On Strategy and Strategic Planning: Repairing America's Strategic "Black Hole"

Mackubin Thomas Owens

Strategy has long been the subject of scholarly study and policy analysis. Historians and social scientists alike have written widely about strategic thought, process, and practice. Scholars continue to dissect the meaning of strategy.[1] War colleges teach courses on the subject, as do civilian colleges. Yale University, for instance, has a well-regarded program on grand strategy, and other universities have followed suit.

Strategy and strategy-making are complex phenomena, not reducible to a simplistic mechanical process, and the making of strategy deserves more study than it often receives. In many respects, U.S. strategic planning has been rendered nearly useless because the processes have become routinized and thereby trivialized. Legislatively required documents such as the National Security Strategy and the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) initially may have been useful but now are merely periodic bureaucratic exercises.

The result is what Colin Gray calls "a black hole where American strategy ought to reside."[2] What the United States needs is a return to the long-range strategic planning process that it implemented during the Cold War.

On Strategy and Policy

When all is said and done, strategy is ultimately best understood as the interaction of three things, all within the context of risk assessment:

- **Ends** (the goals or objectives that the strategic actor seeks to achieve);
- **Means** (the resources available to the strategic actor); and
- **Ways** (the strategic actor's plan of action for utilizing the means available).

In essence, any strategy worth the name should articulate a clear set of achievable goals; identify concrete threats to those goals; and then, given available resources, recommend the employment of specific instruments to meet and overcome those threats.

A good strategy also seeks to minimize risk by, to the extent possible, avoiding mismatches between strategy and related factors. For instance, strategy must be appropriate to the ends as established by policy. Strategy also requires the appropriate tactical instrument to implement it. Finally, the forces required to implement a strategy must be funded, or else it must be revised. If the risk generated by such policy/strategy, strategy/force, and force/budget mismatches cannot be managed, the variables must be brought into better alignment.

History clearly teaches that the development of a coherent strategy is absolutely essential to national security in times of both war and peace. In the absence of a coherent strategy, non-strategic factors such as bureaucratic and organizational imperatives and the

vicissitudes of domestic politics will fill the void to the detriment of national security.

Modern strategic studies can be said to begin with the division of the art of war into the theory of "the use of engagements for the object of the war" (strategy) and "the use of armed forces in the engagement" (tactics) by the great interpreters of Napoleonic warfare, Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini and Carl von Clausewitz.[3] As the latter wrote:

> Strategy is the use of the engagement for the purpose of the war. The strategist must therefore define an aim for the entire operational side of the war that will be in accordance with its purpose. In other words, he will draft the plan of the war, and the aim will determine the series of actions intended to achieve it: in fact, shape the individual campaign and, within these, decide on the individual engagements.[4]

These 19th century writers originated the modern conception of strategy as the art of assembling and employing military forces in time and space to achieve the goals of a war.[5] While such writers normally limited their use of "strategy" to mean the application of military forces to fulfill the ends of policy, it is increasingly the practice today to employ the term more broadly so that one can speak of levels of strategy during both peace *and* war.[6] Accordingly, more often than not, strategy now refers not only to the direct application of military force in wartime, but also to the use of all aspects of national power during peacetime to deter war and, if deterrence fails, win the resulting conflict.

This more expansive usage of strategy inevitably overlaps with the common meaning of "policy," which is defined as the general overall goals and acceptable procedures that a nation might follow and the course of action selected from among alternatives in light of given conditions. In their military history of the United States, Allan Millett and Peter Maslowski define defense policy as "the sum of the assumptions, plans, programs, and actions taken by the citizens of the United States, principally through governmental action, to ensure the physical security of their lives, property, and way of life from external military attack and domestic insurrection."[7] For our purposes, "policy" refers primarily to such broad national goals as interests and objectives, and "strategy" to the alternative courses of actions designed to achieve those goals, within the constraints set by material factors and geography.

