Because strategy never stops...

Infinity Journal

IN THIS EDITION

Martin van Creveld | T.X. Hammes | Justin Kelly
Gian P. Gentile | Patrick Porter | David Betz

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A Note From The Editor

Dear IJ Subscribers,

Welcome to Issue 3 of Infinity Journal (IJ)

As Editor, I would love to imply that a workday is spent crafting every word of IJ, and that the hopefully high standard contained within it is only thanks to my unrelenting enthusiasm and attention to detail.

Those days may come, or even return, but this has not been the case with this issue, as the contributors clearly understand what strategy is and where the discussion usefully needs to be. This in no way is meant to impugn or demean the outstanding contributions we have seen in others issues, including that of myself! However, the primary source of friction for the production of Infinity Journal still rests with the fact that the majority of submissions are not addressing strategy.

Almost every discussion any of us at IJ have with anyone about what we do, is taken up with explaining what strategy is. By far, the most common fault with submissions is the assumption that foreign policy and political opinion are somehow "strategy." Unless there is detailed discussion of ends, ways and means – a 3,000-word opinion about President Obama's foreign policy does not an article on strategy make.

Having said that, we would be the first to concede that strategy is not a wholly discreet entity of study. How you use force to gain the political behaviour or condition you seek is necessarily a wide subject, but regardless of that, the acid test is the use of force, or threat of force, for political gain. This is not a hard concept to comprehend.

As simple as this may seem, we are also challenged by those who see the causes of conflict as being religious, economic, environmental or even of "globalisation" as being things distinct and/or separate from politics. More than anything, the reason why people can generally neither write or talk about strategy sensibly is because the government, military and academia have comprehensively dropped the ball in educating people as to what strategy is. The current round of handwringing inside the beltway about "doing strategy" is a little hard to take seriously when the very simple and enduring components of strategy are hardly recognised by anyone. For people schooled in an understanding of strategy, the incredible rarity of like-minds is alarming, and strongly reflected in IJ's difficulty in finding original articles that we want to produce on the subject.

If you accept that strategy is fundamentally what Clausewitz described it as, then you have to understand that when you hear people say things such as "economic strategy" and "political strategy" they quite literally have no clue as to the correct meaning of the word. It is simplistic to say that strategy is about killing to get what you want, but if you do not have a policy that you seek to set forth via the use of force, then you can have no strategy. If you understand that, we would love to hear from you.

William F. Owen
Senior Editor, Infinity Journal

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The Second Lebanon War: A Re-assessment

Martin van Creveld

Jerusalem, Israel

Martin van Creveld is an internationally recognized authority on military history and strategy. He was the only non-American author on the U.S. Army's required reading list for officers, and the only person—foreign or American—to have two books on that list. He holds degrees from the London School of Economics and from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he was a faculty member from 1971 until his retirement in 2008.

What were the origins of the so-called Second Lebanon War, how was it waged and fought, what lessons were drawn from it, and who won it? Looking back on these questions from the perspective of early 2011, it seems sufficient time has passed in order to answer at least some of these questions.

1. Origins

To understand the origins of the war, it is necessary to go back all the way to 1968. Until that time the Israeli Lebanese armistice, which had been established twenty years earlier, was so effective that Israel's border with Lebanon was almost absolutely quiet.

> ## To understand the origins of the Second Lebanon War, it is necessary to go back all the way to 1968.

This situation changed when elements of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) started establishing themselves in Lebanon following the Arab defeat and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967. The PLO's presence was reinforced after 1970, the year in which King Hussein of Jordan crushed the organization in his own country. As many as 5,000 Palestinians were killed. Many others fled and some of them established themselves in Lebanon's refugee camps. From then on, cross-border terrorism, in the form of raids, the planting of mines, and the

launching of Katyusha rockets into northern Israel, became the order of the day.

Throughout the 1970s Israel responded to these provocations by means of artillery strikes, bombing, and raids into Lebanon. Commando raids, including the famous one when future chief of staff and Prime Minister Ehud Barak dressed up as a woman, were also launched. Yet none of this had the desired effect of restoring peace and quiet; instead the country sank into a vicious civil war, which in turn caused large parts of it to fall under Syrian domination. The climax came on 5 June 1982 when six Israeli divisions, with over 1,000 tanks between them, invaded Lebanon, taking just a week to reach the outskirts of Beirut. Again the outcome was not what Israel had expected. Not only did it fail to impose its will, but its forces became involved in a protracted counterinsurgency campaign against various Lebanese militias. In the end, eighteen years were to pass before the last Israeli troops finally gave up their occupation of southern Lebanon, and in May of 2000 they withdrew across the international border.

During this thirty-two year period, Israel's main enemies were first the PLO, then a militia known as Amal, and, from the mid-1980s on, Hezbollah. Like Amal, Hezbollah was rooted in the Shi'ite communities of southern Lebanon and southern Beirut. Like both Amal and the PLO, it enjoyed Syrian support in the form of money, arms, and training. It was, however, much better organized than its predecessors, receiving weapons not just from Syria but from Iran as well. Once Israel had left southern Lebanon, Hezbollah's declared objective in continuing its "resistance" was threefold. First, it sought to free several thousand Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. Second, it sought to "liberate" Shaba farm, a small piece of territory which, against all evidence (including that of specially-appointed U.N Commission that marked the border on the ground), it claimed belonged to Lebanon. And third, Hezbollah, which is a political party as well as paramilitary organization (it even has two ministers in the Lebanese cabinet), had to show it was "resisting" Israel so as to justify its own continued existence in the eyes of its supporters as well as the wider Arab public.

2. The War

Just why Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah launched the

raid on 11 July which marked the beginning of the war, and whether this raid was part of a wider plan in which Syria and Iran were also involved, will probably only be known if Wikileaks is able to put its hands on original documents coming from Damascus, Tehran, and Beirut. Suffice it to say that since Israeli troops were not just killed (as had happened several times in the previous six years) but captured, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had no choice but to retaliate in force. Had he not done so, he would have been swept away.

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Though the decision to retaliate in force was inevitable, it also meant that the Israel Defense Force (IDF) was taken by surprise and did not have time to prepare properly. Of the entire vast order of battle, only five regular brigades were immediately available. Moreover, these brigades had spent years doing little but carrying out counter-insurgency operations in the Occupied Territories. As a result, they had almost forgotten how to fight a *real* enemy; he who fights the weak will end up by becoming weak. Some of the burden fell on the Israeli Navy which shelled Lebanon's coast, imposed a blockade, and cut the country off from the world. In doing so, one of its modern ships was hit by an Iranian-built surface to sea missile, suffering damage and taking some casualties. Since this was the first time in thirty-nine years anything of the kind had happened, it was a considerable propaganda victory for Hezbollah. At the same time it proved how much the crew had underestimated the enemy, since they (perhaps acting on their superiors' orders) had not even switched on the vessel's electronic defenses.

The most important part of the response, however, was carried out by the Israel Air Force (IAF). Back in 1991, the Gulf Coalition aircraft had hunted Saddam Hussein's mobile missile launchers for weeks without locating and destroying even one. In 2006, the outcome was very different. Highly motivated and superbly trained, equipped with the latest precision-guided munitions and even better command, control and communication facilities, the IAF had been flying over Lebanon for many years. Now it started the campaign by delivering a stunning blow to Hezbollah. Most of the latter's medium-range (50 km and more) missile-launchers were knocked out during the first forty-eight hours and the rest forced to take cover. The organization's central headquarters as well as several important communication-centers were demolished, as was a large part of the Shi'ite quarter of Beirut where they had been located.

That accomplished, the IAF's remaining operations were less successful. Several "in depth" heliborne raids were launched, but none of them met expectations in causing the death or capture of important Hezbollah leaders. Instead, three helicopters were lost. Vast destruction was inflicted on Lebanon's infrastructure, roads and bridges in particular, but whether traffic from Syria to the west and from central Lebanon to the south was really brought to a halt is not clear.

Above all, the IAF did not succeed in ending the hail of short-range rockets—some 3,500 in all—that came down on towns and villages all over northern Israel, causing considerable physical damage, driving several hundreds of thousands people from their homes, and paralyzing about one third of the entire country. It was this failure, above all, that has caused Israeli public opinion to turn against the IDF, which includes the IAF. Still the accusations are unfair. Given how numerous the rockets were, as well as the ease with which they could be transported, concealed and fired, stopping them was probably beyond the capabilities of any air force, however sophisticated and however well prepared.

Originally the Israelis seem to have hoped to accomplish their objective—teaching Hezbollah, as well as that part of the Lebanese people which supported it, a lesson they would never forget—without engaging in large-scale ground operations. This explains why they only sent three brigades to their northern border, leaving the remaining two to police the area around the Gaza Strip and the West Bank; only gradually did they realize that these forces were far from enough. First one reserve division, then two more, was called up. Contrary to the fears of some, the men proved willing enough and there were few, if any, refusals to serve. Fulfilling the fears of others, the mobilization process did not come up to expectations. Years had passed since the men had trained together, and a great many of them were out of condition and had forgotten how to fight. Many kinds of equipment such as webbing, bullet-proof vests, ammunition, and communications gear were in short supply. The part of the logistic system responsible for Class I supplies did not function properly either. It left thousands without either food or water for days on end, forcing them either to rely on handouts from the civilian population—those who had not fled their homes—or else to scavenge for what they could find inside Lebanon itself. In fact, the defective performance of the IDF's logistic system was one of the main shortcomings revealed by the war. Civil defense, too, proved inadequate, leaving many people stranded in their shelters.

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Above all, when IDF ground operations in southern Lebanon got under way they proved clumsy, heavy-handed, and slow. Very large forces—as many as 500-600 tanks with all their accompanying firepower—were deployed. Partly for that very reason there was no attempt at surprise, no attempt at attacking the enemy from unexpected directions (only late in the war did the IDF start using its helicopters to land troops in Hezbollah's rear), and little or no cooperation among the various participating formations. Just who was to blame for these shortcomings is not clear. So unhappy was Chief of Staff Dan Halutz with his commander on the ground, General Udi Adam, that he fired him in the middle of the war. Adam, on his part, did not remain silent but blamed the Government and the Chief of Staff for holding him back and not allowing him to carry out his carefully-laid plans during the first days of the war.

