the initiation of counterspace activities by a foreign power as a significant escalation of a future conflict. Regardless of our initial level of national interest in a given conflict, such an escalation could dramatically increase the US stake in the outcome. Our increased stake could alter our willingness to escalate the scope and level of violence of our military operations. In other words, an attack on US space assets as part of a regional conflict might be viewed as more than a regional issue by the United States and, therefore, elicit an escalated response.

Detering Cyberspace Attack

Detering cyberspace attack presents an even more complex challenge than deterring space attacks. As in the space domain, we must convince our competitors that the United States may see cyberspace attack as a serious escalation of a conflict and that we will respond accordingly (and not necessarily in kind). However, the nature of cyberspace operations poses additional challenges as well.

The most significant deterrence challenge posed by the threat of cyberspace attack is the perceived difficulty of attributing such attacks to a specific attacker, be it a state or nonstate actor. If competitors believe we cannot determine who is attacking us in cyberspace, they may convince themselves that such attacks involve little risk and significant gain. In addressing the attribution issue, US cyberspace deterrence strategy and activities must deal with the inherently thorny trade-off between demonstrating our ability to detect and attribute cyberspace attacks and providing intelligence about our capabilities to competitors that could help them pose a still greater cyberspace threat in the future.

Further complicating the deterrence of cyberspace attack is the lack of a known historical track record of US detection, attribution, and response. This lack of precedent could raise questions about the credibility of deterrent actions and could thus embolden potential attackers, who might convince themselves that the action they contemplate would not elicit

a response. Yet, establishing adequate precedents is made more difficult because few nations have defined publicly what they consider to be a cyberspace “attack,” nor have they communicated to competitors the kinds of responses to such activities they might consider.

Cyberspace attacks involve significant potential for producing unexpected second- and third-order effects that might result in unintended and possibly undesired consequences. The deterrence impacts of such uncertainty over the potential impacts of a cyberspace attack would be a function of the nature of the attacker’s goals and objectives. A competitor’s concerns about unintended consequences could enhance the effects of our deterrence activities if it wishes to control escalation or fears blowback from its cyberspace operations. However, deterrence of a competitor whose primary goal is to create chaos could be undermined by the potential for unintended consequences. We need to carefully consider how to account for such possibilities in our deterrence strategy.

Secure the Continued Role of US Nuclear Forces in Twenty-First-Century Deterrence

We have saved discussion of the continued role of US nuclear forces in deterrence for the end of this article, not because it is less important than in the past, but because it is best understood in the context of the other aspects of twenty-first-century deterrence strategy and activities addressed above.

Many argue that the only legitimate role of nuclear weapons is to deter the use of nuclear weapons in a catastrophic attack against us or our allies. This is indeed their most important role. However, the deterrence roles of the US nuclear arsenal go well beyond deterrence of nuclear attack alone.

US nuclear forces cast a long shadow over the decision calculations of anyone who would contemplate taking actions that threaten the vital interests of the United States or its allies, making it clear that the ultimate consequences of doing so may be truly disastrous and that the American president always has an option for which they have no effective counter. Even in circumstances in which a deliberate American nuclear response seems unlikely or incredible to foreign decision makers, US nuclear forces enhance deterrence by making unintended or uncontrolled catastrophic escalation a serious concern, posing what Thomas Schelling calls “the

threat that leaves something to chance.”⁵ These are deterrence dynamics that only nuclear forces provide.

As a result, US nuclear forces make an important contribution to deterring both symmetric and asymmetric forms of warfare in the twenty-first century. Our nuclear forces provide a hedge against attacks that could cripple our ability to wage conventional war because they would enable the United States to restore the military status quo ante, trump the adversary’s escalation in a manner that improves the US position in the conflict, or promptly terminate the conflict.

For US nuclear forces to be effective in playing these vital deterrence roles, they must have certain key attributes. They must be sufficient in number and survivability to hold at risk those things our adversaries value most and to hedge against technical or geopolitical surprise. Both the delivery systems and warheads must be highly reliable, so that no one could ever rationally doubt their effectiveness or our willingness to use them in war. The warheads must be safe and secure, both to prevent accidents and to prevent anyone from ever being able to use an American nuclear weapon should they somehow get their hands on one. And they must be sufficiently diverse and operationally flexible to provide the president with the necessary range of options for their use and to hedge against the technological failure of any particular delivery system or warhead design.

Our forces have these attributes today, but we are rapidly approaching decision points that will determine the extent to which they continue to have them in the future. We are the only acknowledged nuclear weapons state that does not have an active nuclear weapons production program. Our nuclear weapons stockpile is aging, and we will not be able to maintain the reliability of our current nuclear warheads indefinitely. We will need to revitalize our nuclear weapons design and production infrastructure if we are to retain a viable nuclear arsenal in a rapidly changing and uncertain twenty-first-century security environment. Similarly, we face critical decisions regarding the modernization of our nuclear delivery systems, due not to their impending obsolescence—all will remain viable for at least a decade, some for two or three—but rather because of the long lead times involved in designing and building their replacements. If, through negotiations or unilateral decisions, we make a deliberate national decision to forego nuclear weapons in the future, we will have to reconsider our fundamental deterrence strategy, for it will no longer be built on the firm foundation that our nuclear arsenal provides.

Conclusion

Deterrence was an essential element of national security practice long before the Cold War and the introduction of nuclear arsenals into international affairs. For millennia, states have sought to convince one another that going to war with them was ill advised and counterproductive, and they sometimes responded to deterrence failures in a manner intended to send powerful deterrence messages to others in order to reestablish and enhance deterrence in the future. The advent of nuclear weapons did change the way states viewed warfare, however. The avoidance of nuclear war—or for that matter, conventional war on the scale of World War I or World War II—rather than its successful prosecution became the military's highest priority. This spurred a tremendous flurry of intellectual activity in the 1950s and 1960s that sought to develop a fully thought-out theory of deterrence as well as a massive national effort to put that theory into practice to deter (and contain) the Soviet Union.

Just as the beginning of the Cold War did not create the utility of deterrence as an element of national security strategy, the end of the Cold War did not eliminate it. As we move forward into the twenty-first century, it will be to the United States' advantage to lay the groundwork necessary to ensure that its deterrence strategies and activities are effective in the future. The concept of deterrence is sound, and we have the means necessary to implement it against the full range of threats that are reasonably susceptible to deterrence. The challenge that remains before us is to allocate the resources and create the processes necessary to proactively and successfully “wage deterrence” in the twenty-first century. It is a task that is nonpartisan in nature—one that can be sustained over the years through the commitment of the highest levels of our government. **SSQ**

Notes

1. *Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept Version 2.0*, US Department of Defense, December 2006.
2. Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 131–34.
3. Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs Books, 2004), 5.
4. Brad Roberts, *Deterrence and WMD Terrorism: Calibrating Its Potential Contributions to Risk Reduction* (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, June 2007), Abstract.
5. Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 121–22.

On Nuclear Deterrence and Assurance

Keith B. Payne

Weakness is provocative.

—Donald Rumsfeld

GIVEN THE diversity of opponents US leaders now must hope to deter and the variety of circumstances in which deterrence and assurance will be important goals, a broad spectrum of US strategic capabilities may be necessary. In some plausible cases, nonmilitary capabilities will suffice, while in others the immense lethality of US nuclear threats is likely to be required. In some cases *punitive* US threats will not deter because the opponent will accept great risks, but *denying* that opponent a practicable vision of success may deter.

US nonnuclear threats and employment options often are likely to be salient for punitive and denial deterrence. For example, in regional contingencies where US stakes at risk do not appear to involve national survival or the survival of allies, some opponents are likely to view US nuclear threats as incredible regardless of the character of the US arsenal or the tone of US statements. And, when US priority goals include postconflict “nation-building” and the reconstruction of a defeated opponent, US advanced nonnuclear threats may be *more credible* because highly discriminate threats will be more compatible with US stakes, interests, and the goals of postconflict reconciliation and reconstruction.¹

Reprinted with courtesy from *The Great American Gamble: Deterrence Theory and Practice from the Cold War to the Twenty-First Century*, 409–48. Copyright © 2008 by National Institute Press, “The Nuclear Posture Review: Setting the Record Straight,” *Washington Quarterly* 28, no.3 (Summer 2005); and “What Are Nuclear Weapons For?” *Forum on Physics and Society*, American Physical Society 36, no. 4 (October 2007).

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No Deterrence Value for Nuclear Weapons?

Some contemporary commentators take the plausible cases described above to the extreme and assert that US nuclear weapons now offer little or no added value for deterrence over nonnuclear capabilities. The rationale for this assertion is derived from the old balance of terror formula: predictable deterrent effect is equated to the United States' capability to threaten the destruction of a select set of opponents' tangible, physical targets. Consequently, if nonnuclear weapons now can threaten to destroy most or all of that set of targets, then nuclear weapons supposedly no longer are of value for deterrence. The vulnerability of the designated targets, not the specific US instrument of threat, is expected to determine the deterrent effect.

The first of these propositions—that deterrent effect can be equated to target coverage—is fundamentally flawed. The second also is highly suspect; it certainly is possible to *hope* that US nuclear weapons no longer are critical for deterrence, just as it is possible to hope that all leaders will learn to be responsible and prudent. To assert confidently that US nuclear weapons no longer are valuable for deterrence purposes, however, is to claim knowledge about how varied contemporary and future leaders in diverse and often unpredictable circumstances will interpret and respond to the distinction between nuclear and nonnuclear threats. Those who make such a claim presume knowledge that they do not and cannot have.

In addition, a popular refrain of some commentators is that US nuclear weapons should be considered useful *only for deterring nuclear attack*.² This is not, and has not been, US deterrence policy. The only apparent rationale for this assertion is to buttress the claim that the deterrence value of nuclear weapons is narrow in scope and purpose and that the commentators' favored steps toward nuclear disarmament could eliminate even that value; if deterring nuclear threats is the *only purpose for US nuclear weapons*, they will then have *no unique value* if others move away from nuclear weapons.

This proposition is logical but artificially narrow. It misses other severe nonnuclear threats to the United States and allies that may not be deterred reliably absent US nuclear capabilities, such as threats posed by chemical and biological weapons (CBW). Commentators can claim for political reasons that US nuclear capabilities should be considered pertinent for deterring only nuclear threats but CBW threats are real and growing and there is no basis to conclude that US nonnuclear capabilities would suffice to deter them. Even if the vision of the complete worldwide elimination

of nuclear weapons were to be realized, CBW threats would remain. The most that can be said in this regard is that US nuclear weapons might or might not be necessary for this deterrence goal—hardly a robust basis for making profound policy decisions about the most fundamental security questions.

Thinking through some plausible scenarios may be helpful in this regard. For example, if an opponent were to escalate an intense, ongoing conventional conflict by employing CBW with horrific effect against US forces, civilians, or allies, a high-priority US goal would likely be to deter the opponent's subsequent use of CBW. The US deterrence message to the opponent in this case could be that the opponent would suffer exceedingly if it were to repeat CBW use—that the United States would so raise the risks of the conflict for the opponent that it would *choose not to repeat its use of CBW* (even if its initial employment proved useful militarily or politically). This message could be intended to deter a second CBW attack during the crisis at hand and also to send a message to any hostile third parties that they must never consider CBW use against the United States and its allies.

The question in this scenario is whether US *nonnuclear capabilities* alone would constitute an adequate basis for this deterrence message. As noted above, there is no useful a priori answer to this question. Some plausible circumstances, however, suggest the potential unique value of nuclear threats. For example, if a pitched conventional conflict is in progress and the opponent already has been subjected to an intense US campaign of nonnuclear “shock and awe,” could the threat of further US nonnuclear fire in response to an opponent's CBW attack be decisive in the opponent's decision making? The United States could threaten to set aside some targeting limitations on its nonnuclear forces for this deterrence purpose. Would such a nonnuclear threat dominate the opponent's calculation of risk, cost, and gain? Or, might it look like “more of the same” and have little prospect of being decisive in the opponent's decision making?

The answers to such questions certainly are not so self-evident as to suggest that US nuclear threats would provide no unique added deterrent value. Nuclear weapons may be so much more lethal and distinguishable from nonnuclear threats that, on occasion, they can deter an opponent who would not otherwise be susceptible to control. Strategic nuclear threats have the potentially important advantages of extreme lethality from afar and a relatively obvious firebreak. These could be important qualities to deter CBW first or second use and to help deter future third-party CBW

use. Clinton administration secretary of defense Les Aspin rightly pointed to the prospective value of US nuclear weapons for the deterrence of CBW threats given the proliferation of the latter: "Since the United States has forsworn chemical and biological weapons, the role of US nuclear forces in deterring or responding to such nonnuclear threats must be considered."³

How and what might constitute an "adequate" US mode of deterrence will depend on the details of the engagement, including opponents' values, vulnerabilities, risk tolerances, perceptions, access to information, and attention. Confident a priori assertions that nuclear threats *are sure to make the decisive difference* for deterrence purposes, or that they *can provide no significant added value*, betray only the pretense of knowledge regarding how opponents will calculate and behave in the future. Even with a careful assessment of the pertinent details of opponent and context, precise prediction about the linkage of specific threat to deterrent effect is subject to uncertainties.

Nevertheless, a common proposition, initially expressed soon after the Cold War by Paul Nitze, is that the United States may now consider converting its strategic deterrent from nuclear weapons to "smart conventional weapons" because the latter can carry out many of the same "combat missions."⁴ Nuclear weapons are said to be of limited and indeed declining value because there are "no conceivable circumstances in which the United States would need to use or could justify the use of nuclear weapons to fight or terminate a conventional conflict with a nonnuclear adversary."⁵ This proposition ignores the potential value of nuclear weapons for the deterrence of CBW; it also misses the fundamental point that deterrence requirements are *not set by what may be necessary to "fight or terminate" a conflict*.

Linking the assertion that there are few, if any, necessary "combat" roles for nuclear weapons to the conclusion that nuclear weapons lack *deterrence* value is a non sequitur, even if true. Nuclear weapons could be deemed to have no value whatsoever for combat missions and remain absolutely key to the deterrence of war and the assurance of allies. Deterrence involves exploiting opponents' fears and sensitivities and may have little or no connection to US preferences for the wartime employment of force for combat missions. Assurance, in turn, requires the easing of allies' fears and sensitivities, which again may have little or nothing to do with how the United States might prefer to terminate a conflict. Whether US nuclear capabilities are regarded as useful or not "to fight or terminate a

conventional conflict” may tell us nothing about their potential value for the political/psychological purposes of assurance and punitive deterrence. Deterrence, assurance, and war fighting are different functions with possibly diverse and separate standards for force requirements. The potentially different force standards for these different goals should not be confused.

This most basic confusion was apparent during the congressional discussions of the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP). The RNEP evolved from studies conducted during the Clinton administration and subsequently was pursued by the Bush administration as *potentially important for deterrence purposes*.⁶ Yet, some congressional opponents of the RNEP pointed to the apparent lack of a “specific military requirement” as a basis for their opposition.⁷ One prominent member of Congress stated that no “military requirement for a nuclear earth penetrator” has been “articulated to me.”⁸

The pertinent questions for the RNEP had less to do with any expressed *military requirement* for this niche capability than whether a persuasive case could be made that it would be important for deterrence of significant threats and the assurance of allies. The uniformed military in general may have limited appreciation for a system that, as discussed by political leaders, would be useful as a *withheld* instrument for deterrence. If I can’t use it, what good is it? is an understandable question. That “use” standard, however, may have limited relevance when the value of a nuclear capability is determined more by opponent and allied perceptions of it than by US employment plans.

The Apparent Value of Nuclear Weapons for Deterrence

Whether or not nuclear weapons are considered useful for combat missions or have been asked for by military commanders, a quick review of available evidence points toward their potentially unique value or deterrence and assurance. For example, in the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq launched 88 conventionally armed Scud missiles against targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia; those missile strikes continued until the end of the war. In Israel and the United States there was concern that Iraq would use chemical weapons.⁹ The anticipation of such attacks led Israeli citizens to take shelter in specially sealed rooms and to wear gas masks. Although Iraq did not employ chemical or biological warheads, Scud strikes directly inflicted more than 250 Israeli casualties and were indirectly responsible for a dozen

deaths, including children, resulting from the improper use of gas masks.¹⁰ UN officials have stated that Iraqi bombs and missiles contained enough biological agents to kill hundred of thousands,¹¹ and US officials have confirmed that *if* Iraq had used available biological weapons, the military and civilian casualty levels could have been horrific.¹²

Saddam Hussein was neither a philanthropist nor particularly humane. Why then did he *not* use the available chemical or biological weapons? Was he deterred by the prospect of *nuclear retaliation*? Israeli commentators frequently suggest that the apparent Israeli nuclear threat deterred Iraqi chemical use. In this regard it should be noted that during a CNN interview on 2 February 1991, then-US defense secretary Dick Cheney was asked about the potential for Israeli nuclear retaliation to Iraqi chemical strikes. Secretary Cheney observed that this would be a decision that “the Israelis would have to make—but I would think that [Hussein] has to be cautious in terms of how he proceeds in his attacks against Israel.” The following day, when asked about Secretary Cheney’s statement, Israeli defense minister Moshe Arens replied, “I think he said that Saddam has reasons to worry—yes, he does have reasons to worry.”¹³ This reply, and Secretary Cheney’s original statement—in which he did not object to the premise of the question about the possibility of Israeli nuclear retaliation, at least to Israeli analysts—was key to deterring Iraqi chemical weapons use.¹⁴

The possible direct US role in nuclear deterrence in this case should be highlighted.¹⁵ On 9 January 1991, Secretary of State James Baker expressed a severe deterrent threat to Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz in Geneva: “Before we cross to the other side—that is, if the conflict starts, God forbid, and chemical or biological weapons are used against our forces—the American people would demand revenge, and we have the means to implement this.”¹⁶

President Bush’s strongly worded letter to Saddam Hussein warned against the use of chemical or biological weapons. It spoke of the “strongest possible” US response and warned that, “you and your country will pay a terrible price” in the event of “such unconscionable acts.”¹⁷

Secretary Cheney also implicitly linked US nuclear threats to Iraqi use of WMD: “The other point that needs to be made, and it’s one I have made previously, is that he [Hussein] needs to be made aware that the President will have available the full spectrum of capabilities.”¹⁸

Such statements by then-ranking US and Israeli officials, while not explicitly threatening nuclear retaliation, certainly implied the possibility.

These threats appear to be a plausible explanation for Iraqi restraint with regard to chemical and biological weapons. Following the 1991 Gulf War, authoritative accounts of Iraqi wartime decision making on this issue emerged. In August 1995, Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz reported to Amb. Rolf Ekeus, a UN weapons inspector, that “Iraq was deterred from using its WMD because the Iraqi leadership had interpreted Washington’s threats of grievous retaliation as meaning *nuclear* retaliation.”¹⁹

Tariq Aziz’s explanation has been corroborated by former senior Iraqi military officials, including Gen Wafic Al Sammarai, then head of Iraqi military intelligence. General Sammarai stated, “Some of the Scud missiles were loaded with chemical warheads, but they were not used. They were kept hidden throughout the war. We didn’t use them because the other side had a deterrent force.”²⁰ He added, “I do not think Saddam was capable of making a decision to use chemical weapons or biological weapons, or any other type of weapons against the allied groups, because the warning was quite severe, and quite effective. *The allied troops were certain to use nuclear arms and the price will be too dear and too high.*”²¹ Similarly, Iraqi general Hussein Kamal, Saddam Hussein’s son-in-law and Iraqi minister of military industries, reportedly stated following his defection from Iraq in 1995 that “during the Gulf War, there was no intention to use chemical weapons as the Allied force was overwhelming . . . there was no decision to use chemical weapons for fear of retaliation. They realized that if chemical weapons were used, *retaliation would be nuclear.*”²² At the time, the fact that some US naval vessels reportedly were deployed with nuclear capabilities aboard may have contributed to this helpful Iraqi view.²³

In 1995, Brent Scowcroft, President Bush’s national security advisor during the 1991 Gulf War, revealed publicly that US leaders had decided in fact that the United States would *not* respond to Iraqi WMD use with nuclear weapons. Rather, according to Scowcroft, the United States would have expanded its conventional attacks against Iraqi targets.²⁴ And President Bush has stated that “it [nuclear use] was not something that we really contemplated at all.”²⁵ Nevertheless, according to the accounts by Tariq Aziz, Gen Hussein Kamal, and Gen Wafic Al Sammarai, the Iraqi leadership *believed* that the United States would have retaliated with nuclear weapons—and the expectations appear to have deterred—as clearly was intended by US officials.

On this occasion, *implicit US nuclear* threats appear to have deterred as hoped; Schelling’s proposition regarding the deterring effect of pos-

sible nuclear escalation appears to have been demonstrated. The fact that many in the US senior wartime leadership later explained publicly that the United States would *not* have employed nuclear weapons may help to degrade that deterrent effect for the future. A comment by Bernard Brodie vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in 1963 may be apropos: If the opponent is under the “apparent conviction” that the US nuclear deterrent is credible, “why should we attempt to shake that conviction?”²⁶ Nevertheless, the point here is that the 1991 Gulf War appears to offer evidence that *nuclear* deterrence, on occasion, can be uniquely effective. Saddam Hussein appears to have been confident that he could withstand the pressure of conventional war with the United States—perhaps based upon his relatively dismissive view of the US will to fight a bloody conventional war. When Secretary of State James Baker told Tariq Aziz of the “overwhelming” conventional power that would be “brought to bear” against Iraq, Aziz responded, “Mr. Secretary, Iraq is a very ancient nation. We have lived for 6,000 years. I have no doubts that you are a very powerful nation. I have no doubts that you have a very strong military machine and you will inflict on us heavy losses. But Iraq will survive and this leadership will decide the future of Iraq.”²⁷ This prediction proved accurate for a decade.

Of course, the explanations of apparent Iraqi restraint offered by Tariq Aziz, Wafic Al Sammarai, and Hussein Kamal do not close the issue; they do, however, suggest that *nuclear* deterrence was at least part of the answer as to why Saddam Hussein did not use WMD in 1991 when he apparently had the option to do so. These explanations also suggest the profound error of those prominent commentators who asserted with such certainty immediately after the 1991 war that nuclear weapons were “incredible as a deterrent and therefore irrelevant,”²⁸ and the fragility of similar contemporary claims that US nuclear threats are incredible and thus useless for contemporary regional deterrence purposes.²⁹

Prominent American commentators can assert that nuclear weapons are incredible and thus useless in such cases; their speculation about US threat credibility, however, ultimately is irrelevant. For deterrence purposes, it is *the opponent's belief* about US threat credibility that matters, and that cannot be ascertained from the views of American domestic commentators. The 1991 Gulf War appears to demonstrate that Iraqi officials perceived US threats as nuclear and sufficiently credible to deter, and that this *perception was more important* to US deterrence strategy than were actual US intentions. Nuclear deterrence appears to have played a significant role

despite the fact that US leaders apparently saw no need to employ nuclear weapons and had no intention of doing so.

There is little doubt that US *nuclear* threats have contributed to the deterrence of additional past opponents who otherwise may have been particularly resistant to US nonnuclear threats. This deterrent effect is a matter of adversary perceptions—which can be independent of our preferences or intentions regarding the use of force. However we might prefer to deter or plan to employ force, the actual behavior of adversaries on occasion suggests that there can be a difference between the deterring effects of nuclear and nonnuclear weapons. In some past cases, given the adversary's views and the context, it has been “the reality of nuclear deterrence” that has had the desired “restraining effect.”³⁰ In the future, as in the past, the working of deterrence on such occasions may be extremely important.

There is some additional evidence from countries such as North Korea that opponents continue to attribute unique deterrence value to US nuclear weapons. For example, during a 2005 visit by a US congressional delegation to North Korea, Rep. Curt Weldon, then vice-chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, raised with senior North Korean military and political leaders the US interest in a nuclear capability to threaten hardened and deeply buried targets. According to the after-trip report by Congressman Weldon and other members of the bipartisan delegation, this was the only US military capability that appeared to concern the North Korean leadership and “got their attention,” suggesting its potential deterrence value.³¹ North Korean statements regarding US nuclear “bunker burst” capabilities also appear to reveal an unparalleled concern about the possibility of such US nuclear capabilities, thereby suggesting their potential value for deterrence.³²

Rogues and potential opponents are expending considerable effort on hard and deeply buried bunkers. Some of these bunkers reportedly can be held at risk of destruction *only via nuclear weapons*.³³ During the 1991 Gulf War, some Iraqi bunkers were “virtually invulnerable to conventional weapons.”³⁴ In 1999, concerted NATO air attacks reportedly could not destroy a deep tunnel complex at the Pristina Airport in Kosovo. As a British inspector on the ground at the time reported, “On June 11, hours after NATO halted its bombing and just before the Serb military began withdrawing, 11 Mig-21 fighters emerged from the tunnels and took off for Yugoslavia.”³⁵ Similarly, in 1996, senior Clinton administration officials observed that *only* nuclear weapons could threaten to destroy the

suspected Libyan chemical weapons facility located inside a mountain near Tarhunah.³⁶ Moreover, the US Cold War “legacy” nuclear arsenal apparently has limitations against some protected targets. “Furthermore, the current [nuclear] inventory only has a limited capability for holding hardened underground facilities at risk. The country’s only nuclear earth penetrating weapons . . . cannot survive delivery into certain types of terrain in which such facilities may be located.”³⁷

Adversaries unsurprisingly seek to protect what they value. And, as Defense Secretary Harold Brown emphasized, US deterrence threats should be capable of holding at risk those assets valued by the opponent.³⁸ Consequently, to the extent that we hope to apply the “logic of deterrence” to rogue-state decision makers, the US capability to threaten that which they value located within protected bunkers may be important for deterrence; if North Korean and other rogue leaders demonstrate the value they attribute to assets via buried and hardened bunkers, the US capability to hold those types of targets at obvious risk of destruction may be an important deterrent threat to those leaderships. Highlighting the potential value of nuclear capabilities to do so hardly connotes a rejection of deterrence in favor of “war fighting” as often is claimed; to the contrary, it reflects an attempt to find plausible deterrence tools suited to contemporary opponents and conditions. This is precisely the point made with regard to deterring the Soviet leadership in 1989 by R. James Woolsey, who subsequently served as the director of central intelligence in the Clinton administration:

Successful deterrence requires being able to hold at risk those things that the Soviet leadership most values. The nature of the Soviet state suggests that the Soviet leaders most value themselves. This emphasizes the importance of being able to hold at risk deep underground facilities, such as those at Sharapovo, which can only be done effectively by an earth-penetrating [nuclear] weapon.³⁹

A fundamental deterrence question regarding such US capabilities concerns which set of specific conditions is more likely to provide the United States with greater leverage: when opposing leaderships have, or do not have, sanctuaries impervious to US prompt threats. Are opponents likely to feel greater freedom to provoke the United States severely when they believe themselves to be *more* or *less vulnerable* to US deterrence threats?

