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THE INTELLIGENCE NECESSARY TO THE FORMULATION OF A SOUND STRATEGY

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What follows is a consideration of the contribution that intelligence should make to the process of formulating a strategy. For this purpose a strategy is defined as a plan, made in advance of hostilities, for achieving the necessary and desired results of war. A sound strategy should give reasonable assurance of achieving both necessities and desires, but should most certainly be directed toward achievement of those things which are assessed as being necessary.

The proper relationship of intelligence to strategy as a whole and particularly to any one strategic plan is best understood if intelligence is considered to be an identifying and measuring activity even more than a gathering or collecting process.

It is the function of intelligence to identify and measure the necessities in a contemplated war and the opportunities which will arise in such a war. This requires a creative effort far beyond the effort of gathering information. It is likely that intelligence failures in the formulation of past strategy are more often traceable to unattempted measurement or to inaccurate measurement than to the lack of information, even though information oftentimes has been deplorably poor.

The problem of identifying and measuring necessities is related to enemy threats, threats both of preemptive action and resisting action. The problem of opportunities is related to overcoming or frustrating these threats and to producing further end results that are in accord with national purposes. Enemy threats can be measured in terms of enemy strengths and enemy purposes. Opportunities can be measured in terms of enemy strengths and friendly purposes. When enemy strengths and purposes combined have war consequences of intolerable or unacceptable magnitude, the overcoming or frustrating of them become necessities of war.

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The intelligence necessary to formulation of a sound strategy is that which identifies and measures all major threats from enemy strengths and purposes and identifies and measures all major opportunities open to friendly purposes.

There are four key words in this statement:

STRENGTHS

PURPOSES

THREATS

OPPORTUNITIES

They are arranged in order of probable intelligence consideration and in order of relative susceptibility to measurement. Strength must be combined with purpose to constitute a threat. Assessment of the strength — or lack of it — behind a threat is necessary to the judgment of opportunity.

Intelligence currently is required to identify and measure a greater variety of strengths than ever before in history. The number and variety of military strengths still is increasing. There are also economic strengths, industrial strengths, the strengths of cohesion within a nation and between it and its allies, the strengths of organization, of leadership, of racial characteristics, of nationalism, of religion, of political fanaticism, and many other types.

In addition, any strength, particularly any military or industrial strength, needs to be measured in terms of both its current and potential values. Many strategies have failed through ignoring or through not using proper measurements of the potential value of some strength — some strength which turned out to be a far more serious threat component than any strength in being.

Technology may not have completely changed the nature of war, but it has so expanded the nature and variety of strengths involved in war that those strengths considered critical in former days may no longer stand alone as such, but must be considered in their relative stature with many others.

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The orthodox treatment of the order of battle of armies, navies, and air forces covers only a part of the problem of assessing military strengths — and not even the major part that it is so often considered as being.

Such is the great variety of military strengths — including the firepower, mobility, and tenacity of modern armies; the submarine fleets that can cruise the oceans of the world without resupply; the weapons of mass destruction which can themselves be divided into many categories; the specialized strengths of air task forces and naval task forces — that considering them only in the current and existing sense presents a monumental problem. The problem becomes literally staggering when the difficulties of assessing current strengths are combined with the probabilities and possibilities of future military strengths that may have a bearing on any particular strategy. Notable examples of possible military strengths of the near future, which become probable if the forecast applies to a time period of any magnitude, are the strengths represented by nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles.

Prior to any consideration of the variety of purposes that need to be measured it will be helpful to differentiate between what is ordinarily thought of as “war” and what is brought to mind by the word “warfare.” Among other things, such a differentiation relieves the mind of any paradoxical confusion as between a “war plan” and our national attitude against aggressive war.

Although the purposes of war are the main guide to the strategy of either side, the purposes of “warfare” are the ones of primary importance to an intelligence staff and to a strategy. These “warfare” purposes can be specific and various to combine with the great variety of strengths that are available. Depending upon the magnitude and types of strength and the seriousness of purpose involved, each combination can be of importance in the formulation of a proper strategy.

As an illustration, the basic war purpose of the Soviet Union undoubtedly is that of imposing Moscow-controlled communism on the world. This purpose is the key to Soviet strategy and should also exercise a positive influence on our own strat-

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egy. However, Soviet purposes of warfare are certainly more specific than this, and it is at some level of more detailed purpose that intelligence staffs must aim in order to identify and measure major Soviet threats.