Adam's replacement was Halutz's own deputy, General Moshe Kaplinsky. However, his appointment did not cause the situation to improve to any noticeable extent. Units continued to receive contradictory, ever-changing orders; the number of different ones received by just one with which I am familiar during a twenty-four hour period has to be seen to be believed. Some forces never entered Lebanon. Others, which did, engaged in heavy-handed, frontal attacks against fortified Hezbollah positions. On one occasion an entire division, complete with all its armor and artillery, was "fighting" fifty Hezbollah combatants! Though most of the positions were occupied in the end, several were abandoned later on, demoralizing the troops who asked why they had to fight and die if their achievements were to be discarded in such a way.

Some of the difficulties the IDF experienced seem to have been due to the fact that the terrain is mountainous and unsuitable for armor (a fact, however, that should have been obvious in advance). Many others felt sheer confusion from the top, including the Minister of Defense, the Chief of the General Staff, and senior commanders near or at the front itself. Here and there, so idiotic did the troops consider the orders with which they were issued that they simply refused to carry them out.

At the tactical level, too, results proved disappointing. The Hezbollah guerrillas came under massive bombardment both from the air and from ground artillery. Nevertheless, on the whole they fought very well. They stood their ground, firing Russian-made anti-tank Kornet missiles at the advancing Israeli Merkavas, inflicting casualties, and destroying or disabling several tanks. Their bunkers turned out to be well-built with several openings to each one. From time to time they left those bunkers to fight in the open, where their skills at using camouflage and fighting in the dense vegetation characteristic of the area proved at least equal to those of their opponents.

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When the war was finally brought to an end the IDF claimed to have killed between five and seven hundred Hezbollah members. Yet it had almost no prisoners to show; proof that it had not succeeded in taking them in the rear, blocking their escape routes, and demoralizing them. Above all, in thirty-four days of fighting the IDF did not succeed in ending the hail of Katyusha rockets. It did not even succeed in greatly reducing Hezbollah's ability to fire them; if the number of Israeli civilian casualties was limited, this was due less to any countermeasures or civil defense than to the fact that most of the population had fled, as well as the rockets' own extreme inaccuracy. Thus, not merely the IDF's own operations but those of its supporting organizations as well, can hardly been seen as a great success.

3. Assessment

Tactically and operationally, the IDF's ground campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon brought to light many major shortcomings. The IAF did much better, especially during the first forty-eight hours, when it accomplished what Schwarzkopf's juggernaut had failed to do over a period of six weeks. In addition, since Hezbollah's missiles were smaller than those of Saddam Hussein and were carefully concealed in urban areas, the IAF's achievement was much greater still. Later though, a shortage of suitable targets caused its effectiveness to decline. Fighter-bombers worth tens of millions of dollars found themselves trying to chase individual cars and even motorcycles that might or might not carry Hezbollah members and rockets. Attack helicopters were used far too cautiously; at the same time they were put at risk because, surprising as it may seem, intelligence concerning topographical conditions and obstacles in southern Lebanon was not good enough. The one attempt to mount a heliborne assault operation failed to achieve anything. The IAF did inflict quite a number of civilian casualties, but in the end it was unable to achieve the one thing that really mattered.

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Disappointed by the slow pace of ground operations in particular, and recalling thousands of rockets that struck their own country, Israeli public opinion has been loud in demanding that the conduct of the war be investigated and those responsible for the "failures" taken to account. The Winograd Commission was appointed to do just that, and its report was not sparing of the IDF's shortcoming. Moreover, in the international arena, there was a widespread feeling that the campaign had not been a success – to put it mildly.

On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that war is not a game of football in which a decision is reached by means of the number of goals scored on each side. Instead, it is the continuation of policy with an admixture of other means, a physical and moral struggle by means of the latter; in such a struggle the side with the strongest will wins. If anybody had predicted, a few days before the war, that in response to the capture of two of its soldiers, Israel would launch an air campaign all over Lebanon, mobilize three reserve divisions, send them across the border, and keep up the pressure for over a month while taking thousands of rockets and suffering more than a hundred casualties, he would have been considered stark raving mad.

"Stark raving mad" (*majnun*, in Arabic) was, in fact, the way many people in Lebanon and the rest of the Arab world reacted to the Israeli attack. As the statements of several of Hezbollah's top leaders indicated, they too were surprised by the strength of the Israeli reaction. None of the organization's original objectives were achieved. Its fighters remain in prison; the Israeli "occupation" of Shaba Farm continues; and Jerusalem, which it set itself as its ultimate objective to liberate, remains as firmly in Israeli hands as it has been during

the last forty-four years. What the war did do was to show that, in case of war, neither Syria nor Iran would necessarily come to Lebanon's rescue. The country's infrastructure was left in ruins. Thirty thousand dwellings were destroyed or damaged, and dozens of bridges, underpasses, and gas stations demolished. Hundred of thousands of people were forced to flee, and as many as 2,000 killed.

As a result, since the middle of August 2006, all over southern Lebanon hardly a shot has been fired. This was not for lack of provocation. First, Israeli troops remained in the country for weeks, putting the lie to Nasrallah's promise to continue fighting them as long as they did so. Next, a senior Hezbollah official, Imad Mughniyya, was assassinated in Damascus. Perhaps most serious of all, Israeli drones continue to fly over Lebanon as they have done for years. From time to time they are joined by fighter-bombers. They gather intelligence, produce the occasional sonic boom, and in general behave as if Lebanon were not a sovereign country. While, it is true that Hezbollah has been rebuilding its military strength and receiving weapons, including missiles capable of hitting every Israeli target as far away as the Red Sea. It remains, on the other hand, bluster as he may, that Mr. Nasrallah himself

has gone on record as saying he and his organization would be in no hurry to pull the trigger again. On the rare occasions when a few rockets *have* landed in northern Israel, he and the organization of which he is the head were almost hysterical in blaming others and begging Israel not to retaliate.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has achieved what no other Israeli prime minister able to do

As of early 2011, it looks as if then Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has achieved what no other Israeli prime minister from Golda Meir to Ariel Sharon was able to do for thirty-eight years between 1968 and 2006; namely, he put an end to hostilities on Israel's northern border. Moreover, given the IDF's numerous documented failures, it is arguable that this achievement was due solely to his persistence in continuing the war, in spite of all the difficulties. To the extent that things may change at any moment – of course the jury is still out, and may it remain so for a long, long time to come.

Limited means strategy: What to do when the cupboard is bare

T.X. Hammes

Institute for National Strategic Studies
Washington D.C.

Col. (Ret) Dr. T.X. Hammes of the Institute for National Strategic Studies is the author of The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century and Forgotten Warriors: The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, the Corps, Ethos, and the Korean War.

Professor Eliot Cohen has suggested that a strategy should include assumptions, ends, ways, means, priorities, sequencing and a theory of victory. This approach significantly expands on the normal "ends, ways, and means" formulation. Yet each element listed by Cohen is essential. In my last commentary, I highlighted why defining assumptions correctly is the first step in developing an effective strategy. (Infinity Journal Issue 1) While getting the assumptions right and regularly reevaluating them is absolutely critical, it is only the first step. As many modern authors have noted, the real trick in strategy is achieving coherence among the ends, ways and means. Further, since one will never have sufficient resources to accomplish everything at once, the strategist must assign priorities so that operators can appropriately sequence the use of available assets. And of course, the strategy must answer the question of how these actions lead to success.

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This short piece will examine only the need to consider situations where the nation has limited means relative to the task at hand. This discussion is not about fighting limited wars, since almost all wars are limited. Rather it is about fighting any war where, for whatever reason, resource limitation will constrain how the tasks are achieved. Such limitations exist across the spectrum from small wars to World War II. Even in that massive effort, the United States was forced to modify its strategic approach due to limitations on some resources.

Unfortunately, recent U.S. strategic documents have failed to even discuss the means needed for a specific effort. Instead, the tendency has been to state the desired goals, outline a potential way to achieve them and then fail to identify the means needed. This is most obvious in official U.S. strategy documents such as the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy. Mandated by Congress and unclassified, each has been reduced to a bureaucratic exercise that lists a set of goals but never defines the ways or means of achieving them.

Unfortunately, recent U.S. strategic documents have failed to even discuss the means needed for a specific effort.

This is a useful exercise, as these documents are utilized to explain U.S. aspirations in an unclassified but official forum. However, this practice is highly problematic when used in documents which are supposed to express an actual strategy for a conflict. It is widely accepted that the United States invaded Iraq with too few troops to achieve its stated goals. While Iraq was clearly a case of under-resourcing, it seemed to be based on unrealistic assumptions about the political situation in a post-Saddam Iraq. The United States does not appear to have calculated what resources might be required in different possible outcomes of the invasion. Then, the Administration was slow to understand the shortage of resources and take corrective action. Indeed, it did not attempt to bring coherence to the ends, ways and means until the 2007 surge.

Despite what should have been a learning moment, the United States continues to use strategies that specifically fail to balance the ends-ways-means triad. Nowhere is this more evident than in Afghanistan. Prior to 2009, Iraq was the main effort; and therefore Afghanistan was treated as an economy-of-force theater. Admiral Michael Mullen acknowledged this to the House Armed Services Committee after his December 2007 visit to Afghanistan. He noted "In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must. "[i] Clearly, at that time, the United States had no articulated strategy for a victory in Afghanistan but was simply fighting a holding action with whatever resources could be spared from

the fight in Iraq. In short, the strategic goals were adjusted downward in recognition of the limited means available. During some periods, the military effort was focused almost exclusively on hunting Al Qaeda elements with only marginal efforts to develop Afghan government or military capabilities.

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However, eighteen months later the Obama Administration appointed General Stanley McChrystal as Commander, International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan, and tasked him with developing a winning strategy. The redacted version of McChrystal's August 2009 assessment and Bob Woodward's *Obama's War* account of the discussions surrounding the December 2009 review of Afghan policy suggest that the United States again failed to achieve coherence among the ends, ways and means selected.