In general, strategy provides a conceptual link between national ends and scarce resources, both the transformation of those resources into means during peacetime and the application of those means during war. As such, it serves three purposes.[8]

- Strategy relates ends or the goals of policy (interests and objectives) to the limited means available to achieve them. Both strategy and economics are concerned with the application of scarce means to achieve certain goals, but strategy implies an adversary who actively opposes the achievement of the ends.
- Strategy contributes to clarification of the ends of policy by helping to establish priorities in the light of constrained resources. In the absence of established priorities among competing ends, all interests and all threats will appear equal. In the absence of strategy, planners will find themselves in the situation described by Frederick the Great: "He who attempts to defend too much defends nothing."
- Strategy conceptualizes resources as a means in support of policy. Resources are not means until strategy provides some understanding of how they will be organized and employed. Defense budgets and manpower are resources. Strategy organizes these resources into divisions, wings, and fleets and then employs them to deter war or to prevail should deterrence fail.

The first two functions make it clear that a broad national strategy must shape strategies for various regions and theaters by

prioritizing them. In terms of warfighting, the national strategy establishes the desired goals in a theater, linking operational considerations to the requirements established by national authorities. Based on guidance from higher authorities, the theater commander determines the desired outcome within his area of responsibility. The staff then develops war plans based on an array of plausible scenarios. Using various force planning models and war games to determine force size and mix, the theater commander's staff then derives the force necessary at the outset of a campaign to achieve the desired outcome.

In addition to determining the required force, staffs at all levels also determine the schedule for deploying forces from out of theater. Part of this determination is establishment of the Time-Phased Force Deployment Line, designating in a detailed manner the timeline for forces to be deployed to the theater. The higher-level strategies also establish priorities among the various theaters, indicating which will be the site of the main effort and which might be designated "economy of force" in the event that crises occur in more than one theater simultaneously.

National strategy thus guides "force apportionment," the distribution of existing forces among the various theaters. During World War II, national strategy dictated a policy of "Europe first." During the Cold War, U.S. strategy dictated a focus on Europe followed by the Asia–Pacific and finally by the Greater Middle East.

Of course, warfighting and war planning are only part of the theater commander's job. He is also responsible for shaping the theater in hopes of advancing U.S. interests without recourse to war, engaging the governments within the region and developing the necessary security infrastructure to maintain a favorable state of affairs. In this regard, the theater commander employs such tools as security assistance, military exercises, and humanitarian support. The theater commander's actions are not strictly military in nature; diplomacy and interagency operations play a major role in the development and implementation of each geographic command's Theater Security Co-operation Plan.

The final function of strategy is to serve as a guide to force planning. In theory, the strategy–force planning process is logical. The planner first identifies national interests and the objectives required to achieve those interests. The planner then conducts a net assessment in order to determine the ability of adversaries to threaten those interests or to interfere with the achievement of national objectives. These represent the "operational challenges" that U.S. forces must surmount in order to implement the strategy. Next, the planner forges a strategy to overcome operational challenges and a budget to fund the capabilities and operational concepts that are needed to implement the strategy.

The execution of any chosen strategy requires the fulfillment of certain strategic requirements. These requirements determine the necessary military capabilities and operational concepts, which in turn drive the acquisition of forces and equipment. Thus, if there is a strategic requirement for a particular capability, the forces or equipment needed to provide that capability presumably should be obtained. To overcome these operational challenges and confront plausible future areas of military competition, the United States must develop new operational concepts.[9]

Although strategy can be described as the conceptual link between ends and means, it cannot be reduced to a mere mechanical exercise. Instead, it is "a process, a constant adaptation to shifting conditions and circumstances in a world where chance, uncertainty, and ambiguity dominate."[10] It is a mistake to attempt to reduce strategy to a single aspect, although it is not unusual for writers on strategy to try.[11] Clausewitz dismissed as simplistic the reduction of strategy to "principles, rules, or even systems" because, on the contrary, strategy "involves human passions, values, and beliefs, few of which are quantifiable."[12]

Strategy, properly understood, is a complex phenomenon comprising a number of

elements. Among the most important of these are geography; history; the nature of the political regime, including such elements as religion, ideology, culture, and political and military institutions; and economic and technological factors.[13] Accordingly, strategy can be said to constitute a continual dialogue between policy on the one hand and these various factors on the other.[14]

