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RESEARCH REPORT

NATIONAL WILL: ACHILLES HEEL IN UNITED STATES NATIONAL STRATEGY

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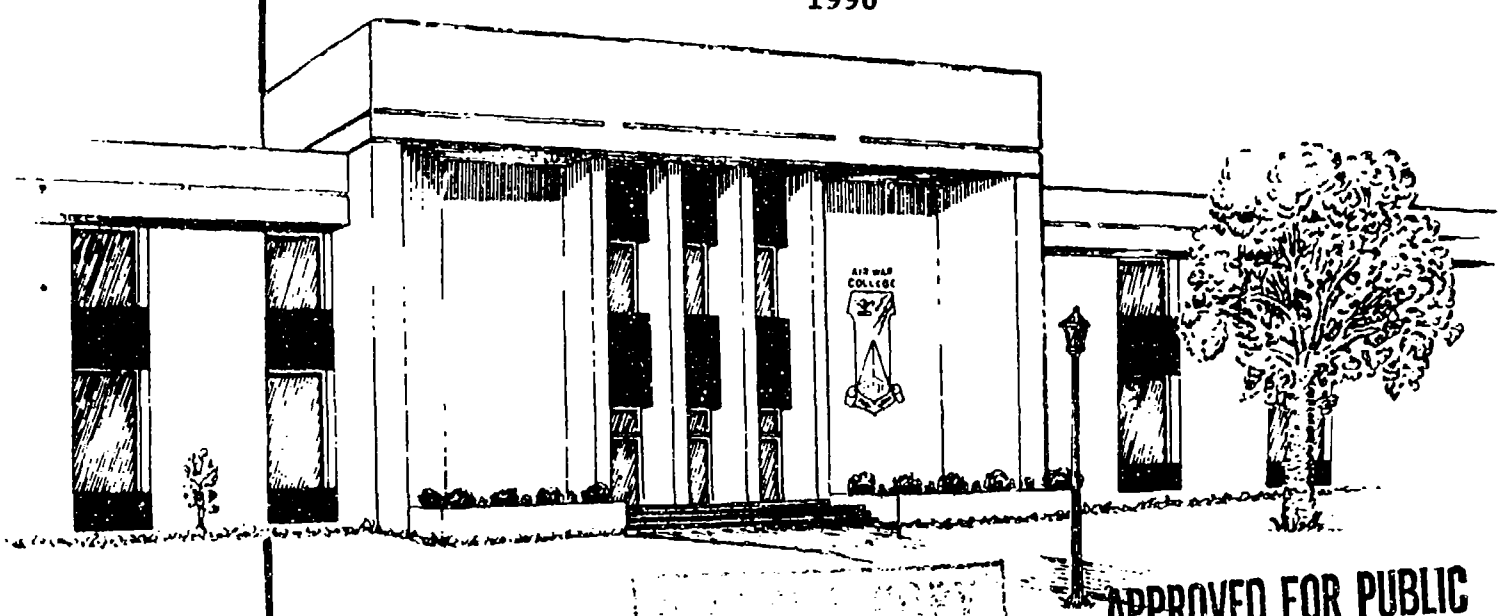

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NATIONAL WILL: ACHILLES HEEL IN UNITED STATES NATIONAL STRATEGY

by

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Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM

REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Lieutenant Colonel James S. O'Rourke, IV

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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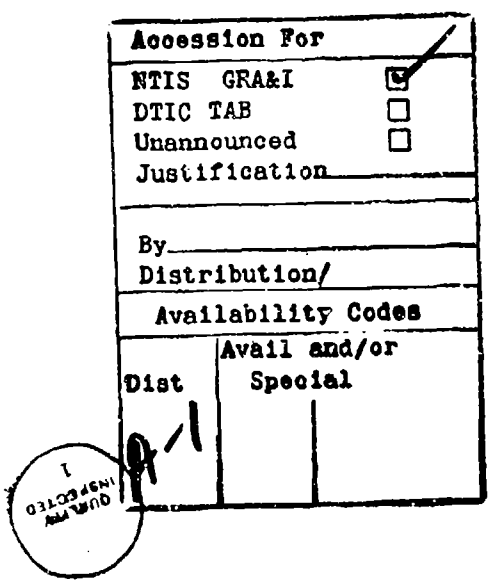

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: National Will: Achilles Heel in United States National Strategy. AUTHOR: Kevin Collins, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