The stated goal was "to reduce the will and capability of the insurgency, support the growth in capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF); and facilitate improvements in governance and socio-economic development, in order to provide a secure environment for sustainable security that is observable to the population."[ii] In short, the goals/ends were maximalist. The way or method which McChyrstal selected was population-centric counterinsurgency. This method makes protection of the population and development of an effective government the primary effort. It is both manpower and expertise intensive.

However, in keeping with guidance from the White House, he provided no estimate of the troop requirement in his estimate. While McChyrstal gave no official estimate, the FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* ratio of 1 security officer per 50 inhabitants suggested it would take over 600,000 security personnel to pacify Afghanistan. This number is an average used against a range of insurgency efforts from incipient to intense. The field manual makes no comments on the level of training or effectiveness necessary for the troops. Most analysts accept that Afghanistan's political, economic and social conditions combined with its extremely difficult terrain and the Pakistani sanctuaries mean that the Afghan insurgency is clearly one of the more difficult insurgencies on record. Under these conditions it is highly likely that even 600,000 personnel will be grossly insufficient. One might note that during the period 1971-72, the US/South Vietnamese governments reached a ratio of 1 security officer per 15 people. To achieve the same ration, Afghanistan would need about 2 million men. Yet in December, President Obama authorized only 30,000 additional U.S. troops for an extended surge of 18 to 24 months.[iii]

The plan called for ISAF to grow to 150,000 troops, with the surge tentatively scheduled to end in July of 2011. At the same time, the Afghan security forces maximum planned strength was set at 400,000, which could not be achieved until 2014 at the earliest. Even if the highest numbers are achieved, the combined Afghan/ISAF force will remain below the FM 3-24 estimated requirements. Further, the ISAF forces are tentatively scheduled to withdraw during the same period the Afghan forces are growing. In effect, the administration

has stated that it will not provide the security forces required by its own plan. Of even more concern, the administration provided no figures publically for the resources needed to establish "governance and socio-economic development" – the other pillars of its population-centric COIN approach. These functions require high levels of skills not usually found in armed forces. The shortage of civilian experts means this has been the weakest part of the ISAF effort since its inception. The governance and development efforts remain badly under-resourced today.

Despite this acknowledgement that it would provide insufficient means to execute the chosen strategy, the Administration has not adjusted its ends or ways. It has extended the potential timeline to 2014 which, based on optimistic projections, could result in an ANSF of 400,000 with an ISAF advisory force of 40,000 post-2014. Unfortunately, this remains well short of the FM 3-24 projections. In short, the Administration has failed in the essential task of developing coherence among the ends, ways and means.

This consistent failure to match means to selected ends and ways is a trend in U.S. strategic thinking. From the Iraq invasion to the Afghan reviews and in various national security documents, the United States has consistently published "strategies" without articulating what the strategy requires in terms of means to attain it. As a result, one is left perplexed as to the nature of American strategy and how the government thinks it can achieve goals without specifying necessary resources.

We're broke, it's time to think

Given the looming debt crisis and inevitable cuts in the Department of Defense, U.S. strategic planners should assume they will be conducting means limited operations against all but truly existential threats. Further, it is unlikely that the government of the day will clearly define the resources needed for any military operation. Thus, one of the key assumptions that must be made in the development of any strategy is the level and types of resources available. When it becomes apparent that the level of resources will limit the goals that can be achieved, the planning team must work to bring coherence to the ends-ways-means.

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Initially, they should still focus on achieving the goals stated by the national command authority. If the means are limited, then alternative ways must be examined. Often, these alternatives will have a higher level of risk than a fully resourced plan. For instance, the priority of resources to Europe in World War II meant that the Marine invasion of Guadalcanal was conducted by a single division with inadequate naval and air support. The invasion was a strategic necessity, but the risk was higher because it was done with minimal resources. Part of the ends, ways and means balancing must include examination of the degree of risk involved in various potential

approaches; as well as the differing impacts of both success and failure in each approach. These alternatives and the possibility that the goals cannot be achieved with limited means must be part of an ongoing dialogue between the strategic planners and the national command authority. This dialogue must be continuous, since policy decisions are also based on assumptions. As either policy or strategy assumptions are updated due to changing conditions, those changes may require adjustment of either the policy, the strategy, or both. Only through continuous feedback can policy and strategy maintain coherence.

For instance, in light of the limited means available in Afghanistan, there are alternatives to the current approach of having ISAF conduct clear, hold and build prior to the turnover to Afghan forces. Some writers have suggested that ISAF adjust the way it is attempting to succeed. Rather than employing the resource intensive population-centric counterinsurgency method, they might look to an approach based on counter-terrorism operations designed to disrupt Taliban operations while limited ISAF conventional assets focus on training and deploying Afghan Security Forces. ISAF special operations forces would concentrate on raids to disrupt Taliban operations while the reduced conventional forces focus on mentoring the Afghans. The Afghans will replace the ISAF forces currently conducting the clear, hold and build phases of counterinsurgency. More radical suggestions include ISAF simply conducting counter-terror operations only against Al Qaeda leadership while providing logistics support and training to various Afghan warlords who will "govern" their respective territories. The bulk of ISAF conventional forces would be sent home. These reduced options do not attempt to achieve all of the current strategic goals but would be targeted at the most important ones.

These alternatives illustrate that lack of resources to achieve goals via a specific way does not mean one automatically gives up all strategic goals. When the means are insufficient, the first step is to evaluate alternative ways. The different approaches for Afghanistan outlined above have different probabilities of success and entail different risks. Just as important, they have different strategic outcomes — both if they succeed and if they fail.

In some cases, changing ways will not be sufficient. In those cases, limited means will force a downward adjustment of even the most important strategic goals. In those cases, planners must examine potential alternatives and, if none has a significant probability of success, they must go back to the policy makers and inform them of that fact. It is then up to the policy makers to decide if they wish to reduce the goals or increase the resources. The key is a continuing dialogue between policy and strategy. Given the nature of interactively complex (wicked) problems, planners must accept that it will be an iterative process to adjust the ends, ways and means

in pursuit of a workable strategy. Nor will this process cease when a strategy is executed. In fact, the actions taken will fundamentally alter the situation. The interactive nature of conflict requires constant reevaluation not just of the progress of the plan, but also of the nature of the problem. The enemy's response almost certainly will change the situation enough to require a strategic reevaluation and an adjustment of resources.

Resources will increasingly drive strategy

Even during World War II, strategic choices were driven by resources. The Allies concluded they did not have sufficient resources to simultaneously defeat both Germany and Japan and thus decided to deal with the greater danger first – Germany. They focused resources on Germany with the full knowledge it would extend the war against Japan. In fact when Germany surrendered, Allied planners were anticipating a year or even two of continued very bloody fighting.

No matter what the reason, resource limitations require balancing the ends-ways-means formula.

No matter what the reason, resource limitations require balancing the ends-ways-means formula. If adjusting the ways does not overcome the deficiencies, then the goals must be adjusted. This may require adjusting the strategy as well. Failure to adapt to realities imposed by limited resources assures failure. Unfortunately, the pattern of recent U.S. strategies has been to ignore the impact insufficient resources have on stated strategic goals. The combined failures to examine assumptions and bring coherence to the end, ways and means triad have resulted in long and, to date, inconclusive wars.

These failures highlight the need to resurrect the concept of a strategy based on limited means. Rather than ignoring the means deficit or hoping to find the necessary resources after the strategy is initiated, this approach accepts that for whatever reason, national decision makers will not provide the resources necessary to achieve maximum goals. They may decide the goals are not worth the investment of limited strategic resources (Afghanistan today) or there may be higher priorities for those resources (Afghanistan from 2002 to 2008), or the nation may simply not have the resources due to external constraints (what the US may face due to rising national debt). The continuing economic crisis and looming debt levels virtually assures future interventions will lack resources. Thus, it is essential that strategic planners recognize the requirement for coherent ends, ways and means; and be prepared to develop means limited strategies.

Footnotes

[i] Julian Barnes, "U.S. calls Iraq the priority," Los Angeles Times, 12 Dec 2007, http://articles.latimes.com/2007/dec/12/world/fg-usafghan12

[ii] Stanley McChyrstal, COMISAF Initial Assessment, Kabul, Afghanistan, 30 Aug 2009.

[iii] Bob Woodward, Obama's War, (New York, Simon & Schuster, 2010), page. 387.

On Paradigms

Justin Kelly

Land Warfare Studies Centre
Canberra ACT

Brig (Ret) J. D. Kelly is a graduate of RMC Duntroon, Royal Military College of Science (UK), Australian Command and Staff College, Joint Services Staff College and US Army War College. During his Army career he served in Bougainville, East Timor and Iraq. He is presently posing as a management consultant.

At first sight nothing can appear more unpractical, less promising of useful result, than to approach the study of war with a theory. There seems indeed to be something essentially antagonistic between the habit of mind that seeks theoretical guidance and that which makes for the successful conduct of war. The conduct of war is so much a question of personality, of character, of common-sense, of rapid decision upon complex and ever-shifting factors, and those factors themselves are so varied, so intangible, so dependent upon unstable moral and physical conditions, that it seems incapable of being reduced to anything like true scientific analysis.

Sir Julian Corbett

A recent edition of *Joint Force Quarterly* contains an article by David Kilcullen and Sebastian Gorka entitled "The Actor Centric Theory of War: Understanding the Difference Between COIN and Counter-Insurgency".[i] The article argues that, because it is based on interpretations of only a handful of 20th Century cases, the US Army's famous Counter-Insurgency Field Manual FM 3-24 describes a narrow concept of 'COIN' rather than the much broader 'counter-insurgency' and therefore has limited applicability.