Strategy as a Dialogue Between Policy and National Power

To be successful, strategy-making must be an interactive process that takes account of the interplay of all relevant factors. An inflexible strategy may be worse than no strategy at all, as the Germans discovered in 1914 and the French found in 1940. To paraphrase Gray, strategy is the product of the dialogue between policy and national power in the context of the overall international security environment.[15]

Real strategy must take account of such factors as technology, the availability of resources, and geopolitical realities. The strategy of a state is not self-correcting. If conditions change, policymakers must be able to discern these changes and modify the nation's strategy and strategic goals accordingly.[16] For instance, while the U.S. policy to contain the Soviet Union remained essentially constant during the Cold War, certain factors changed. Accordingly, it is possible to identify three distinct strategic periods during the Cold War, all of which had operational and force-structure implications.[17]

When strategy-makers do not adapt to changing conditions, serious problems can result. Jakub Grygiel shows how a failure to adapt strategy to geopolitical change led to the decline of Venice (1000–1600); the Ottoman Empire (1300–1699); and Ming China (1364–1644).[18] Each actor faced changing circumstances but made wrong strategic choices. These cases are cautionary for the United States, since it has faced substantial geopolitical changes of great magnitude since the end of the Cold War: the decline and then reassertion of Russian power, the expansion of terrorist organizations, the rise of China, disorder in the Greater Middle East, and the new geopolitics of energy.

Strategic Culture

Another important aspect of strategy-making is the "strategic culture" of a state or nation. By applying the notion of strategic culture, analysts attempt to explain continuity and change in national security policies, thereby creating a framework that can explain why certain policy options are pursued by states that share a given strategic culture.[19]

For instance, historians have noted that the strategic culture of sea powers tends to differ from the strategic culture of land powers. Thus, one sees similarities between the strategic approaches of Athens, Great Britain, and the United States on the one hand as opposed to the strategic approaches of Sparta, Germany, and Russia on the other. China seems to possess a discernible strategic culture traceable to Sun Tzu and other Chinese military thinkers.[20] The same holds for Islamic states.[21]

According to Kerry Longhurst:

> [A] strategic culture is a distinctive body of beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding the use of force, which are held by a collective and arise gradually over time, through a unique protracted historical process. A strategic culture is persistent over time, tending to outlast the era of its original inception, although it is not a permanent or static feature. It is shaped and influenced by formative periods and can alter, either fundamentally or piecemeal, at critical junctures in that collective's experiences.[22]

For Carnes Lord, strategic culture constitutes the traditional practices and habits of thought by which military force is organized and employed by a society in the service of its political goals.[23]

One of the charges often brought against American strategic culture is that it confuses technological superiority with strategy itself. For instance, critics of the efforts to

"transform" the U.S. military in the early years of the 21st century claimed that America tends to seek technological fixes for strategic problems in an attempt to remove itself from the sharp end of war.[24]

Strategy vs. Nonstrategic Factors

In any case, strategy is an indispensable element of national security. Without it, something else will fill the void. For example, in wartime, service doctrines will dominate the conduct of operations if strategy is absent. This state of affairs is captured by Andrew Krepinevich in his characterization of the Vietnam War as "a strategy of tactics."[25]

In peacetime, defense planning is usually dominated by domestic policy considerations such as organizational imperatives and congressional politics. In his 1961 book *The Common Defense*, Samuel Huntington observed that military policy exists in two worlds: the world of international politics and the world of domestic politics. The first world is shaped by such factors as balance of power, wars and alliances, and the use of force and diplomacy to influence the actions of other states in the international arena. The principal "currency" of this arena is "power," primarily military power. The second world is shaped by interest groups, corporate interest groups, political parties, social classes, and the like. The currency here is the resources provided by society, personnel, money, and matériel.