National will is the Achilles heel in United States national strategy. The value of the psychosocial or national-will element of power is often neglected by national leaders in developing an appropriate national strategy to achieve national objectives. This paper reviews and evaluates the attitudes and characteristics of national will as a United States strategic weakness. The lack of interest in or assessment of US national will is criticized in terms of its implications for policy. Without a consensus in national will, the United States will continue to experience a difficulty in performing effectively as a world leader. Americans must perceive a threat to our territorial integrity or a catastrophe before national will will allow for achievement of national objectives. Only when our national leaders seriously evaluate the psychosocial element of power and our citizens play a mature and responsible role in shaping national will will we have a national strategy worthy of the name.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Kevin A. Collins, USAF (M.A., Webster College), served as an executive support officer, squadron section commander, and chief of base administration at England Air Force Base, Louisiana, from 1973 to 1977. He served as a protocol officer at Headquarters, Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, from 1977 to 1980, and then served in a one-year air staff training assignment (ASTRA) as the assistant deputy chief of the Executive Services Division, Office of the Vice Chief of Staff, Headquarters, United States Air Force. He served with the USAF Air Demonstration Squadron "Thunderbirds" at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, as the executive officer from 1981 to 1983. He was assigned as the chief of protocol, US European Command, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, from 1984-1987. He then became commander of the 3500th Mission Support Squadron and later deputy base commander, Reese Air Force Base, Texas. Colonel Collins is a graduate of the Squadron Officer School, the Armed Forces Staff College, and the Air War College class of 1990.

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CHAPTER I

NATIONAL WILL AND NATIONAL STRATEGY

Introduction

The value of the psychosocial or national-will element of power is significantly underrated by national leaders in developing an appropriate national strategy to achieve national objectives. This study will analyze some of the attitudes and characteristics that make national will the Achilles heel in our ability to pursue our vital interests and achieve national security objectives.

It seems virtually self-evident that national will is, at best, hard to recognize in a quantitative sense but it remains equally true that it is the decisive element of power in a free society. The people are the ultimate source of a national strength and power. (37:896)

Terminology

In speaking about National Security Policy issues it is necessary to have a common understanding of what we mean. The National Security Policy Studies Course at Air War College defines national strategy as, "The art and science of developing and using the political, economic, and psychosocial powers of a nation, together with its armed forces during peace and war to secure National objectives."

(36:4) Our national objectives are "Those fundamental aims, goals or purposes of a nation . . . to which a nation commits its resources." (38:4) To amplify, Secretary of State Baker, concerning values and objectives we hold to be important, has said, "It's in our long term foreign policy interest for more people around the globe to share our core values--democracy and self-determination, respect for individual rights and freedoms, economic liberty, reliance on a market economy and peaceful resolution of conflicts." (3:1) The identifying of national objectives and then a national strategy is a process which requires consideration of abstract thoughts, combining different elements of national policy (domestic policy, foreign policy, defense policy) on the various elements of power available to leadership. The principal elements of power driving national strategy are again political, economic, psychosocial, and military elements. There could be others, such as science and technology, or perhaps geography, but the first four are undeniably the key elements. These are the means by which we develop a national strategy. They are "the means which are available for employment in pursuit of national objectives." (31:122) National will is another term to describe the psychosocial element of power, and be depicted as the values, outlook, character, customs, traditions, beliefs, and behavior patterns of a nation. (37:57)

In this study the psychosocial element encompassing national will is the focus of attention. The psychosocial element--the national will--is an element of power. How powerfully, or how weakly, it manifests itself dictates to a significant degree how strongly the other elements of power can be employed within a national strategy to obtain national objectives.

Why National Will?

In our recent history, the evidence seems to indicate a national sentiment still uncomfortable with the idea of this nation influencing international security issues across the globe and across a spectrum of concerns. What is not in question is our will or ability to fight for our survival or our vital interests. What seems more difficult is the reluctance to forcefully engage in a decisive way in support of our wider ranging objectives. Why? The US isolationist heritage, pluralistic democracy, our Vietnam experience, our recent experience with Islamic fundamentalism, traditional values, affluence, and a sense of individualism are some examples that come to mind.