As well as being interesting for its argument, the Gorka-Kilcullen article is interesting because of the analytical framework it uses. The perspective the article takes tells us a lot about the way military theory is usually derived. The basic proposition, familiar to us all, is that to develop military theory, we consider our and others experiences, draw generalities from them, define the relationships and dynamics that connect those generalities and then proffer the assembled whole as a theoretical explanation of some aspect of strategy or warfare.

Clearly the development of theory is an endeavour of considerable intellectual boldness but most of us are not dissuaded by this and, perhaps hubristically, are equally eager to both proffer our own theories and dispose of those of our colleagues. In doing so, through the 'arbitrary selection of evidence and the arbitrary placement of emphasis', history is tortured as much as is necessary for us to make our points.

This article is not an attempt at critical deconstruction of the Gorka-Kilcullen piece but is a more discursive exploration of how we think about problems and the pitfalls that are consequently presented to us. It is aligned with the Kilcullen-Gorka proposition summarized above but goes further to argue that, as a consequence of the flawed way we usually think about military problems, most of the theories we arrive at are guff.

the development of theory is an endeavour of considerable intellectual boldness

Paradigms

The community of military and strategic theorists is not the only one engaged in the process of theorizing. It lies too at the core of the physical and social sciences which are also tested by the innate difficulty of not just discovering the facts but also of understanding what they mean. Although Rousseau was right and truth will manifest itself – that does not mean it will also reveal itself.

In 1962 Thomas Kuhn wrote *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in which he broadened the meaning of paradigm from a simple exemplar to being a model from which springs a particular coherent tradition of scientific research. Kuhn posited that scientific communities assembled around paradigms and that most scientific research revolves around further adorning and investigating the particular paradigm then extant. Textbooks are the vehicles by which the paradigm is passed from generation to generation and knowledge and

acceptance of the extant paradigm is the price of entry into the particular scientific community owning it.

Kuhn was specifically addressing progress in the physical sciences which are focused on the disclosure of an objective truth. Warfare is not a science, at least not in the sense of having one objective truth, but military theory does aspire to being scientific in that it comprises a structured body of knowledge. The evolution of this structured body of knowledge rests on a paradigmatic journey from experience through the establishment of paradigms to the distillation of theory based on those paradigms. This theory is then deposited into textbooks –– doctrinal publications — which are used to proselytize the next generation. Kuhn's discussion of the role of paradigms is therefore broadly applicable relevant to military theorists. In this context, the Gorka-Kilcullen article was a criticism of the specific paradigmatic journey leading to the publication of FM 3-24. In doing so, however, it raises the issue of how our other paradigmatic journeys are proceeding.

Warfare is not a science, at least not in the sense of having one objective truth

Constructing Paradigms

The process of developing military theories rests on inferences drawn from paradigms. In this, a number of examples, facts or trends is assembled into a structured whole which is held to adequately explain the behavior of a dynamic reality. Military theories are universally based on the examination of the historical record and the selection of exemplar conflicts. These exemplars are chosen because they are held to exhibit a few significant characteristics which are believed to enable them to be collected into a category. Having established a category, the types of actions which were historically efficacious, or which can be argued to have been so if they had been applied, can be assembled into a paradigm that encompasses both a description of a phenomenon and a model for its behaviour in a range of circumstances and in the face of specific stimuli. These paradigms are, in effect, theories. They are intended to help us understand some aspect of war and often include prescriptions of what we should do about it. These theories are usually proposed as generally applicable descriptions of, and approaches to, real world situations.

This is a fraught process. Colin Gray has argued that the character of warfare is determined by six aspects of context: the political, the strategic, the social-cultural, the economic, the technological; and the geographical.[ii] To form a true category — one on which theory can be based — the examples which comprise it must have commonalities not just in appearance or provenance but in behaviours and responses to stimulus. Given the diversity of contexts in which they have arisen, the chances of any two conflicts sharing sufficient commonality to form a true category would appear to be small. Most of the categories we create, group examples of only superficial similarity, for the purposes of theory these are false categories. There is a high probability that theory derived from such false categories is so flawed it is useless.

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Most of the categories we construct are false. The COIN example cited by Kilcullen and Gorka demonstrates the problem. Current population-centric COIN doctrine describes an approach to warfare that purports to connect the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Vietnam and Algeria among others. The extent of the commonality between these conflicts is very, very low and any theoretical prescription emerging from considering them as a category is unlikely to be applicable to any real world situation. To extrapolate abstracted experience from Northern Ireland, for example, and attempt to apply it to actual conflict in Afghanistan, or prospective conflicts in some other part of the world is so wildly speculative as to be of no practical utility. The result is theory that, in Kant's words, is nothing more than an empty ideality of concepts. COIN though is not the only example of a false category and resulting false theory.

Let us also consider something like 'industrial age warfare'. This could be read to include all wars fought in the 'industrial age' and so would connect the Crimean War, US Civil War, Austro-Prussian War, World Wars I and II, the Russian Civil War, Korea, and probably finishing with Operation Desert Storm. This is not useful. 'Industrial age warfare' might mean wars between nation states during this period — but to me this still doesn't help identify generalities shared by these wars that can support either a description of why things happened in the order or way in which they did, or provide the basis for the identification of a clear path to victory for either side. What if we limit the category further and say it includes only wars between the standing forces of nation states in the 20th century. This links the World Wars, the Russo-Japanese War, Vietnam, Korea, Desert Storm and a number of others. But even at this level of refinement, the resulting category rests on supposed similarities between the Japanese campaign in Malaya, for example, and the roughly contemporaneous Barbarossa. There is simply insufficient connection between any of these examples to enable inferences to be drawn that can truly claim to comprise some generally applicable descriptive or prescriptive theory.

Tracked to its core, conventional warfare, like its kin regular warfare, is that warfare for which a Service or country prepares.

'Conventional' warfare is yet another example of our epistemological confusion. Tracked to its core, conventional warfare, like its kin regular warfare, is that warfare for which a Service or country prepares. It has no innate characteristics of its own apart from being the dominant paradigm that is embedded in an institution's organisational and conceptual preparations. If COIN becomes embedded in this way, it displaces the former dominant paradigm and becomes the new 'conventional'. There are lots of other examples of this reality based on unreality. In the 1990s Network-Centric Warfare (NCW), Effects-Based Operations (EBO) and "Swarming" were

all proposed as the new dominant paradigm for warfare. In the early 21st Century it is Hybrid War, Asymmetric Warfare, War Amongst the People, and Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW).

The Gorka-Kilcullen article proposes that broadening the set of examples included in the paradigm would enable the production of a more broadly applicable doctrine, that is, it would lead to better theory. The effect of this broadening though is to dilute the, already meager, commonality shared by the examples. This leads to the resulting theory becoming more general, less specific and more descriptive – Clausewitz – or to theory resting on relationships that simply don't exist. The alternative is to derive theory and write doctrine for each individual category in an expansive taxonomy of conflict types that is continuously expanding to accommodate new experiences.

The Implications for Practitioners

The American linguist Benjamin Whorf coined the aphorism that 'language is not just a reporting device for experience but its defining framework'. Although the underlying proposition remains contested the aphorism contains an element of truth – particularly for militaries. How can we understand something that we have no words to describe? As explained earlier, the community assembled around a paradigm proselytizes it through its textbooks – for militaries - doctrine. To produce doctrine, the phenomena of war and warfare need to be disaggregated into some structure that allows the programmed instruction of neophytes. In this process those being taught are provided not just with knowledge of the extant paradigm or paradigms but also the lexicon with which they will describe and understand war. This disaggregation arranges the various competing paradigms into a hierarchy that reflects their relative status. The dominant paradigm – the conventional – lies at the core of the doctrinal edifice while others are missing altogether or are pushed to the periphery.

> # No military prepares to fight the last war: they are simply trapped in a dominant paradigm which they have taken to an exotic context to which it is ill-suited.

The danger in this is that, until they gain a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of reality, practitioners will conceive of warfare as a choice between the conceptual enclosures offered by doctrine and will be constrained in their understanding by the lexicon they have been given. This means that they will seldom be prepared to fight the war they have and will most often start any war trying to fit square doctrinal pegs into round practical holes. This is the source of the 'preparing to fight the last war' problem. No military prepares to fight the last war: they are simply trapped in a dominant paradigm which they have taken to an exotic context to which it is ill-suited.

Our lexicon also constrains our perception of reality. Human cognition rests heavily on the identification of patterns and the subsequent correlation between what is observed and what can be expected. As a species, when these patterns are not apparent we have a tendency to imagine them. Additionally, because we are so quick to see patterns, odd events which don't fit into the pattern are usually discarded. This cognitive bias means that a paradigm is necessary for perception in the first place; that is, we tend to see what we expect to see. If, by dint of training, we have been prepared to see specific patterns, we will most likely do so. If we have been told that COIN has these patterns, things we see in practice that do not fit the paradigm are discarded as anomalous or given reduced weighting. Inappropriate paradigms can obscure the truth.

Conclusion

The paradigms on which much of our theory is based typically reflect the creation of false categories that claim for conflicts, or even specific instances within conflicts, a commonality that they don't really have. Militaries do this because they have to teach the uninformed, the rest of us because it's either a way of life or a living. The result is that we often don't have the mental apparatus and lexicon to understand and describe novel reality. Instead of seeing what is, we tend to see patterns that don't exist and, consequently, apply nostrums that are inappropriate.

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Because the more successful of these false theories transition from the usually hermetic world of military doctrine and strategic academia into the public conscious, the impacts of their errors can be especially destructive. We live in an era in which practically the whole world is expert in the theory and practice of COIN, able to recognize quagmires with great facility and ready to engage in the public policy that midwifes strategy. The consequences for strategy are that it tends to reflect the false consciousness arising out of poor theory rather than a thoughtful response to objective circumstances and needs. In the 21st century this is a fact of life but the consequences can be mitigated if at least those in the community with a reasonable claim to expertise can speak truth – or at least avoid speaking untruth.

Footnotes

[i] S L v Gorka and David Kilcullen, "The Actor Centric Theory of War: Understanding the Difference Between COIN and Counter-Insurgency", Joint Forces Quarterly, Issue 60, 2011, pages 14-18.