There are no a priori answers to such questions that can be assumed to apply across a spectrum of opponents and circumstances. In contemporary cases, however, as in the past—*if* the complex variety of conditions

necessary for deterrence to work are present and the challenger is risk- and cost-tolerant—then *nuclear* deterrence *may be uniquely decisive* in the challenger's decision making. Moreover, for deterrence to work on those occasions—whether they are few or many—could be of great importance given the potential lethality of emerging WMD threats to the United States. To assert otherwise—that US nuclear weapons now provide *no* unique added value for deterrence—contradicts available evidence and lays claim to knowledge about opponent decision making that domestic commentators do not and cannot have. Such assertions reveal more about what some commentators *wish* to be true than what available evidence suggests should be believed.

There should be no presumption that nuclear threats always will make the difference between effective deterrence or its failure. The capability, however, to threaten an adversary's valued assets with great lethality and from afar—including well-protected targets—may be critical for some US deterrence purposes. Unless future leadership decision making is different from that of the past, in some cases *nuclear* threat options will contribute to deterrence. Given literally decades of experience, the burden of proof lies with those who now contend that nuclear weapons are unnecessary for deterrence; considerable available evidence contradicts such a contention.

The decisions of Britain and France also suggest the continuing value of nuclear weapons for deterrence. Both have reaffirmed their long-term commitments to maintaining their nuclear capabilities for deterrence purposes, including deterrence of rogue states and other possible future unexpected contingencies.⁴⁰

Also indicative of the continuing deterrence value of nuclear weapons are Russia's and China's decisions to modernize and expand their nuclear arsenals⁴¹ and the apparent desire of North Korea, Iran, and possibly Syria to possess nuclear weapons.⁴² North Korean officials have pointed to the value of nuclear weapons for deterrence:

Today's reality verifies that the [North Korean] nuclear deterrent constitutes the one and only means that can prevent war on the Korean peninsula and defend peace in this region. . . . We will strengthen our nuclear deterrent in every way to prevent war and defend peace on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia and will take a decisive self-defensive countermeasure at the necessary time.⁴³

North Korea's nuclear weapons program is "an all-purpose cost effective instrument of foreign policy . . . the single most important lever in its asymmetric conflicts and negotiations with South Korea, the United

States, and Japan.”⁴⁴ So too, Iranian officials reportedly attribute great deterrence value to nuclear weapons. Following Iran’s costly war with Iraq in the 1980s, and the subsequent 1991 Gulf War,

Iranian leaders believed that nuclear weapons were the ultimate instrument of asymmetric warfare. They held that if Iraq had had nuclear weapons [in 1991], the United States would never have attacked it. Hence, in January 1995, Iran signed a contract with Russia for the completion of a nuclear power plant in the city of Bushehr, which . . . provided Iran with a pretext to begin building a complete fuel cycle, with the aim of producing enriched uranium for nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

The material question is not whether commentators believe nuclear weapons “ought” to have value for deterrence in a normative sense; they *have* demonstrated that value. The question is whether we are willing to accept the risk of deterrence failure on those occasions in which the United States could not threaten nuclear escalation, possibly including threats to some adversaries’ highly valued/protected targets. The added risk of deterrence failure flowing from such an inability surely cannot be calculated a priori with precision. It may be nonexistent or high, depending on the specific circumstances of the contingency. Even if the risk of deterrence failure for this reason is low, however, the possibility would still deserve serious consideration because the consequences of a single failure to deter WMD attack could be measured in thousands to millions of US and allied casualties. And, of course, that risk may not be low.

The Value of Nuclear Weapons for Assurance

Nuclear weapons also appear to have unique value for assurance. Particularly pertinent in this regard are the views of those allies who consider themselves dependent on the United States’ nuclear umbrella for extended deterrence. Former senior military officers from the United States, Germany, Britain, France, and the Netherlands, have emphasized the continuing importance of the *nuclear* escalation threat for deterrence: “The first use of nuclear weapons must remain in the quiver of escalation as the ultimate instrument to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction, in order to avoid truly existential dangers.”⁴⁶

Similarly, following the North Korean nuclear test in October 2006, Japanese and South Korean officials emphasized the importance they place on US *nuclear capabilities* for extended deterrence. Former South Korean defense ministers asked that US nuclear weapons removed from South

Korea in 1991 be returned, and public sentiment turned strongly in favor of South Korea having a nuclear weapons capability.⁴⁷ A South Korean delegation to the United States, led by Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung, sought an explicit public declaration that if North Korea employed nuclear weapons against South Korea, the United States would respond in kind as if the United States itself had been attacked.⁴⁸

A 2006 Japanese study headed by former prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone concluded that “in order to prepare for drastic changes in the international situation in the future, a thorough study of the nuclear issue should be conducted.”⁴⁹ Nakasone noted that Japanese security is dependent on US nuclear weapons, but that the future of the US extended deterrent is unclear. Japanese defense minister Fumio Kyuma was explicit regarding the nuclear requirements of extended deterrence. “The strongest deterrence would be when the United States explicitly says, ‘If you drop one nuclear bomb on Japan, the United States will retaliate by dropping 10 on you.’”⁵⁰ There could hardly be a stronger allied statement of the perceived value of US *nuclear* weapons for the continued assurance of allies or a more explicit *rejection* of US ambiguity in its extended deterrence commitments.

A Japanese commentary on the subject by Kyoto University professor Terumasa Nakanishi laments the “Chamberlainization” of the US extended nuclear umbrella for Japan and explicitly links related fears to the potential Japanese need for nuclear weapons:

With America not indicating that it will shore up its nuclear deterrence toward China and North Korea, if Japan is going to try to put an actual lid on the North Korean nuclear problem, private Japanese citizens, as “*sensible and prudent Japanese*,” should widen and deepen discussion from now on [about] the issue of how Japan can connect its independent national strategy and Japan’s own nuclear weapons and nuclear strategy to its foreign policy.⁵¹

The expressed definition here of what is a “sensible and prudent” course for Japan may be far different from the preferred US definition of the same.

The Iranian drive for nuclear weapons similarly appears to be leading some neighboring Arab states to anticipate *their own need for nuclear weapons*: “Just such a reaction is underway already in the Middle East, as over a dozen Muslim nations suddenly declared interest in starting nuclear-power programs. This is not about energy; it is a hedge against Iran. It could lead to a Middle East with not one nuclear-weapons state, Israel, but four or five.”⁵²

That officials and commentators in key allied countries perceive great value in US nuclear weapons for extended deterrence suggests strongly that these weapons *do have unique assurance value*. There is a direct connection between allied perceptions of the assurance value of US nuclear weapons for extended deterrence and nuclear nonproliferation. There may seem to be an incongruity between the US maintenance of its own nuclear arsenal for deterrence and its simultaneous advocacy of nuclear nonproliferation; a prominent member of Congress has likened this seeming incongruity to a drunkard advocating abstinence. However, given the obvious importance of US nuclear weapons for its extended deterrence responsibilities and the critical role which US extended nuclear deterrence plays in nonproliferation, *there is no incongruity*. Sustaining US capabilities for extended nuclear deterrence is critical for nuclear nonproliferation.

Such allied commentary does not demonstrate directly the value of nuclear weapons for *deterrence*—again, it is US *opponents* who ultimately determine the deterrence value of US nuclear weapons. It is, however, significant evidence of the importance of US nuclear weapons for the assurance of allies via extended deterrence. It also is important to recognize that for North Korea's closest neighbors, including Japan and South Korea, the question of the value of US nuclear weapons is not an academic or theoretical debate about preferred utopian futures. It is a most serious concern among these Asian leaders who undoubtedly understand North Korea at least as well as US commentators. They believe that US nuclear weapons are critical to the deterrence of North Korea and thus their own assurance. These are only perceptions; their perceptions, however, may be particularly well-informed, and both deterrence and assurance fundamentally are about perceptions.

The apparent importance of US nuclear weapons for extended deterrence, assurance, and thus nonproliferation may distress US commentators who would prefer US deterrence threats to be largely or exclusively nonnuclear. Just as deterrent effect ultimately is determined by opponents, however, what does or does not assure allies is not decided by the preferences of US commentators, but by the allies themselves. The United States can decide what priority it places on the assurance of allies and how it will proceed to support that goal, but only the allies can decide whether they are assured. In the contemporary environment, available evidence suggests strongly that assurance is an important goal and that US *nuclear weapons* are critical to the assurance of key allies to a level they deem adequate.

The United States could decide to withdraw the nuclear umbrella and provide only a nonnuclear commitment. As discussed above, however, it is likely that the US withdrawal of its *nuclear* extended deterrent coverage would create new and powerful incentives for nuclear proliferation among its friends and allies who, to date, have felt sufficiently secure under the US extended nuclear deterrent to remain nonnuclear.⁵³ This linkage is not speculative; it is voiced by allies who feel increasingly at risk. Extreme care should be exercised before moving in a direction that carries the risk of unleashing a nuclear proliferation “cascade”—such as moving prematurely in the direction of a wholly nonnuclear force structure. As a 2007 report by the Department of State’s International Security Advisory Board concludes,

There is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that US assurances to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have foresworn nuclear weapons. This umbrella is too important to sacrifice on the basis of an unproven ideal that nuclear disarmament in the US would lead to a more secure world . . . a lessening of the US nuclear umbrella could very well trigger a cascade [of nuclear proliferation] in East Asia and the Middle East.⁵⁴

The Credibility of US Nuclear Threats: Implications for the Arsenal

If we hope to apply the logic of punitive deterrence to an opponent in an acute contingency, then that opponent must attribute *some* credibility to our threats. Whether the intensity of that belief corresponds to Kahn’s favored threat that leaves *little* to chance, or to Schelling’s threat that leaves *something* to chance, the opponent must anticipate that there is *some probability* that the US threat would be executed.

In the past, militarists and dictators have seen in America’s Western and democratic scruples license to provoke the United States. These leaders have included Adolf Hitler, Hideki Tojo, Mao Zedong, Saddam Hussein, and Slobodan Milosevic.⁵⁵ Adolf Hitler frequently boasted that he was not limited by “bourgeois scruples” in the manner of liberal democracies and that this would help ensure his success. Or, as Slobodan Milosevic proudly declared, “I am ready to walk on corpses, and the West is not. That is why I shall win.”⁵⁶ Obviously, both Hitler and Milosevic misjudged their situations. However, their expectations that Western democratic norms would

provide the basis for their victory likely contributed to their willingness to provoke.

This point has implications for the US nuclear arsenal's value for deterrence. In some instances, low-yield, accurate nuclear weapons may contribute to a US deterrent threat that is *more believable* than otherwise would be the case. The US "legacy" nuclear arsenal's generally high yields and limited precision could threaten to inflict so many innocent casualties that some opponents eager to find a rationale for action may seize on the possibility that a US president would not execute an expressed nuclear deterrent threat. Uncertainty regarding the US threat in such cases could work against the desired deterrent effect.

America's aversion to causing "collateral damage" is well known. Some opponents clearly see proper US concerns about civilian casualties, "nation-building," and winning "hearts and minds" as US vulnerabilities to be exploited. They may disdain as particularly incredible deterrence threats based on the generally high nuclear yields of the US Cold War arsenal, given the civilian destruction which high yields could cause. The US desire to minimize unintended destruction, inspire postconflict support from an opponent's liberated populace, and pursue postconflict reconstruction may be priorities in the contemporary period that reduce the apparent credibility of Cold War-style assured destruction nuclear threats.⁵⁷ In these cases, US nonnuclear and very discriminate nuclear capabilities may be important for US deterrence credibility. During the Cold War—when US survival was at stake and the context involved thousands of nuclear weapons on each side—these types of considerations were likely to have been less pertinent to considerations of credibility. Now, however, they point toward the potential value of advanced nonnuclear and highly discriminate nuclear threat options for deterrence credibility. Some studies done late in the Cold War, and looking 20 years into the future, pointed to the same conclusion.⁵⁸

Consequently, reducing nuclear yields and improving the accuracy of US nuclear forces may be important for contingencies in which nuclear deterrence is critical but new, post-Cold War priorities are in play. Again, this suggestion is not, as some commentators charge, a rejection of deterrence in favor of "destabilizing," "war-fighting" nuclear weapons. Such a characterization is to apply loaded Cold War deterrence labels to a context in which they lack *meaning*. The potential value of low-yield, accurate nuclear weapons is fully consistent with their possible deterrent effect.

US strategic policies guided by balance-of-terror and assured-destruction metrics subverted long-standing moral strictures against threatening civilians in favor of the goal of deterrence “stability.” In the contemporary era, however, when the stakes at risk for the United States in a regional crisis do not include national survival, and when postconflict reconstruction and minimization of damage to the opponent and its neighbors may be priority goals, the credibility of the US deterrent may rest *not on how much damage can be threatened* à la assured destruction, but rather on *how controlled is that threatened damage*. Traditional moral considerations and the efficacy of deterrence may now merge.

In short, as the apparent success of nuclear deterrence during the 1991 Gulf War illustrated, perceptions are key to deterrence. Nuclear threats may be important, but high nuclear yields and limited precision *may not* appear to constitute credible threats to opponents who understand US concerns about inflicting “collateral damage” and expect that US “self-deterrence” would provide them greater freedom of action. We should not want the relatively high yields and modest accuracies of the US Cold War legacy nuclear arsenal to give an opportunity for contemporary opponents to view US deterrence threats with disdain.

It does not require much foresight or imagination to conclude that—*to the extent that the logic of deterrence applies*—under plausible circumstances US threats may more readily serve deterrence purposes when US forces can hold enemy sanctuaries at risk with minimal unintended damage. Leaving uncontested an opponent’s potential belief that the United States would be incapable of threatening its sanctuaries, or would be “self-deterred” by enlightened scruples from executing its deterrence threats, may contribute to that opponent’s felt freedom to provoke the United States. This is not a far-fetched concern. Contemporary rogue states appear eager to exploit both mechanisms in the hope of escaping US deterrence constraints. In this context, capabilities dubbed “destabilizing” by traditional balance-of-terror categorization—such as precision accuracy and counterforce potential—may be important for deterrence. The old notion that a coherent distinction can be drawn between “stabilizing” forces intended to serve deterrence purposes and “destabilizing” forces for “war fighting” fits the old formula but does not fit these contemporary circumstances.

Finally, some commentators have opposed US development of nuclear weapons intended to limit collateral damage because they claim that US forces designed to do so would be considered by a president to be more

“useable,” thus “lowering the threshold” to US nuclear employment: “The implication is that, if their resulting collateral damage can be substantially reduced by lowering the explosive power of the warhead, nuclear weapons would be more politically palatable and therefore more ‘useable’ for attacking deeply buried targets in tactical missions—even in or near urban settings, which can be the preferred locales for such targets.”⁵⁹

This critique posits that the United States should forego a capability that may be valuable for deterrence for fear that a president might employ it cavalierly. Such a trade-off is at least questionable, particularly given the absence of any history of such cavalier presidential behavior. In addition, because an opponent might consider a US nuclear deterrent threat to be *credible* does not also mean that it is regarded by presidents as easily employable—as was demonstrated during the 1991 Gulf War. A president’s decision calculus about the actual employment of nuclear weapons is likely to be affected by many factors, particularly including the severity and circumstances of the provocation, other priority US goals, allied considerations, immediate foreign and domestic political circumstances, and personal moral perspectives. The manifest characteristics of US weapons may be more salient to an opponent’s *view* of US credibility than it is to a president’s view of their usability. A president’s perceptions of *useable* and opponents’ views of *credible* need not be conflated.

Can there be confident promises that more “discriminate” US nuclear capabilities would strengthen US deterrence efforts or make the difference between deterrence working or failing on any given occasion? *No; of course not.* In the absence of a specific examination of opponent and context, we are dealing again in speculative generalizations about how deterrence may operate. The particular types of nuclear capabilities necessary to threaten opponents’ deeply buried bunkers and other targets, while minimizing the potential for collateral damage, could provide the needed lethality and credibility for deterrence on occasion. However, an opponent also could miss such fine points regarding US nuclear capabilities, or be so motivated that the specific character of the US nuclear threat is irrelevant to its decision making. What can be said is that—unless a close examination of opponents suggests otherwise—these types of specialized nuclear capabilities *cannot reasonably be touted as ensuring deterrence credibility or dismissed a priori* as destabilizing and intended for war-fighting vice deterrence purposes. In the contemporary environment they may be intended for and well-suited to the political goals of deterrence and assurance.

The Nuclear Disarmament Vision

Throughout the Cold War and post-Cold War years, various groups and individuals have put forth initiatives for the long-term elimination of nuclear weapons or their near-term reduction to small numbers. With the end of the Cold War, many thoughtful people understandably question why the United States should continue to maintain nuclear weapons, particularly if most plausible adversaries can be defeated militarily with conventional forces alone. The point here is that, on some occasions, deterrence and assurance will be the priority goals. Numerous countries—including contemporary opponents and allies—give every indication that they perceive unique value in nuclear weapons for those purposes, whether or not US domestic commentators believe it or want it to be true. Those perceptions alone create the potential value of nuclear weapons for deterring opponents and assuring allies.

A common problem with recent and past nuclear disarmament initiatives is that they emphasize the risks of maintaining US nuclear capabilities, but are silent or wholly superficial in discussing the risks of their elimination. The postulated benefit from US moves toward giving up nuclear capabilities typically is presented in terms of the contribution such a move supposedly would make to the goal of nuclear nonproliferation.⁶⁰ US steps toward global nuclear disarmament supposedly will begin the action-reaction process of eliminating those nuclear threats that justify retaining US nuclear weapons for deterrence: no such threat, no such need. As I have argued elsewhere, the traditional balance-of-terror's simplistic action-reaction process is utterly inadequate for contemporary strategic conditions. Whatever the merit of that metaphor for this application, however, the question of nuclear disarmament must include a net assessment—a review of the value of nuclear weapons and the related downside of losing that value.

The burden of proof is on those who now assert that adversaries would be deterred reliably by US nonnuclear capabilities; that allies similarly would be assured reliably by the same; that opponents dutifully would follow the US example; and, that the United States could be confident they had done so. *Considerable evidence points to the contrary in each case.* In 2006, British prime minister Tony Blair made this point against those questioning his decision to modernize Britain's nuclear capabilities:

Those who question this decision need to explain why [nuclear] disarmament by the UK would help our security. They would need to prove that such a gesture would change the minds of hardliners and extremists in countries which are developing

these nuclear capabilities. They would need to show that terrorists would be less likely to conspire against us with hostile governments because we had given up our nuclear weapons. They would need to argue that the UK would be safer by giving up the deterrent and that our capacity to act would not be constrained by nuclear blackmail by others.⁶¹

Blair's critics and their US counterparts who now advocate that the United States embrace the "vision" of nuclear disarmament *have not begun* to offer a plausible net assessment in response to this challenge. Instead, they appear satisfied to assert the old action-reaction/inaction-inaction balance-of-terror adage, along with the equally dubious claim—also derived from the old formula—that deterrence now can be orchestrated to work reliably with nonnuclear forces alone. Both assertions can be described as reflecting hope over considerable evidence.

There are conditions that should be considered critical milestones for any significant US steps toward nuclear disarmament. The realization of some of those conditions would represent a more dramatic restructuring of international relations than has occurred since the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. This should not preclude creative thinking about prudent steps toward greatly reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, but it certainly should make us wary of embracing the vision of nuclear disarmament as a practicable goal in the absence of such dramatic change.

For example, one of the reasons nuclear deterrence has been valuable is that it appears to have disciplined the behavior of some states that otherwise could not be trusted to behave peaceably. Not all states are trustworthy, and it is those untrustworthy states with hostile designs that often pose security challenges; they are called "rogues" for a reason. In the past, such untrustworthy governments included Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union; now they include the governments of Iran, North Korea, and Syria. These particular rogue leaderships may come and go, but in the future, there will be comparably untrustworthy leaderships with hostile intent. This is pertinent because there is *no indication* that, in a world of sovereign states, adequate international verification and enforcement measures will be available to backstop nuclear disarmament, much less the elimination of CBW. Most experience points to the contrary.

The Clinton administration's thoughtful undersecretary of defense for policy, Walter Slocombe, observed rightly in this regard that if "somehow" all of the pertinent powers of the world were to accept the vision of nuclear disarmament, its realization would demand "a verification regime of extraordinary rigor and intrusiveness. This would have to go far be-

yond any currently in existence or even under contemplation.”⁶² Secretary Slocombe noted that the challenge to establishing the necessary verification regime should be obvious—it would have to include “certain and timely” procedures for “forcible” international action to ensure compliance.⁶³ In the absence of a trustworthy authority with much of the power and prerogative of a world government, such a verification and enforcement regime cannot exist. The enduring lack of reliable verification and enforcement—combined with the likelihood that some states will be untrustworthy, armed, and aggressive—explains why disarmament visions must remain visions in a world of sovereign states.

There are real risks associated with the possession of nuclear weapons. Great risk also may be expected if the United States and its allies were to give up nuclear weapons in the mistaken belief that untrustworthy, hostile states no longer could pose WMD threats. The same hostility and lack of trust inherent in international relations which creates the need for nuclear deterrence prevents the realization of visionary solutions to end that need.⁶⁴

Other than the occasional, unpromising call for world government,⁶⁵ the proponents of nuclear disarmament *have not begun* to suggest how this sturdy barrier to the realization of their vision and like visions in past centuries may be breached while maintaining US security and the security of allies. We all would like to hear and to believe, but no plausible answer is offered.

In his final speech to the US Congress, Winston Churchill warned, “Be careful above all things not to let go of the atomic weapon until you are sure and more than sure that other means of preserving peace are in your hands!”⁶⁶ There is no known basis for concluding that those “other means” are at hand or that threats to peace will disappear. Until then, embracing nuclear disarmament seriously as the priority US goal *should be recognized as entailing the serious risk of further vilifying those US forces that may be important to deter future war, assure allies, and help contain nuclear proliferation.*

Balance-of-Terror Tenets versus Plausible Deep Nuclear Force Reductions

Not all visions offer a wise path forward. Karl Marx’s slogan “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs” was a beautiful

vision borrowed from Scripture. Attempts to realize that vision in the Soviet Union instead produced misery for millions and probably set back Russian economic development by half a century.

The vision of zero nuclear weapons appears beautiful.⁶⁷ Yet, were the United States to pursue that vision as its priority goal, it could degrade the deterrence of war and the assurance of allies. In contrast, these same risks do not *necessarily* apply to deep reductions in the US strategic nuclear arsenal. Deep nuclear reductions could be consistent with continued support for US strategic goals in a dynamic strategic environment—which is why they could be undertaken prudently in select circumstances.⁶⁸

The continuing undisciplined application of the balance-of-terror tenets to contemporary questions of strategic forces and policy, however, will likely *preclude the opportunity for prudent deep nuclear force reductions*. As applied, those tenets *work against* the US policies and capabilities that could otherwise help to mitigate the risks associated with deep nuclear reductions and thus help to make them acceptable to US leaders responsible for “the common defense.”

The character and size of the US nuclear arsenal should be paced by numerous factors, including:

- the contemporary, highly dynamic strategic threat environment;
- the relationship of the nuclear arsenal to other national goals (e.g., nonproliferation);
- the goals the nuclear arsenal is intended to serve and their priorities, including assurance and deterrence;
- the potential contributions to those goals by other nonnuclear and nonmilitary means; and,
- budget and technical realities.

The United States cannot control all of these factors with any predictability, but it can influence some. When the alignment of these conditions presents the opportunity for prudent deep nuclear reductions, that opportunity should be pursued smartly. The Bush administration’s 2002 Treaty of Moscow, for example, contained a two-thirds reduction in the permitted number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons—from the 6,000 weapons permitted by the 1991 START I treaty to a range of 1,700 to 2,200 weapons. At the time of the Moscow Treaty, Bush administration officials publicly identified *the new and more cooperative relationship with*

the Russian Federation as enabling such dramatic reductions.⁶⁹ The then-emerging improvement in political relations with Russia on a broad scale permitted deep reductions in the US strategic nuclear arsenal. This potential for deep reductions was *not the result of negotiations for that purpose* but a basic shift in political relations. US officials at the time also stated explicitly that *deeper reductions were possible in the future as conditions permitted*.⁷⁰

What might contribute to the opportunity for further prudent reductions? In 2002, Bush administration officials included the development of US advanced nonnuclear forces and defensive capabilities as possibly doing so.⁷¹

Developments in US nonnuclear offensive weapons and damage-limitation capabilities could plausibly contribute to prudent reductions by helping to mitigate the possible risks of deep reductions and by providing nonnuclear offensive and defensive capabilities to perform some duties reserved to nuclear weapons in the past.⁷² Significant damage-limitation capabilities, for example, could help to reduce a risk particularly associated with very low nuclear force numbers: they could help to make US security *less vulnerable* to dangerous technical and geopolitical surprises, including deception by countries that had ostensibly agreed to deep reductions and thereby contributed to the freedom felt by the United States to do so.

In addition, the responsiveness of the US nuclear and strategic forces production infrastructure in principle could help mitigate another of the primary risks involved in deep reductions—if the conditions permitting deep reductions shift and reestablish the requirement for an increase in the US arsenal's quantity or quality. The risk of being caught short in a dynamic environment may be eased by retaining a stockpiled reserve of nuclear weapons, *or via the US capability to respond and adapt with new nuclear weapons in a timely way without relying on an inventory of stockpiled weapons*. This latter possibility follows simply from the principle that the United States may not need to have on hand or stockpiled a redundant reserve of nuclear forces *if* they can be produced reliably in a timely fashion: the more reliably, rapidly, and credibly the United States can reconstitute forces in a shifting threat environment, the lower the need to rely on existing inventories of stockpiled or deployed weapons. Consequently, the freedom to reduce nuclear weapons deeply ironically may benefit from the US capability to restore nuclear forces as flexibly and rapidly as may be required by changes in the factors that pace US requirements.

In short, the pacing factor most under US control—that is, the character of US strategic capabilities and nuclear production infrastructure—may help contribute to the realization of deep nuclear force reductions. This could be accomplished by reducing the demand for deployed or stockpiled nuclear weapons and by mitigating the risks that otherwise could be associated with deep reductions—particularly including risks of surprising behavior by opponents and the need to adjust rapidly to changes in the threat environment.