The notion that national will needs more consideration as an element of power, comes from our belief that we think much more about the political, economic, and military elements of power than we do about the potential impact of our national will as an element of power. If that is misunderstood, it can lead us to the point at which the

United States and its pursuit of national objectives are out of synch with our national will. Such a disconnect in a pluralistic democracy, in a free and open society, can lead ultimately to an inability to achieve objectives. The result is a loss of national prestige, credibility and power. Evidence of recent events, such as the Iranian hostage crisis, the Marine deployment in Lebanon, our Vietnam experience, and the SALT II treaty all concluded with national security objectives short of what we envisioned. The evidence indicates that all elements of power are linked. How we accomplish objectives is interrelated--so much so that it is essential for national will to be equally considered if we are to be successful in our national policies. The outcome will be a better national security strategy, effectively providing for and countering threats to our security.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL WILL

An Important Element

Why is national will important? It is important because the true resolve of a nation is reflected in the willingness of its citizens to sacrifice or fight for what they believe in. A noted scholar, Hans Morgenthau, has said that national will "exerts a permanent and often decisive influence upon the weight a nation is able to put into the scales of international politics." (14:211)

Clausewitz wrote, "When we speak of destroying the enemy's forces, we must emphasize that nothing obliges us to limit this idea to physical force: the moral element must also be considered." (12:97) The American Vietnam experience is a classic example of the importance and failure of will. Colonel Harry G. Summers, in his book On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context, writes:

> The North Vietnamese, after their experience with the French, had every reason to believe that American morale could be our weak strategic link. Knowing they did not have the military means to defeat us, they concentrated on this weakness. (47:12)

"President Johnson deliberately avoided mobilizing the national will so as not to jeopardize his Great Society Program" (47:11), and in so doing failed to employ the

psychosocial element of power. Colonel Summers argues that, this failure to develop and use national will was our major strategic failure. Although we succeeded in Vietnam, in virtually everything we set out to do, the enemy was victorious. The following quotation taken from a conversation in April 1975 between Colonel Summers and Colonel Tu, Chief, North Vietnamese (DRV) Delegation, succinctly conveys the relevance of national will to national strategy.

> "You know you never defeated us on the battlefield," said the American colonel. The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark a moment. "That may be so," he replied. "But it is also irrelevant". (47:1)

Specifically, without a national will to exercise military power, a nation becomes powerless to provide a decisive military strategy.

It is interesting to note that Carl von Clausewitz, writing on warfare, clearly articulated for the first time, the idea of will as an element of power--a key ingredient in armies' abilities to succeed. Clausewitz writes of will in respect to armies, but even a cursory review of his writing, reveals a high correlation of the principles as they apply toward societies as a whole. After all, armies are groups of people, so are societies. Both are culturally united and influenced by leaders. It would seem reasonable to conclude that as will affects armies, so does it also affect societies.

Clausewitz On Will

Carl von Clausewitz, the respected theorist on war had references, variously translated, as "morale," "moral," and "psychological" to talk about aspects of will. In Clausewitz's time, there was nothing new about stressing the significance of psychological factors in war, it's just that most writers had little of substance to say. Clausewitz however "placed the psychological at the center of his theoretical speculations." (12:11) He spoke of gifts of the mind and most important, temperament in general. As Clausewitz evidently recognized, wars are not just won or lost on the battlefield, but rather in the minds of men.

Exertion of Strength On Will

What is war? Clausewitz says, "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will." (12:75) Most people focus on the fact that war is an act of force--which is true--but more importantly for us, is that object of war is imposing our will. National will is the object of the contest, as a king is in chess. If the aim is to disarm an enemy, you succeed if he no longer has the will to support his own government, to resist or to fight. It seems clear that the will of the nation must be as strong a link as its national strategy or military capabilities, to be effective as a nation. A common aphorism holds that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. It's equally true that national strategy and policy execution are only viable with supportive

national will as a foundation. To disarm an enemy, this nation must have the will to, as Lieutenant General William C. Odom, former director, National Security Agency, observes, "put him in a situation that is even more unpleasant than the sacrifice you call on him to make." (39:77) This nation must be willing to exert power against his "power of resistance . . . the total means at his disposal and the strength of his will." (12:77) It is interesting to note that Carl von Clausewitz places the "strength of his will" as a primary element requiring our attention. This principle applied to the United States seems to support the idea of the significance of the strength of will as a key factor affecting the strength of our nation.