[ii] Colin S. Gray, "Recognizing and Understanding Revolutionary Change in Warfare: The Sovereignty of Context", Strategic Studies Institute, 2006.

The Death of American Strategy

Gian P. Gentile

Council on Foreign Relations
United States

Gian P. Gentile is a serving United States Army Colonel and is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. He commanded a combat battalion in West Baghdad in 2006 and holds a PhD in history from Stanford University.

American strategy — strategy, the idea that in war the ways and means to carry it out should be employed considering alternatives and with the least cost of blood and treasure to achieve policy goals — is dead. The slayer of American strategy is counterinsurgency tactics. Thanks to the American Army's embrace of counterinsurgency, what we are left with is a strategy of tactics.

The slayer of American strategy is counterinsurgency tactics.

History shows what happens to nations when they allow the actual doing of war—its tactics—to bury strategy or blinker strategic thinking. The German Army in World War II was pound for pound probably the finest mechanized fighting force the world had ever seen. Yet its tactical excellence through methods such as lightening war or "blitzkrieg" could not rescue Nazi Germany's bankrupt strategy and morally perverse policy.

The United States suffered a similar fate in its war in Vietnam. Strategy should have discerned that the war was not winnable based on the moral and material cost that the American people were willing to pay relative to a communist enemy who was willing to pay everything. Instead the American military became mired in the hope that battlefield tactics of search and destroy would in itself rescue failed strategy. It could not and the United States lost its first war in modern history.

Counterinsurgency has defined a new American Way of War. More than that, the doctrine of counterinsurgency has become the language and grammar of the current American war in Afghanistan. American Generals and politicians speak in the language of counterinsurgency tactics. Phrases like "protecting" or "shielding the Afghan people," or "clear, hold, build" are all drawn from the tactics of counterinsurgency.

today in Afghanistan four star generals and politicians routinely use the language of counterinsurgency tactics to explain strategy and policy

Imagine in history how General Dwight D. Eisenhower would have sounded in the summer of 1944 giving a speech on American grand strategy for the defeat of Nazi Germany by mostly talking about American infantry squads clearing German dugouts in the hedgerows of northern France. People would have thought it curious for a four star general to be talking at the level of small unit, tactical action. Yet today in Afghanistan four star generals and politicians routinely use the language of counterinsurgency tactics to explain strategy and policy. What's more, they usually won't mention its exceedingly high cost and historical instances of such tactics producing less than decisive results.

Identifying the death of strategy

The death of American strategy is manifested in the mismatch of national resources to achieve policy aims in Afghanistan. President Obama's core political aim for the American military in Afghanistan is to "disrupt, disable and eventually defeat al Qaeda." Nowhere in that core political aim is there mention of building an Afghan nation. Yet the American Army and its generals offered up only one method for achieving the President's political aim: long term nation building in Afghanistan, often referred to as a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy. It is like using a sledgehammer to drive a small nail through a piece of soft, pine wood when a smaller, carpenter's hammer would do the trick.

There are more limited alternatives to achieving US aims in Afghanistan such as focusing primarily on killing the few remaining al Qaeda fighters left. However, the dominance of the doctrine of American counterinsurgency has prevented

serious considerations of other alternatives, killing strategy in the process. Why?

After four plus years of battlefield use of its current doctrine on Counterinsurgency (codified in Field Manual 3-24) the American Army has yet to revise it, and there does not seem to be any serious effort to do so anytime soon. This is hard to understand. The American Army has gained a great deal of experience at fighting wars of counterinsurgency since Field Manual 3-24 first hit the scene in December 2006. Moreover, FM 3-24 has as its highest principle the need to have an army as a "learning and adapting organization." Well we have learned, and perhaps are ready to adapt those lessons in revisions to the manual. The contradiction of American counterinsurgency is that it has as an imperative to learn and adapt to do better population centric counterinsurgency, but by rule an army cannot learn and adapt its way out of doing that very kind of counterinsurgency. The American Army is trapped by it.

a revised counterinsurgency manual might offer operational alternatives to the countering of insurgency

Herein lays the rub: in fundamentally revising the doctrine, strategy might be resurrected from the dead. For example, a revised counterinsurgency manual might offer operational alternatives to the countering of insurgency. As the manual is written now, the only way for the United States to counter insurgencies and deal with instability in the world is through long term state building. The thinking goes that to defeat an insurgency state institutions must be built, alongside government and security forces. In so doing the local populations will be won over to the government's side and turn on the insurgent enemy.

There are other operational alternatives to countering insurgencies that the manual does not consider. An insurgency can be defeated or at least suppressed by focusing on the killing of the insurgents without the addition of an expeditionary army doing nation building. Moreover the United States can deal with insurgencies by using its special forces to train and assist host notion forces.

However, the American Army's current doctrine for counterinsurgency is trapped within the framework of armed nation building; there are simply no other options. Until the Army breaks out of this straightjacket, American strategy in Afghanistan will remain in the grave because simple operational doctrine, which should never determine strategy, is doing exactly that. It is excluding the consideration of better and more limited alternatives to achieve political aims.

The myth of the successful surge

In highlighting the relative value of tactics and strategy, the Chinese philosopher of war Sun Tzu said thousands of years ago that "strategy without tactics is the slow road to victory" but "tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat." With the new American way of war through counterinsurgency, when Generals and politicians speak of "holding Marja" or

"shielding" civilians in Kandahar, one hears only the silence of dead American strategy in Afghanistan.

Sadly, though, Sun Tzu's noise of tactics without strategy continues today as the United States looks to Libya and what to do there in the months ahead. Policy makers and many generals seem to have been seduced by the idea that better state building tactics during the Surge of troops in Iraq in 2007 worked. But the Iraq Surge in 2007 did not work, it failed.

This basic fact needs to be understood as the United States looks to Libya and the prospect of increased American military action there, especially the potential use of ground troops to occupy and rebuild. Unfortunately a narrative has been constructed by popular writers, participants of the Iraq Surge both government and military, and selective think tank punditry that the Surge was a triumph of American military power. General David Petraeus has said that the Surge "saved Iraq from a desperate situation."

This flawed narrative, however, promises to view Benghazi through the perverted prism of the success of the Iraq Surge.

Iraq was not "saved" and the Surge was not a triumph of American Arms. The ongoing violence in Iraq signified by an ongoing stream of Al Queda attacks in which scores of civilians are routinely killed or wounded, the divisiveness of the Kurdish situation, are just a few examples that the civil war in Iraq is far from over. The fundamental issues that divide the country have yet to be resolved.

Iraq was not "saved" and the Surge was not a triumph of American Arms.

It is true that violence in Iraq did start to lower toward the end of 2007 and after only about six months of the implementation of the Surge. But the reasons for the lowered violence had more to do with other conditions that conspired to lower violence. The spread of the Anbar Awakening and the buying off with US dollars of Sunni tribes and fighters to stop killing Americans and join in the fight against Al Queda was one important condition. This condition combined with the Shia militia decision to stand down its attacks against Sunnis and the fact that Baghdad had become physically separated by sect through civil war in 2005 and 2006 largely accounts for the reduced violence.

To be sure the increased number of American combat brigades played a role in the lowering of violence, but through combat action against Al Queda which furthered its reduction. The Surge did not, as the narrative argues, vindicate a new American approach to nation building which won the trust of the local Iraqi population.

Bringing strategy back from the dead

American armed nation building at the barrel of a gun simply does not work and strategy should discern this basic truth. It didn't work for the United States in Vietnam. The idea that a "savior" general named Creighton Abrams came on board, reinvented his field army, and won the war in the South

is fiction. Neither did it work in Iraq, nor is it working today in Afghanistan, nor will it work in Libya. The idea that the United States can put men and women on the ground with guns and bring about societal transformation through armed nation building is a chimera.

American armed nation building at the barrel of a gun simply does not work and strategy should discern this basic truth.

Yet there is the persistent belief, partly due to the construction of the "surge triumph" narrative that the allegiance of local populations can be won over to a friendly government's side (supported by the US) as long as the United States military is carrying out the correct methods of armed nation building.

It is not to say that armed nation building by the United States can't work, it can as long as the United States is willing

to commit to a generational effort to make it succeed. But then that is where strategy comes into play which should, if done correctly, measure the costs and benefits and the level of effort relative to policy aims. It may be that there are places in the world where the United States should commit to long term nation building; but strategy should make such determinations.

Unfortunately the seduction with the notion of successful American nation building campaigns and "savior generals" who lead them seems to have convinced some folks and policy makers that the US Army has finally figured out how to do the mechanics of nation building and that they can succeed relatively quickly. The Surge triumph narrative has gone a long way to contribute to this flawed thinking. But as the United States looks to Benghazi and the use of American military power in the future, it should have a clear eye on what actually happened in Baghdad.

More importantly, strategy must be brought back from the dead and given a new life in the pursuit of American security.

Isolationist heresies: strategy and the curse of slogans

Patrick Porter

King's College London, Defence Studies Department
UK

Originally from Australia, Dr. Patrick Porter is a Senior Lecturer at King's College London, Defence Studies Department. He is currently writing a book on American grand strategy from Pearl Harbor to Iraq. His first book, Military Orientalism: Eastern War through Western Eyes, was recently published by Columbia University Press and Hurst Publishing. Dr. Porter is also the author of 'The Offshore Balancer', a strategy weblog.

Over sixty years ago, the United States embarked on a grand strategy of primacy, euphemised often as 'leadership.' It fashioned itself as the guardian of world order through a global military presence in which it continues to garrison much of the world; a network of permanent alliances and client states; a pervasive spying and surveillance system; all underwritten by the Bretton-Woods financial order and the dollar as the world's reserve currency. This strategy aimed well beyond overcoming adversaries. It sought to spread a democratic and market ideology and remake the world in America's image. By becoming the anchor of world security, the U.S would deter or overmatch enemies, reassure friends and potential rivals, and remain the sole benevolent superpower with its domestic liberalism secure in a liberal globe. While debate continues about whether this primacy is ultimately good for America, it is becoming clear that it cannot last forever, at least in its current form.