The continuing, mechanical application of balance-of-terror idioms and tenets to contemporary questions of US deterrence strategy and strategic policies will *undercut US policies and capabilities that could facilitate the opportunity for further prudent deep nuclear reductions*. Why? First, the balance-of-terror formula focuses obsessively on calculating the number and type of deployed nuclear weapons considered adequate for “stable” deterrence. Long-term linear planning around that number—and setting successively lower arms-control limitations—work against the flexibility to shift and adapt strategy and capabilities as necessary per the threat conditions that pace actual need. If history were fixed or proceeding reliably in a straight line toward greater amity and peace, the lack of flexibility embedded in the balance-of-terror formula might be acceptable. There is little evidence, however, of such a happy trajectory.

Second, the contemporary action-reaction proposition that a manifest US capability for “new” nuclear weapons production should be rejected because it will drive nuclear proliferation argues against having the type of viable nuclear production infrastructure that could help the United States adjust as necessary to changes in the threat environment *without relying on inventories of deployed or stockpiled weapons*. Similarly, the traditional “instability” arguments now leveled against nonnuclear strategic forces may reduce the potential for the development and deployment of nonnuclear strategic weapons that could permit less reliance on nuclear weapons.

Third, the traditional balance-of-terror presumption against supposedly “destabilizing” damage-limitation capabilities could keep US vulnerability to the risk of surprise too high for the prudent implementation of much deeper reductions, even if the environment is so conducive. And, at very low numbers the presumption against discriminate, counterforce offensive forces could preclude strategic capabilities important for effective deterrence in plausible circumstances.

In summary, the balance-of-terror formula and tenets tend to be inconsistent with the flexibility and adaptability of US policy and forces that could contribute to prudent, deep nuclear reductions given a permissive threat environment. Sharp opposition to past US policy initiatives for greater flexibility typically followed the balance-of-terror narrative, including the critiques of the 1974 “Schlesinger Doctrine” (NSDM-242) and Secretary Brown’s 1980 “countervailing strategy” (PD-59). And, as is discussed below, the Bush administration’s 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) endorsed deep nuclear reductions, the possibility for further, deeper nuclear reductions, and *each of the capabilities described briefly above that could facilitate further prudent reductions*. Yet these NPR initiatives ran afoul of the continuing power of the same balance-of-terror narrative and have largely been stymied as a result.

The 2001 Nuclear Posture Review: A Self-Conscious Step toward Prudent Deep Reductions

The Bush administration’s 2001 NPR was mandated by Congress to examine the roles and value of US strategic forces in the post–Cold War strategic environment, particularly including nuclear weapons.⁷³ It identified several avenues to strengthen deterrence, including the need to understand opponents better so that the United States can “tailor its deterrence strategies to the greatest effect.”⁷⁴ The NPR correspondingly emphasized the need for a wide spectrum of capabilities—conventional and nuclear, offensive and defensive—to support the tailoring of US deterrence strategies against a diverse set of potential contingencies and opponents.⁷⁵

Senior US officials emphasized that the NPR firmly embraced deterrence as a continuing fundamental US goal,⁷⁶ and that it focused on deterring post–Cold War threats including, in particular, those posed by WMD proliferation.⁷⁷ Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld’s unclassified “Foreword” to the *NPR Report* specified that its policy direction was designed to “improve our ability to deter attack” while reducing “our dependence on nuclear weapons” for deterrence and placing greater weight on *non-nuclear* strategic capabilities.⁷⁸ Correspondingly, it emphasized the need for flexibility in US strategic force sizing as necessary to meet the needs of a variety of possible future threat conditions, and delinked the sizing of US nuclear force levels from those of Russia, which *was not considered an immediate threat*.⁷⁹ It concluded that the immediate deterrence role for

US nuclear weapons could be met with far fewer deployed nuclear forces and that US nuclear requirements could recede further as advanced non-nuclear weapons and defenses matured.⁸⁰

In addition, Secretary Rumsfeld specified that a potential problem with the extant nuclear arsenal was its combination of relatively modest accuracy and large warhead yields.⁸¹ The NPR pointed to the potential for low-yield, precision nuclear threat options and the ability to hold hard and deeply buried targets at risk to improve US deterrence capability and credibility.⁸² Correspondingly, the NPR called for the US capability to “modify, upgrade or replace portions of the extant nuclear force or develop concepts for follow-on nuclear weapons systems better suited to the nation’s needs.”⁸³

Finally, as mentioned above, the NPR concluded that the new relationship with Russia permitted the United States to reduce by approximately two-thirds its deployed strategic nuclear warheads from the START I ceiling of 6,000,⁸⁴ and that the requirements for nuclear weapons might be reduced further still as US nonnuclear and defensive capabilities advanced.⁸⁵ Senior Department of Defense officials specified that the NPR’s sizing of strategic nuclear warheads at 1,700–2,200 did *not* include Russia as an immediate threat.⁸⁶ As Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith said in open testimony, “We can reduce the number of operationally deployed warheads to this level because . . . we excluded from our calculation of nuclear requirements for immediate contingencies the previous, long-standing requirements centered on the Soviet Union and, more recently, Russia. This is a dramatic departure from the Cold War approach to nuclear force sizing.”⁸⁷ Force sizing instead was calculated to support the *immediate* requirements for deterrence and to contribute to the additional goals of assuring allies, dissuading opponents, and providing a hedge against the possible emergence of more severe, future military threats or severe technical problems in the nuclear arsenal.⁸⁸

The NPR intentionally moved beyond the balance-of-terror formula that reduces US strategic nuclear force sizing to the familiar deterrence calculation of US warheads and opponents’ targets. This was not unprecedented. Former secretary of defense Schlesinger discussed his 1974 “essential equivalence” metric for strategic forces as intended to contribute to allied and enemy *perceptions* of overall US strength.

The NPR also walked away from the balance-of-terror tenet that societal protection is useless, unnecessary, and “destabilizing.” Instead, Secretary

Rumsfeld tied ballistic missile defense (BMD) deployment directly to denial deterrence and improved crisis-management options, in addition to providing possible relief against the failure of deterrence: “. . . active and passive defenses will not be perfect. However, by denying or reducing the effectiveness of limited attacks, defenses can discourage attacks, provide new capabilities for managing crises, and provide insurance against the failure of traditional deterrence.”⁸⁹ The subsequent formal announcement in December 2002 by Pres. George W. Bush that the United States would deploy strategic BMD against limited offensive missile threats was perhaps the most visible break from long-standing balance-of-terror policy guidelines.

Finally, the NPR endorsed a “responsive” industrial infrastructure to help provide the basis for flexible and timely adjustment of US strategic capabilities to technological and geopolitical developments. Again, a goal was to ease the requirement for deployed or stockpiled nuclear weapons; as increased reliance could be placed on a responsive industrial infrastructure to allow necessary adjustment to shifting technical or political conditions, there could be less reliance on deployed and nondeployed reserve warheads.⁹⁰

In summary, the NPR established force sizing metrics that took into account US national goals in addition to deterrence. It recognized the potential for deep force-level reductions, given the new relationship with Russia, and sought to mitigate the risks of those reductions (and possible future, deeper reductions) by establishing a flexible, adaptable approach to force deployments, promoting strategic nonnuclear forces and defenses, and establishing a responsive industrial infrastructure that could reduce reliance on the maintenance of deployed and stockpiled nuclear weapons.

Another Balance-of-Terror/Assured-Destruction Counterreformation: Two Steps Back

Key commentators and members of Congress from both parties were unsympathetic to the NPR and its recommendations, some decidedly so. Responses to the NPR reflected both misunderstanding of its content and the long-familiar points of opposition to *any* strategic policy initiative departing from balance-of-terror and assured-destruction orthodoxy, whether from Democratic or Republican administrations.

Opposition to the NPR mirrored the sharp criticism of both NSDM-242 and PD-59. In each case, criticism followed from the familiar balance-of-terror/assured-destruction formula: support for multiple US nuclear threat

options and the endorsement of modest counterforce strategic capabilities supposedly was the work of nuclear “war-fighting” hawks who rejected deterrence.

Commentators who continued to calculate US strategic force requirements via the Cold War’s arithmetic formula dismissed the official claim that Russia was *not included* in the NPR’s 1,700–2,200 range of strategic warheads. They simply could not fathom how the standard deterrence formula of counting US warheads and opponents’ targets could result in the range of 1,700–2,200 warheads *unless* Russia continued to be included as the immediate threat to be deterred.⁹¹ As noted above, however, that balance-of-terror formula was not the NPR’s measure; the old metrics simply could not take into account the requirements stemming from the multiple national goals of assurance, deterrence, and dissuasion that were included in the NPR.⁹²

In addition, pointing to uncertainty in the functioning of deterrence and recommending damage-limitation measures as a hedge against that uncertainty challenged the core balance-of-terror tenets. When the NPR recommended a defensive hedge and a spectrum of offensive capabilities—nuclear and nonnuclear—to strengthen deterrence, the old labels of “war-fighting” and “destabilizing” could not be far behind.

Commentators’ applications of the familiar Cold War formulas and metrics to the NPR’s initiatives led inevitably to the erroneous conclusion that the NPR’s recommendations reflected a rejection of deterrence in favor of a “destabilizing,” “war-fighting” strategy.⁹³ One commentator’s assessment was typical in this regard: “Throughout the nuclear age, the fundamental goal has been to prevent the use of nuclear weapons. Now the policy has been turned upside down. It is to keep nuclear weapons as a tool of war-fighting rather than a tool of deterrence.”⁹⁴ Precisely the same charge was leveled at NSDM-242 and PD-59, despite the fact that neither they nor the NPR fit such a description.⁹⁵

The NPR’s embrace of strategic BMD also predictably brought charges of instability and the action-reaction “law” back into play: “Not only did this action destroy the arms reduction process . . . it made inevitable the next round of arms escalation. Missile defense began as Ronald Reagan’s fantasy The resuscitation of the fantasy of missile defense, and with it the raising from the dead of the arms race, may result in catastrophes in comparison to which [the war in] Iraq is benign.”⁹⁶

This narrative on the NPR—derived wholly from the Cold War’s balance-of-terror standards and terms of art—reverberated first within the United States and then abroad. With that, critics could cite each other as authoritative validation of their interpretation and critiques of the NPR.

A similar application of Cold War norms to the NPR was seen in most congressional commentary and opposition. Consequently, much of the NPR’s recommended strategic force program has *not* been pursued. Former senior Pentagon official Tom Scheber has observed in this regard, “*Little progress* has been made on plans to develop and field prompt, conventional global strike [capabilities] and to modernize the nuclear force. In addition, initiatives to modernize the nuclear warhead research and production infrastructure and restore functionality have not progressed substantially.”⁹⁷

This opposition was made more enduring and salient than might otherwise have been the case by the Bush administration’s relatively modest efforts to present and explain the NPR publicly. In comparison to previous major initiatives in strategic policy—including NSDM-242 and PD-59—there was considerably less apparent public effort by the White House and the Department of Defense to make the case that the new realities of the twenty-first century demanded the approaches to deterrence and strategic forces presented in the NPR.

A critique based on the Cold War’s balance-of-terror orthodoxy was inevitable, even had there been a vigorous effort on the part of officials to present and explain the NPR. That critique has greeted every attempted policy departure from orthodoxy since the 1960s; it constitutes the baseline of accepted wisdom about deterrence and strategic forces for many in the United States. The combination of decades-long familiarity with the idioms and standards of the “stable” balance-of-terror/assured-destruction model, and a limited public effort by the administration to explain the NPR, virtually ensured that the familiar critique based on past terms and definitions would become the accepted public narrative on the NPR. That narrative, in turn, became the basis for congressional opposition.

In addition, and unsurprisingly, there were extreme-sounding commentaries on the NPR that appeared to be driven by partisan politics. For example, Dr. Helen Caldicott, a cofounder of Physicians for Social Responsibility, provided the following crude, politically partisan commentary during the lead-up to the 2004 presidential elections: “My prognosis is, if nothing changes and Bush is reelected, within ten or twenty years, there will be no life on the planet, or little.”⁹⁸ Similarly, a *Los Angeles Times*

commentary told of “a hawkish Republican dream of a “‘winnable nuclear war’” that threatened a “nuclear road of no return,” and that “could put the world on a suicidal course.”⁹⁹ Another asserted, “With Strangelovian genius” the NPR “puts forth chilling new contingencies for nuclear war.”¹⁰⁰ Such descriptions were pure hyperbole, of course, but—presented with the appearance of insight—they were frightening hyperbole.

Leaving such extreme commentary aside, most of the reasoned critique of the NPR was based on standard balance-of-terror/assured-destruction formulas and definitions. This was again apparent during the congressional debate over RNEP. Congressional critics objected to it as being the “action” that would inspire the “reaction” of nuclear proliferation and to RNEP’s putative “war-fighting” capability, claiming it to be “destabilizing” and contrary to deterrence.

When Cold War measures of merit are applied in such a fashion to a decidedly post-Cold War strategic policy initiative, that initiative can only be deemed unacceptable; the NPR’s recommendations were sure to be described as a rejection of deterrence, by definition, because the NPR did not follow the familiar balance-of-terror formula and related strategic force standards and goals. The critique was understandable on its own terms but correspondingly missed the greater reality. The NPR’s departure from balance-of-terror orthodoxy did not reflect a rejection of deterrence; it was, instead, an intentional step away from the definition of deterrence and measures of US strategic force adequacy created during and for increasingly distant Cold War conditions.¹⁰¹ It sought to identify the minimal level of nuclear capability consistent with multiple US strategic goals in a new and dynamic strategic environment. And, in doing so, it recommended a two-thirds reduction in forces and a series of measures to mitigate the risk of such deep nuclear reductions—leaving open the possibility of further nuclear cuts.

The irony here is that the typical critiques of the NPR charged that it was a throwback to Cold War thinking when, in fact, those very critiques sprang from the vintage balance-of-terror narrative. Commentators responded yet again on the basis of past strategic measures and, unsurprisingly, found the NPR in violation of the definitions, terms, and metrics of that old, favored, Cold War deterrence formula—as if that formula continues to be coherent in conditions so different from those which gave it intellectual life.

The NPR was neither beyond critique nor the final word in “new thinking” about strategic forces and policy. Useful commentary, however, now can only be based on recognition that our thinking about deterrence, defense, and strategic forces must adapt to the new realities of the twenty-first century. The NPR’s drive to help create conditions suitable for prudent nuclear reductions instead was challenged by traditional Cold War standards and idioms that now have little meaning or value.

Still Holding the Horses

There is an anecdote, perhaps true, that early in World War II the British, in need of field pieces for coastal defense, hitched to trucks a light artillery piece with a lineage dating back to the Boer War of 1899–1902.¹⁰² When an attempt was made to identify how gun crews could increase its rate of fire for improved defense, those studying the existing procedure for loading, aiming, and firing noticed that two members of the crew stood motionless and at attention throughout part of the procedure. An old artillery colonel was called in to explain why two members of a five-member crew stood motionless during the process, seemingly doing nothing useful. “‘Ah,’ he said. ‘I have it. They are holding the horses.’”¹⁰³ There were, of course, no longer any horses to hold, but the crew went through the motions of holding them nonetheless. The author of this anecdote concludes that the story “suggests nicely the pain with which the human being accommodates himself to changing conditions. The tendency is apparently involuntary and immediate to protect oneself against the shock of change by continuing in the presence of altered situations the familiar habits, however incongruous, of the past.”¹⁰⁴

The continued application of the balance-of-terror tenets as guidelines for US strategic policy is akin to holding on to nonexistent horses. The expectation of well-informed, “rational” (i.e., prudent/cautious) opponents, and the related expectation that the absence of “suicidal” decision making must lead inevitably to the predictable, mechanical functioning of deterrence, are weak reeds upon which to base US policy, as they were during the Cold War. Former defense secretary Robert McNamara has stated that deterrence did not fail catastrophically at the time because “we lucked out.”

Today, it is even more dangerous to expect the functioning of deterrence to be predictable, easily understood, achieved, and manipulated. Holding on to such unwarranted expectations virtually ensures that the next failure

or irrelevance of deterrence will come as a surprise and that the United States simultaneously will dawdle in pursuing critical defensive/preventive measures and avoid the hard work necessary to strengthen deterrence to the extent feasible.

The NPR reflected a transformation in thinking about deterrence and strategic forces brought about by the dramatic change in conditions from those of the Cold War. Its basic recommendations were reasonable, prudent steps to align better our strategic policies and forces to the realities of the new era:

- Broadening the range of US strategic goals that define the adequacy of US strategic forces.
- Expanding US deterrent threat options.
- Emphasizing the deterrent role for nonnuclear options.
- Raising concern about the uncertainty of deterrence and the credibility of the inherited Cold War nuclear arsenal for some contemporary deterrence purposes.
- Seeking an improved understanding of opponents and their intentions, and the flexibility to tailor deterrence to the specific requirements of foe, time, and place.
- Moving beyond the balance of terror as the measure of our deterrence and strategic force requirements.
- Placing a new priority on the US capability to limit damage in the event of deterrence failure or irrelevance.

In due course, the fact that continuing faith in fixed Cold War models, terms, and metrics has stymied the NPR's implementation will be a historical footnote—one with possibly lasting effect. The important question to consider now, however, is not the fate of the 2001 NPR, but rather the fate of future reviews and efforts to better align US strategic policy and requirements with the reality of multiple and diverse opponents, WMD proliferation, and dynamic threat conditions. Many of the basic contours of US strategic policy goals taken into account by the NPR are likely to endure—particularly including the need to deter multiple threats, assure understandably nervous allies, and provide protection against various forms and sizes of attack, including limited nuclear and biological attacks. Future reviews of US strategic policy will confront the same questions of

how US strategies and strategic forces can help support these goals in an unpredictable, dynamic threat environment. The continued application of Cold War strategic orthodoxy to those questions will prevent any plausibly useful set of answers. The balance-of-terror tenets, as applied, serve largely to buttress a political agenda of stasis that actually works *against* the very steps that could facilitate the realignment of the US nuclear arsenal and policy with contemporary realities—including the potential for prudent, deep nuclear force reductions.

It is time to move on from the enticing convenience and ease of the brilliant and innovative theoretical strategic framework of the Cold War. That framework is traceable to hubris, unwarranted expectations, and the need for convenience and comfort, however false. It is based on hopes that are beyond realization and conditions that no longer exist. Outside of the unique Cold War standoff that gave it a semblance of coherence, the balance-of-terror lodestar will be a continuing source of dangerous and confused policy guidance. ❧

Notes

1. The increased importance that US officials attribute to these goals is elaborated in Sharon Behn and Seth Rosen, “US Urged to Focus More on Nation-Building,” *Washington Times*, 28 July 2005, 15.

2. Daryl Kimball, “Of Madmen and Nukes,” *Arms Control Today* 35, no. 9 (November 2005): 3, <http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005>. See also, Wolfgang Panofsky, “Nuclear Insecurity: Correcting Washington’s Dangerous Posture,” *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (September/October 2007): 109–10.

3. Les Aspin, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office [GPO], January 1994), 61.

4. Paul Nitze, “Is It Time to Junk Our Nukes?” *Washington Post*, 16 January 1994, C-1.

5. Kimball, “Of Madmen and Nukes.”

6. See statements by Assistant Secretary of Defense J. D. Crouch in Tom Squitieri, “Bush Pushes for Next Generation of Nukes,” *USA Today*, 7 July 2003, 1.

7. See, for example, David Ruppe, “Republican Lawmaker Slams Bush Nuclear Plans,” *Global Security Newswire*, 4 February 2005, http://www.nti.org/d/newswire/issues/2005_2_4.html. See also, Jonathan Medalia, “Bunker Busters”: *Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator Issues, FY 2005–FY 2007*, updated 21 February 2006 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 9.

8. Congressman David Hobson, quoted in Jim Woolf, “US Drive for Nuclear ‘Bunker Buster’ Bomb Boosted,” *Reuters.com*, 3 February 2005.

9. Pres. George H. W. Bush stated that “one of my big worries as commander-in-chief, which was shared by our military, was the fact that he might use chemical weapons. . . . We lived in fear of it.” President Bush in *A Gulf War Exclusive: President Bush Talking With David Frost*, transcript no. 51, 16 January 1996, 5. Gen H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander in chief of coalition forces, and Gen Walt Boomer, commander of US Marines, also anticipated Iraqi

chemical use. See their statements in *Frontline*, no. 1408, The Gulf War Part II, 10 January 1996 transcript, 3–4. See also, Youssef M. Ibrahim, “Israel Expecting Missiles from Iraq in Case of a War,” *New York Times*, 1 January 1991, 1.

10. See the discussion in Moshe Arens, *Broken Covenant* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 201. See also, Sen. Arlen Specter, “Statistics on Missile Scud Attacks on Israel,” *Congressional Record—Senate*, 5 March 1991, S2689.

11. R. Jeffrey Smith, “U.N. Says Iraqis Prepared Germ Weapons,” *Washington Post*, 26 August 1995, A-1. For a comparison of the lethality of conventional, chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons see, Steve Fetter, “Ballistic Missiles and Weapons of Mass Destruction: What Is the Threat? What Should Be Done?” *International Security* 16, no. 1 (Summer 1992): 27.

12. Presentation by Dr. William Shuler, deputy for counterproliferation, Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy, 13 December 1995, Seventh Annual SO/LIC Symposium, Washington, DC.

13. Akiva Eldar, “‘Saddam Would Have Reason to Worry,’ Says Arens When Asked about Unconventional Weapons,” *Haaretz*, 4 February 1991, 1.

14. As discussed by Shai Feldman of Tel Aviv University’s Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies and Amatzia Baram of Haifa University in their respective papers presented at the conference, “Regional Stability in the Middle East: Arab and Israeli Concepts of Deterrence and Defense,” hosted by the US Institute of Peace, 17–19 June 1991, Washington, DC.

15. See the discussion in Tim Trevan, “Inside Saddam’s Death Lab,” *Sunday Times* (London), 14 February 1999, www.sunday-times.co.uk/news/pages/sti/99/02/4; Tim Trevan, *Saddam’s Secrets: The Hunt for Iraq’s Hidden Weapons* (North Pomfret, VT: Harper Collins, 1999), 45; and Keith B. Payne, *Deterrence in the Second Nuclear Age* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky), 81–87.

16. *Baghdad INA*, 9 January 1991, translated and presented in “INA Reports Minutes of Aziz-Baker Meeting,” FBIS-NES-92-009, 14 January 1992, 27.

17. Reprinted in *US Department of State Dispatch, Persian Gulf*, no. 2, 14 January 1991, 25.

18. *Public Statements of Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense*, vol. 4 (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1990), 2547.

19. Smith, “U.N. Says Iraqis Prepared Germ Weapons,” A-19.

20. Statement by Gen Wafic Al Sammarai, “The Gulf War, Part I,” *Frontline* no. 1407, 9 January 1996 transcript, 12.

21. Statements by General Al Sammarai in *Frontline*, “The Gulf War, Parts I and II,” 9–10 January 1996 (emphasis added). Comprehensive background interviews available at www.wgbh.org. See also, Trevan, “Inside Saddam’s Death Lab,” and Trevan, *Saddam’s Secrets*.

22. Quoted in *General Hussein Kamal UNSCOM/IAEA Briefing*, (UNSCOM/ IAEA Sensitive) 22 August 1995, Amman, Jordan (emphasis added). Transcript available at http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news.iraq/un/unscom-iaea_kamal-brief.htm.

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Stabilization, Peacebuilding, and Sustainability in the Horn of Africa

Stephen F. Burgess, PhD

STABILIZATION, PEACEBUILDING, and sustainability in an unstable and famine-prone region like the Horn of Africa are predicated on a holistic approach that addresses environmental degradation, conflict, and their interrelationship.¹ They posit a set of options intended to bring sustainable development as well as security from conflict and struggles over scarce resources. This approach is especially salient in the Horn of Africa because the region combines high levels of environmental stress (manifested in periodic famine and struggles over diminishing arable farm and grazing lands) and conflict (interstate wars, civil wars, and communal clashes).² The region is also one in which environmental disasters (especially famine) and conflicts have been interrelated.

This article addresses the problems of peacebuilding, sustainability, and stabilization in the Horn of Africa and the interrelationship of environmental degradation, instability, and conflict. It assesses the extent to which degradation causes instability and focuses on the spiraling effect of natural disaster, degradation, and conflict on famine, destabilization, and conflict. It examines efforts, especially in Somali pastoral areas of Kenya and Ethiopia, to mitigate environmental degradation and conflict as well as extremism and terrorism. Thus, a sustainability and stabilization assessment is used to examine environmental degradation, conflict, and their interrelationship and what can be done to overcome degradation and conflict.

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Figure 1. Political map of Horn of Africa region. (Borders of the disputed regions of Darfur, the Ogaden, Somaliland, and Puntland indicated here are approximate and are included for orientation purposes only. Some overlap exists between the claims of Somaliland and Puntland along their shared border. The inclusion of such labeling does not represent or imply recognition by the author or by any agency or department of the US government.)

The Horn of Africa Region

The “core” of the Horn of Africa refers to the area adjacent to where the “Horn” juts into the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean and includes Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti. The core features a cultural clash between “lowland” Islamic pastoralists from Somali, Oromo, and other ethnic groups and “upland” Orthodox Christian farmers from Amharic and Tigrayan ethnic groups. The struggle between uplanders and lowlanders has

been going on for several hundred years and has centered on control over land and wealth.³

The larger Horn refers to countries that have close relations with or are rivals of the core states, especially Sudan and Kenya, and to a lesser extent Uganda. Sudan is especially important because of its rivalry for the past century and a half with Ethiopia. Sudan features a core group of Arab-speaking Muslim farmers from the banks of the Nile and surrounding areas who have managed to control (often with force) vast outlying sections of the country composed mostly of nomadic pastoralists and some farmers. The struggle between Sudan and Ethiopia began with the Mahdi in the late nineteenth century and resumed in the 1950s with the independence of Sudan. Ethiopia tended to back southern Sudanese rebels who were fighting against Sudanese government attempts to “Arabize” and “Islamize” them. Sudan tended to back Eritrean separatists who were fighting for independence and against Ethiopian annexation.

Kenya fits into the Horn because of its relations with Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Kenya was a British settler colony from which the British projected power during the colonial era and attempted to control pastoralist areas in the north of the country (including Somali pastoralists). Kenya has been a peacemaker in the region, especially in Somalia and Sudan. Uganda fits into the Horn because of its relations with Sudan and Kenya and its pastoralist population (in the northeast) who move across borders. In addition, the Blue Nile and White Nile both flow through the region.