Military decisions influence and are influenced by both worlds, and a decision in one currency is payable in the other. Huntington called the decisions in the currency of international politics *strategic* in character. Decisions in the currency of domestic politics are *structural*. Unless there is a strong and coherent strategic vision to guide defense decisions even during peacetime, defense decision-making is likely to be dominated by structural decisions.[26]

Levels of Strategy

War and conflict can be divided into several levels. As noted, Clausewitz distinguished between tactics, "the use of armed forces in the engagement," and strategy, "the use of engagements for the object of war." It is now common to speak of an intermediate level between strategy and tactics: the "operational level of war," a realm concerned with the planning and conduct of campaigns to achieve strategic goals within a theater of war.[27] The central focus of this essay is the strategic level of war and conflict, which in itself is subject to further subdivision.[28]

In its broadest sense, strategy is grand strategy. In the words of Edward Mead Earle:

> [S]trategy is the art of controlling and utilizing the resources of a nation—or a coalition of nations—including its armed forces, to the end that its vital interests shall be effectively promoted and secured against enemies, actual, potential, or merely presumed. The highest type of strategy—sometimes called grand strategy—is that which so integrates the policies and armaments of the nation that resort to war is either rendered unnecessary or is undertaken with the maximum chance of victory.[29]

Thus, grand strategy is intimately linked to national policy in that it is designed to bring to bear all the elements of national power—military, economic, and diplomatic—in order to secure the nation's interests and objectives. Grand strategy can also refer to a nation's overarching approach to international affairs: isolationism or disengagement, cooperative or collective security, selective engagement, and primacy.[30]

Finally, grand strategy can allude to a geopolitical orientation: "continental" or "maritime."[31] Whichever meaning is emphasized, the choice of a grand strategy has a major impact on the other levels of strategy and force structure.

Military power is one instrument of grand strategy. How military power is employed in both war and peace is the province of military strategy. In peacetime, military strategy provides a guide to what Samuel Huntington calls "program decisions" and "posturing." Program decisions involve the strength of military

forces, their composition and readiness, and the number, type, and rate of development of weapons. Posturing is defined by how military forces are deployed during peacetime to deter war (Clausewitz's "preparation for war"). In wartime, military strategy guides the employment of military force in pursuit of victory (Clausewitz's "war proper").[32]

U.S. Strategic Planning and the Strategic "Black Hole"

Given the relatively secure position of the United States at least after the War of 1812, the early American national security apparatus—the State Department, War Department, and Navy Department—remained small and primitive compared to those of the European states. Nonetheless, the United States in fact pursued a consistent grand strategy from the Founding until the outbreak of World War II. The objective of this grand strategy—often mistaken for isolationism—was to maintain the security of the United States by means of skillful diplomacy combined with preemption and unilateralism.[33]

With the outbreak of World War II, the requirements of fighting a global conflict in conjunction with allies impelled the United States to develop the sort of national security apparatus we see today, but it was not until the Cold War, the National Security Act of 1947, and subsequent amendments that this structure came of age.[34]

The problem today is that the documents that supposedly inform U.S. strategy do no such thing. They are, at best, pro forma bureaucratic exercises. For instance, the National Security Strategy (NSS), required by the Goldwater–Nichols Act of 1986, presumably serves as the U.S. grand strategy document, defining U.S. security interests, objectives, and goals and providing guidance to those who are charged with executing that strategy. But while there have been some excellent examples in the past, the NSS has lately become little more than a list of aspirations with no real strategic plan for achieving its stated goals.

Other documents intended to supplement the NSS—the National Defense Strategy, National Military Strategy, and Quadrennial Defense Review—have served only to confuse strategic planning. This is especially true of the QDR, which has long been little more than a bureaucratic budgetary exercise that the services "game" in order to protect or expand their shares of the defense budget. In addition, the QDR has recently been required to address the latest fashionable issues of the day, such as "climate change."