Soviet purposes of warfare probably include: occupying and utilizing the resources of Western Europe; occupying and utilizing the resources of the Middle East; keeping the United Nations continually off balance in Asia and the Far East; successfully resisting any effort to weaken the strengths of the Soviet heartland; destroying the continental strengths of North America; and an over-all and modifying purpose of eliminating populations and peoples considered difficult to assimilate in a communist world order.

Such detailed, specific purposes of warfare, combined with Soviet strengths, create major threats of meaning to our strategy.

It is likely, however, that a substantially more detailed statement is required, or would be of advantage. The Soviet Union does not yet have the relative strengths necessary to bid surely for the broad war purpose of creating a communist-dominated world order, but the Soviet Union does have the strengths, both existing and potential, to bid separately and in varying combinations for many of the purposes of Soviet warfare. These are the threats that intelligence today must measure as part of its contribution to any strategy devised against the Soviet Union.

A major difficulty confronting intelligence in connection with any assessment of the problem of purpose comes from the limited utility of the ideas "offensive" and "defensive." Because many of the most aggressive acts of warfare are basically defensive in purpose, paradoxical confusion can result from the use of "offensive" and "defensive" to indicate purpose in any but the simplest situations. Even in the simple situations, from which the ideas of offense and defense arose, it has become customary to say "the best defense is a good offense," thus further illustrating the disservice which use of these terms involves.

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Determination of threat stems from appraisal of strength and purpose. Such identification may be sufficient in some circumstances, but there is a growing opinion that intelligence measurement of probable results of an activated threat is necessary as well as desirable. Such measurement approaches what can be termed "war gaming."

A successful measurement of this sort can have a great influence on strategy. The extent to which intelligence should contribute to this process may be disputable, but it appears certain that the intelligence necessary to a strategy will be better if an advanced war gaming process of some sort is kept closely in mind during all the processes of intelligence preparation. Perhaps it is sufficient to say that judgment of a threat cannot have its proper influence on strategy until the value of the threat is rounded out in terms of probable results if the threat is activated.

The idea encompassed in expression of an enemy "capability" certainly includes the element of accomplishment, and the threat of a capability is a measurement which has little meaning without the inclusion of the element.

Measuring the current threat posed by an enemy air force requires conclusions in many areas such as:

- a. The number, disposition, and types of aircraft and their performance characteristics.
- b. The weapons, logistics support, level and type of air training, and the control mechanisms.
- c. The warfare purposes which such an air force can reasonably pursue.

For each major purpose it also is necessary to assess:

- a. The enemy doctrine of employment.
- b. The tactics used for resisting or evading opposition.
- c. The quality of action to be expected in relationship to our contemplated action.
- d. The net value of probable accomplishment in terms of service to the enemy purpose.
- e. The probability of action being undertaken.

It is obvious that certain of these conclusions will be modified in any forecast of the future threat posed by the enemy air

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force. As some of the strength factors change, different ideas as to purpose are brought to mind, particularly if the expected changes in strength are in terms of performance, training, weapons, or doctrine.

If the purpose being assessed is that of resistance to our own air penetration, commonly termed the enemy's "air defense," the quality of his action and its net value to the enemy purpose become of vital importance. Measurements of these factors are too often made in terms such as good, poor, moderate, and so on. They need to be made in terms that have a greater meaning to the decision maker. If the quality of Soviet resistance can be appraised in terms of such things as the known quality of German resistance, matching new qualities of resisting forces with new qualities of the penetrator, perhaps a measurement can be provided that has meaning to both war planner and engineer.

The problems involved in estimating the threats from an enemy air force are illustrative of only one segment of the picture. A great variety of enemy strengths and purposes are involved, and efforts similar to those described for air forces must be undertaken in relation to many if not all combinations of them. To visualize this is to appreciate the full and tremendous scope of the work which must be done to identify and measure the "threats" which pose the necessities of war.

Opportunity is a function of enemy strength and friendly purpose. If a good job has been done in assessing enemy strengths and purposes in order to identify threats, much already has been done toward establishing opportunities. However, it would be mistaken to assume that enemy purposes and friendly purposes are identically opposed. Variations of purpose may be forced in accordance with the strength factor; frustration of certain enemy purposes may have to be waived if there is no adequate enemy vulnerability; or — a devious route to such frustration may be found if a direct one shows inadequate promise.