The Horn of Africa features pastoralists, drylands, and semiarid topography (80 percent of the more than five million square kilometers). Sixty-two percent of land in the Horn of Africa is occupied by pastoralists, who are 12 percent of the population of the region and who live on semiarid land with a lack of water.⁴

All of the states mentioned came together to create the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) in the mid-1980s to deal with famines, which were afflicting the region.⁵ In the mid-1990s, the IGADD became the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and became a peacemaking body, playing a role in the end of conflicts in southern Sudan and Somalia and authorizing the development of an early warning system to prevent or stop environmental degradation and conflict.⁶

The Horn is greatly influenced by Egypt, which has had long, close relations with the region. Egypt’s primary concern has been guaranteeing the

free flow of the Nile for national survival and ensuring navigation through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. Saudi Arabia has influence over Sudan and Somalia and has exported its version of “Wahhabist” Islam to the Horn. Yemen is just across the strategic strait (the Bab el-Mandeb) from the Horn and takes an interest in its affairs. Yemen has also been a crossing point for al-Qaeda from the Arabian Peninsula to the Horn.

Islamic extremism exists in the Horn of Africa and has flowed down from the Arabian Peninsula. Osama bin Laden was welcomed to Sudan in the early 1990s by Islamist leader Husain al-Turabi and built al-Qaeda there. In 1996 the Sudanese regime asked bin Laden to leave. In 1993 Islamic extremists arose in Somalia in opposition to US, UN, and Western intervention. Today extremism persists among some members of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), and foreign Islamic fighters have been fighting the Ethiopians. However, it is uncertain if al-Qaeda has made serious inroads into Somalia. In Kenya and Tanzania, the discontent of coastal Muslims who have been neglected by regimes dominated by non-Muslims from the interior led some to join al-Qaeda and participate in the 1998 embassy bombings and the 2002 attacks on an Israeli hotel and airliner in Mombasa.⁷ At issue is the degree of al-Qaeda presence today, especially in Somalia and coastal Kenya and Tanzania. In previously religion-tolerant Ethiopia, reports have asserted that both Islamic extremism (especially Wahhabism) and Orthodox Christian fundamentalism are growing.⁸

Stabilization Challenges and State Failure in the Horn of Africa

State failure in the Horn of Africa has provided considerable material for research and literature.⁹ Somalia is the most obvious case.¹⁰ State disintegration in Uganda under Idi Amin in the 1970s and Milton Obote in the early 1980s is also well known.¹¹ In Sudan, the central government has tried to “conquer, Arabize, and Islamize” the South for most of half a century, as well as ethnically cleanse Darfur and subdue other outlying regions, instead of seeking to build legitimacy—this has constituted state failure in those regions.¹² Less obvious cases of “partial failure” include Ethiopia in the Somali Ogaden, Kenya in the Somali Northeast, and Uganda in the Acholi North (facing the Lord’s Resistance Army).¹³

At the macro level, the Horn of Africa is a difficult region in which to build and sustain states. There are widely differing topographies (mountains,



Figure 2. Topographical map of Horn of Africa region

savanna, and desert) and modes of production (commercial and smallholder agriculture and pastoralism). Before the European colonial powers arrived, there were only two significant states extant—Amharic-Shoan Ethiopia and Mahdist Sudan.¹⁴ Boundaries drawn and colonies created in the late nineteenth century have remained sources of contention. The colonial legacy is one in which relatively strong states (e.g., Ethiopia, Sudan, and British settler Kenya) were surrounded by nonstate groupings (mainly pastoralists). Indirect colonial rule in Uganda and Sudan meant little integration of ethnic groups, especially pastoralists. The division of Somalis into five colonial territories helped to accentuate clan fissures.¹⁵

In the Horn of Africa, pastoralists resisted state intervention and controls such as boundaries, fencing, and pest eradication programs and did not need states as much as farmers did.¹⁶ In general, there was little environmental control or agricultural extension and livestock control in the region. Thus, there was little positive institutional interaction between pastoralists and states. Therefore, the tasks of post-independence state building and regional integration were difficult in the vast lowland expanses of the Horn.¹⁷

In the 1950s and 1960s, Ethiopia annexed Eritrea—which led to war—and came into rivalry with newly independent Sudan and Somalia, which set the stage for a range of destabilization activities. Ethiopia supported rebels in the southern Sudan, while Sudan supported the Eritrean liberation movements. Somalia laid claim to the Ogaden in Ethiopia, which led to an invasion and war in 1977–78. Somalia's defeat and subsequent Ethiopian subversion contributed to state decline, failure, and collapse. These rivalries paved the way for state failure, especially for Somalia and Sudan, regime change in Ethiopia, and the independence of Eritrea. After Eritrea became independent in 1993, it quickly came into conflict with its erstwhile ally, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) regime in Ethiopia.

At the intermediate level, all states in the region have suffered problems with institutional viability and state weakness. Patronage networks developed and then shriveled in Somalia and Sudan in the 1960s and 1980s, leading to state failure. In Kenya under Pres. Daniel Arap Moi (1978–2002), patronage networks shrunk and ethnic conflict over land intensified, bringing warnings of possible state failure.¹⁸ In the 1960s Ugandan president Milton Obote shut out the predominant Buganda kingdom from patronage networks and removed the Kabaka as head of state, which led to Idi Amin's 1971 military coup and state disintegration.¹⁹

At the micro level, all states in the region have suffered from shocks of various sorts—including famine, economic downturns, and revolution—which contributed to state failure. The Ethiopian famines of 1973 and 1984–85 contributed to regime changes (the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 and Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991). In the late 1970s, the revolutionary Dergue regime instituted land reform and attempted to radically reorganize farming, which disrupted traditional agricultural systems and productive capacity.²⁰ The disruption and famine gave impetus to the Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front, which came to power six years later. The Somalia famine of

1991–92 was partly the result of state failure and conflict. The rise of clan warlords, who used food to empower themselves, made the reconstitution of the Somalian state all but impossible.²¹

Stabilization Challenges in Somalia

The case of state failure and collapse in Somalia (1990 to the present) is the most pronounced of any in Africa and the world and has been examined thoroughly by a number of scholars.²² At the macro or structural level, the principal problems have been pastoralist clans who have long contended for resources, the colonial misdivision of Somalis, and the resulting irredentism. Pre-colonial Somalia was characterized by pastoralist clans who contended over water holes, grazing lands, and livestock and who raided sedentary agriculturalists—poor social capital for the building of nation-states.²³ In the scramble for Africa, Italy took southeastern Somali areas, while Britain took northern and southwestern Somali areas and Ethiopia took the western Ogaden region.²⁴ The Italians did little to build colonial administration and infrastructure from 1900 to 1941, while the British put little into the north (Somaliland) from 1900 to 1961 and the south that it governed from 1941 to 1961.

From independence in 1961 until 1969, small elites struggled to create a successful Somali state but were unable to control contention and political chaos. They established patronage networks that drowned in a sea of corruption. They promised the recovery of Somali lands in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti but were unable to bring about the irredentist promise of a larger Somalia.

The military coup of 1969 and the Siad Barre dictatorship were reactions to the weakness and corruption of the new Somali state and the civilian elites' inability to bring promises to fruition. The Barre regime made a concerted effort to strengthen and extend the state's reach (e.g., they attempted to transform pastoralists into fishers) and build the Somali nation. The adoption of "scientific socialism" helped to bring Soviet assistance, including large amounts of military aid. In 1977 and 1978 Somalia used that military aid to invade Ethiopia and take the Ogaden. Defeat in 1978 dealt a blow to the Barre regime from which it never recovered.

At the intermediate level of institutional viability and state weakness, dictator Siad Barre established patron-client relations in the 1970s (with the help of Soviet aid) with the various clans. However, after the defeat in 1978, the switch from Soviet to American patrons, and economic downturn in the

1980s, the regime narrowed the range of clan clients until only Barre's sub-clan of the Darod clan was benefiting.²⁵ In April 1978 the Somali Salvation and Democratic Front launched guerrilla operations in southern Somalia with Ethiopian support. In 1981, the Somali National Movement launched a campaign in the north that would lead to the nominal independence of Somaliland in 1991. Repression by the regime's security system did not prove effective and actually backfired, increasing violent opposition. Siad Barre refused to negotiate with the opposition and reacted by narrowing his power base to three sub-clans of the Darod clan.²⁶

At the micro level, the United States suddenly withdrew aid to the Barre regime in 1988 as the Cold War was coming to an end. The evaporation of resources crippled the state and enabled the rebels' advance, which led to regime failure in the course of 1990 and collapse in January 1991. Siad Barre continued to refuse to negotiate, even as opposing rebel groups closed in on the capital, Mogadishu.

After the collapse, the inability of opposition movements and clans to reach agreement led to the failure of the Somalian state and the rise of the warlords.²⁷ The failed state and clan warfare in Somalia immediately had ramifications for environmental sustainability and the welfare of Somalis. The great Somalia famine of 1991–93 was a direct result of state collapse and the conduct of the warlords. Warlords seized food from Somali farmers and relief agencies and used the proceeds to buy weapons, provide patronage, and grow in strength. With no state, fights over grazing lands and water holes went unresolved. As clan warfare intensified, there was no state to step in to resolve disputes. The interconnectedness of state failure, warfare, and environmental degradation and famine became clear.

Efforts were mounted to reconstitute the Somalian state, but all failed. In 1993, the United States and the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) tried to gain agreement on rebuilding the state. The special representative of the UN secretary-general and chief of mission, ADM Jonathan Howe, and his advisors were determined to take a "bottom up" approach to reconstituting the Somalian state. In March 1993, they negotiated an agreement with a range of local leaders to build local governments, then provincial governments, and then the central state. However, Howe and his colleagues attempted to circumvent the powerful warlords after already agreeing in principle to a "top down" power-sharing arrangement among them. The warlords rejected the bottom-up approach and mounted an insurgency that eventually drove the United States and the United Nations out of Somalia.²⁸

After US and UN withdrawal, the warlords continued fighting each other in and around Mogadishu for more than a decade. In contrast, peace prevailed in Somaliland (in the north of Somalia), which declared independence in May 1991 and held democratic elections in 2003. However, Somaliland has failed to win recognition as a sovereign state. In 1998, Puntland (in the northeast of Somalia) declared autonomy from Mogadishu under Pres. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed and has remained relatively peaceful (though there have been clashes with Somaliland forces over the contested Sool region). In 2004, Yusuf was elected by his peers as president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) for all of Somalia. Elections were held in Puntland in January 2005, and Mohamed Muse Hersi was voted president.

After 1993, peacemaking in Somalia fell to the IGAD under Kenyan and Djiboutian leadership. In 2004 the TFG and Somali Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) were formed and elected President Yusuf. Each of Somalia's four major clans was allocated 61 seats in the parliament, while an alliance of minority clans received 31 seats. The TFP and TFG agreed on a charter for the reconstitution and governing of the Somali state. A split occurred between President Yusuf's group (based in the Darod clan) and a Mogadishu-based faction (mainly the Hawiye clan). At the beginning of 2006, the split ended, and the TFG moved to Baidoa, Somalia.

In early 2006, the Islamic Courts Union arose as an armed group and by June defeated the warlords in and around Mogadishu. By September the ICU controlled much of Somalia outside Somaliland and Puntland as well as Baidoa, where the Ethiopian army protected the TFG. In December 2006, the Ethiopians launched a counteroffensive and drove the ICU out of Mogadishu and other major centers. In February Uganda sent 400 troops as an advance contingent of 1,600 peacekeepers to Mogadishu as part of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM); Nigeria, Ghana, and Malawi failed to send peacekeepers because of continuing violence. In March the TFG moved to Mogadishu, which was rocked by violence that drove tens of thousands out of the city. Eritrea, in its feud with Ethiopia, has armed and trained the ICU as part of a coalition dedicated to driving the Ethiopian army and the TFG out of Somalia. At issue is whether or not the TFG can survive and the Ethiopian army can be replaced by African Union (AU) peacekeepers.

Francois Grignon, Africa director of the International Crisis Group (ICG), finds that the conflict in Somalia is a greater challenge than the

conflict in the African Great Lakes region (including the Democratic Republic of the Congo). He has been pessimistic about the prospect of Ethiopia holding Mogadishu for the TFG and even more so about the Ethiopian army being replaced by AU peacekeepers or a new Somalian army.²⁹ Lt Col Scott Rutherford, US defense attaché to Kenya, observed that the longer Ethiopia meddles in Somali affairs, the longer it will take the TFG to become independent.³⁰

Stabilization Challenges in Sudan

Sudan is a state that has failed though it has never collapsed. Since independence in 1956, the government in Khartoum has been unable to achieve legitimacy in vast outlying areas of Africa's largest country. Instead, the regime has mostly engaged in repression, which has devastated the South and other areas. The civil war in the South, 1955–72 and 1983–2005, has contributed to massive dislocation of farmers and pastoralists and to famines that have killed hundreds of thousands of people (as well as livestock). Planted landmines have inhibited agricultural and pastoral activities in many parts of the South. Genocide in Darfur has brought even greater dislocation and death in a shorter period of time.³¹

At the macro level, the slave trade (especially in the nineteenth century) by the Arab North in the African South (and other regions) created hegemonic relations that have endured until today.³² In the 1880s and 1890s, the Mahdist state fought against nonbelievers in outlying regions that it claimed. The British inherited the tensions and minimally managed Sudan as a “condominium” of Egypt, with the goal of protecting the Nile and the Suez Canal. For much of the period, the North and the South were separate entities. However, as independence approached in the early 1950s, they were thrown together by the British. In the early 1950s, the northerners' old hegemonic tendencies reemerged as they attempted to spread Islam as the religion and Arabic as the language of instruction in the South.³³

In the two North-South civil wars, the rebels were supported at various times by Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and other states.³⁴ At the institutional level, the Sudanese government excluded the South and other regions from patronage networks that were established under successive dictators and during brief electoral democratic interludes in the mid-1960s and mid-1980s. From 1972 to 1983, peace prevailed—the only period in which Sudan emerged from state failure. In the late 1970s and early

1980s, growing indebtedness led to state decline.³⁵ During the 1980s, a series of economic shocks and the resumption of the North-South civil war in 1983 led Sudan to sink back into state failure. In 1989, Gen Omar al-Bashir staged a military coup, which deepened state failure. The Islamist military regime intensified its war against the South, with help from growing oil revenues in the late 1990s, but was unable to defeat the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement and army. The impasse and intervention by international peacemakers in the early 2000s led to the negotiation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which went into effect in July 2005 and which promises a referendum for the South in July 2011 to decide whether to become independent or remain part of Sudan. The future of North-South relations remains uncertain.³⁶

The same symptoms of state failure that the Khartoum regime had exhibited towards the South could be observed in its relations with Darfur and other outlying regions. In 2003 and 2004, the government dispatched the *janjaweed*—pastoralist militias who were already struggling with Darfur farmers over diminishing land³⁷—to ethnically cleanse Darfur so that various rebel movements would lose their base of support. Also, the *janjaweed* militias have many mercenaries.³⁸ The result has been a genocide in which hundreds of thousands have been killed or raped and millions displaced since 2003–04 and in which widespread atrocities have continued ever since. As in the case of the South, the intervention of international peacemakers has been required to put an end to Khartoum's abusive behavior.³⁹

Francois Grignon finds that the CPA between North and South Sudan is in danger. Darfur is a dramatic humanitarian catastrophe, but it is really a smokescreen for the real power struggle between North and South. However, if Khartoum loses Darfur, it stands a good chance of losing the South.⁴⁰

Solomon Gomes of the AU Peace and Security Commission finds that the Northern Sudanese are “playing for time” and that the AU and international community must be wary of Khartoum-sponsored militia groups in southern Sudan and must be prepared for the secession of the South followed by a resumption of hostilities by Khartoum. If the South secedes, Darfur will seek the same route.⁴¹ Gomes notes that Khartoum accepted aspects of the Darfur Peace Agreement and now the hybrid UN/AU force. However, the problem now is persuading the government and the fractious Darfur rebel movements to meet and discuss. In the meantime, the violence and humanitarian catastrophe continue.

In regard to stabilizing Somalia and Sudan, Gomes observes that the Peace and Security Commission (as the “locomotive” for action) has the responsibility to inform the Peace and Security Council and the entire AU membership regarding the “pulse” in conflict zones. However, the commission is understaffed and limited in taking action. It provides reports, for example, from Sudan and Chad but cannot take action. Another problem is a lack of authority; for example, the AU has called on all rebel movements to leave Chadian territory but has been unable to enforce its request. Gomes believes that the AU should leverage support for Chad’s interests from France and the European Union (EU). The diplomatic track on the Chad-Sudan conflict has been slow to materialize and has only come to fruition lately through French leadership.⁴²

Stabilization Challenges in Ethiopia’s Ogaden Region

Since annexing the Ogaden in the late 1800s, the Ethiopian state has traditionally failed to reach out to pastoralists in the Somali Ogaden region and to other pastoralists, including Oromo and Borana herders.⁴³ The problem of weakness and failure has been based upon the bias of the Ethiopian state in favor of highland Ethiopian Orthodox farmers versus lowland Islamic pastoralists. Also, Ethiopian suspicions about the loyalties of Ogaden Somalis rose in the 1960s, reached a crescendo during the 1977–78 Ogaden war, and have persisted ever since.

In 1991, the Tigrayan-dominated Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front regime took power and instituted a system of ethnic federalism that promised autonomy and self-rule to the Ogaden Somalis, Oromos, and others.⁴⁴ If properly instituted, ethnic federalism would have enabled the various ethnic pastoralist groups to look after their own development needs. However, the EPRDF regime has kept a tight rein on the federal regions, especially since the 1998–2000 war with Eritrea. The lack of autonomy helps to explain the revived insurgencies of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). Basic government distrust of Oromos and Ogaden Somali pastoralists continues in spite of ongoing projects for the lowlands and pastoralists by government and international development agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGO). Meanwhile, the number of people and livestock continues to grow, as do sustainability and stabilization challenges.⁴⁵

The ONLF and OLF continue to operate against the government and its forces. The killing of nine Chinese oil workers and 65 Ethiopians by the

ONLF showed a level of sophistication that points to Eritrean involvement.⁴⁶ The escalation of hostilities in the Ogaden has created a humanitarian crisis in which pastoralists are finding it increasingly difficult to survive.⁴⁷ The massacre of oil workers has led Ethiopia to increase its military operations, made aid programs difficult to sustain, and caused problems for government officials and international aid agencies. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been experiencing trouble, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has been considering pulling out of the Ogaden, even though the humanitarian situation has deteriorated rapidly.⁴⁸

Stabilization Challenges in Pastoral Areas of Kenya and Uganda

Kenya has had particular problems relating to Somali pastoralists in eastern Kenya. In the 1960s, Somalis fought against incorporation into Kenya and were regarded as either nationalist secessionist guerrillas (by Somalis) or merely bandits (by the government). In the colonial era, the British did not incorporate Somalis living in Kenya into the prevailing order. At independence, the British reversed previous colonial policy and decided to force unity among disparate ethnic groups (including Somalis) in Kenya. In 1961 the establishment of the Republic of Somalia inspired Somali political leaders in Kenya to rally for secession from Kenya and incorporation into Somalia. Subsequently, the Somalian government supported the *Shifita* ("the lawless"). Eventually, the *Shifita* depended too much on Somalia and lost its internal drive for self-determination.⁴⁹ The *Shifita* war has colored Kenya's relationship with pastoralists from the 1960s onwards and helps to explain (along with a number of other factors) state failure to deal with growing populations and development problems that have threatened the way of life and ecosystems in much of the north of the country.⁵⁰ The same hostility applies in Uganda's National Resistance Movement regime's relations with the Acholi and pastoralists in the north of the country, due partly to the two-decade-long struggle with the Lord's Resistance Army.⁵¹

A fundamental problem for both Kenya and Uganda is that the regimes are based around ethnic groups engaged in farming in the south of their respective countries that have trouble relating with other groups, especially pastoralists. Lt Col Scott Rutherford, US defense attaché to Kenya, notes that the Muslim population there has been marginalized by the government. For example, the Swahili population along the coast has a special passport, which is a mark of government distrust. The vast majority of Muslims are not extremists but have

felt oppressed by the Kenyan government. US-Kenyan cooperation in the global war on terrorism (GWOT) has further marginalized them.⁵²

Stabilization Challenge: The Ethiopia-Eritrea Confrontation

A fundamental problem for the EPRDF regime is the fact that it is based on the Tigrayan ethnic group, which is less than 10 percent of the population.⁵³ In the May 2005 elections, the regime was surprised by the strength of the opposition and, according to EU observers, rigged the results.⁵⁴ The confrontation with Eritrea is another problem for the EPRDF regime, and thousands of Ethiopian troops remain in the vicinity of the frontier. The war ended in 2000, and the Boundary Commission's decision was rendered in 2002. However, Ethiopia has refused to accept the awarding of the village of Badme and contested territory to Eritrea, which threatens a resumption of hostilities if resolution is not achieved.⁵⁵ Eritrea is playing a destabilizing role in the Horn of Africa, supporting the Islamic Courts Union and other movements that oppose the Transitional Federal Government and the Ethiopian presence. Ethiopia has thousands of troops tied down in Somalia trying to protect the TFG. Eritrea has moved thousands of militias and troops into the demilitarized zone bordering Ethiopia, thereby increasing the chances of an incident escalating into another all-out war. In regard to Sudan, Ethiopia has become very dependent on Sudanese oil and will be cautious in relations with Khartoum.⁵⁶

The conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea remains the major stumbling block in the stabilization of the Horn of Africa according to Grignon of the ICG.⁵⁷ Solomon Gomes of the AU Peace and Security Commission asserts that the AU views Ethiopia-Eritrea as the most serious crisis that it currently faces.⁵⁸ The animosity between the Eritrean president and the Ethiopian prime minister is a major obstacle to peace and impacts the whole region. The Eritrean president is isolated, which renders peacemaking difficult.

Gomes observes that in attempting to stabilize the Ethiopia-Eritrea standoff, the commission and the AU Peace and Security Council have not done enough. The AU heads of state have tried quiet diplomacy, without success. The Algerians mediated from 1998 to 2000 but cannot be called on again. Libya's behavior has been erratic in attempting to mediate. South African president Thabo Mbeki and Ghanaian president and current AU chairman, John Kuofour, have tried to mediate without success. At the moment, the IGAD is an organization in name only due to politics, and Eritrea's withdrawal from the body has undermined its credibility. Pres.

Mwai Kibaki of Kenya is not well enough to mediate. Tanzania and the United States should both do more. The United States signed the Algiers Agreement in 2000 as a guarantor and is obliged to do more. At the moment, the United States is too focused on Somalia and the war on terrorism. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) forces have been reduced, while Ethiopia and Eritrea have lots of forces near the temporary zone and Eritrea has sent militias into the zone.⁵⁹

Radical Islamist Stabilization Challenges

Radical Islamists are said to be hiding and operating on the Kenyan coast and in Somalia. Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) civil affairs personnel are conducting projects on the Kenyan coast to try to win hearts and minds and assuage fears, but Islamic residents are not responding. The local population is not turning extremists over to Kenyan government authorities or to US personnel. Islamists are thriving on the protection of the local population. They are securing funds and can travel freely between Kenya, Somalia, Yemen, and the Gulf states (e.g., Oman). The security situation in Kenya is no better than at the time of the 1998 embassy bombings, in spite of the East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI). The Pakistani population in Nairobi is also a source of concern. In the ranks of the irredentist Somali movements (e.g., the ICU and the ONLF) are radical Islamists trying to defeat Ethiopia and establish an Islamist state. Eritrea is backing the Islamists against Ethiopia. However, Eritrea would not try to stage an Islamist attack on the CJTF-HOA in Djibouti like the attack on Chinese and Ethiopian oil workers in the Ogaden.⁶⁰

The situation in Nairobi and Mombasa is better than in 2006, when there was a stream of reported threats. Nine years since the embassy bombings, the region is as volatile as ever. Zanzibar remains a problem. Kenya has not made much headway—the border is porous, and northern and coastal Kenya are largely ignored by the central government. The border is closed in the northeast; it is difficult to handle Somali refugees, and there is little international pressure on Kenya to do something about them. There are no terrorism laws on the books in Kenya yet because of the December 2007 elections.⁶¹

Peacebuilding-Sustainability-Stabilization Challenges

Taken together, peacebuilding, sustainability, and stabilization manifested in the interrelationship between war and famine have been devastating in the Horn of Africa. Already noted was the close relationship between famine, conflict, and the undermining of regime legitimacy in Ethiopia in 1973–74 and 1984–85 as well as in Somalia in 1991–93. Drought and dependence on foreign aid, along with corruption, undermine sustainability and legitimacy. Global warming is affecting the region, but direct evidence of warming causing conflict is difficult to confirm. For example, a study of the Turkana in northern Kenya did not find a direct link.⁶²

Among pastoralists, sources of conflict include scarce resources such as water holes and grazing lands, particularly during times of extreme hardship.⁶³ Desertification (caused in part by climate change) has contributed to conflict among pastoralists. There is conflict between neighboring ethnic groups in pastoral areas that often crosses borders, mainly because of cattle raiding.⁶⁴ Previous analysis has discussed the underlying reasons for conflict, including a lack of infrastructure to support pastoral livelihood.⁶⁵ In addition, promoting sedentary agriculture can cause alienation among pastoralists who are being forced to give up a generations-old lifestyle.

In regard to pastoralists and sustainability and stability, their level of support for Islamic extremism/terrorism is open to question. In Somalia (and to a lesser extent Sudan), it could be said that sustainability and stabilization challenges have created dissatisfaction among Muslim populations and have opened the door to at least tolerating Islamic extremism/terrorism even if not supporting it.

In Ethiopia, desertification and declining grazing lands have led to impoverishment of Somali and Oromo pastoralists, disaffection, and declining legitimacy of the state. In areas with large clans, there is plenty of conflict over land and resources and strong and continuing ethnic tensions. In the area where Somalis and Oromos border each other, there is lots of conflict and fighting.⁶⁶

Some disaffected Somali pastoralists in Ethiopia have supported continued destabilization of the Ogaden by the ONLF against Ethiopian security forces. The sustainability and stabilization crises in the Ogaden could open the door to safe havens for Islamic extremists and could conceivably generate recruits. The same could be said of some Oromo pastoralists and support for the OLF.