Genesis and Strength

What is always most difficult is gauging strength of will. Conventional wisdom asserts that strength is dependent on the motives influencing the will. Motives and linkage to vital interests thus become key ingredients in developing a national consensus and a strength of will. Clausewitz provides some superb analysis of what provides strength in a will when he writes, "For the stronger motive increases will power, and will power, as we know, is always both an element in and the product of strength." (12:85)

War is not an isolated act, but an act of will. War deals with human factors, with living and with "moral forces." Clausewitz writes:

> neither person is an abstract person to the other, not even to the extent of that factor in the power of resistance, namely the will, which is dependent on externals. The will is not a wholly unknown factor; we can base a forecast of its state tomorrow on what it is today. (12:78)

What is the American national will today? What do our allies and adversaries see? What do we see? Certainly, all individuals draw conclusions about their strength of will based on what one sees themselves to be and what one sees themselves willing to do. The will to fight, the will to sacrifice, and the will to expend energy in an effort is assessed in large part by what one does. The proof of who one really is, is exhibited in behavior. Conclusions and forecasts of one's strength of will are shaped fundamentally by the images of each individual's performance in the world. For Americans our heritage, national policies, successes, failures, and public opinion shape, in a significant way, the answers to these questions.

The Moral Factors

Clausewitz writes:

> The moral elements are among the most important in war. They constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole, and at an early stage they establish a close affinity with the will that moves and leads the whole mass of force, practically merging with it, since the will is itself a moral quantity. (12:184)

The national will, then, can influence our national objectives in many ways. Its importance is that it is the sensing reason, justifying and confirming our physical efforts. "The effects of physical and psychological factors

form an organic whole which, unlike a metal alloy, is inseparable by chemical processes." (12:184) It appears that regardless of physical effort or capability, the will or moral factor produces causes and effects which truly dictate our possibilities. "The moral factors are the precious metal, the real weapon, the finely-honed blade." (12:185)

When Clausewitz talks about methods of war, he offers three options. The third is to wear down the enemy. He writes, "wearing down the enemy in a conflict means using the duration of the war to bring about a gradual exhaustion of his physical and moral resistance." (12:93) Moral resistance here is defined as will to fight. Certainly attrition warfare is designed to make the level of enemy investment of effort too great to sustain. For the United States, the national or military strategy works only if we have more strength of will than the adversary. Our experience in Lebanon in 1983, Vietnam in 1968, and Korea in 1952, all were confronted with a national will calling for a return home when the military situation did not show promise of victory in a foreseeable period. Continued support became politically unacceptable. Never mind the national strategy, or policy, the will to stay the course or pay the acceptable price was challenged by the people less on its rightness, and more on the necessary sacrifice being unacceptable. Except during World War II, operations of much duration have had difficulty sustaining public support. The political climate

becomes too hot to continue the struggle for national security objectives.

The United States as a civilized, affluent, and industrialized country has much to lose in conflicts. Conflicts with countries in the third world, seem to be viewed as risks of more to lose than what can be gained. We seem preoccupied with our material world and reluctant to demonstrate determination or courage when that would influence the material comforts of our lives. Sacrifice is accepted only when it is deemed essential. The individualism of America, the "me generation," "do your own thing" culture, and isolationist heritage do not incline us to giving up something unless it is necessary.

> In any primitive warlike race, the warrior spirit is far more common than among civilized peoples. It is possessed by almost every warrior: but in civilized societies only necessity will stimulate it in people as a whole, since they lack the national disposition for it. (12:100)

Clausewitz seems to have it right. The civilized countries with more to lose have more difficulty generating the will to fight. More primitive adversaries have to fight militarily, politically, economically, and socially to survive. The imperative of necessity delivers strength to the equation of temperament and national will. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, in their analyses of Clausewitz's On War, conclude "In matters psychological Clausewitz is always the keenest and also the most measured of observers." (12:658)

Clausewitz Summary

What is clear is that the will of a people or a nation is a very important element. It permeates all that we do and influences all situations. It can lift our horizons or dash our hopes. While it is not quantifiable and hard to classify or count, it can be seen and felt. In our multimedia age, we can see and feel our national will better than ever before. Some argue, with an open and free press, perhaps better than we would like.

Certainly our history provides the strongest proof of the importance of "moral factors" and the often incredible effect national will has had on national strategy and national policies. Individual will is essential to forge victory in adversity; it is no less essential for societies collectively to engage a national will for national policies to achieve their objectives. Clausewitz seems to identify these principles for leaders and these principles throughout provide a correlation with societies as a whole. Wars are fought by individuals, but won and expressed by societies.