The dominance of the United States is under strain.

The dominance of the United States is under strain. Its debt currently stands at around $14 trillion. Formerly the world's largest creditor, it is now its greatest debtor. Repaying the interest on that debt alone is a weighty burden. The Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff regards this debt as the greatest threat to national security. The Secretary of Defence warns that the US could become what Eisenhower feared, "militarily strong, but economically stagnant and strategically insolvent." Budget deficits continue to be heavy, occupying ever-greater percentages of its GDP. America's ability to restore the eroding economic foundations of its power while satisfying the consumer demands of its citizens and maintaining global military hegemony is in doubt. It is recovering from a financial crisis, a war in Iraq whose combined costs could reach $3 trillion, and commitments ranging through Afghanistan-Pakistan, Egypt, Israel and South Korea that deplete the time and energy of its leaders and place it constantly in the eye of geopolitical storms. To be sure, we cannot know the future. Forecasts of imperial decline have been wrong before. But its ambitious commitments exceed its resources and its contracting power. Worse, especially now that it has warily shouldered an ever-expanding diplomatic crisis in Libya, it lacks a comfortable surplus of power in reserve to react to other contingencies and emergencies. Surely now is a time to consider a scaling back of 'ends' as well as a strengthening of means?

To take this modest position, however, is often to be branded an 'isolationist.' Senator Rand Paul's recent proposal to cut America's $3 billion annual donation to Israel, and to end the days of being its armourer, may or may not be prudent. But a *Washington Post* columnist dismissed it as 'neo-isolationist.' When presidential candidate Ron Paul suggested in a Republican primary debate in 2008 that the US should adopt a more modest statecraft, less inclined to armed intervention and entanglement in the politics of the Islamic world, and questioned its forward-leaning military posture, Senator John McCain waved it away as isolationist, akin to the short-sighted statesmen of the 1930's. And despite rededicating the U.S. to primacy and expanding targeted killings, escalating in Afghanistan and bombing Libya, President Barack Obama has been accused of stumbling towards isolationism.

This is an old story. Ever since the U.S. was attacked by Imperial Japan on 7 December 1941, its political establishment has argued that new technology married with predatory ideologies has compressed time and space, obliterated boundaries and outmoded natural frontiers. In such a world, the US is no longer essentially secure in a well-defended hemisphere, but must project its power beyond its region. Sensitive to the 'lesson' that American disengagement helped bring on global war in 1941; American leaders have forever been on the lookout for isolationist heresies. As Iraq was

imploding into communal violence and civil war, President George Bush II declared in a State of the Union address that the most dangerous prophets were not the architects of the Gulf adventure, but isolationists who would have America retreat and leave 'an assaulted world to fend for itself.'[i] President Barack Obama's *National Security Strategy* of 2010 claims, 'America has never succeeded through isolationism. As the nation that helped to build our international system after World War II and to bring about the globalization that came with the end of the Cold War, we must reengage the world on a comprehensive and sustained basis.'[ii] Notice the startling dualism and moral heat of these visions: a more modest strategy would leave other nations defenceless; Americans must choose between isolation and engagement across the board. The vast middle ground between both poles is denied.

Isolationism is at root both a theory of American security and a species of American exceptionalism

Isolationism has become an inflated concept wielded to close down debate. This is due to the narrowness of strategic debate in Washington. A diarchy of liberal internationalists and muscular nationalist hawks places all other ideas under the shadow of a Wilsonian tradition, in which the U.S. has no choice to secure itself but to dominate and convert the world. Members of this consensus regard themselves as different – contrast the unilateralist swagger of the Bush II era and the Obama Administration's more consensual approach of stealth, charismatic uplift and multilateralist modesty – but these are arguments about the techniques of American hegemony, not the wisdom of hegemony itself. Both major parties have marginalised contrary visions. Those who argue for a withdrawal from global primacy are only to be found on the political fringes of American conservatism and progressivism. In such a narrow political-intellectual market, the richness of the competing traditions of American statecraft is reduced to caricature. The word 'neocon' during the Iraq war degenerated into a lazy word for any undesirably hawkish or muscular diplomacy. The word 'isolationist' has also been emptied of meaning and become a rhetorical device to stifle and delegitimise dissent.

What is isolationism, exactly? Isolationism is at root both a theory of American security, holding that the U.S. should insulate itself from commitments and conflicts to protect itself, and a species of American exceptionalism, born of a dislike of the Old World's corrupt diplomacy and a desire to remain aloof from it. Actual isolationism as a conscious policy is historically extremely rare. The lockdown of Tokugawa Japan from outside influence is one example among few. Historically, it was never the grand strategy of the U.S. to isolate itself from the world. It was always extensively engaged in international trade and diplomacy. Many of those unfortunate interwar American forbears who became infamous for their isolationism were not the provincial reactionaries that memory credits them for. Even Republicans like Robert Taft did not call for the strict isolation of the United States from world affairs. A broad church, they were more often not isolationists but 'hemispherists.' They believed that the U.S. could defend itself amply across a vast domain from far into the Pacific

through to the territories of the Monroe Doctrine in South America and off its eastern coast. To believe that the state should content itself with defending a domain from Alaska to Luzon, Canada to Argentina, Greenland to Brazil, (or beyond that if we include the Philippines), is not the equivalent of hiding under the bed.

Moreover, contrary to the dominant myths of U.S. statecraft, the U.S. was not passively isolationist and dormant before the attacks on Pearl Harbor. Washington had placed a stranglehold on Imperial Japan in the form of an economic embargo on shipments of raw materials and oil shipments, and an asset freeze, in pursuit of an East Asian 'open door' of trading interests, presenting Tokyo with the choice between abdicating its imperial ambitions and challenging American power. Contrary to the myths that hardened among the makers of U.S. statecraft after World War Two, security crises can be created by American presence, not just its absence. This is a persistent blind spot. Now, political explanations for the rise of Al Qaeda's international terrorist network often focus on the irresponsibility of 'leaving' Afghanistan and Pakistan after the Cold War, rather than what became a driving ideological force in its jihad against the U.S., America's armed presence in support of Gulf regimes loathed by the Bin Ladenists. This does not necessarily mean that engagement can never be prudent. But it is to recognise that it can generate costs and blowback, liabilities worth including in any strategic assessment.

The isolationist accusation loses sight of these complexities and does violence to diplomatic prehistory. It draws on a binary vision of history, where American absence is almost always unwise and dangerous, and American presence is always far-sighted and prudent. Thus 'isolationist' is now a term hurled not only at those very few Americans who believe the U.S. should 'come home' and shelter on its own continent, but at those who oppose a grand strategy of global dominance; who believe the costs of the Faustian bargains the US has made with authoritarian states in the Middle East outstrip the gains; and who question the wisdom of permanent alliances rather than temporary ones. High-stakes debate fell prey to sloganeering.

For the theologian and prophet Reinhold Niebuhr, the sloganisation of debate was particularly a problem for debate about foreign relations. Though policymaking is always fraught by dilemmas, tragic choices and ambiguity, 'distance and ignorance' increased the danger that simplism, ideology and fundamentalism would mask these difficulties and damage statecraft. The War on Terror, like the Cold War he lived through, could be rhetorically recast to the point where a sober consideration of costs and benefits would be replaced by seductively simple rhetoric. Doctrine became dogma. George Kennan's containment – pragmatic, selective, measured- could be universalised and militarised. Now, the death of Osama Bin Laden overshadows a reckoning of what it cost, and whether it could have been achieved more cheaply. Yet now is a time where we need a sophisticated debate about realigning America's role with its power. As Jack Hunter argues, 'On both domestic and foreign policy, America desperately needs a cost/benefit analysis, not simply a blind defense of cost during a time of national jubilation. The death of America's top enemy—and the way in which we achieved it—should encourage national reflection

and hopefully a major reassessment of what this country can realistically achieve militarily. We should also begin to consider what we can afford and what we cannot.'[iii]

The 'isolationist' smear and the mentality behind it makes it harder to argue for a middle ground. It is anti-strategic in essence, because in its dualistic assumption of global engagement versus isolation, it denies the possibility of compromise and adjustment, demands pure absolutes in an impure and constraining world, and makes it more difficult to obey the never-ending dialectic of recapturing coherence between ends and means. As Walter Lippmann observed during the Cold War as he despaired at the limitlessness of the Truman Doctrine:

We are disposed to think that the issue is either this or that, either all or nothing, either isolationism or globalism, either total peace or total war, either one world or no world, either disarmament or absolute weapons, either pious resolutions or atomic bombs, either disarmament or military supremacy, either non-intervention or a crusade, either democracy or tyranny, either the abolition of war or a preventative war, either appeasement or unconditional surrender, either non-resistance or a strategy of annihilation. There is no place in this ideological pattern of the world for adoption of limited ends or limited means, for the use of checks and balances among contending forces, for the demarcation of spheres of influence and of power and of interest, for accommodation and compromise and adjustment, for the stabilization of the status quo, for the restoration of an equilibrium. Yet this is the field of an efficient diplomacy.[iv]

there is little room for one alternative grand strategy, that of offshore balancing

In the shadow of this reductive dualism, there is little room for one alternative grand strategy, that of offshore balancing. This strategy would position America not as a wandering vigilante, nor as a passive gatekeeper, but as a heavyweight husbanding its resources and prepared to intervene in extremis to prevent an unfavourable balance of power. It would not seek to dominate strategic regions, but would be prepared to deny such dominance to others. Recognising that the *Pax Americana* cannot go on forever, and that the eventual resumption of multi-polar competition is a fact of life, it would consciously sacrifice some of the prestige of being the unipolar behemoth, in return for a more 'free hand' strategically, shouldering less of the burden of international security and addressing the strategic deficit not with a larger military, but a smaller policy. It would play harder to get, being less prone to the moral hazards that come with underwriting

others' security, and more wary of allowing others to free ride on its overburdened shoulders. It would make its alliances less ambitious and expansionist, or even replace permanent alliances with temporary expedient ones.