In short, the United States has failed to provide useful strategic guidance for translating national policy into theater strategy and force employment, shaping force structure, and integrating and synchronizing the planning and activities of the Joint Staff, combatant commands, the services, and combat support agencies. As Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley have observed:

> The U.S. government currently lacks both the incentives and the capacity to support strategic thinking and long range planning in the national security arena. While individuals on the National Security Council (NSC) staff may develop planning documents for their respective issues, the NSC staff lacks adequate capacity to conduct integrated long-range planning for the president. While some capacity for strategic planning exists in the Department of Defense (DOD), no other department devotes substantial resources to planning for the long-term future. Although the State Department's policy planning office develops a "big picture" approach in specific policy areas, such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization enlargement or relations with China, it tends (with some exceptions) to focus on issues already on the policy agenda rather than challenges that might loom over the horizon. Nor does it address the types of capabilities the United States should seek to develop to deal with future challenges.[35]

The result is Colin Gray's strategic "black hole."

A Return to Strategic Planning

Colin Dueck has offered a useful critique of what currently passes for strategic planning.

In particular, he criticizes the centralization of foreign policy planning in the White House under President Obama. He offers six suggestions to correct the problem:

- Develop and execute a meaningful national security strategy early on.
- Restore a proper balance of responsibilities between the NSC and line departments and agencies.
- Appoint a strong national security advisor to play the role of genuine honest broker, policy entrepreneur, and presidential agent.
- Appoint and empower a strategic planning directorate on the NSC staff.
- Create an effective strategic planning board.
- Learn from private[-]sector experience.[36]

It would also be useful to revisit the U.S. strategic planning approach during the Cold War. Two of the most important documents shaping early Cold War policy and strategy were NSC-20/4, "U.S. Objectives with Respect to the USSR to Counter Soviet Threats to U.S. Security," signed by President Harry Truman in 1948, and NSC-68, "United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," signed by President Truman in 1950. Both documents argued for a policy of "containment" against the Soviet Union, the purpose of which was to prevent Soviet expansionism and guarantee the security of America and its allies.[37] NSC-68 in particular served as the foundation of the U.S. approach to the Soviet Union until its collapse in the late 1980s.

However, the cost associated with NSC-68 was high: It called for a tripling of the defense budget to build up U.S. conventional forces and to develop a thermonuclear weapon. Concerned about the high cost of defense, President Dwight Eisenhower sought a way to examine existing American containment policy and compare alternative policy options. He settled on a systematic policy exercise to review U.S. foreign policy objectives and recommend a course of action. The exercise, called "Project Solarium,"[38] pitted three teams against each other.

- Team A would make the best possible argument for the existing policy of containment, seeking to prevent Soviet expansion in Europe while minimizing the risk of general war.
- Team B would accept containment as a viable policy but be less tentative about its implementation. It would assert that any Soviet or Soviet-sponsored aggression would lead to general war and threaten massive U.S. and allied retaliation using any means necessary.
- Team C would argue for "rollback," meaning a policy to halt and then reverse Soviet efforts to hold territory by the presence of the Red Army.[39]

Five weeks later, the teams reconvened and presented their findings to the President.

- Team A argued that the U.S. should develop and implement a more dynamic campaign of political and psychological action against the Soviets. The group rejected any strategy that based its arguments on the acceptance of a risk of general war and recommended "waging peace" with U.S. power by emphasizing the importance of negotiations. It also sought to prevent the use of an active military threat from driving national security strategy even though it gave the concept of force an important role to play—primarily the role of augmenting diplomatic, economic, and political initiatives.
- Team B warned about the rigid nature of "drawing a line," implying that it could actually increase the risk of war through

inflexibility, but argued that a preponderant show of U.S. force combined with a definitive geographical boundary line could lead to a change in Soviet policy and/or a mellowing of the overall regime. Team B further explained that the allies would not readily accept where to draw the line and that this strategy would be extremely expensive. However, it made the case that the external threat to the U.S. ultimately outweighed the threat to domestic economic stability.