Conflict appears to be decreasing in northeastern Kenya, but structural problems remain. With good rains, there is less conflict over natural resources. There have been drought and famine over the past two years.⁶⁷ Drought has caused a recent spike in pastoralist unrest. Pastoralists have restocked their livestock after drought by raiding other livestock from farming areas to the south. Somali pastoralists in Kenya identify more with Somalia than with their country of residence.⁶⁸ Historical neglect at the pastoral level compounded by lack of understanding by elites leads to conflict. Land titling is unpopular with pastoralists and has led to a groundswell of political dissent. In the meantime, irrevocable damage has already been done.⁶⁹

In Moyale, on the Kenya-Ethiopia border, local politicians are being divisive and have helped to create new political divisions among pastoralists along ethnic lines. Previously, several generations had lived peacefully together and intermarried.⁷⁰

Coastal populations have been discriminated against by the central government. The problem goes well beyond environmental sustainability. Political factors alienate the population. This is a region with a rapidly growing population maintaining the same practices. Therefore, the people will become increasingly alienated, and it is uncertain what will they do. As for al-Qaeda, it is a mystery not well understood, especially in East Africa.⁷¹

In Sudan, population displacement, lack of governance, conflict-related resource exploitation, and underinvestment in sustainable development, all produce sustainability and stabilization challenges. There are five million internally displaced persons (IDP) and international refugees (Sudan has the largest population of IDPs).⁷² Competition over oil and gas reserves, the Nile River waters, and timber, as well as land use issues related to agricultural lands, are factors in the instigation and perpetuation of conflict in Sudan. Confrontations over range lands and rain-fed agricultural lands in the drier parts of the country demonstrate the connection between natural resource scarcity and conflict. In northern Darfur, high population growth, environmental stress, land degradation, and desertification have created the conditions for conflicts, which have been sustained by political, tribal, or ethnic differences. This is an example of the social breakdown that can result from ecological collapse.⁷³

Stabilizing and Peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa

In overcoming state failure and stabilizing the Horn of Africa, the approach must be sophisticated—managing macro, intermediate, and micro levels and forging a range of partnerships from the United Nations to African regional organizations and from states in the region to NGOs and to the United States and the European Union.

In stabilizing the Horn of Africa at the macro or structural level, the Horn is the only region in Africa where the structural solution of secession (i.e., Eritrea, southern Sudan, Darfur, and Somaliland) seems to be a realistic option that could make matters more peaceful rather than increasing bloodshed (e.g., Nigeria). The question is: Should secession be allowed to run its natural course? Or, should the international community encourage compromise solutions (e.g., federalism or confederation)? Thus far, secession has only been allowed in the case of Eritrea, where the Eritrean People's Liberation Front won military victory and where a friendly (at that time) Ethiopian government agreed.

At the intermediate level, building state capacity and institutional viability remains an ongoing process in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, involving international aid agencies and NGOs. The three states have a long way to go before they can provide services to all of their people. In Somalia and Sudan, the issue is one of reconstituting the state through either peacebuilding or neotrusteeship. Thus far it seems that neotrusteeship is too costly for the international community and will be perceived as neocolonial in Africa. Thus, a gamble will be made on lower-cost peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

In regard to managing micro-level challenges (short-term shocks), the IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) has developed policies for sustainability, food security, conflict resolution mechanisms, and an early warning system that is intended to ameliorate the impact of state weakness and failure and environmental disaster.⁷⁴ However, the IGAD early warning and prevention capabilities are only in their initial stages. Problems with the IGAD early warning system include the fact that three key countries (Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia) are not involved and the system remains focused on low-level pastoral conflicts in northern Uganda and northern Kenya. Furthermore, measures for resolving conflicts over resources in Uganda and Kenya have not been implemented.⁷⁵

The Golden Spear Disaster Management Center provides early warning to 11 African states. Regional organizations and governments need to have the political will to act and fund early warning and prevention.⁷⁶

Standby Capability

Member states of the IGAD and the East African Community (EAC) are building the East African Brigade of the African Standby Force (ASF) to intervene to stop state failure and its consequences. However, the “Eastbrig” has fallen behind its western and southern counterparts because Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda have been slow to cooperate and implement prior agreements. In fact, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) brigade of the ASF, led by South Africa, has already deployed to Darfur ahead of the Eastbrig. In any event, the UN will play the lead role in Southern Sudan and appears to be assuming leadership in Darfur.⁷⁷

The ASF’s biggest problems are logistics and sustainability within the AU framework. Within the African Union, there is little vision regarding where the ASF is headed. For example, the military planning cell has drafted terms of reference for its missions, but AU administrators do not seem to know that the planning cell exists. Thus, a sustainable ASF remains a dream. African states contribute less than one percent of their defense budgets to fund the ASF and support staff. Most support comes from the United States and the European Union. A Marshall Plan for Africa is needed to overcome this deplorable situation.⁷⁸

According to Marcel LeRoy of the EU, the EU provided €243 million in support to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in Darfur from 2004 to 2007. The AU deployed AMIS with hope and heart, not with plan. The EU cannot withdraw support, which would lead to the collapse of AMIS and massive looting. The switch to a hybrid AU/UN Darfur mission may help, but there will still be problems. The EU is more reluctant to fund AMISOM in Somalia and the AU Peace and Security Commission because of the AMIS experience.⁷⁹

Stabilizing Somalia and Peacebuilding

Top-down and bottom-up approaches to overcoming state failure have been implemented in Somalia. Since 1993, one bottom-up approach has NGOs working with Somali groups and civil society.⁸⁰ A second bottom-up approach was undertaken by the “Islamic Courts.” Islamism arose in the 1990s and was manifested in the Islamic courts that were founded

to administer sharia law and justice in an anarchic environment. They formed the Islamic Courts Union, defeated the warlords in May 2006, and established control of Mogadishu and large swaths of southern Somalia until being defeated by Ethiopian forces backing the Transitional Federal Government in December 2006.⁸¹

Another approach has been multilateral and top down, with the IGAD, led by Kenya, bringing various Somali elites together to establish the TFG and then sending them back to Somalia to assume control with Ethiopian assistance.⁸² It is uncertain whether this approach will succeed or if bottom-up approaches will pay dividends. It is also uncertain whether Somaliland will ever become part of Somalia again or if it will become independent, as appears to be the prevailing sentiment. Reconciliation talks between the TFG and the Islamic Courts were held twice in 2007, but no progress was made. The problem of Ethiopian troops as a “lightning rod” in Somalia remains.

According to Solomon Gomes of the AU Peace and Security Commission, Somalia is high on the AU list of countries to stabilize. The AU did not want to go into Somalia until the UN Security Council guaranteed logistics. However, Uganda jumped into Somalia, while Ghana, Nigeria, and Malawi did not. If four countries had sent four battalions, it would have sent a visible message, but the situation on the ground makes it difficult for the Ugandans to sustain peacekeeping operations. In the peace process, a “carrot and stick” approach is needed, and the ICU must be made stakeholders.⁸³

Peacebuilding in Puntland, Somaliland, and Somalia requires a long-time horizon. Shifting political, military, and social dynamics demands up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the situation on the ground to facilitate peacekeeping. Institutions that the NGO Interpeace helped build in Puntland and Somaliland have helped keep peacebuilding going. Ingredients for success include bringing stakeholders together, creating institutional dynamics, and providing technical assistance and support. Pastoralists must be made part of the stakeholder process. For example, nomads were consulted before the date was set for the recent Somaliland elections.⁸⁴

An early warning system has been established all over Somalia consisting of partnerships with organizations that have contacts and offices throughout the country. Since Somali nomads are found all over Somalia and in parts of Ethiopia and Kenya, mobile education systems and clinics

are the answer to the cross-border dilemma. Somalis and other pastoralists live for movement. Therefore, regional integration is very important. An IGAD framework has been set up to enable the informal sector to benefit from regional integration, especially pastoralists, and to make a contribution to environmental sustainability.

The TFG is not the permanent solution for Somalia. The reconstruction of Somalia is an ongoing process in line with the tasks given by the 2004 charter. Reconciliation talks between the TFG and the ICU must be used as a springboard to the next stage. The international community must push for a settlement in Somalia and needs to bring other countries and organizations into the process.⁸⁵

Interpeace is continuing to conduct extensive public consultations, workshops, forums, and stakeholder dialogue on issues essential to peacebuilding and state reconstruction. As there was no central government, it adopted a regional approach—setting up projects in Puntland (Garowe), Somaliland (Hargeysa), and south-central Somalia (Mogadishu). In Somalia, the Center for Research and Dialogue, with the help of the traditional elders, has successfully facilitated a number of reconciliation processes among major clans in the region. Work is being carried out on the ground by three non-partisan partner organizations that promote peace and reconciliation in Somalia. After months of reconciliation and power sharing among clans, people of the Bakool region went to the polls to vote for local and regional authorities, including the governor, district commissioners, and regional and district councilors. The region became the second area in Somalia to elect its officials through a community-based, participatory process.

According to Francois Grignon of the ICG, reconciliation negotiations must open the door to legitimate claims by clan representatives. A third-party facilitator is needed to negotiate between the TFG and the ICU. Trade control is a factor in the negotiations. A disarmament process has to be included in negotiations. Since fear is entrenched in Mogadishu, confidence-building measures need to be agreed upon and implemented.⁸⁶

In Somalia, Islamic activists have taken advantage of the absence of a central government and ascendancy of the ICU. For now, a possible Islamist onslaught has been pushed into the background. A number of things are needed to prevent people from joining Islamist movements. There should be no guarantee that the lifestyles of protagonists will be maintained if and when peace comes. The Islamists will be victims of peace and will continue to act as spoilers. At the moment, Djibouti is

playing the mediator role. It is difficult to see if Somalia's problems can be overcome. There is a need for the international community to strike a fair balance to help stabilize Somalia. Reconstitution of the state is crucial, as is political will. Then the United States and others can come into support, playing a facilitative role.⁸⁷

It appears that the US Department of State is providing support for the TFG government because US policy makers do not want to be involved in Somalia again. With no presidential directive, there has been no US action. Western partners are waiting for the United States to act. Somali reaction to Ethiopian intervention has been strong and negative. Intervention in Somalia is costing Ethiopia politically and economically. Ugandans want their peacekeeping force to be Africanized and brought under the UN umbrella so that resources can start to flow their way. Nigeria failed to send a force because of internal problems. Ghana decided that the situation was too volatile and is not sending a force. The Burundians are sending more than 1,000 troops, but they need to be trained and equipped. In regard to building the capacity of the AU Peace and Security Commission to do military planning, there are 1,000 positions, only 500 personnel, and 350 quality people. With AMIS and AMISOM plus operations planned for the Comoros, Chad, and the Central African Republic, the AU has its hands full. The AU has no expertise in large-scale peace-support operations. The EU wants to have a voice but is not giving sufficient funds. The AU has a lack of fiscal capacity.⁸⁸

In Somali areas, the various streams of Islam and Islamist movements are affecting the entire Horn. What happens in Somalia provides opportunities for Islamism to emerge in different forms and spread. In Somalia, the sources of Islamism include Wahhabi extremism due to Saudi funding. Wahhabists have been taking students to Saudi Arabia and Yemen in the last 15 years. In dealing with Islamism, there must be a recognition that Islamism is not going to stop. Thus, a long-term approach must be taken. The moderate voice within Islam must be enhanced, for example, with investment in moderate madrassas.⁸⁹

Stabilizing Sudan

The future of Sudan remains just as uncertain as that of Somalia. Whereas it seems difficult if not impossible to reconstitute the Somali state, the problem with Sudan is the concentration of power in Khartoum. As the oil boom continues, Khartoum will continue to reap the lion's share

of the benefits, will grow in power, and will become increasingly capable of preventing the South and Darfur from seceding.

Popular opinion in the South and Darfur indicate that the optimal approach would be to allow the South to secede in 2011 and provide the same option for Darfur. The two regions have been brutalized by Khartoum, and it is hard to visualize their remaining part of even a confederation. The problem is that Khartoum will not allow secession without a struggle. As for the rest of Sudan, federal arrangements would be most suitable, but it is difficult to see how Khartoum could be persuaded to accept constitutional changes.⁹⁰

According to Gomes, peacebuilding efforts are ongoing in southern Sudan. First, there is a need to disarm all militia groups in the South. Second, the international community must take seriously the possibility of the South seceding.⁹¹

International actors need to think ahead to the 2011 Sudan referendum and the possibility of southern Sudanese independence. The Saudi government is working to influence actors in the region to help to stabilize Sudan. In Sudan, the ruling Congress Party and the associated National Islamic Front are making concessions for peace, but it is uncertain if they will follow through. The Bashir regime has sidelined the Wahhabi faction that used to dominate the government but is also reluctant to yield to international pressure.⁹²

If Khartoum gets the lion's share of resources, it may be prepared to let southern Sudan become independent. The Sudanese "Arab" mind-set has been to make peace when it suits them; otherwise, they wage war.⁹³

Grignon, of the ICG, says there is a great need to stabilize Somalia and Sudan and to create a level where differences can be regulated. Peacemakers must find centers of gravity and create equilibrium in the region. A new (or revitalized) regional security architecture would help in Sudan and Somalia. The IGAD supported negotiations in Sudan and Somalia, but it needs to be strengthened to promote dialogue in the region. There is no good alternative to a regional peace process because of the connectivity of conflicts.⁹⁴

Stabilizing Ethiopia vs. Eritrea

Resolving the Ethiopia-Eritrea confrontation is a daunting task, especially now that the two countries are fighting in Somalia.⁹⁵ Even if the border issue is settled, the confrontation will not end because the pride of national leaders and their survival is the main issue, not borders. Pres. Issaias Afwerki had exaggerated expectations that Eritrea would be the Singapore or Malaysia of the Horn of Africa and would become a dominant

political, economic, and technological center. He assumed that the Eritrean Defense Force was invincible. As a result of dashed expectations, Eritrea has not been flexible.⁹⁶

The US role has been and will continue to be crucial in Eritrea-Ethiopia talks. Unfortunately, the US preoccupation with its alliance against terrorism has relegated the Ethiopia-Eritrea confrontation to the background. The Boundary Commission decided to “virtually” demarcate the boundary, as neither side would allow access for physical demarcation. This decision led Eritrea to demand the withdrawal of UNMEE peacekeepers from its territory, which began in March 2008.⁹⁷

According to Grignon, the international community should not attempt to reengage via Libyans and other actors that have been associated with Eritrea in negotiating an end to the confrontation. Instead, the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia should be called upon to put pressure on the two parties. Peacemakers have to take into account Ethiopia’s internal dynamics and constraints on the regime.⁹⁸ Prime Minister Meles Zenawi cannot make major concessions because of pressures from Ethiopian nationalists. Gomes believes that peacemakers should be using back channels. Uncontested areas along the border should be demarcated, with disputed areas left until later.⁹⁹

Kenya as an “Anchor State” in the Horn of Africa

Kenya is an industrializing state and is relatively stable and democratic. According to noted scholar and development expert Michael Chege, the democratic Kibaki regime has made great strides; for example, helping to reduce poverty by 10 percent between 2003 and 2007. He believes that Kenya is becoming an economic dynamo as well as a center of peace and stability. There are concerns about the possibility of Sudan and Somalia dissolving into even greater chaos. However, Kenya will probably follow the reactive stance that it assumed in the past, even if its interests in southern Sudan are harmed. Finally, Islamic extremists on the Kenyan coast remain a cause for concern.¹⁰⁰

Kenya remains engaged in the diplomatic process, including Darfur negotiations, recognizing that the region is very unstable. According to Brigadier Maurice Walugu of the Kenyan Ministry of Defense, there are two levels on which Kenya deals with Sudan—the political level of negotiating with the Sudanese government and the practical military level—as the peace process (e.g., the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between North

and South) does not guarantee results in reducing conflict or the number of internally displaced people. Although the Sudanese government does not seem willing to accept change in Darfur, Kenya remains engaged.¹⁰¹

Peace in Somalia is the main focus of Kenyan military engagement. Some parts of Somalia have been stabilized. The role of the Kenyan military is to participate in line with AU rules of engagement to advise, train, coordinate, and liaison. Kenya is working with Uganda, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to limit collateral damage in Mogadishu as well as to control the influx of terrorist groups and with the United States on Somalia, antipiracy operations, and sea lanes regulation. Kenya is willing to train Burundian peacekeepers for service in Somalia. However, Kenya cannot send its own peacekeepers because it borders on Somalia and because peace has not been secured. Djibouti is trying to defuse the Somali conflict as well as the Ethiopia-Eritrea confrontation.¹⁰²

In regard to the Eastbrig of the ASF, Kenya is hosting the planning elements and the independent mechanism for coordinating security and socioeconomic development. The headquarters of Eastbrig is in Ethiopia, and, according to Brigadier Walugu, Kenya enjoys good partnership with Ethiopia. Kenya is ready to respond to contingencies thanks to US and EU training and support. Kenya has peacekeepers in UNMEE, alongside Jordanian forces, the only forces remaining between Ethiopia and Eritrea.¹⁰³ Kenya does not want to be in Somalia because “frontline states” are not supposed to operate there. As for the Ugandan peacekeepers, Walugu believes they were not deployed too early in Somalia; just too few troops and not enough support. The problem is deploying into Somalia. It takes a lot of time and considerable risk.¹⁰⁴

As for dealing with Kenyan pastoralists and communal conflict, Walugu likened the Kenyan army to the 7th Cavalry in the western United States. It takes time to educate and change the culture of people (i.e., pastoralists). The drilling of boreholes and the development of water resources and pastures can help to contain the conflict.¹⁰⁵

In the operations against the Islamic Courts Union, the Kenyan military joined with the Ethiopians on occasion, which caused tensions. The Ethiopians were not easy to deal with and blamed the Kenyans when something went wrong. The planning cell is on Kenyan real estate.¹⁰⁶

Ethiopia as an “Anchor State” in the Horn of Africa

Besides intervening with troops in Somalia, Ethiopia has sent peacekeepers to three different peacekeeping operations and is prepared to send more. At the moment, cordial relations exist between Ethiopia and Sudan, partly because Ethiopia is importing oil from Sudan.¹⁰⁷

EU and US policy towards the EPRDF regime is necessarily “nuanced.”¹⁰⁸ After the rigging of elections and shooting of students in May 2005 and the trial of opposition leaders in November 2005, the EU and the United States downgraded some ties. With the 2006 intervention in Somalia, full relations have been restored. However, Congress recently sanctioned a number of regime leaders for the 2005 events. Ethiopia is disappointed at not being compensated by the United States for its intervention and peacekeeping role in Somalia in 2007.¹⁰⁹ In fact, Ethiopians cannot leave Somalia without a guarantee of security, so the costs continue to mount.

Ethiopian nationalists believe that the best approach to stabilizing the Horn of Africa is to bring Eritrea under control—through regime change if necessary. They want the United States to support the TFG in Somalia with billions of dollars. Nationalists want universal recognition of Somaliland as an independent state (with the ulterior motive of further dividing Somalis). They want a united democratic federal Sudan and believe that secession of the South is destabilizing. They demand that the United States induce Egypt to negotiate with Ethiopia over sharing Blue Nile water.¹¹⁰

Ethiopian moderates note that, following 11 September 2001, the Horn of Africa attracted more attention as a region perceived to be a base for radical Islamists and terrorists. Ethiopia was thought to be a target, and Somalia and Sudan were suspected of sponsoring terrorists. One of the problems has been governance failure in most of the countries in the region. For example, Ethiopia cannot build national consensus. Sudan has improved since the CPA in 2005, but Darfur remains a disaster.¹¹¹

Regional Organizations as Partners

Stabilization and peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa have involved considerable efforts at peacemaking by IGAD states, the AU, the UN, and the United States. The UN has mounted peace and stability operations between Ethiopia and Eritrea and in Somalia (which failed in 1993–94) and southern Sudan, and the African Union has done so in Darfur and Somalia. In the Horn of Africa, the IGAD must be rejuvenated as a forum in which disparate member states air their differences (aiding stabilization

efforts) and work to prevent humanitarian disasters by addressing sustainability challenges. The East African Community has demonstrated even greater potential to build cooperation for sustainability and stabilization. The Common Market of East and Southern Africa (COMESA) has been working on economic and sustainability challenges and is moving to work on issues of stabilization.

According to Ambassador Wane of the African Union Peace and Security Commission, a regional approach is needed, given the interconnection of conflicts. The problem is that the IGAD is dysfunctional due to political differences.¹¹² According to Walter Knausenberger, the COMESA is more dynamic and promising than the IGAD.¹¹³

The IGAD has been playing a mixed role in stabilizing the Horn of Africa for two decades. The Intergovernmental Association on Development was founded in the wake of the 1984–85 Ethiopian famine, and a main priority was dealing with drought and desertification that helped to bring about famine and instability in the region. In the early 2000s, the IGAD played a role (along with Kenya and the United States) in the resolution of the North-South conflict in Sudan and in negotiating a transitional federal government for Somalia, which moved back to the country in February 2006 and attempted to establish authority from Mogadishu in 2007. A conflict the IGAD does not have the capacity to resolve is the continuing confrontation between Ethiopia and Eritrea in the wake of the 1998–2000 war, which has spilled over into Somalia and has affected the entire region.¹¹⁴ Only UN peacekeepers are preventing a resumption of hostilities, while Saudi Arabia and Algeria are being suggested as possible mediators.

The COMESA has helped to reduce tariffs among member states and boost intraregional trade, which has helped Kenya and several other states prosper. Trade in livestock and animal products has been demonstrated to help pastoralists become more prosperous in the Horn of Africa.¹¹⁵ The biggest problem continues to be the low level of African trade. A second problem is the plethora of organizations to which states belong.¹¹⁶

Promoting Sustainability, Stabilization, and Peacebuilding

Policies that could promote sustainability, stabilization, and peacebuilding include the development of federalism, improving the lives of pastoralists, and regional early warning and intervention. Programs include expanding

and strengthening the IGAD-CEWARN early warning and action system and programs that aim to build links between pastoralists and governments in Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and Kampala, including the building of wells, schools, and clinics and the provision of marketing centers for the buying of herds. International aid programs are enabling the building of schools and clinics and helping to extend the presence of states in previously ungoverned regions. Stakeholders include state and nonstate actors, international governmental organizations (e.g., the IGAD), and NGOs. A participatory approach to project development and implementation should be promoted, and local pastoralist institutions such as trading associations and peace committees should be built. Pastoral self-governance should be strengthened.¹¹⁷

Moderate forces exist among the Somalis; they need to be understood, strengthened, and supported. Somalis as a group are not susceptible to extremist philosophy, but if forced to choose sides, they will go with the Islamists, even though Somalis are not strict Sunnis. The key is to provide economic growth equitably and to engage with people who know the area.¹¹⁸

The Kenyan government requires a mind-set change in relation to Somalis and other politically marginalized groups to move towards sustainability-stabilization. The government needs to be properly engaged but thus far has taken a divisive approach, making issues political as well as resource based. Pastoralists must be assisted in managing the excessive growth of population and animals. Ways must be found for herders to move to other pasture and water areas so that conflict can be avoided with sedentary agriculturalists. Visual tools, including ones that show ethnic overlay, trade routes, and markets, have been developed to assist pastoralists and enable them to deal with resource and pasture access issues. Access to the political process is essential to providing pastoralists with voice and participation at the national and provincial levels. Fifty percent of the GDP in Kenyan agriculture comes from pastoral activities throughout the country; so, the marginalization of pastoralists is partly due to misperceptions. Marginalization is now being overcome by technology—with cell phone access (cell phone towers in the rural areas), pastoralists now have access to market information. Alternative access means rural banking and livestock sales can develop. Funds can go into other entrepreneurial areas besides livestock. Therefore, providing access to economic resources and development is the best counterterrorism initiative.¹¹⁹

The RELPA (Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas), managed by the Nairobi regional office of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), is attempting to promote sustainability and stabilization in pastoralist areas with a number of NGO partners.¹²⁰ One such partner is the NGO “Pact,” which works with partner NGOs and the USAID for conflict mitigation and provides conflict resolution training to deal with pastoralist water disputes and subclan conflicts.¹²¹

RELPA represents sound thinking, is a step forward, and is intended to use a joint programs approach. It is regional, integrated, and comprehensive, which is essential because pastoralism is regional and boundaries do not constrain groups. The task for RELPA is to make steps forward. Thus far, there have been procurement issues and delays. RELPA needs more than two years’ funding to be effective. Thus far, livelihood interventions have not had the impact desired, as they have not addressed or understood underlying conflict dynamics among pastoralists. In any case, it is unlikely that the RELPA approach and “alternative livelihoods” programs can mitigate support for Islamic extremism and terrorism.¹²²

A consortium of groups has formulated a cross-sectoral program across borders. Case studies in Ethiopia and Kenya indicate that there is now better reporting response regarding conflict, early warning, and drought (this is difficult to do in Somalia). The Integrated River Basin Management Project works with the private sector. There is a need for resources to provide access to safe water. In addressing issues of education and health, mobile schools and clinics have been proposed in pastoral areas. The health issue is vital—a quarter of the pastoralist population has acute malnutrition compounded by a lack of stable health service and good hygiene.¹²³

The IGAD-CEWARN early warning mechanism holds promise for preventing conflict among pastoralists as well as famine. The IGAD-CEWARN, established in 2001, has lacked strategic direction; however, state-of-the-art software is its strength. There are 52 sets of selected indicators of communal variance, areas reported, media reporting on conflict, and environmental context. Field monitors provide weekly reports on specific incidents as they happen. Information flows to the national level and to the IGAD-CEWARN, but lack of government action is a major weakness. The well-established response mechanism needs to be programmatically designed and developed. Another problem is the diverse source of funds (60 percent from the USAID, 30 percent from the German GTZ, and only 10 percent from member states).¹²⁴

The Ugandan government has used daily reports from the IGAD-CEWARN to deal with problems of drugs, arms, and human trafficking by pastoralists. The Ugandan government adopted a disarmament strategy with NGO funding. The Ugandan army was used to disarm the pastoralists. Many community members died as a result (Karamojong in the Karamoja region).¹²⁵ The IGAD-CEWARN needs to work at early warning and conflict management among pastoralists at a lower level. Then, it can be developed to manage bigger conflicts and disasters involving states.¹²⁶

Interpeace partners in Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland have initiated various efforts to prevent environmental devastation, notably uncontrolled tree cutting for charcoal. This began during the late 1970s by refugee influxes from the Ogaden in neighboring Ethiopia but was further aggravated by a lack of governance following years of prolonged conflict.¹²⁷

Conclusion

The Horn of Africa is one of the world's most fragile regions; only West and Central Africa surpass it in terms of state failures and instabilities. This article underlines the importance of a regional focus on the problem of state failure and the danger of conflict spillover. In regard to a sustainability assessment, clearly failed states cannot deal with environmental degradation and disaster. Disasters (e.g., famines) and the lack of sustainability contribute significantly to state failure. State failure means that struggle over resources occurs in a state of anarchy and results in a downward spiral.

The macro-level or structural factors are important in explaining sustainability and stabilization challenges. The clan-based Somali society made state building difficult in the 1960s, made state collapse possible, and is making state reconstitution even more difficult in the 2000s. In Sudan, long-standing historical and cultural differences between Khartoum and outlying regions led to state failure from the outset. In Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, the center of power has rested in agricultural centers, with pastoralists the outsiders.