It is in the opportunity field that the greatest intelligence development is required, and this is true of the gathering or collection function, as well as the creative one. Development

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of opportunities requires a vast amount of detailed knowledge of which even the scope and kind is not well known. Experience in handling the modern strengths and purposes of warfare is as yet too slight for us to have more than a general idea of the information needed to establish sound opportunities for their use.

In this activity the process of an approach to war gaming again becomes a major factor, and it should again be emphasized that intelligence necessary to strategy will be better if an advanced war gaming activity is kept in mind during the intelligence production process.

The USAF targeting activity is an example of an intelligence effort directed toward analyzing opportunities for air action to further major purposes of warfare.

The target organizations undertake to nominate "purposes" of atomic warfare in terms consistent with the values of the US national strength involved.

These purpose values currently are listed as follows:

- a. To produce an initial paralysis of Soviet governmental controls.
- b. To prevent unacceptable launchings of Soviet atomic weapons against the US and its Allies.
- c. To prevent unacceptable massing and maneuver of Soviet ground forces acting to occupy areas in Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East.
- d. To prevent unacceptable employment of the Soviet sea forces.
- e. To neutralize or destroy the general threat of Soviet air action against Allied Air Forces in Western Europe, the Near East, and the Far East.
- f. To neutralize or destroy the ability of the Soviet Union to sustain large-scale military operations.
- g. To neutralize or destroy the ability of the Soviet Union to develop or produce weapons having a decisive or stalemating potential.
- h. To sufficiently neutralize or destroy the political, social, industrial, and economic strengths of the Soviet Union so that governmental changes or decisions satisfying to the US will

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occur or may be readily forced by additional available or contemplated pressures.

Certain of these purposes may be acceptable for many weapons or many strengths, but it is probable that there will be significant and important differences. The attractive simplicity of the Casablanca directive to fatally weaken the German capacity and will to wage war is now recognized as inadequate.

If from this example drawn from USAF targeting activities it is possible to visualize the great variety of possible friendly purposes that are involved — purposes for land and sea warfare as well as air warfare, and all the subordinate varieties of the three combined — it should be possible to appreciate the great scope of the effort involved in identifying opportunities. This is an area of intelligence service which has never been fully recognized and certainly has never been fully developed. In no other area of intelligence work is purpose so important as it is in this one. Unless purpose is clearly defined in terms that permit an exacting search for precise conditions, opportunities that have tragic instead of useful results may be suggested and adopted as a part of strategy.

The Japanese in 1941 implemented a strategy that is outstanding among all those which seem to have been based upon intelligence misjudgments. Perhaps no nation has ever embarked upon a course of military action so poorly aimed at achieving the necessary results in a war. The existing threats of deployed forces in being and the opportunities to overcome them seem the only intelligence assessments used, even if others were made. The threats which stemmed from US industrial strength and latent military strength seem not to have been measured. All the information necessary to the making of these measurements was available to the Japanese or readily attainable — but the measurements were not accurately made.

The Germans seem to have based their strategy upon measurements of better scope but without sufficient accuracy. They did not accurately measure the potential threat of US and British Air Forces, the true threat of the Soviet armies, and the full scope of opportunity to the German submarine.

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The strategy implemented by the Allies was largely a strategy that evolved, but judgments of importance and accuracy were made — some in advance, some along the way. An early judgment was made that the threats from German strength and purpose were more pressing in time than were the Japanese threats in the Pacific. The threat of latent German strengths appears to have been adequately assessed. The German submarine appears to have been measured in all its proper stature and the opportunity to invade and occupy Germany was given a timing that was consistent with success. The opportunities to put Japanese strength on a shelf of impotence through air and submarine attack were adequately assessed and the timing of the invasion and occupation of Japan was made coincident with greatest Japanese impotence.

It certainly can be said that Allied strategy succeeded in achieving at least the necessary results of war with Germany and Japan. Whether intelligence judgments as such were made toward this end is not as important as is recognition that intelligence judgments of this kind should have been made.

Intelligence necessary to an anti-Soviet strategy in today's world must appraise a greater variety of strengths, purposes, threats, and opportunities than ever before. United States strategy must rely upon the adequacy and accuracy of these judgments and cannot count upon Soviet errors of judgment to make up for Western failures. It should be expected, instead, that the enemy is not likely to make major errors in judgment and will be extraordinarily keen and alert to take advantage of any the West may make.

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