- Team C argued that mere containment was flawed because it had no endgame and let the Soviets read American inaction as fear and acquiescence. It acknowledged that the benefits of "rollback" were speculative but claimed that political and military actions short of general war (for example, covert operations and economic pressure) would be an effective way to take back regions from the Soviet area of control until, ultimately, the Soviet Union changed. Therefore, the U.S. must first put indirect pressure on the Soviet Union by engaging its satellite states and then direct pressure on the Soviet Union itself.[40]

After listening to the presentations, President Eisenhower summarized the arguments of the three teams and opted for the course of action recommended by Team A, which served as the foundation of NSC-162/2, "Basic National Security Policy," signed by Eisenhower on October 30, 1953. As one commentator notes:

> While NSC 162/2 did not represent a radical shift in policy, just as NSC-68 was not a radical departure from NSC 20/04, the exercise itself forced policymakers to justify a number of key assumptions about Soviet objectives and American capabilities. This not only strengthened the intellectual basis for containment as a long-term policy, but conferred legitimacy on the President's ultimate decision to follow the basic recommendations of Team A. The substance of the policy, in other words, had benefited from the process used to design it.[41]

As Eisenhower observed, "The plans are nothing, but the planning is everything."[42]

Conclusion

Strategy is designed to secure national interests and to attain the objectives of national policy by the application of force or threat of force. Strategy is dynamic, changing as the factors that influence it change. Strategic requirements continue to evolve.

The evolution of strategy over the past 50 years illuminates the interrelationship of ends, means, and the security environment. Potential mismatches between ends and means create risks. If the risks resulting from an ends–means mismatch cannot be managed, ends must be reevaluated and scaled back, means must be increased, or the strategy must be adjusted.

Strategy-making is a central component of defense policy. Without a coherent, rational strategy to guide the development and employment of forces, structural factors such as bureaucratic and organizational imperatives will dominate the allocation of resources for defense, leading to a suboptimal result.

Good strategy requires an effective strategic planning process. Unfortunately, U.S. strategic planning is defective. As a result, U.S. actions against China, Iran, Russia, ISIS, and the like are uncoordinated and incoherent. To advance its national interests in a dangerous and uncertain world, the United States must restore strategic planning and the idea of strategy as a guide to action to a central role.

Strategic planning must look beyond the next budget cycle in order to address the wide array of international challenges the United States faces and advance long-term U.S. interests. The best strategic planning process incorporates both constructive competition and creative cooperation in order to reconcile diverging perspectives. Otherwise, the U.S. strategic black hole will persist.

Endnotes:

1. See, for instance, Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
2. Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 247.
3. Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 128.
4. Ibid., p. 177.
5. For an excellent treatment of the origins of modern strategic thinking, see Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). *Cf.* John Shy, "Jomini," Chapter 6, and Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," Chapter 7, in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).
6. Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991); Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).
7. Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, 1994), p. xiii.
8. I am indebted to Dr. Robert S. Wood, former dean of the Center for Naval Warfare Studies, Naval War College, for this formulation.
9. See Mackubin Thomas Owens, "Force Planning: The Crossroads of Strategy and the Political Process," *Orbis*, Vol. 59, Issue 3 (Summer 2015), pp. 414–416, and "Strategy and the Logic of Force Planning," in *Strategy and Force Planning*, 4th ed., ed. Strategy, Security, and Forces Faculty (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2004).
10. Williamson Murray and Mark Grimsley, "Introduction: On Strategy," Chapter 1 in *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, ed. Williamson Murray et al. (New York:: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 22.
11. For instance, in *Strategy*, Luttwak reduces strategy to a manifestation of "paradoxical logic." In his monumental *The Art of War in the Western World* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), Archer Jones reduces strategy to a choice between "persisting" and "raiding." In *World Politics and the Evolution of War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), John Weltman explicates warfare in terms of a simplistic version of Delbruck's distinction between strategies of annihilation and attrition.
12. Murray and Grimsley, "Introduction: On Strategy," p. 1; Clausewitz, *On War*, pp. 134–136.
13. Murray and Grimsley, "Introduction: On Strategy," pp. 7–20.
14. Clausewitz, *On War*, pp. 183, 131–132; Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 57, No. 5 (Summer 1979); and Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 23–44.
15. Colin S. Gray, "Inescapable Geography," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 22, Nos. 2/3 (June/September 1999), p. 169.
16. Jakub J. Grygiel, *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
17. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). *Cf.* Owens, "Force Planning," pp. 421–427.The three strategic periods were the "New Look" strategy of the Eisenhower Administration; the "Flexible Response" approach of John F. Kennedy; and "détente," which is most closely linked to Richard Nixon's presidency. "New Look," a term adopted by Eisenhower's first defense budget, balanced military commitments with federal budget realities and sought to deter the Soviet threat with large investments in nuclear weapons. Kennedy, seeking alternatives to what he viewed as an excessively limiting strategy of massive nuclear retaliation or nothing at all, had his advisers develop scalable options for responding to challenges to U.S. security interests. Nixon strove to ease or relax tensions with the Soviet Union, initiating a number of communications channels, summits, and treaty negotiations.
18. Grygiel, *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change*, pp. 51–161.
19. On strategic culture, see Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1977); Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979); Colin S. Gray, "Comparative Strategic Culture," *Parameters*, Vol. XIV, No. 4 (Winter 1984); Colin S. Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Style* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton, 1986); Carnes Lord, "American Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 4, No. 5 (November–December 1985); Alastair Ian Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Spring 1995); Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 1998); Lawrence Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture and Ways of War: An Historical Overview* (London: Routledge, 2006).
20. Ralph Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).
21. Sebastian Gorka, *Defeating Jihad: The Winnable War* (Washington: Regnery, 2016).
22. Kerry Longhurst, "The Concept of Strategic Culture," in *Military Sociology: The Richness of a Discipline*, ed. Gerhard Kummel and Andreas D. Prufert (Baden- Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), p. 200.
23. Lord, "American Strategic Culture," pp. 269–293.