The intermediate or institutional level also helps in explaining sustainability and stabilization challenges. Certainly, in the case of Somalia, institutional mismanagement and state weakness contributed to failure. In Sudan, discrimination against outlying regions was important, but the impulse to subjugate those regions was even more significant. State weakness helps to

explain why pastoralists in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda did not receive adequate attention, but the structural divide was more important.

The Horn of Africa is one region of the world where short-term shocks have played a significant role in creating acute sustainability-stabilization challenges. The susceptibility of the region to drought, overpopulation, and famine has brought several cataclysmic events that have contributed to state failure. Sudden changes in conflicts, such as the rebel success in Somalia in 1990, led to state collapse. The sudden defeat of Somali forces in 1978 in the Ogaden had a crushing effect on the Siad Barre regime.

Clearly there is a gap on the continuum of state failure between (1) state collapse in Somalia, (2) failure by Khartoum to deal with its outlying regions in a peaceful and fair way, and (3) failure of Ethiopia and Uganda, and to a lesser extent Kenya, to relate to and provide services to pastoralists. State failure and sustainability and stabilization challenges in the Horn have been distinctive and unusual.

This article has extensively examined sustainability challenges, including climate change, population growth, and desertification, as well as water shortage, famine, and rivers that are linked with conflict. It has demonstrated that there is a degree of interrelationship among ethnic conflict, weak states, and interstate rivalry, as well as extremism, terrorism, and sustainability challenges. It has focused on a specific problem of sustainability-stabilization—the challenges facing Islamic pastoralists who may be attracted to Islamic extremism and terrorism—as well as solutions.

This article has offered solutions at the macro level (e.g., the reduction of greenhouse gases and improving education and employment to reduce birthrates) and at the micro level (e.g., development projects for pastoralists, farmers, and women, as well as the development of market infrastructure, local governance, and tree planting). Stabilization measures were also examined, including early warning and preventive action, peacemaking, and peace and stability operations, as well as peacebuilding, development and trade, and the role of anchor states and a range of organizations. The article confirmed the utility of peacebuilding and stabilization and promoting sustainability together.

Threats in the Horn of Africa from sustainability and stabilization challenges are moderate in severity. Certainly, the threats from the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region and from Iraq and Iran are much greater. The 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania indicate that there are threats and that actions to build peace and bring greater sustainability

and stabilization to the region will advance wider security. Somalia and Somalis are the focus of efforts to prevent ungoverned areas and underdeveloped pastoralists from being used by extremists. The development of a coordinated approach among diplomats, development experts, and defense personnel to bring sustainable development to Somalis and to help reconstitute the Somalian state could bear fruit if sustained over the long run.

In this regard, this article has identified a range of intervention policies and programs as well as tools and technologies that could increase sustainability and stability and delay, defer, or prevent failure. The article also identified the range of stakeholders, including state and nonstate actors (intergovernmental organizations and NGOs). The article determined their likely reactions to stabilization and sustainability efforts, as well as their willingness to accept constructive roles in the process of sustainable development or the likelihood that they will oppose efforts. The task of winning over partners to assist the Horn of Africa in achieving sustainable development and stabilization is very difficult and requires an ongoing effort to change structures and attitudes. **ISSQ**

Notes

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41. Solomon Gomes (AU Peace and Security Commission, Addis Ababa), interview by author, 31 May 2007. Another problem in Darfur is that Libyan and Eritrean soldiers seem to be autonomous from the AU peacekeeping force.
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55. Terrence Lyons, *Avoiding Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2007); and Wong, interview.

56. Wong, interview. The Carter Center found that there were significant flaws but not enough to change the outcome of the elections. The EU cut direct aid to Ethiopia.

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64. Philip Dobie (UNDP Drylands Development Center), interview by author, 6 June 2007. According to Dobie, Darfur and other conflicts over pastoral land are development failures, not meteorological disasters. Local populations have been adept at dealing with climatic fluctuation for hundreds of years.

65. Woldentensaie, interview.

66. Graham and Wondimkum, interview. In Somali areas with small clans, there is no conflict. However, in Gambella is another area where the USAID has been assisting with conflict-

mitigation work, even though environmental issues are not relevant in such a lush and sparsely populated area.

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71. Ibid.
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73. Ibid.
74. Susanne Schmeidl and Cirù Mwaùra, *Early Warning and Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa: Protocol on the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism for IGAD Member States* (Trenton, NJ, and Asmara, Eritrea: Red Sea Press, 2001); and IGAD-CEWARN personnel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, interview by author, 31 May 2007.
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86. Grignon, interview.
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89. Richards, interview. In discussion is a broader regional conflict mitigation program. Security is needed for NGOs specializing in conflict mitigation and doing work in conflict zones.
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91. Gomes, interview.
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93. Amb. David Kikaya and Prof. Moses Onyango (International Relations, US International University, Nairobi), interview by author, 6 June 2007.
94. Grignon, interview.
95. Lyons, *Avoiding Conflict*; and Wong, interview.
96. Wong, interview.
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98. Grignon, interview. See also Lyons, *Avoiding Conflict*.
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100. Michael Chege, interviewed in Nairobi, June 7, 2007.
101. Brig Maurice A. Walugu (operations director, Ministry of Defence, Nairobi), interview by author, 4 June 2007.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid.
106. Col Don Zimmer, interview by author, 4 June 2007.
107. Wong, interview.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid.
110. Kinfé Abraham, interview by author, 31 May 2007
111. Prof. Berhanu Kassahun (Department of Political Science and International Relations, Addis Ababa University), interview by author, 1 June 2007.
112. Amb. Wane (African Union Peace and Security Commission, Addis Ababa), interview by author, 1 June 2007.
113. Knausenberger, interview. Also, COMESA is tied into the New Partnership for African Development, which is attempting to hold states accountable in areas of governance, accountability, and development.
114. Lyons, *Avoiding Conflict*.
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117. Ann Muir, *Customary Pastoral Institutions Study* (Washington, DC: USAID, March 2007).
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124. Woldentensaie, interview.
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Resurrecting the “Icon”

The Enduring Relevance of Clausewitz’s *On War*

Nikolas Gardner

FOR STUDENTS OF strategy, Carl von Clausewitz has long been a polarizing figure. Notwithstanding their rather different interpretations of *On War*, soldiers, statesmen, and scholars such as Moltke the Elder, Gen Colin Powell, and Sir Michael Howard have praised its insights and elevated it to the forefront of the strategic canon. Their enthusiasm has been matched by the hostility of writers like Sir Basil H. Liddell Hart, Sir John Keegan, and Martin van Creveld, who have condemned Clausewitz as bloodthirsty, misguided, and obsolete.

Phillip S. Meilinger sides emphatically with the latter school in his article, “Busting the Icon: Restoring Balance to the Influence of Clausewitz,” in the premiere issue of this journal. Meilinger argues that the current predicament of the US military in Iraq stems from its cultural ignorance and its obsession with bloody, decisive land battles, conditions that he attributes directly to its fascination with the Prussian theorist. The extent to which such shortcomings actually afflict American forces in Iraq is debatable. What is clear, however, is that neither recent scholarship on Clausewitz nor a careful reading of *On War* itself supports Meilinger’s diatribe. For Meilinger, like many other detractors, a sound grasp of Clausewitz’s arguments is apparently not a prerequisite for attacking them. His condemnation of *On War* is particularly unfortunate at a time when the book is inspiring insightful and creative attempts to address the strategic challenges facing the United States in Iraq and elsewhere. This essay evaluates Meilinger’s principal criticisms of Clausewitz’s ideas before turning to consider briefly the real influence Clausewitz has had on the US military and the broader strategic studies community.

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Clausewitz and “The Primacy of Slaughter in War”

Meilinger begins by acknowledging briefly the value of some key concepts in *On War*, including the importance of understanding the nature of a conflict before embarking upon it, the inevitability of friction and fog, the relationship between military strategy and political objectives, and the “paradoxical” trinity. He then quickly transitions to the attack, noting that Clausewitz died before completing *On War* to his satisfaction, leaving his widow to publish the manuscript as a “rough draft.” This, along with the dialectical method of reasoning employed throughout the book, has left it littered with “contradictions and redundancies” that can mislead the modern reader.¹ Numerous writers have observed that these issues have encouraged misinterpretation of Clausewitz’s ideas.² Despite mentioning them, Meilinger does not believe that these problems have presented a significant impediment to understanding *On War*. On the contrary, he contends that Clausewitz clearly and consistently emphasized “the primacy of slaughter in war.”³ To support this assertion, Meilinger provides a sampling of 20 apparently unequivocal statements advocating the destruction of the enemy in a bloody, decisive battle. This apocalyptic approach to warfare should not be surprising, he argues, because “to Clausewitz, decisive battles were the part and parcel of war. After all, he had lived through the Napoleonic Wars and written at length on the wars of Frederick the Great. Fighting major battles made those eras important and different from what had gone before, and that is why Clausewitz emphasized them.”⁴

In an age when Western public opinion takes a dim view of large-scale bloodletting, the utility of such an approach is limited. In Meilinger’s opinion, this Clausewitzian obsession with slaughter has tainted the doctrine, educational institutions, and strategy of the US military. He argues that Army and Marine Corps doctrines echo *On War*, emphasizing the importance of violent, close combat. Enthusiasm for the Prussian theorist at the prestigious National War College is apparently so feverish that the curriculum includes a staff ride to Gettysburg with the intent of “glorifying a battle that included two of the bloodiest and most inane frontal assaults against a fortified position in US military history.”⁵ Meilinger implies that American military operations since Korea have been directed by Army officers whose outlooks have been shaped by an unthinking commitment to close combat.⁶ Disaster has been averted only when political factors have prevented the large-scale deployment of ground forces and instead forced the

use of airpower in conjunction with special operations forces. In cases like Afghanistan in 2003, Meilinger contends that this approach produced “politically desirable results with a remarkably low casualty-toll—to both sides.”⁷ In Iraq, however, he asserts that “the Clausewitzian focus on decisive battle and bloodshed” encouraged American commanders to deploy a large invasion force that sparked an insurgency, a type of warfare on which *On War* offers precious little advice. The Iraqi quagmire can thus be attributed largely to the embrace of outdated Clausewitzian dictums regarding the necessity of decisive land battles.

This thesis is problematic on so many levels that it is difficult to know where to begin. At basis, Meilinger’s description of Clausewitz’s ideas amounts to an inaccurate caricature. Rather than grappling with the complex and often contradictory ideas expressed in *On War*, Meilinger employs an intermittent form of textual analysis to demonstrate Clausewitz’s alleged obsession with decisive battle. This is a wholly inadequate means of explaining a nuanced argument that appears in different stages of development throughout the book. Elucidating this argument and its evolution over time is not prohibitively difficult, thanks to the patient efforts of numerous historians. We know that the Napoleonic Wars had an indelible impact on Clausewitz, leading him to emphasize the centrality of the bloody and decisive clash of arms throughout much of his career as a scholar. In the 1820s, however, his study of history led him to acknowledge the legitimacy of conflicts fought for limited political ends, in which such engagements might be neither necessary nor desirable.

Historians disagree over the extent to which he managed to revise his existing work to reflect the dual nature of war before his untimely death in 1831.⁸ Nonetheless, they concur that chapter 1 of book 1 represents Clausewitz’s ideas in mature form. It also outlines his conception of war in general terms. Entitled “What is War?” this chapter begins by positing that when considered through the lens of a pure (and artificial) logic, war should escalate to extremes, as each belligerent intensifies its efforts to defeat the enemy. It then explains that the political objectives sought by the belligerents, the relative advantage of remaining on the defensive, and the inherent imperfection of intelligence, all tend to limit the escalation of conflicts in reality. This leads Clausewitz to the counterargument that war is a continuation of political activity by other means. He then reconciles these opposing ideas in a conceptual model that aims to shed light on the

nature of any conflict: his “paradoxical trinity” of emotion, chance, and reason.

This chapter is the key to understanding Clausewitz’s theory of war. It makes clear that the bloody, decisive clash of arms is just one of many forms that wars may take. The conflicts of Clausewitz’s time often culminated in such climactic engagements, but he recognized that wars fought for limited objectives did not necessarily involve decisive battles. It is worth noting that this recognition arose at least in part from his comparison of the wars of Napoleon with those of Frederick the Great. Meilinger suggests that these two commanders lived in an age in which “major battles” became more important and more prevalent. To Clausewitz, however, not to mention most military historians, the real dividing line lies between the age of Frederick and that of Napoleon. While Frederick fought “princely” wars of limited duration and intensity for relatively restricted goals, Napoleon engaged in “national” wars that mobilized the resources of entire nations in pursuit of far more ambitious objectives. According to Peter Paret, “Positing a measure of discontinuity between Frederick and Napoleon helped Clausewitz create a unified, all-encompassing theory of war.”⁹

To overlook the chapter in which this theory is expounded in favor of a series of disconnected quotes from throughout the book is to misrepresent the fundamental argument of *On War*. Meilinger justifies this by arguing that the force and frequency of Clausewitz’s endorsements of decisive battle reveal his true feelings on the subject. Yet a closer examination of these endorsements reveals that they are accompanied by numerous caveats and stipulations. Six of the 20 examples that Meilinger lists to demonstrate Clausewitz’s emphasis on “the necessity of decisive and violent battle” appear in chapter 2 of book 1, another chapter which was apparently revised toward the end of his life. In the context of this chapter, which actually explores the relationship between objectives and the military means used to achieve them, these statements are characterizations of war in the abstract, which are invariably followed by descriptions of how real-world conflicts tend to differ from that model. For example, Meilinger includes the following extract from page 95 of *On War*: “Since in the engagement everything is concentrated on the destruction of the enemy, or rather of *his armed forces*, which is inherent in its very concept, it follows that the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces is always the means by which the purpose of the engagement is achieved.” Immediately after this statement Clausewitz continues, “The purpose in question may be the destruction

of the enemy's forces, but not necessarily so; it may be quite different. As we have shown, the destruction of the enemy is not the only means of attaining the political object, when there are other objectives for which the war is waged."¹⁰

Clausewitz certainly does not discount the importance of decisive battle in this chapter. Indeed, its principal argument is that the prospect of battle, even if it never occurs, must exert a significant influence over the planning and conduct of war. Clausewitz expresses this idea in the following well-known metaphor: "The decision by arms is for all major and minor operations in war what cash payment is in commerce. Regardless of how rarely settlements actually occur, they can never be entirely absent."¹¹ This is rather different than advocating the pursuit of a bloody and decisive engagement under any circumstances.¹² Clausewitz clearly recognized that the military means and methods used to achieve a particular political objective depended on the nature of the objective itself. Thus, wars varied widely in their scale, intensity, and duration.

Clausewitz also understood that belligerents might seek victory through unconventional methods. In his attempt to demonstrate Clausewitz's obsession with decisive battle, Meilinger downplays the significance of insurgency in the Prussian theorist's conceptualization of war, arguing that "any lessons derived from *On War* regarding modern revolutionary warfare are largely being imagined by hopeful readers where none exists."¹³ In support of this argument, Meilinger notes that *On War* includes only "one brief chapter" on people's war. He also contends that Clausewitz was so doubtful of the effectiveness of insurgents that he advocated their use only in conjunction with conventional forces. It is important to recognize that, unlike many modern commentators, Clausewitz did not view "people's war" as a type of conflict fundamentally distinct from large-scale conventional operations. Rather, he saw both as different methods of warfare chosen by belligerents based on their relative strengths as well as their offensive or defensive orientations at a given point in a conflict. In book 6 of *On War*, Clausewitz argues that guerrilla warfare gives a significant advantage to the defender because it compels the attacker to disperse its forces and prolong its campaign. This in turn undermines the attacker's political resolve, which is inherently more fragile than that of a defender fighting to preserve its territorial integrity or perhaps even its existence as a sovereign entity. Therefore, guerrilla tactics enable the defender to sap the strength of its enemy until it is able to take the strategic offensive

using conventional forces. Thus, as Jon Sumida recently argued, Clausewitz viewed guerrilla warfare as “an important element of his concept of the greater strength of the defensive.”¹⁴

Not only is insurgency a significant component of Clausewitz’s thought, but also his ideas are of considerable use in explaining the dynamics of real-world conflicts. Mao Zedong and Vo Nguyen Giap followed Clausewitz in viewing guerrilla warfare as one stage of a protracted process culminating in a large-scale offensive by conventional forces.¹⁵ While their respective strategies for revolution in China and Vietnam were not executed without flaw, communist victories in both countries followed a pattern that would be recognizable to Clausewitz, with the effective use of guerrilla tactics followed by a transition to large-scale conventional operations. His conception of guerrilla and conventional war as two different hues in an integrated spectrum of violence is also applicable to contemporary conflicts. In their recent examination of the 2006 war in Lebanon, Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey Friedman have demonstrated that Hezbollah employed both guerrilla and conventional methods against Israeli forces. They suggest that the United States will face enemies employing a similar blend of methods in future conflicts. More generally, they argue:

The commonplace tendency to see guerrilla and conventional methods as a stark dichotomy is a mistake and has been so for at least a century. In fact, there are profound elements of “guerrilla” methods in the military behavior of almost all state militaries in conventional warfare, from tactics all the way through strategy. And most nonstate guerrilla organizations have long used tactics and strategies that most observers tend to associate with state military behavior. In reality, there is a continuum of methods between the polar extremes of the Maginot Line and the Viet Cong, and most real-world cases fall somewhere in between.¹⁶

Thus, far from being irrelevant, *On War* remains a valuable tool for understanding contemporary conflicts. By placing insurgency in the broader context of the relationship between offense and defense that characterizes all wars, Clausewitz helps explain why states and nonstate actors choose guerrilla methods to pursue their military and political objectives.

Overall, in his attempt to demonstrate Clausewitz’s alleged fixation with bloody conventional battles, Meilinger has overlooked some of the principal arguments of *On War*. Those parts of the book that he draws upon, he uses selectively, quoting statements out of context with little regard for the qualifications and caveats that often surround them. The result is a fundamentally distorted portrayal. In fact, Clausewitz recognized that the means and methods employed by the belligerents in any war depend on

their relative strengths, their offensive or defensive orientations, and the political objectives for which they are fighting. Thus, the decisive clash of arms is only one of many possible forms that war might take.

“War is a Continuation of Policy by Other Means”

Meilinger is actually well aware of Clausewitz’s argument regarding the relationship between war and the political objectives for which it is fought. Indeed, it is this argument that is the second major target of his wrath. Meilinger notes that Clausewitz’s most famous statement has been translated into English in a variety of ways, with war defined as a continuation of “politics,” “policy,” “diplomacy,” and other slightly different translations of the German word *politik*. This issue has significant implications for our understanding of *On War*, and it has attracted considerable attention from scholars.¹⁷ After mentioning it, however, Meilinger rather arbitrarily settles on policy on the grounds that it is “the most common translation.”¹⁸ He then adopts an interpretation articulated by John Keegan in *A History of Warfare*, contending that when Clausewitz stated that war is a continuation of policy by other means, he meant “that war was an affair of states and that the decision to wage it was based on rational calculations regarding political issues and major state interests.”¹⁹

Meilinger takes issue with this allegedly “Clausewitzian” view. Leaning further on Keegan, he argues that societies throughout history “have made war for distinctly cultural reasons” rather than simply to achieve policy objectives. He also draws on a recent work by Stephen Peter Rosen to show the impact of “nonrational” cognitive processes as well as hormones such as testosterone on human behavior and decision making.²⁰ According to Meilinger, however, the American military is trapped in a Clausewitzian straitjacket, seeing war solely as a rational pursuit of policy. Believing that war is conducted by actors attempting to achieve rational policy objectives, it has become “culturally tone deaf.”²¹ Consequently, its leaders are bewildered when adversaries and allies behave in what they perceive to be nonrational ways. Not only do they misunderstand their enemies, but they also alienate potential allies, such as Iraqi civilians who have become disenchanted by the heavy-handed, “testosterone-induced tactics” of American Soldiers and Marines.

This critique of Clausewitz is neither new nor particularly robust. Like Meilinger’s argument regarding the “primacy of slaughter” in *On War*, it

confuses Clausewitz's descriptions of war in the abstract with his arguments about war in reality. To begin, it rests on an exceedingly narrow understanding of the term *policy*. Meilinger never explicitly defines the term, but his discussion makes clear that he considers it to be separate from a broad range of "other" factors that have sparked conflicts, including economics, ideology, religion, nationalism, revenge, greed, and even domestic politics. Clausewitz has been criticized for his lack of attention to economics. There is no evidence to suggest that he believed that economic factors had no influence on the policy objectives of states. Indeed, the notion that any casual observer of politics, let alone an experienced soldier and historian like Clausewitz, would be blind to the links between economic factors, government policy, and war is difficult to take seriously.²² Nor did Clausewitz consider the development of policy to be a wholly rational undertaking, as John Keegan has alleged. Ideally, he assumed that states would develop rational policies aimed at enhancing their own power. In reality, however, he recognized that the political decision-making process was often far from rational. That he understood the influence of nonrational factors like ideology, religion, nationalism, and revenge on the development of policy is evident in the first aspect of the trinity "composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity."²³ In the words of Christopher Bassford and Edward Villacres, "The 'remarkable trinity' is, in fact, Clausewitz's description of the psychological environment of politics, of which 'war is a continuation.' The only element of this political trinity that makes it unique to *war* is that the emotions discussed are those that might incline people to violence, whereas politics in general will involve the full range of human feelings."²⁴

Despite Meilinger's attempts to resuscitate it, Keegan's argument that some societies make war for "cultural reasons" disconnected from politics has been euthanized by a variety of scholars. Christopher Bassford has pointed out that politics is simply the process by which power is distributed within states and between them. War is merely an extension of this process with the addition of force. Thus, all wars have the same connection to politics, regardless of their often exotic cultural veneer. As he explains:

The power being contested may be social, as in the endemic personal competitions in feudal societies or during the European "Age of Kings"; economic, as with control of gold for the mercantilists, human flesh for the cannibal or slave-trader, or food for the ecological disaster victims on Easter Island; religious, as in the early stages of the Thirty Years' War or, in a rather different sense, Aztec Mexico; ideo-

logical; or anything else. Regardless of the motivation, the contest is for power and is therefore political.²⁵

Meilinger criticizes Bassford's broad definition of the political process. It is evident, however, that Clausewitz understood politics in similarly broad terms. As Antulio Echevarria has pointed out, *On War* uses examples from a diverse range of societies, including "tribal" peoples like the Tartars, to demonstrate "how policy and political forces have shaped war from antiquity to the modern age." Like the Romans of the Republic and the French under Napoleon, the Tartars fought to achieve an objective: in their case, land. The religion and culture of the Tartars influenced the nature of their objective and the way they sought to secure it and, thus, "fell under the rubric of political forces in Clausewitz's mind."²⁶ For Clausewitz, therefore, culture was significant in that it affected how and why societies went to war, but it did not change the fact that they went to war to secure a political objective of some sort.

Stephen Peter Rosen offers rather more reliable intellectual scaffolding on which to construct a serious argument. Unfortunately for Meilinger, Rosen's observations are largely consistent with those of Clausewitz. As Peter Paret has noted, Clausewitz was unique in his own era in that he "took the decisive step of placing the analysis of psychological forces at the very centre of the study of war."²⁷ Rosen in fact quotes at length from Clausewitz's discussion of the psychological impact of defeat on an army.²⁸ Not surprisingly, given when it was published, *On War* makes no mention of testosterone. Nonetheless, Clausewitz considered the desire for status, a quality Rosen relates to testosterone levels, to be of utmost importance in a military commander. As he explains in chapter 3 of book 1, "Of all the passions that inspire men in battle, none, we have to admit, is so powerful and so constant as the longing for honor and renown. . . . It is primarily this spirit of endeavor on the part of commanders at all levels, this inventiveness, energy, and competitive enthusiasm, which vitalizes an army and makes it victorious."²⁹ Thus, contrary to Meilinger's assertions, Clausewitz recognized that neither politics nor war was completely or even predominantly a rational process. Emotional, cultural, and psychological factors profoundly influenced both political objectives and the way in which they were pursued on the battlefield.

Carl von Clausewitz, the US Military, and Contemporary Strategic Thought

Meilinger's portrayal of Clausewitz's ideas amounts to a crude caricature. He may be correct, however, that some members of the US military understand these ideas in similar terms. As Peter Paret explained, when *On War* first gained prominence in Western military organizations in the latter half of the nineteenth century, officers read the book not as a holistic explanation of war as a phenomenon, but rather, "as a kind of operational manual," similar to the work of Clausewitz's contemporary and rival, Antoine-Henri Jomini.³⁰ This approach led readers to seize upon straightforward, prescriptive statements in the text of *On War*, and few of Clausewitz's declarations are more vivid than those concerning decisive battle. In the words of Michael Howard, Clausewitz describes battle "with a vigor and vivacity which make those chapters leap from the pages like a splash of scarlet against a background of scholarly gray."³¹ Thus, many military professionals of the nineteenth century interpreted *On War* as a Jominian blueprint for the destruction of the enemy army in battle.³²

This view has persisted over time because for many soldiers and statesmen, Jomini's prescriptive approach to strategy appears more immediately useful than that of Clausewitz. Rather than reflecting at length on the nature of war and explaining its complex dynamics, Jomini offers specific advice on how to conduct it. For those in search of straightforward solutions to real-world problems, Jomini's principles of war can be attractive, regardless of their contemporary relevance. This preference for practical guidance is evident in the popularity of Clausewitz's "center of gravity" in military circles. As Colin Gray has commented, "It may be no exaggeration to suggest that the American military has seized on the concept of the 'center of gravity' and sought to apply it in a distinctly Jominian spirit. After all, here is a concept with direct practical use. Unlike friction, or the culminating point of victory, and other difficult concepts, center of gravity appears to be ready for the strategic primetime."³³

Nonetheless, it would be wrong to suggest that the meaning of *On War* is accessible only to introspective academics sequestered from the pressures of war and statecraft. Soldiers, diplomats, and political leaders are perfectly capable of grasping Clausewitz's ideas and using them to inform their judgments. The most successful have been those who have read *On War* not for "practical hints and military prescriptions," but for general insights into the nature of war.³⁴ The impact of Clausewitz is evident, for

example, on the authors of US Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, even if he is not the only, or even the most important, influence on them. To Meilinger and others who associate Clausewitz solely with conventional battles, this document appears to be a repudiation of *On War*. In fact, Clausewitz's emphasis on the importance of determining the nature of any conflict can be seen in the manual's observation that "every insurgency is contextual and presents its own set of challenges."³⁵ More generally, the manual's recognition that "political power is the central issue in insurgencies and counterinsurgencies" reflects Clausewitz's observations regarding the relationship between war and politics in the broader context of the trinity.³⁶ Lest this be dismissed as wishful thinking by a Clausewitzian desperate to discern signs of "the master" in the doctrinal tea leaves of FM 3-24, it is worth noting that two of the manual's authors have made explicit their debt to *On War* in other publications. David Kilcullen has responded to Clausewitz's admonition regarding the necessity of determining the nature of a conflict to argue for the "disaggregation" of the global war on terrorism.³⁷ John Nagl has used the trinity as a starting point in his own study of counterinsurgency.³⁸


FM 3-24 has also faced criticism from a Clausewitzian perspective. Gian Gentile has argued that the manual is being applied dogmatically, with insufficient consideration to the possibility of an adaptive enemy. While he stops short of advocating the destruction of the enemy in a decisive battle, Gentile also contends that the manual is too dismissive of combat, which Clausewitz saw as the essence of war.³⁹ Such dissent indicates disagreement within the US military regarding the implications of *On War* in today's strategic environment. Given the complexity of the book, this is not surprising. More importantly, while some may continue to view Clausewitz through a Jominian lens, it is evident that understanding of the Prussian theorist's ideas in the US military is much more varied, pervasive, and sophisticated than Meilinger suggests.