For those who grew up with US grand strategy as it has evolved since World War Two, such an alternative is hard to imagine. But it has a logic that can be traced back to the Founding Fathers. For most of American history, it was not axiomatic that the US should have permanent alliances, a long-range military protectorate, or that it should assume the burden of brokering peace on other continents. The Founding Fathers were neither the prototypical 'neocon nation' crusaders of Robert Kagan's vision, nor were they original isolationists. They did not oppose commerce abroad, or the dismembering of contacts with foreign nations. Theirs was a more pragmatic grand strategy somewhere in the middle. Consider George Washington's Farewell Address of 1796. With the newborn republic vulnerable and nervous, Washington advised that the U.S. should accumulate the commodities of space and time in order to grow, and do so by deliberately limiting its relationship with Europe and preserve its geopolitical distance. Temporary alliances in emergency could be prudent – after all, the help of France had been critical to the Revolutionary War. But permanent alliances and military entanglements in Europe could jeopardise security, deplete wealth, encourage the creation of a swollen military establishment, and harm its very political fabric. Within a long-term vision of restrained activism, there was still the willingness to project power when directly threatened, for example in the later Tripolitan wars against the Barbary Pirates. American statecraft was born in a cradle not of binary visions of empire and isolation, but of carefully calibrated power-political thought. The republic's early history demonstrates that there is a point of equilibrium between unbounded globalism and short-sighted insularity, and that Americans do not have to choose between hiding from the world or dominating it.

Those of us from outside the U.S. have a serious interest in this question. Our interests are tied to the survival of America as a powerful democracy capable of sustaining its capacity to intervene against would-be hegemonic predators, and to the potential disasters of a hegemonic grand strategy again becoming aggressive. It should be easier to debate how the U.S. should cope with the potential return of multipolarity, how to go about strategies of retrenchment, and the painful 'guns or butter' decisions that must be made over the next decade. Even if the U.S. continues to pursue global hegemony, clearly it cannot keep fighting campaigns of armed nationbuilding and counterinsurgency, or amassing liabilities well beyond its ability to meet them. America's ability to rise above binary slogans and confront these questions, and match the utopian visions of Wilson with the prudence of George Washington, will be critical in the years ahead.

Footnotes

[i] "Transcript: President Bush's State of the Union Address", 31 January 2006, Washington Post at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/31/AR2006013101468.html, accessed 14 May 2011.

[ii] President of the United States, National Security Strategy (May 2010), p.11.

[iii] Jack Hunter, "Obama kept us safe", The American Conservative, 5 May 2011, at http://www.amconmag.com/blog/2011/05/05/obama-kept-us-safe/, accessed 11 May 2011.

[iv] Walter Lippmann, "The Rivalry of Nations", The Atlantic, (February 1948), pages 17-20, page.19.
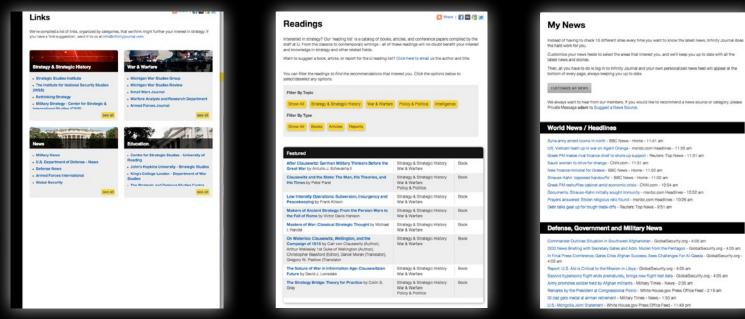
'Cyberwar' is not coming

David Betz

King's College London, Department of War Studies
UK

Dr. David Betz is a senior lecturer in the Department of War Studies at King's College London and a Senior Fellow, Program on National Security, Foreign Policy Research Institute. His main research interests include insurgency and counterinsurgency, information warfare and cyberwar. He directs the Insurgency Research Group at King's College London, advising the British Army on Stabilization and Counterinsurgency doctrines. He also leads the 2-year US Department of Defense MINERVA-funded project 'Strategy and the Network Society' and is the academic director of the Master's Program for "War in the Modern World". He blogs at Kings of War.

The term cyberspace was coined by the science-fiction writer William Gibson in the 1982 short story 'Burning Chrome'. Of his creation, Gibson later said "it seemed like an effective buzzword ... evocative and essentially meaningless. It was suggestive but had no real semantic meaning, even for me."[i] No one now would deny its buzzy qualities; even in an era of increasing fiscal austerity, attaching the prefix cyber to this or that policy or threat has the power of opening the public purse like no other. For instance, in the recent UK defence review cybersecurity was one of the few areas where increased funding was announced (the other, not coincidentally, was intelligence); in practically every other area of defence the funding arrows pointed sharply downward.

The title and foreword of Britain's new National Security Strategy, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty*, provides a perfect example of a paradoxical perception of physical security being matched by a sense of unconventional insecurity:

Britain today is both more secure and more vulnerable than in most of her long history. More secure, in the sense that we do not currently face, as we have so often in our past, a conventional threat of attack on our territory by a hostile power. But more vulnerable, because we are one of the most open societies, in a world that is more networked than ever before.[ii]

Nor is Britain peculiar in this sense; the same sentiment pervades American strategic writings such as the latest *Quadrennial Defense Review* and, no doubt, of most other major countries.[iii]

what does it actually mean for strategists concerned with the balancing of ends, ways and means in conflict today?

The word 'cyberwar' (or two words, 'cyber war', it depends who you ask) is evocative, to be sure, but what does it actually mean for strategists concerned with the balancing of ends, ways and means in conflict today? Not much. In fact, it is not just a meaningless neologism, but strategically a distracting and nonsensical one. Contemporary strategists who reckon that 'cyberwar' is a decisive new form of conflict are wrong.

The apprehension about cyber is natural and predictable. In the late 1960s Marshall McLuhan, drawing on Søren Kierkegaard's 1844 book *The Concept of Dread*, observed that "wherever a new environment goes around an old one there is always new terror." It is not hard to find evidence today of a 'new terror'.[iv] It is splashed across the pages of newspapers and the covers of popular books where all manner of cyber-prefixed threats from 'cyberespionage' and 'cyberterror' to 'cyberwar' and even 'cybergeddon' are proclaimed; and these in turn engender other cyber-prefixed neologisms such as 'cybersecurity', 'cyberpower' and 'cyberstrategy' in response. Most of these neologisms need to die and none sooner than cyberwar. As strategists we should be demanding that our colleagues be more disciplined in their declaration of new prefixed war types.

Haven't I seen you here before?

The present is always shaped by many forces, often deep historical processes — political, social, economic, demographic, climatic and so on; but there can be little doubt

that this particular moment is powerfully affected by a recent and radical change in the modality of communications which many regard as the dawning of an 'Information Age'. "The Web is shifting power in ways that we could never have imagined", claimed a recent BBC television documentary on cyberspace called *The Virtual Revolution*:

With two billion people online the Web is holding governments to account, uncovering injustices, and accelerating globalisation. It's providing us with new allegiances but it's also reinventing warfare.[v]

the prophets of airpower made exactly the same claim

Leave aside whether this is true — we shall come back to it — and wonder, haven't we heard this before? Of course, repeatedly throughout the 20th century (especially in the first decades but actually still occasionally even today) the prophets of airpower made exactly the same claim. As Michael Sherry commented on early speculations about the "age of flight" in his masterful history *The Rise of American Air Power*:

Because prophecy necessarily leaped ahead of technology, it often read like fanciful or bloodless abstractions, as if designed, like science fiction, less to depict future dangers than to express current anxieties.[vi]

Writing in the shadow of the Great War's ghastly yet indecisive slaughters, strategists such as J.F.C Fuller convinced themselves of the power of aerial warfare to deliver big results fast. In *The Reformation of War* he invited his readers to consider the consequences of a massive aerial attack:

London for several days will be one vast raving Bedlam… the government… will be swept away by an avalanche of terror… Thus may a war be fought in forty-eight hours and the losses of the winning side may be actually nil![vii]

Fuller's imaginings succeeded in capturing brain-space amongst the most senior policy-makers. "The bomber will always get through…", warned Stanley Baldwin in a famous House of Commons speech in November 1932 entitled 'A Fear for the Future'.[viii] Thus twinned can be seen the belief not only in airpower's puissance but an equally acute sense of the fragility of modern society and its vulnerability to attack. As the other great interwar British strategist Basil Liddell-Hart put it, air power enabled strikes to be conducted over top of a nation's surface fortifications:

A nation's nerve system, no longer covered by the flesh of its troops is now laid bare to attack, and, like the human nerves, the progress of civilization has rendered it far more sensitive than in earlier and more primitive times.[ix]

This is not to beg the question that airpower and 'cyberpower' are necessarily the same or equivalent things; rather it is to suggest we must walk a fine line between justified concern and interest-driven alarmism when it comes to the strategic evaluation of the cyber threat, and that this might be helped by observing some lessons from the stultifying 100-year debate over airpower.

The most pertinent of these is the fact that airpower never lived up to the dreams of its most enthusiastic boosters. No one would deny its enormous importance in modern warfare — indeed it is not far-fetched to say that "death from above" is practically the signature of the contemporary Western way of war; but what has never come to pass is the *independent* war-winning quality which the prophets of airpower claimed for the new means of war.

Almost as pertinent is the need to be cautious of generals whose expert claims for the new means must be regarded in light of their speakers' needs for advantages in internal bureaucratic positioning vis-à-vis other services. For instance, in 1908 the science fiction author H.G. Wells in his book *The War in the Air* described the strategic impact of airpower essentially ambivalently: just five years after the first flight of the Wright brothers he already concluded that aerial warfare would be "at once enormously destructive and entirely indecisive."[x] Contrast this with the utopian conclusion of William 'Billy' Mitchell, father of the United States Air Force (with the benefit of another two decades of study) that airpower was "a distinct move for the betterment of civilization, because wars will be decided quickly and not drag on for years."[xi] Who was the clearer thinker?