24. Colin S. Gray, *Strategy for Chaos: Revolutions in Military Affairs and the Evidence of History* (London: Frank Cass, 2002).
25. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 164–193.
26. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 1–4.
27. See Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Operational Concepts and Military Strength," in *2017 Index of U.S. Military Strength*, ed. Dakota Wood (Washington: The Heritage Foundation, 2016). *Cf.* Luttwak, *Strategy*, pp. 91–112, and Luttwak, "The Operational Level of War," *International Security*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Winter 1980–81); Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations," Chapter 1 in *Military Effectiveness*, ed. Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1988), Vol. 1., pp. 3, 12–19.
28. See, for instance, Luttwak, *Strategy*, pp. 69–189.
29. Edward Mead Earle, *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943), p. viii.
30. There are several grand strategy taxonomies. The most useful is that of Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1996/97), pp. 5–53.
31. Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of Super Power* (Lexington: University. Press of Kentucky, 1988), and Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartlands, Rimlands, and the Technological Revolution* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1977).
32. Huntington, *Common Defense*, pp. 3–4. Huntington's strategic category corresponds to Graham Allison's "rational decision model," in which "governments select the action that will maximize strategic goals and objectives." See Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (September 1969), p. 694. Huntington's structural category shares many of the attributes of Allison's "organizational" model, which sees the actor in national decisions as "a constellation of loosely allied organizations." Ibid., p. 699. Allison's original paper was later expanded into a book, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971). An updated and expanded version was released as Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1999).
33. John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
34. See "The American Way of Organizing for Defense," Chapter 2 in Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and Mackubin Thomas Owens, *US Foreign Policy and Defense Strategy: The Evolution of an Incidental Superpower* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014).
35. Michele A. Flournoy and Shawn W. Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium for the 21st Century," Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, *Princeton Project Papers*, 2006, p. [4], https://www.princeton.edu/~ppns/papers/interagencyQNSR.pdf (accessed July 2, 2016).
36. Colin Dueck, "Strategic Planning for the Next President, Part 2: Recommendations for the NSC Process," Foreign Policy Research Institute *E-Notes*, January 2016, http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/01/strategic-planning-next-president-part-two-recommendations-nsc-process/ (accessed June 15, 2016).
37. Thomas Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 203–210, 385–442.
38. Named for the room in the White House where the President issued the directive for the study.
39. Tyler Nottberg, "Once and Future Policy Planning: Solarium for Today," Gettysburg College, Eisenhower Institute, http://www.eisenhowerinstitute.org/about/living_history/solarium_for_today.dot (accessed June 7, 2016).
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Quoted in Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. vii.