The same is true in the broader strategic studies community. The precise meaning and implications of Clausewitz's ideas remain subject to considerable debate and reassessment.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding the occasional exposé proclaiming the danger and/or irrelevance of *On War*, scholars generally agree that Clausewitzian concepts provide a very effective framework for understanding the fundamental dynamics of war, adaptable to any time and place. Recent work has applied this framework productively to inform analyses of conflicts and situations that Clausewitz could never have envisioned. For ex-

ample, Adam Cobb draws Clausewitz's observations regarding the relationship of means and will, the difficulty of fighting multiple enemies, and the necessity of determining the nature of a conflict to develop an incisive assessment of American strategy in Iraq.⁴¹ Scott Douglas has built on Kilcullen's argument for the disaggregation of the war on terrorism, calling for the "selective identification" and targeting of enemy centers of gravity by the United States.⁴² More broadly, David Lonsdale has used Clausewitz as a framework to evaluate claims regarding the transformative nature of the Revolution in Military Affairs.⁴³ Rupert Smith has employed the Clausewitzian trinity as an analytical tool to develop the argument that Western militaries have entered an age of low-intensity "War Amongst the People."⁴⁴ Significantly, Smith uses Clausewitz's ideas to develop a powerful critique of the Western preference for large-scale military operations, which Meilinger attributes to a slavish devotion to *On War*. The fact that these authors invoke Clausewitz does not exempt their conclusions from any criticism. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that *On War* is far more than an ethnocentric invocation of decisive land battles.

Conclusion

Overall, there is little evidence to support Meilinger's assertions regarding the malign influence of Clausewitz. A cursory analysis of *On War* contradicts his characterizations of the book's principal arguments. Furthermore, a survey of contemporary military doctrine and strategic studies scholarship reveals that authors—both military and civilian—have a more sophisticated understanding of Clausewitz's ideas than Meilinger suggests. The primary problem appears to be that Meilinger has not read *On War* with a great deal of care. If this is the case, it is only a symptom of a deeper issue. At basis, Meilinger seems less interested in grappling with the complexities of *On War* than with condemning the bloody, "ground-centric," and culturally insensitive approach to war that he believes the book advocates. To a culture that often reduces the learning process to a PowerPoint briefing, it is tempting to comb Clausewitz's ruminations for "takeaways" that prescribe a particular course of action, and this is apparently what Meilinger has done. To read *On War* as a work of advocacy, however, is to misunderstand its purpose. Clausewitz sought not to provide instructions for victory in battle but to illuminate the nature of war, regardless of time and place. Granted, there are sections of *On War* that have little applicability beyond the early nineteenth century. Nonetheless, it also includes discussions of the dynamics of warfare

and statecraft that transcend the period in which they were written and shed light on the nature of conflict today. Thus, in ascribing American military failings to *On War*, Meilinger is condemning a book that actually has many insights to offer into contemporary conflict and diplomacy. These insights are not always obvious or actionable. Nor are they sufficient by themselves to address the strategic challenges facing the United States. Given the scale and complexity of these challenges, it would be unrealistic and intellectually lazy to expect easy answers from any single book. More than any other work, *On War* provides a foundation for understanding the nature of war, which is an essential first step in the process of devising sound strategy. Rather than casting him aside, we need more than ever to read Clausewitz carefully. 

Notes

1. Phillip S. Meilinger, "Busting the Icon: Restoring Balance to the Influence of Clausewitz," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 119.

2. See, for example, Peter Paret, *Understanding War: Essays on Clausewitz and the History of Military Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 163; Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 228–54; and Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 22–23.

3. Meilinger, "Busting the Icon," 126.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., 129.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 130.

8. Peter Paret and Michael Howard have suggested that Clausewitz completed relatively few of his intended revisions, based on their belief that a note by the author declaring his satisfaction with only chapter 1 of book 1 was written in 1830. Azar Gat, Hew Strachan, and Jon Sumida have dated this note to 1827, which suggests that he revised more of *On War* before 1830. See Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 70–71; Gat, *History of Military Thought*, 257–65; Hew Strachan, "A Clausewitz for Every Season," *American Interest* 2, no. 6 (July/August 2007): 31–32; and Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz: A New Approach to On War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), xiv–xv.

9. Paret, *Understanding War*, 151–52.

10. Clausewitz, *On War*, 95.

11. Ibid., 97.

12. For a discussion of this chapter of *On War*, see Michael Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought* (London, UK, and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2001), 135–54.

13. Meilinger, "Busting the Icon," 131.

14. Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz*, 15. See also Christopher Daase, "Clausewitz and Small Wars," ed. Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 182–95.

15. On the relationship between the ideas of Mao and Clausewitz, see R. Lynn Rylander, "Mao as a Clausewitzian Strategist," *Military Review* 61, no. 8 (August 1981): 13–21. On the origins of Giap's ideas, see Robert J. O'Neill, *General Giap: Politician and Strategist* (New York and Washington, DC: Praeger, 1969), 62–63; and Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: The History, 1946–1975* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 18–22.

16. Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey A. Friedman, *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, PA: US Army Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 7–8.

17. See, for example, Christopher Bassford and Edward J. Villacres, "Reclaiming the Clausewitzian Trinity," *Parameters* 25, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 9–19; and Hew Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War: A Biography* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007), 163–65.

18. Meilinger, "Busting the Icon," 134.

19. *Ibid.*, 135.

20. Meilinger reiterates and expands slightly upon these arguments in "Clausewitz's Bad Advice," *Armed Forces Journal* (August 2008), <http://www.afji.com/2008/08/3599010>.

21. Meilinger, "Busting the Icon," 132.

22. Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 208.

23. Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

24. Bassford and Villacres, "Reclaiming the Clausewitzian Trinity."

25. Christopher Bassford, "John Keegan and the Grand Tradition of Trashing Clausewitz: A Polemic," *War in History* 1, no. 3 (November 1994): 319–36.

26. Antulio J. Echevarria, "War, Politics and RMA—The Legacy of Clausewitz," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 10 (Winter 1995–96): 78.

27. Paret, *Understanding War*, 114.

28. Stephen Peter Rosen, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford, UK: Princeton University Press, 2005), 101–4.

29. Clausewitz, *On War*, 105.

30. Peter Paret, "Clausewitz and the Nineteenth Century," in Michael Howard, ed., *The Theory and Practice of War: Essays Presented to Captain B. H. Liddell Hart* (New York: Praeger, 1965), 31. See also John Shy, "Jomini," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 178.

31. Michael Howard, "The Influence of Clausewitz," in Howard and Paret, eds., *On War*, 35.

32. See for example Robert Citino, *The German Way of War: From the Thirty Years' War to the Third Reich* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 147.

33. Colin S. Gray, "Clausewitz, History and the Future Strategic World," ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich, *The Past as Prologue: The Importance of History for the Military Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 122.

34. Bassford, "John Keegan and the Grand Tradition of Bashing Clausewitz."

35. US Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006), Foreword.

36. *Ibid.*, 1-1.

37. David Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no. 4 (August 2005): 597–617.

38. John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 18–19.

39. Gian P. Gentile, "Our COIN Doctrine Removes the Enemy from the Essence of War," *Armed Forces Journal* (January 2008); Gentile, "Eating Soup with a Spoon," *Armed Forces Journal* (September 2007).

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40. For two recent examples, see Antulio Echevarria, “On the Clausewitz of the Cold War: Reconsidering the Primacy of Policy in On War,” *Armed Forces and Society* 34, no. 1 (October 2007): 90–108; and Terrence Holmes, “Planning versus Chaos in Clausewitz’s On War,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 1 (February 2007): 129–51.

41. Adam Cobb, “Iraq: A Strategic Assessment,” *Civil Wars* 9, no. 1 (March 2007), 32–60.

42. Frank ‘Scott’ Douglas, “Fighting the Inchoate War: Defining, Fighting and Second-Guessing the ‘Long War,’” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 3 (June 2007), 391–420.

43. David Lonsdale, *The Nature of War in the Information Age: Clausewitzian Future* (London, UK, and Portland OR: Cass, 2004).

44. Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

Book Reviews

Nation Building: The Geopolitical History of Korea by Walter B. Jung.
University Press of America, 1998, 384 pp., \$76.50.

One must begin this historical narrative by reading the preface, for it is here that author Walter B. Jung sets the stage by declaring his thesis: “a nation’s history is formed and shaped by its interactions to key external powers” (p. v). Perhaps no other place in the world demonstrates this more than Korea. From its earliest days as an embryonic state pinioned between China, Japan, and Russia to today’s tenuous alliance with the United States, the shape of Korea has been forged by the fires of external power. While this book must discuss some of the internal mechanics of the nation for clarification, the focus is clearly “on the mechanisms and consequences of regional geopolitics that Korean states have had to deal with . . .” (ibid.). To this point, the author does a superb job. A straightforward reading provides a chronicle of the external forces impacting Korea, but there are additional points the reader can take away—an appreciation of history, changing paradigms of power, and lessons learned to be used by today’s leaders.

The first chapter opens with a tedious description of the people and land of Korea. Wading through these first few pages, one might think the book is a left-over reading assignment from one of Dr. Jung’s classes at the University of Central Oklahoma, where he recently retired. But after a bit of dry reading, the saga of Korean history unfolds with Old Testament fervor; kingdoms rising, merging, fracturing, and falling; invasions by foreign hordes valiantly rebuffed and some not. Since the advent of the first kingdoms in the fourth century BC, the peninsula has seen a continual cycle of unification and separation as well as foreign occupation that has fueled the development of fierce nationalism. It is almost unfathomable for the Western mind to grasp such extensive history. For example, beginning in the third century AD there were over 300 years of Orwellian conflict between three kingdoms occupying the peninsula. That one small period of Korean history is more than the entire existence of the United States. From the Korean saga one must consider the cultural consciousness created by such history and realize it to be a factor when interacting with ancient countries and their people.

By examining such an expansive period of time in such a volatile region, the reader has a front row seat to see the changing paradigm in power. In the earliest days, it was the Chinese and Japanese trying to use military force to physically occupy the strategic peninsula. As time marches on, cultural aspects become more important, and as globalization increases, so do economics and politics. The Korean War was more of a proxy war between political ideologies than a matter of occupying land. The industrialization of modern Korea has been greatly impacted by the constantly shifting actions of various US presidents’ foreign policies. It is

this industrialization that is providing Korea with its current military and economic power. The author does a commendable job in the last third of the book providing a comprehensive, yet concise, narrative of the Korea-US relationship post-World War II. This part of the book also provides many examples that can be useful to leaders.

Actions taken by the United States after the Korean War provide lessons that are applicable today. These include the United States sponsoring a democratic government in a country that had never had that form of government. There were also issues of administering aid—the consequences of focusing on short-term consumption instead of strategic infrastructure rebuilding. Lastly, the book illustrates how US actions can bring an ally closer and simultaneously drive it away; how it is possible to build goodwill and anti-American sentiment at the same time by flip-flopping strategies and contradictory policies. Learning of these events and their consequences is important to any well-rounded leader.

The book does an excellent job in its mission of chronicling the impact of foreign powers on Korea. There is no right- or left-leaning bias detectable. The writing can be dry at times, but as the reader becomes engrossed in the events detailed in the text, the clinical descriptions become inconspicuous. Unfortunately, books with this focus on externalities are few and far between. More often the influences of external powers must be gleaned from historical manuscripts, but there are other books in a similar vein. *The World is Flat* by Thomas L. Friedman examines globalization and provides excellent insight into various forces shaping the world today. One of my favorites is *The Prize* by Daniel Yergin. It examines the entire oil industry on a global historical scale and provides some great insight into the development of the geopolitical structure of the Middle East. Today, more than ever, external powers shape the path on which any country travels. That is why it is increasingly important for leaders to have a broad foundation of knowledge derived from books such as *Nation Building* that help sharpen analytical skills.

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The Leader of the Future: Visions, Strategies, and Practices for the New Era
edited by Frances Hesselbein and Marshall Goldsmith. Jossey-Bass, 2006,
318 pp., \$27.95.

Leadership is a volatile subject. Some people believe studying it is a waste of time—“leaders are born not made” is their motto. Others believe leadership can be learned and influenced. The prevailing view favors the latter. This review highlights several ideas presented in *The Leader of the Future*, illustrating what the reader can expect.

This anthology, edited by two respected authorities in the leadership field, categorizes articles written by contemporary leaders from the private and social

sectors, government, the military, and education into five parts. This permits the reader to read each article consecutively or just the section that appears to address an immediate need. *Part One: A Vision of Leadership* is reserved for an article by Joseph A. Maciariello, "Peter F. Drucker on Executive Leadership and Effectiveness." The Leader to Leader Institute holds the copyright to this anthology, and Peter Drucker is its founder. This entry sets the tone and vision for the book.

Part Two: Leading in a Diverse World focuses on a wide-ranging organizational challenge—what is needed to earn strong contributions from all team members? The first article, "Systems Citizenship: The Leadership Mandate for this Millennium" by Peter Senge, emphasizes the need for nongovernmental organization (NGO) and business interaction. With the military's expanded role in nation building, military, contractor, and NGO interaction is critical for overall success. People who understand systems logic and can recognize patterns are essential in this environment. An organization geared to capitalize on each member's unique capability to contribute is primed for success. It is also better prepared to deal with crises and stress.

Many readers will discover immediate value in *Part Three: Leading in a Time of Crisis and Complexity*. The first two articles, "Anchoring Leadership in the Work of Adaptive Progress" by Ronald A. Heifetz and "The Challenge of Complexity" by John Alexander, discuss leadership's adaptive challenges and how complexity increases leadership situation challenges. The first discusses time differences for adaptive work as opposed to technical work. Heifetz hypothesizes that Moses took 40 years to "bring the children of Israel to the Promised Land not because it was such a long journey, but because it took that long for the people to leave behind the dependent mentality of slavery and generate the capacity for self-government." This observation should be useful for recognizing why nation-building efforts in today's world progress at a glacial pace.

John Alexander uses the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the challenges of responding to those natural disasters as an example of complexity of crisis, suggesting the very definition of leadership is changing because of the rise of complex challenges with no preexisting solutions or expertise. The complexity of society, the global nature of events, near-instantaneous communication, and visibility highlight the enormity of the problem as well as the shortcomings of preconceived solutions chosen by many leaders. This book scopes the challenge and provides tools to increase success in future endeavors by multidimensional leaders with global views.

Part Four: Leading Organizations of the Future discusses multiple views of a critical aspect of leadership. David Ulrich and Norm Smallwood discuss "Leadership as a Brand." Branding goes well beyond mission statements and visions. Strong, effective leadership at all levels is vital to an organization's success. Branding leadership puts leadership into business terms. This article lays out a six-step plan to achieve a leadership brand. Ulrich and Smallwood maintain branded leadership is the key to success.

Noel M. Tichy and Chris DeRose discuss “Leadership Judgment at the Front Line.” Frontline leaders create a framework for judgment calls. The authors use Best Buy, Intuit, and Yum! Foods as examples of organizations developing leadership in the front line where the worker interacts with the customer.

Quality and character of leaders is critical both now and in the future. *Part Five: The Quality and Character of the Leader of the Future* addresses these factors. Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner discuss “It’s Not Just the Leader’s Vision.” Most people accept vision as a critical factor in leadership; however, Kouzes and Posner remind us that people do not want to hear the leader’s vision. They want to hear “how their dreams will come true and their hopes will be fulfilled.” This section discusses how to integrate individual and corporate visions.

Usman A. Ghani, in “The Leader Integrator: An Emerging Role,” and Edgar H. Schein, in “Leadership Competencies: A Provocative New Look,” both discuss a developing need for leaders to combine culture and environment. Effective leaders bring organizations together. They need multiple skills, applied as needed, to ensure the organization achieves at its highest possible level. Ghani cites Lou V. Gerstner (former chairman and CEO of IBM), Oprah Winfrey (chairman of Harpo, Inc.), and Herbert W. Kelleher (founder and chairman of Southwest Airlines) as examples of model leader integrators. Each of these leaders brought a unique integration of skills to their respective organizations, ensuring their success. Most importantly, they accomplished this with skills unique to themselves. Other leader integrators will have to decide what they bring to their organizations and apply those skills to achieve their success.

This review highlights one or two articles in each part of the book. Many leadership books have gimmicks; not this one. Jam-packed with useful, forward-looking information, it offers insight useful for leaders at all levels of an organization. Some of the authors will be familiar to readers; however, none of the material is tired or recycled. Each author has presented evolutionary and revolutionary ideas for the reader’s consideration. This reviewer suggests this is a “cannot miss” read. Add it to your leadership library, but read it before putting it on the shelf.

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ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army by Robert K. Brigham.
University Press of Kansas, 2006, 250 pp., \$29.95.

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam never became a fully legitimate arm of the government because of misguided policies, poor leadership, and a failure to create a Vietnamese army with origins in and connections to Vietnamese culture and history. Robert K. Brigham makes his case convincingly in this welcomed post-revisionist monograph on a maligned army. He does so not with recycled English-language sources but instead relies on documents from the Vietnamese Archive in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnamese-language books and memoirs, and

dozens of interviews of ARVN veterans. Indeed, Brigham only used oral histories he could corroborate with other sources.

Among the strengths of this book are the author's analyses of ARVN conscription and the relationship between the draft and morale and family life. Conscription was nothing new to Vietnam, but historically it had been molded to the rhythms and requirements of family and agricultural life through terms not exceeding one year. When the ARVN increased the term to two years in pursuit of a stronger army, village agriculture and family life suffered severely from the loss of the backbone of the labor force. Consequently, the government prevented soldiers from fulfilling obligations to their families, forcing them to behave in a way that is shameful within that culture. Morale plummeted. By the late 1960s, soldiers brought their families with them to encampments or shanty towns so that they could care for each other.

Army life discouraged the soldiers because they did not receive adequate weapons and combat training prior to field operations and because the government made no effort to explain in political and cultural terms the reasons why they needed to sacrifice and fight for the government and idea of South Vietnam. This was the policy of RVN president Diem and his successors, because they feared a nationalistic, patriotic, and motivated ARVN might someday hold them accountable for corruption, failed policies, and the like. The ARVN was notorious for a high desertion rate, but Brigham points out that perhaps "only 20 to 30 percent of the soldiers listed as deserters actually were" skirting their duties out of fear or malice (p. 48). Over half of the deserters actually served in units to which they were not assigned. Many deserted to see their families and eventually returned to their units. Brigham thus accomplishes one of his goals: dispelling ill-founded conclusions with sound analyses. For instance, he refutes the myth that wounded US soldiers received preferential treatment over their ARVN counterparts.

In analyzing why the ARVN soldiers fought—in spite of poor training, poverty-level pay, and abject facilities—Brigham arrives at several inferences. Because training and training facilities were so substandard, a conscript's initial experience was that of alienation. Not only was he going to be away from his family for years, the ARVN lacked the spirit to function as a substitute family. Interviewees asked, "How can you build a nation without a well-trained army that knows why it is fighting and then gets to fight?" They also asserted that they did not fight for their buddies because ARVN small units lacked closeness and cohesion. Brigham concludes that soldiers fought on behalf of their families.

Brigham observes that the ARVN displayed better fighting skill, endurance, and effectiveness than is commonly credited. The discussion of the Battle of Ap Bac is excellent, and Brigham notes a couple of battles in which the ARVN fought very well, one of which Military Assistance Command, Vietnam called "a brilliant performance" (p. 94). Unfortunately, the author devotes only 28 pages to an assessment of the army's abilities in combat. While he defends the South Vietnamese performance during Tet, that offensive receives only two pages. Brigham scarcely mentions Lam Son 719 in a single sentence, and the 1972 Easter Offensive gets

two paragraphs of coverage. Although his intent “is not the story of men and maneuvers during the Vietnam War, or even the story of the ARVN in battle,” a fuller coverage of battle would have strengthened his thesis that by the early 1970s soldiers fought to keep their families together. Armies exist to fight. The topics of this book—conscription, family life, morale, training, and politics—all influenced the fighting effectiveness of the ARVN. An analysis of its battle performance would have completed his social history of the ARVN by more thoroughly tracing the connections between society and culture and the army’s deeds in war. Vietnam War historiography still awaits the definitive history of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Perhaps Professor Brigham will satisfy this need with a second edition of his most recent work.

Glaring defects are rare. Brigham states that “from 1969 until 1973 the Nixon administration launched one of the most massive air campaigns in history” (p. 100). Actually, that air campaign did not become “massive” until March of 1972. There were only 2,107 “attack” sorties over North Vietnam from 1969–71, in contrast to the 41,057 in 1968 and the 21,496 in 1972 (Wayne Thompson, *To Hanoi and Back*, 304). He also claims that “most modern armies in a time of war” are not “built on the draft,” (p. 7) a surprising assertion given the reliance of armies during both world wars on conscription.

Aside from its contribution to our understanding of an understudied aspect of the war, *ARVN* is especially relevant to the US military’s current effort to upgrade its understanding of non-Western cultures and languages. Americans equate combat skill solely with functions they can engineer, such as training in weapons and tactics, and materiel support like equipment and firepower. *ARVN* demonstrates that there is a straight line from cultural underpinnings to unit combat effectiveness. Brigham provides an example of the consequences of ignoring familial values, priorities, concepts of honor and responsibility, family obligations, and political training for an armed force expanding during wartime. I recommend *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army* to scholar and policy maker alike.

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The Risk Society at War: Terror, Technology and Strategy in the Twenty-First Century by Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen. Cambridge University Press, 2006, 224 pp., \$27.99.

With the end of the Cold War, strategy which served to rationalize new technologies, doctrine, and agents has shifted from defeating concrete threats to managing risks, at least in the Western world. This is the cornerstone of this book. Danish professor Mikkel Rasmussen has written other in-depth strategic analyses focused on Western civilizations and their constructs in the post-Cold War world, *The West, Civil Society and the Construction of Peace* being his most recent.

The Risk Society at War is complex, requiring careful reading, and the reader must possess a good amount of background knowledge about the historical and current

social and military strategic concepts used throughout the book. The second chapter defines reflexive rationality, the structure for Rasmussen's analysis. He asserts that risk politics has changed strategy and defends this thesis in succeeding chapters. The chapter on revolution in military affairs (RMA) shows quite persuasively how this concept has little to do with technology but rather must be understood in social terms, especially in the new post-9/11 world construct. While communications and information technology may have shaped the perfect battle, such as the advance on Bagdad in 2003, it has not formed the perfect war, and that, Rasmussen argues, is not possible. This book shows that while Clausewitz would have approved of RMA—war is the continuation of politics after all—today's political leadership elites seek to manage risk. The military and its purely battlefield strategy are indeed shaped and controlled by bureaucratic politics.

Rasmussen has produced a current analysis of the strategy formulation process illustrated with plenty of modern warfare examples, including the Balkans, Iraq, and 9/11. Military organizations, in contrast to political institutions, have been slow to adopt preemptive strike doctrines, since burden of proof and democratic legitimacy interfere with stated risk-averse goals that twenty-first-century politicians embrace.

An interesting concept for strategists is the chapter in which the United Nations concept of war is laid out and Rasmussen lays out his concept of the "bureaucratization of war" that challenges the notion that states conduct international affairs with the knowledge that war will be conducted as a last resort. Instead, international agencies have taken on a larger role, and Western states no longer expect to conduct war against other states. As nontraditional, nonstate enemies like al-Qaeda have emerged, states have had a hard time rationalizing the fight in new terms.

Risk-averse Western states equipped with RMA-enabled militaries no longer need to put large forces on the ground, but they must place large numbers of individuals in nongovernment agencies on the ground to rebuild or bolster failing states and their societies. The building blocks of strategy—technology, doctrines, and agents—have all evolved, since perfect security is no longer possible and Western states must engage to manage risk.

According to Rasmussen, the strategic issues currently confronting the Western world are the Iraq/Afghanistan war, the rise of Chinese military power, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Western societies cannot agree on the ends of strategy, and they also disagree fiercely on the means to achieve security. The risk framework presented in this text may prove useful in solving the twenty-first-century strategy-development dilemma.

The bureaucratization of warfare has turned war into a risk calculus rather than the meaningful political instrument that Clausewitz described. The fact that Western governments believe they face enemies who view war as more of an opportunity than a risk means that the West must somehow shed the bureaucratization of war. The current set of struggles has become rule altering—in other words, the UN rules of warfare set down after World War II that keep war and violence under

the purview of states are no longer viable. Both state actors and nonstate combatants now seek to use war to change the international political system. Clausewitz defined war as making a state do something it did not want to do; today's conflicts appear to redefine the nature of political communities themselves. Strategy is thus no longer the rational, scientific enterprise of Clausewitz in which strategists balance ends and means. Instead, strategy has once again become the art that Machiavelli wrote about in *The Prince*, a way of pursuing policies that is different from any other and where the stakes may be existential. This definition comes close to Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis.

This is a very complex strategic text; readers who enjoy or are searching for new strategic context in which to define the first part of the twenty-first century are well served. The author proposes a new theory in terms of rationality as an attempt to define the changes that confront Western or at-risk societies today.

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In Extremis Leadership: Leading As If Your Life Depended On It by Thomas A. Kolditz. Jossey-Bass, 2007, 272 pp., \$27.95.

Walk into any bookstore in America and you will encounter aisles packed with books that address leadership in its various forms. Indeed, the leadership-related market is saturated with a tremendous range of topics, with one glaring exception—the special challenges of leading others when lives, as opposed to livelihoods, are on the line. Filling this void, US Army colonel Thomas A. Kolditz successfully tackles the issue of leadership in the most trying situations in *In Extremis Leadership*.