Another wise thing would be to bear in mind Eliot Cohen's sage observation that "air power is an unusually seductive form of military strength, in part because, like modern courtship, it appears to offer gratification without commitment."[xii]

Would you like to come up and see my etchings?[xiii]

In fact, cyberpower is even sexier because it appears to offer something which airpower does not: *anonymity*, which is a function of the identity-obscuring architecture of cyberspace.[xiv] Undoubtedly this has scary implications; it is the key factor underpinning the hyperbolic 'cyber-doomsday' scenarios, which are scaring the wallets out of politicians' pockets.

For instance, in Richard Clarke's recent book *Cyberwar* he describes a cyberattack on the United States, which is utterly devastating 'without a single terrorist or soldier ever appearing in this country.'[xv] Then in a further twist he adds the kicker, because of the inherent identity-obscuring effect of the Web "…we may never even know what hit us."[xvi] Indubitably, this is a scary scenario. "Cyberspace is [the] nervous system—the control system of our country," it says in American strategy.[xvii] If they screw with that we're *really* screwed. However, is that not also the same thing that Liddell-Hart said about airpower?

Maybe what was untrue of airpower before may be true of cyberpower now

Maybe what was untrue of airpower before may be true of cyberpower now; there is no sense in being Luddite about the effects of technology, but it is important, as strategists, not to fool ourselves with it either — which is what we are doing with the 'attribution problem'. Not only is it scary it is

also tempting, because it *appears* to solve an even more vexatious problem of war which has bothered generations of strategists beyond the ones today trying to make sense of information technology: escalation. The implicit logic goes as follows:

1. The identity of a cyber-attacker can be technically very difficult to ascertain;

2. retaliation, therefore, is complicated; and,

3. as a result, the inherent escalatory effect of war that has largely held back *major* war since 1945 might not be engaged.

The obvious way in which deterrence rapidly comes into question has occasionally fuelled comparison of cyberattacks to nuclear ones which are absurd; for as Martin Libicki points out the two are as different as 'fire' and 'snowflakes' — the former destroys cities and kills people whereas the latter merely disrupts and inconveniences them to a greater or lesser degree.[xviii] The appropriate comparison is to airpower. Cyberpower, however, is even more seductive than airpower, in part because, as the sex lives of countless online masturbators will attest, it offers gratification without physical connection of any sort, let alone commitment.

This is delusion — though it is not to diminish the 'attribution problem', which is quite obviously exploited by hackers and criminals who amaze with their speed in the technology race. Rather, it is to say that it is really something which pertains to those activities and not to war, unless one can conceive of one state using cyberpower alone to bend another to its will without declaring what it is. It may come afterwards, it may be implied or delivered secretly rather than openly but anonymity is as much a problem for the aggressor as it is the defender: one's enemy needs to know whose thumb they are under so that they may surrender or render 'cash payment' in return, as Clausewitz put it.

This date will be more expensive than you thought

The ubiquity of digital networks and the prevalence of cheap consumer electronics are thought to be another strategic challenge of cyberspace. As it was put in a recent article in *Joint Forces Quarterly*,

One reason for the imminent and broad-based nature of the cyberspace challenge is the low buy-in cost compared to the vastly more complex and expensive appurtenances of air and space warfare…[xix]

this is a very reasonable fear but it needs to be kept in perspective

Thus exposed is the characteristic fear of our age: pick your metaphor, Goliath versus David or Gulliver against the Lilliputians — our power may not avail us against a sneaky new type of kick in the balls. Actually, this is a very reasonable fear but it needs to be kept in perspective. Outside of

Bible stories, God tends to favour the side with the bigger battalions, as Napoleon once wryly observed.

To be sure, the physical instruments of 'cyberwar' are dirt cheap. *Stuxnet* which targeted the Iranian nuclear programme accomplished relatively cleanly what a powerful air force might have struggled to do messily — and it fit that comfortably on to a thumb drive; but this intangibility belies its size and sophistication. *Stuxnet* is the Zeppelin bomber of today — complex and costly in its own right, but more important as a harbinger of greater complexity and cost to come. Its design required a large amount of very high-grade intelligence about its intended target in order to work. It was not, according to experts who have analysed it, the work of hackers on the cheap:

It had to be the work of someone who knew his way around the specific quirks of the Siemens controllers and had an intimate understanding of exactly how the Iranians had designed their enrichment operations. In fact, the Americans and the Israelis had a pretty good idea.[xx]

In short, as with all other weapons systems (with the exception of the hydrogen bomb, arguably) it required the combination of significant other resources in order to achieve strategic effect and for that effect to be sustained. Far from demonstrating a smoothing of the existing asymmetry of power amongst states it actually shows a reinforcement of that asymmetry: cyberpower rewards already powerful states with even more capability and, when push comes to shove, it would appear that Western powers have thought hard about cyberattack and are pretty good at it.

Again, a comparison to airpower is apt. Certainly, virtually unchallenged air supremacy and air-ground coordination has become more or less the sine qua non of the Western 'way of war'; or what in his book *Military Power* Stephen Biddle described, in slightly different terms, as the 'modern system' of warfare—a system which, not incidentally, he claims was born in the tactical conditions of the First World War.[xxi] The advent of the 'modern system' caused a bifurcation of military power between armies that 'got it' and armies that did not — with the latter being soundly thrashed by the former even when they possessed the same, or similar, weapons and numerical superiority.

Armies which are able to defend their networks will accrue distinct advantages from 'network-enabling' them

A similar thing is likely with respect to cyberpower. Armies which are able to defend their networks will accrue distinct advantages from 'network-enabling' them, while armies that do not possess such ability will not enjoy any such advantage — and they will be punished harshly for trying to 'network-enable' practically anything. It is worth recalling that the seminal 1993 article by John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, 'Cyberwar is Coming!' which set off this debate, in contrast with the extant literature on cyberwar, was essentially tactical in orientation:

Small numbers of your light, highly mobile forces defeat and compel the surrender of large masses of heavily armed, dug-in enemy forces, with little loss of life on either side. Your forces can do this because they are well prepared, make room for manoeuvre, concentrate their firepower rapidly in unexpected places, and have superior command, control, and information systems that are decentralized to allow tactical initiatives, yet provide the central commanders with unparalleled intelligence and 'topsight' for strategic purposes.[xxii]

The focus of strategy must be on understanding the human ends to which technological means are applied in ever-shifting shifting ways.

It was a vision about moving and shooting more adroitly than your opponent through the employment of better information systems — knowledge as power in a very literal and immediate sense. The literature on cyberwar would not lose much by rewinding to this initial conception and starting over. Military cyberpower is a real and important compliment to other military capabilities — it does not, as airpower did not, obviate those capabilities or change the objective nature of war. It is possible that we are as a species *near* to a genuine discontinuity, which some scientists have described as 'The Singularity' — the point at which human intelligence is surpassed by machine intelligence.[xxiii] After that happens, whether we merge with our digital offspring, are massacred by them, or kept as reverend ancestors, or much-loved pets, there is no point speculating about war (or anything else); until then, however, war will remain as it ever was — the collective action of one group of people to impose their will against the resistance of another. The focus of strategy must, therefore, be on understanding the human ends to which technological means are applied in ever-shifting shifting ways. Prefixed war types, which shift that focus onto the technology itself, are to be rejected.

Footnotes

[i] William Gibson, interviewed in No Maps for These Territories, dir. Mark Neale, 89 min (Mark Neale Productions, 2000).

[ii] A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy (London: The Stationery Office, 2010), p. 3.

[iii] United States Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (Washington, DC: February 2010).

[iv] Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 'Marshall McLuhan in Conversation with Norman Mailer', The Way It Is, broadcast 26 November 1967.

[v] British Broadcasting Corporation, The Virtual Revolution, Episode 2 'The Enemy of the State?', aired on BBC2 (6 February 2010), http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00n4j0r

[vi] Quoted in Michael S. Sherry, The Rise of American Air Power (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 23.

[vii] J.F.C. Fuller, The Reformation of War (London: Hutchinson, 1923), http://www.archive.org/stream/reformationofwar00fulluoft/reformationofwar00fulluoft_djvu.txt, p. 150.

[viii] The full text of the Baldwin House of Commons speech from 10 November 1932 may be found on the 'Airminded' blog, http://airminded.org/2007/11/10/the-bomber-will-always-get-through/; Baldwin was echoing the claims of the Italian air power theorist Giulio Douhet, The Command of the Air, trans. Dino Ferrari (New York: Faber and Faber, 1942).

[ix] Op. Cit. Sherry, p. 26.

[x] H.G. Wells, The War in the Air (1908), can be read on-line at http://www.literaturepage.com/read/wells-war-in-the-air.html

[xi] Op. Cit. Sherry, p. 30.

[xii] Eliot Cohen, 'The Mystique of US Air Power', Foreign Affairs, vol. 73, no. 1 (January/ February 1994), p. 109.

[xiii] Archaic sexual innuendo.

[xiv] See Cyberspace Operations, United States Air Force Doctrine Document 3-12 (15 July 2010), p. 10   http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/afdd3-12.pdf

[xv] Richard Clarke, Cyber War (New York, HarperCollins, 2010), pp. 67-68.

[xvi] Ibid, Clarke, p. 68.

[xvii] The White House, National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace (Washington, DC: 2003), p. vii, http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/National_Cyberspace_Strategy.pdf

[xviii] Martin Libicki, Conquest in Cyberspace (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 3& 39.

[xix] Benjamin Lambeth 'Airpower, Spacepower and Cyberpower', Joint Force Quarterly, issue 60, 1st quarter (2011), p. 51.

[xx] William J. Broad, John Markoff and David Sanfer, 'Israeli Test on Worm Called Crucial in Iran Nuclear Delay', New York Times (15 January 2011), http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/16/world/middleeast/16stuxnet.html

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[xxii] John Arquila and David Ronfeldt, 'Cyberwar is Coming' in Arquila and Ronfeldt (eds.), In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1997), p. 23.

[xxiii] Ray Kurzweil, The Singularity is Near (New York: Viking, 2005).