Colonel Kolditz holds a PhD in social psychology and currently serves as professor and head of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the US Military Academy (USMA) at West Point. His department conducts teaching, research, and outreach activities related to leadership, psychology, sociology, and management. Prior to West Point, Kolditz served in a variety of command and staff assignments and as a leadership and human resources policy analyst in the Pentagon. He defines the concept of in extremis leadership as "giving purpose, motivation, and direction to people when there is imminent physical danger and where followers believe that leader behavior will influence their physical well-being or survival." Colonel Kolditz is certainly qualified to offer that description; in addition to his academic duties at West Point, he has served as coach and mentor for the Academy's sport parachute team since 2001.

Rather than rely on existing leadership theories and practices, Colonel Kolditz drew on his considerable personal encounters in in extremis settings, extensive observations of in extremis leaders, and numerous penetrating interviews to produce a book that is as informative as it is entertaining. Interestingly, he not only explored the positive side of in extremis leadership by interviewing US Marines and Soldiers who had recently experienced combat in Iraq, but he and his team also interviewed Iraqi soldiers captured during Operation Iraqi Freedom. These Iraqi prisoners

revealed insights into what happens when ineffective leaders fail to prepare themselves or their followers for life-threatening situations. Kolditz presents his findings in a sequence that is practical, attention grabbing, and easy to navigate.

As he begins, Colonel Kolditz draws on interviews with professionals in high-threat occupations—SWAT team members, soldiers, firefighters, parachutists, and others—to discover key characteristics of in extremis leaders. Combining these interviews with survey data, he concludes that among other things, in extremis leaders are inherently motivated, learn continuously, share risks with their followers, and inspire their followers with their high levels of competence. Additionally, he finds that in extremis leaders place significant trust in their teams and are themselves trustworthy.

Having outlined the characteristics of in extremis leaders, Kolditz goes on to describe some of the ways that in extremis leadership principles apply outside the arena of danger; that is, in everyday business and life situations. In the chapter, “In Extremis Lessons for Business and Life,” he uses anecdotes from military and civilian settings to illustrate the value of in extremis leadership in situations that are not necessarily physically dangerous or life-threatening. He succeeds in making the connection between in extremis and more mundane situations, explaining that “under conditions where deals may involve profits and losses of such magnitude that lives are changed forever, it makes sense that in extremis principles apply.”

Colonel Kolditz follows with in-depth discussions of particular interest to those who develop training materials and curricula for military leadership programs as well as those who will lead during emotionally trying events. In these chapters he concentrates on specific methods for developing the characteristics of in extremis leadership in others and offers realistic guidance for leaders who are faced with death or injuries in their organizations.

To illustrate leadership development in a real-life in extremis setting, Kolditz provides his insider’s view of some of the unique methods employed by the USMA to develop leaders and teams through its highly competitive sport parachute team. The shared risks involved in the extreme sport of collegiate parachuting—which Kolditz rightfully calls “a lab for in extremis leadership”—help produce leaders who exhibit the key characteristics of in extremis leaders described in the opening chapter of the book.

The list of those who praise *In Extremis Leadership* reads like a who’s who in military, government, and private-sector leadership. Gen Eric Shinseki, former US Army chief of staff, declares, “*In Extremis Leadership* transforms the formerly anecdotal study of combat leadership into solid behavioral and social science that will improve leadership across the private, public, and social sectors.” Lt Gen Franklin L. Hagenback, superintendent of the USMA, adds that Colonel Kolditz “has successfully linked leading in dangerous contexts with the requirements of everyday leadership. This book is exciting to read and makes the point that we should all lead as if lives depend on it.”

Recognizing the unique focus of his work, Colonel Kolditz says that *In Extremis Leadership* will help the reader “cut through faddish, bogus leadership approaches

and make you better at leading and being led.” He is right. From everyday leadership challenges to events that threaten lives, livelihoods, or organizations, the ideas Colonel Kolditz shares are worthy of both study and emulation. *In Extremis Leadership* is an engaging, readable book that will prove itself valuable for all who lead, whether in or out of life-threatening situations.

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Peace Out of Reach: Middle Eastern Travels and the Search for Reconciliation by Stephen Eric Bronner. University of Kentucky Press, 2007, 208 pp., \$24.95.

Stephen Bronner leaves no doubt where he stands in his latest book, *Peace Out of Reach*. Unfortunately, his polemic adds little to improve understanding Middle Eastern problems and even less to possible solutions. Apart from a notional plan for Darfur, his advice boils down to a call for more civility, more government, and lower expectations for rogue regimes, all to be facilitated by the replacement of religious thought with state-based liberalism.

A longtime Rutgers professor with a Berkeley PhD (1972), he only took an interest in the Middle East after 9/11 because of what he deemed US policy failures. Much of his newfound knowledge comes from “citizen diplomacy,” trips to the region with organizations like Academics for Peace. Thus, he sees Iraq through a lens ground by Ba’athists on his trips prior to the 2003 invasion; likewise, he discusses Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Palestine, and Darfur. To these he adds a redefinition of anti-Semitism and critiques of free speech and free exercise of religion.

Though Bronner highlights real problems, he substitutes vitriol and weak sources for serious scholarship. While he tries to explain the “need” for this, his argument rings hollow as the book wears on. Even when he comes to philosophical arguments, Bronner presses on unafraid of the facts, as when he makes the case that “true believers” cannot be trusted because they exchange passion for reason. Yet, he shares his passion for peace liberally throughout.

American actions in Iraq have been ill conceived, ill planned, ill executed and often illegal, according to Bronner. He even cites examples of Iran’s moral and practical trumping of the United States by such acts as building banks in Iraq to support reconstruction over the addition of US troops. Apparently, Iranian bankers provide their own security in order to do business.

Later visits to Iran taught him that the “symbolic currency” of a US invasion threat must be eliminated before any real progress occurs with respect to reframing Iran’s quest for nuclear technology and weapons. According to the author, the United States should accept that Iran has a right to such weapons and even help Iran gain nuclear power. Finally, promotion of Iran’s cultural heritage should be pursued to bolster its self-confidence and goodwill. Then, suggests Bronner, irritating tendencies like hypernationalism, anti-Semitism, and religious extremism might be overcome.

Problems in three other countries can be answered by the United States just doing more. It is only a question of what it is doing that changes. With Syria, the United States should interact more positively while excusing human rights abuses and terrorism that are implicit in a modernizing government that faces the risk of overthrow. The Palestinian problem could be solved if the United States did more for the Palestinians, or possibly less for the Israelis.

Bronner finally offers a plan aimed at easing human suffering in Darfur. First, he suggests integrating UN peacekeepers with Sudanese government units and placing the new units under the control of the African Union (AU). He sees this as easing Sudanese sovereignty concerns. This not only ignores the clear violation of Sudanese sovereignty but also dismisses the needs of the UN and other extra-regional actors.

Another point addresses the interests of nine states that border Sudan and the tribes stretched across them. Here, Bronner calls for an extension of the UN arms embargo imposed upon Sudan to stop arms shipments to all these actors, followed by a disarmament campaign. Here he blithely suggests the United States could play a positive role by helping to disarm tribal militias. Thus, no modern weaponry equals peace. Unfortunately, Rwandan and other conflicts prove this assumption flawed.

His remaining three points involve human rights abuses and the possible presence of genocide. Bronner says foreign inspectors must be allowed in to monitor human rights abuses. Next, the AU should control Darfur to spur better access for aid organizations. Again, Sudanese sovereignty and limited AU resources bring into question the plan's feasibility. Finally, Bronner argues that no attempt be made to punish Sudanese leaders for war crimes since such action would stifle progress.

The final chapters involve "the most dangerous elements of politics: intellectual laziness and ideological fanaticism" (p. 121). First, he argues that Arabs must eliminate blatant anti-Jewish literature from common usage. Second, Jews need to stop overusing the term *anti-Semitic* as a cover for assaults on Zionist interests. Once accomplished, leaders of both sides could dialogue effectively to bring about positive change. Passion and idealism once again trump reason in this book.

Bronner next confronts the abuses of those who place freedom of speech above safety and diversity, using the 2006 Danish cartoons case. He blames them for death and destruction wrought by angry Muslims worldwide. Though acknowledging that some Muslim leaders fanned these flames, he sees the problem stemming from haughtiness and the misuse of civil rights by the publishers. "Highlighting free speech without referring to the moral responsibility . . . can only render liberal ideas abstract and produce . . . 'repressive tolerance' " (p. 129). He concludes by calling for more civility as well as legal bars against such discriminatory acts.

Finally, Bronner takes on the Pope specifically and those of faith generally by dismissing arguments that religion and reason should temper one another. Bronner dismisses this view as intellectually repressive and inherently radicalizing. The answer to human problems resides with secular liberalism that accepts everything

but intolerance. Thus, intolerance will win the day over intolerance. The book concludes with similar arguments.

The most positive promise of this book is that of informing readers of the often biased and ill-informed nature of many who offer solutions to the complex and costly problems of the Middle East. However, few need such lessons.

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In the Line of Fire: A Memoir by Pervez Musharraf. Free Press, 2006, 368 pp., \$28.00.

Gen Pervez Musharraf: despot or redeemer? This question is pondered by many interested in the leader of a country that is emerging as a power to be reckoned with. Musharraf decided to write this autobiography after Pakistan assumed a starring role in the war on terrorism—his “contribution to the history of our era.” The memoir offers a kaleidoscopic perspective of one of the most contentious leaders of today. *In the Line of Fire* addresses everything from Musharraf’s pioneer train ride into the birth of the nation-state Pakistan at the age of “4 years and 3 months” to the armor-plated transportation of a controversial world figure. It includes a prophetic foreword by Musharraf, six simple yet thoroughly composed parts, a 14-page pictography, and a reflective epilogue.

Musharraf starts his memoir with the unveiling of a child who prances into a newly formed Pakistan with the energy and cheek of a wild mustang. He relates captivating anecdotes and memories of the blurred boundaries of childhood between India, Pakistan, and Turkey. Musharraf gives the reader a view of a young child with a keen sense of power of discrimination between the weak and the strong. Early on, the mystical force that is luck seems to form a lasting relationship with Musharraf. His was a childhood spent immersed in love, adventure, and controversy. He brings his complex personality alive, detailing the transformation from a reluctant student into an enlightened leader of a country that he feels has always been his home.

As the pages unfold, Musharraf alludes to a successful life built without compromise of faith, family, or dreams. He carefully explores the chance occurrences that were influential in his life and the career choices he made. Fueled by a childhood of mischief, Musharraf sought distraction in the military ranks, where he found his harmony. The section entitled “Life in the Army” recreates the molding of a soldier whose preparation through fire would be useful in readying him for the tempests to come.

The more Musharraf engaged with the military, the more meaningful the dance became. He relates how he valued the education gained in his formative Army years; valued the many ways he was inoculated against the stress of battle. In his stories, he fancies himself as a connoisseur of military strategy. The events Musharraf shares display his strength of character that readily mocks the face of adversity and enables him to fight and lead another day.

Several appropriately named chapters—"The Hijacking," "The Conspiracy," "The Countercoup," and "Anatomy of Suicide"—relate the dramatics surrounding assassination attempts, coups, and manhunts. Safely from within the eye of the storm, Musharraf shares the spin-off tornadoes of his life through detailed, catastrophic stories. He tries to unravel the mystery, mapping, and transformation of his life and his country. There are tales of esprit de corps (some in sweeping generalizations) and how he faces the essential ambiguity of leadership—the freedom and solitude that comes with power.

Musharraf devotes an entire chapter to the Kargil conflict. He illuminates his points in exacting detail, down to the miles and meters. Critics have chided Musharraf for spending so much time giving critical attention to the details of the incident, yet my take is that he goes to great length to present the 1999 conflict as not just a battle won or lost, but also as the event that catapulted him to leading the destiny of a nation. I believe all the extreme focus in the book is to help the reader better understand the events that have brought Pakistan and Musharraf to this time in history.

Musharraf's entry into the antiterrorism band plays like a tune written to avoid the vulnerability of friendly fire. He notes that Gen Colin Powell gave him the ultimatum, "You are either with us or against us." The procedural ride through the web of al-Qaeda suicide bombings and slaughters is both brutal and effective in presenting Musharraf as a dedicated leader pursuing an ingenious hive of terrorists. He adamantly denies Taliban operations within its borders and any feeding of the beasts of Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden. He makes all valid attempts to aid the influence of a pro-Western persona and his hopes to promote a more liberal image.

Leaving no stone unturned throughout the chapters, Musharraf shares his concerns of economy and desired homogeneity of his country, all with the backdrop of a supportive wife, mother, and two children. The essential issues such as nuclear proliferation, international diplomacy, and the emancipation of women are addressed in such a way that sets the stage for future nation-state perspectives.

Musharraf takes a calculated risk in presenting his story, although it is a great way to have a captive audience. At times the book takes on the tone of an advertisement—an emotional campaign for political understanding—a bridge between the mind-set, the media, and reality. I was impressed by Musharraf's keen ability to plop me into the midst of a coup, yet to come out of the pages unscathed, much as Musharraf himself. Though in many areas Musharraf appears to have taken artistic license when presenting events, the book is an easy and occasionally quite entertaining read. Knowledge of the historical events surrounding the partition of British colonial India, modern-day Pakistan, and the cooperative relationship growing between terrorism and religion would be quite useful for the reader. This memoir should be required reading for anyone who wishes to better understand the power that is Pakistan. I must caution that this is a book written about, by, and for Musharraf—it is wise for readers to keep an open mind and to come to their own conclusions on the facts, figures, truths, and persons presented.

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Deterring America: Rogue States and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction by Derek D. Smith. Cambridge University Press, 2006, 197 pp., \$24.95.

The George W. Bush administration sold the Iraq War primarily on the grounds that Saddam Hussein's acquisition of nuclear weapons would pose an unacceptable threat to the United States. The White House portrayed the Iraqi dictator as an undeterrable madman lusting to attack the United States and its allies. "Simply stated," declared Vice President Cheney during the run-up to the war, "there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt that he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us."

We now know, of course, that Saddam had no WMD, much less a functioning nuclear weapons program. But he clearly wanted nuclear weapons. Why? Why do countries like Iraq, North Korea, and Iran seek to acquire nuclear weapons? Because the likes of Saddam Hussein, Kim Jong-Il, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad are suicidal maniacs? Or because they believe nuclear weapons will enhance their security? Indeed, might they seek nuclear weapons to *deter* attacks by the *United States*? And if this is the case—that rogue states seek nuclear weapons for defensive rather than offensive purposes—then what is the justification for preventive US military action against such states? To render rogue states defenseless against US aggression?

"Without a strong understanding of the varying motivations behind rogue state development of WMD," contends Derek Smith in *Deterring America*, "a standardized response to proliferation runs the risk of not disarming the most dangerous states, or attempting to disarm those better left alone." Indeed, the "United States seems to be moving toward a strategic outlook wherein rogue state WMD possession alone is an unacceptable security threat." If so, then the United States has bought into "a recipe for perpetual conflict—an endless string of . . . Iraqi Freedoms."

Smith rightly argues that there are good reasons "to maintain a healthy skepticism toward deterrence." After all, he points out, deterrence is at root a psychological phenomenon requiring "a particular state of mind on the part of the opponent" and an opponent "may simply not understand, fully register, or believe a particular threat." The object of deterrence may have a much greater stake at hand and propensity to run risks, may trap itself into a commitment it cannot break without unacceptable loss of face, or may seek destruction for its own sake.

So far, presumption of rogue-state undeterrability—in contrast to the difficulties of deterring fanatical nonstate actors like al-Qaeda—commands little evidence. Nor does the proposition that rogue-state WMD possession alone can deter the United States. Smith examines the Iraqi and North Korean cases and finds that Iraq's possession (or presumed possession) of WMD did not deter the United States from attacking Iraqi forces in Kuwait in 1991 or from invading Iraq itself in 2003; whereas the United States, for a variety of reasons, most of them having nothing to do with Pyongyang's WMD, rejected war against North Korea during the nuclear proliferation crises of 1993–94 and 2003–06. Among those reasons

were uncertainty over Pyongyang's nuclear intentions, North Korea's capacity to wreak enormous conventional military destruction on South Korea, and (in the second crisis) America's preoccupation with the Iraq War. Pyongyang's acquisition of nuclear weapons was simply not worth a major war on the Korean Peninsula (with potentially very destructive global financial and economic consequences), especially in the absence of any evidence that North Korea was exempt from the grim logic of nuclear deterrence.

Smith believes that continued nuclear proliferation is inevitable but that the United States should seek to retard and contain it where possible. He believes preventive war is a very costly insurance policy that is as likely to provoke proliferation as it is to curb it, although he does not entirely rule out preventive force. His guidelines for exercising preventive force include an assessment of the risk tolerance and values of the target state, estimates of US interests in the region, an examination of the likelihood of success of a military attack, and a reckoning of the probability and potential consequences of target state retaliation. Absent publicly stated criteria for action, preventive force threatens to become self-defeating. As Smith notes,

The Bush Doctrine is a modern iteration of a historic line of thought justifying anticipatory action, but one that thus far lacks a foundation of articulated standards, however imprecise. Failure to provide any genuine restraints on offensive notion of self-defense will likely generate a backlash among targeted states. Fearful that their security depends on a favorable American assessment of their peaceful intentions, many states will probably prefer to embrace WMD for deterrent purposes, exacerbating the U.S. security dilemma.

Are there effective counterproliferation alternatives to preventive war? Smith examines export controls, missile defenses, and passive defenses and finds them all useful but inadequate. He proposes bolstering the existing counterproliferation regime through the establishment of a United Nations–sanctioned global quarantine against the transfer of WMD that would treat them “as international contraband, permitting search and seizure when there is reasonable suspicion of their presence.” The quarantine system would require an integrated framework of initiatives—a strengthened International Maritime Organization, a broadened UN Security Council mandate against WMD proliferation, and the employment of the Proliferation Security Initiative as the enforcement mechanism—“supplying both the legal foundation to establish a global norm against WMD proliferation and the needed capabilities to carry out interdiction missions.” Smith recognizes that his interdiction strategy relies heavily on intelligence capabilities and plain luck but believes that “a global quarantine offers a middle-ground approach with the best matching of ends and means. To avoid leaving interdiction to the United States alone, and to forestall more drastic disarmament measures, the world community should join together and draw a clear line in the sand, on the water, and in the air forbidding all forms of WMD transfer.”

Deterring America is an insightful reassessment of deterrence in an age of rogue-state acquisition of WMD and offers imaginative proposals for more effective

counterproliferation. It masterfully blends theory, history, and prescription into a persuasive case for new thinking about one of the most dangerous challenges of our time.

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Electoral Systems and Democracy edited by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, 245 pp., \$18.95.

Electoral Systems and Democracy is an anthology of selected articles from the quarterly, *Journal of Democracy*. Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institute of War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University, and Marc Plattner is vice president for research and studies at the National Endowment for Democratic Studies. Diamond and Plattner also serve as co-editors of the journal. This is the 18th in a series of *Journal of Democracy* books, which usually publish papers from a specific gathering. This book is different, spanning a 15-year period from 1991 to 2006 to explore electoral systems—a topic of continuing interest in the journal.

Diamond and Plattner have assembled in a single source a firm foundation for reflection and further research on electoral systems. It is clearly aimed at the political scientist and assumes a high level of familiarity with the subject at the outset. The central theme winding through each chapter is comparison of the two major approaches to electoral systems—plurality and proportional representation. The field is moderately technical, and this book has some jargon sprinkled throughout. The layman will have difficulty following the intricacies of the opening arguments, as the authors assume the reader's familiarity with various electoral schemes such as first-past-the-post, single transferable vote, single nontransferable vote, and list-proportional representation, among others.

Electoral Systems is arranged in three sections: I. Electoral Systems and Institutional Design; II. Is Proportional Representation Best?; and III. Country and Regional Experiences. It begins with an excellent 16-page introduction that clearly lays out their approach to the topic. As a well-developed single-source resource, the book describes the various approaches to planning and conducting democratic elections, highlighting objectives election planners may choose to pursue and the tension between those objectives. Examples include representation that closely mimics the voting of the population, keeping radical fringe elements out of legislatures (or ensuring they have a voice), and encouraging moderation in policies to appeal to the widest audience. Understanding these diverse objectives and the inherent tensions among them will be important to military officers working in governmental policy positions in support of nascent democracies. This book illustrates why there is no one best approach to elections and describes two major camps of political scientists who see the same evidence in very different ways. That difference of opinion is the focus of the second section.

The question, Is proportional representation best? is the focus of the second section, but underlies the entire book. The core of this section is a pair of articles labeled “classic” by the editors in their introduction. “Constitutional Choices for New Democracies” by Arend Lijphart and “The Problem with PR” by Guy Lardeyret come from the Winter 1991 and Summer 1991 editions of the journal and present two sides of the question. Much like Friedman’s and Ramonet’s “Dueling Globalizations” in *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1999), these articles both argue with each other and past each other. Three articles follow, each referring to these arguments. Unfortunately for the reader looking for a simple solution, much is left unresolved, reflecting the reality of the state of the art.

Just when you think you cannot stand any more of the same back and forth between squabbling PhDs, the book shifts to specific country examples. Here the academic arguments are brought to life, even as the squabbling continues, albeit somewhat abated. Having trudged through the two weighty preceding sections, even the lay reader will get a lot out of this section. It opens with two articles dealing with Latin America, the first focusing on Uruguay and the second on the entire region. The next article, entitled “Why Direct Election Failed in Israel,” provides a fascinating look at the intricacies of Israeli democracy that seldom make the newspaper. It does a very good job of presenting a historical look at how and why direct election came to Israel and what actually happened—and why the original thinking was wrong. The next article compares the experiences of Japan and Taiwan, showing similarities and differences while highlighting the relative uniqueness of their journeys compared to the rest of the democratic world. As one might expect, the book closes with articles about Afghanistan and Iraq—the most visible ongoing democratic conversions—which provide a useful behind-the-scenes look at the theory and maneuvering in recent elections in both countries.

This is a timely book. At the time of this review, the United States is working its way through the 2008 presidential primaries, and this book unintentionally calls to mind the strengths and foibles of the US electoral system. In the longer term, given the Bush administration’s focus on democratization, it reminds the reader that democracy is more than elections, and elections are more than simply scheduling a campaign and a vote. Largely focused on electoral approaches for developing democracies, there is nevertheless ample evidence of recent electoral change in established democracies as well.

Electoral Systems will not likely turn up in aircrew alert areas or base libraries. As a book by specialists for specialists, its application to the military professional is limited. Nevertheless, for individuals destined for a year in an Iraqi or Afghani governmental ministry, this might be a good use of preparatory time. For the reader interested in the pitfalls and promise of democracy as part of life-long learning, this may prove invaluable.

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The Edge of Disaster: Rebuilding a Resilient Nation by Stephen Flynn. Random House, 2007, 240 pp., \$25.95.

“Increasingly, Americans are living on the edge of disaster” (xvi), and America is unprepared to respond. This is the premise of the book, *Edge of Disaster*, by Stephen Flynn. Through a series of fictional scenarios and historical examples, Flynn argues that in the future—perhaps the very near future—the United States will face national disasters dramatically affecting the physical infrastructure of the country. Flynn defines *physical infrastructure* as the utility distribution systems, transportation networks, and civil engineering projects that Americans rely on for the conduct of daily business. Whether disasters occur due to terrorist attacks or are simply the result of natural causes, they will be devastating to the nation. The drastic results of such occurrences will significantly impact the nation due to the nature of the incident, but even more so because the systems and processes to effectively recover from them are not in place.

There is no question that Dr. Flynn has the professional background to make this claim, for he has been dealing with homeland security issues for over 20 years. A graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy, he retired from the Coast Guard in the rank of commander. He earned a PhD in international politics from Tufts University in 1991 and has served in the White House Military Office and as director for global issues on the National Security Council. Flynn has also worked at the Brookings Institution and is currently at the Council on Foreign Relations. *Edge of Disaster* is the follow-on, or companion book, to his earlier best seller, *America the Vulnerable* (HarperCollins, 2004).

Although not labeled as such, the book reads as if broken into two parts. The first part examines the status of the physical infrastructure of the country and attempts to explain why it is increasingly vulnerable to failure due to natural causes or terrorist attack. The author makes the argument that Americans today are living off the labors of Americans of the past. He suggests that, like children of a wealthy man, we are squandering our inheritance because we did not work to obtain it. Additionally, Flynn continues on to say that what will worsen the effects of disasters is the inability to recover due to the state of inadequate first-responder capabilities. He points out that the typical American attitude toward disasters is that it is likely to happen to someone else, and, therefore, civil services are allowed to suffer. This laissez-faire attitude has negatively impacted agencies charged with organizing and initiating disaster recovery to the point where it is on the brink of failure. Such deterioration will continue unless massive capital expenditures are invested soon to halt the downward trend.

The second part of the book examines possible options the federal government and the American people can use to recover from the present state of disaster unpreparedness. The author argues that “the best defense is a good defense.” The position he expounds is that instead of spending millions of dollars on overseas conflicts, the government should use those funds to commence massive spending on rebuilding the infrastructure of the country and bolstering the recovery capabilities of the

United States proper. Additionally, he argues that due to a lack of public involvement we are not a nation at war but, instead, a government and military at war. The American people are not being employed in the war on terrorism as they were, for example, during WWII. In short, the reality, according to Flynn, is that the government and the American people must begin immediately to prepare for the horrendous disasters that the author predicts will eventually strike the nation. Furthermore, only by taking a hard, honest look at the realities of what may happen when terrorists or nature strike will the nation be able to recover in a reasonable fashion. Flynn's overall solution relies on two things: initially, the federal government must take a strong hand in directing the reconstruction efforts, and secondly, the federal government must fund the reconstruction efforts.

While Flynn's many chilling examples of what may happen to America due to the failure to upkeep the infrastructure upon which our society operates are compelling, there are obvious flaws in both of his solutions. The first is that it is doubtful the state governments will allow the federal government to gain such extensive control over the workings of their territories. The second is, while it is certain the states would be willing to allow the federal government to fund construction projects in their areas, there are only two methods of obtaining the necessary monies: raising taxes or cutting spending to other projects. It seems that the author favors pulling out of overseas conflicts and using the money currently being spent to support the war effort to fund homeland projects. However, analyzing this course of action in light of our current strategy of layered homeland defense, the question needs to be asked if this would not invite increased terrorist attacks within the CONUS.

While the book is indeed thought provoking and deserves serious attention, there seems to be only one direct takeaway for today's Airmen. The Air Force is currently in the precarious position of having to recapitalize its aircraft. This, of course, will require a large amount of funding, which will not be realized if those tax dollars are spent on building and repairing worn-out electric plants, water purification plants, roads, or bridges, for example. The list of projects vying for tax dollars is lengthy, and Air Force leaders need to understand the basis of the competition to gain support for Air Force requirements.

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