If national will is expressed by society as a whole, and contemporary political writers seem to indicate that it is, it is essential to understand not only what we think, but also what our principal adversary thinks. The element of national will, as understood by the Soviets, has profound implications for us. It is important to understand the Soviet thinking, the evolution of some of their ideas and the

application of this thinking as it relates to us. The views of our citizens, about our Soviet adversaries and our own personal predispositions toward will, are both important because they have a great influence on our acceptance of tasks, in support of our way of life. The following Soviet views taken from William P. Baxter's Problem Solving in Military Affairs: The Theoretical Base, Soviet Air Land Battle Tactics, indicate an evolution toward increased awareness of national will as a tenet of strength in war. New thinking then, brings new implications.

The Soviet Union and the Laws of War

It is interesting to note the change in Soviet thinking concerning the place that "morale of the population" has in their current military laws of war. Central to Soviet thinking is the idea that their theory is based on an historical process with identifiable natural laws. In the Soviet view laws have a character of necessity. Laws determine a relationship of events, a certain order and structure. It follows then that laws are viewed as necessary, and therefore are significant and important in Soviet structures. Until Stalin's death in 1953, his thesis on five permanent operating factors was the unchallengable military thought in the art of military affairs. "These factors are as follows:

- The strength of the rear
- The moral spirit of the Army
- The quantity and quality of the divisions

- The arms of the Army
- The organizational capabilities of the military command authority." (43:54)

Stalin's strength of the rear was defined in terms of physical strength, capacity to wage war, and to logistically support in an industrial sense--not a psychological sense. Soviet military strategists published doctrinal changes in 1963, as reflected in Sokolovskiy's Soviet military strategy. A debate raged over the exclusion of "The problems of directing the preparation of the country for war." (44:xvii) A third edition, published in 1968, again left out psychological elements as "political matters." In 1972 Savkin published a book "suggesting" four laws of war. The fourth law being: Course and outcome of war depends on the correlation of moral-political and psychological capabilities of the people and armies of the combatants. (42:92)

> By 1972 . . . a significant change in thinking had occurred. First, a political content had been introduced. Not only morale of the army, but also morale of the civilian population was a critical factor. The political causes of war were seen as critical to its outcome, a point Stalin largely ignored." (6:8)

By 1977 further evolution of the laws emerged with six laws of war officially stated in Sovetskaia Voennaia Entsiklopediia, the Soviet military encyclopedia. The fourth law, which is of special interest to us, reads:

> The dependence of the course and outcome of war [depends] on the correlation of moral - political strengths and capabilities of the warring states. The character of the ideologies of the warring sides and the degree of psychological preparation of their armed forces and

> population for war have a major impact on relative military power. (45:375)

The trend in the literature indicates a thinking on the part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) that standing armies are no longer exclusively viewed as the primary determining factor. With all six laws published in 1977, new thinking seems to indicate a balance in elements of power influencing the outcomes of war. "Political considerations," such as the national will of the people were apparently given more weight than in 1972. By 1977 Savkin's fourth law, addressing moral-political and psychological capabilities is generally included in the accepted laws of war. These laws, then, are the CPSU's belief in what elements determine the course of wars and, in a sense, state the political philosophy of the CPSU in the military arena. A potential lesson is that even our adversaries have increasingly come to recognize the morale, political, and national consensus issues as ingredients of significant influence determining the strength of a state and subsequently its ability to achieve victory in conflicts.

New Thinking - New Trends - New Implications

What are the implications of these Soviet military developments? Recent events seem to underscore the new trends in thinking. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, realizes more clearly than his predecessors that Soviet power is not based

on his military forces alone. Under Gorbachev, Moscow has confronted its domestic and foreign policy defeats. The economy, arms competition, and Afghanistan were issues so significant that, by the 1980s, the reassessment became inevitable. The Politburo was forced to review the basic elements of Soviet power, not just the military. Lieutenant General Odom commented in Foreign Affairs, "The change in Soviet policy is more directly attributable to an internal Soviet assessment that the international correlation of forces is moving against Soviet power." (39:133) Gorbachev's programs of glasnost and perestroika, while essential to the Soviet Union, are sold as aggressively in the west to redistribute public attitudes toward security issues. Gorbachev has directed a campaign against western public attitudes on nuclear weapons and security matters in general.

> "Gorbachev is committing almost as much energy to convincing western publics of the virtue of perestroika as he is to his domestic struggle to permit it. This enormous political engagement tends to confuse and disorient western publics on security matters. It requires little intellectual energy to work up enthusiasm for "human kind interests" such as avoidance of nuclear war. It requires a great deal of intellectual energy and sophistication to see the connection between nuclear weapons, deterrence strategy and the avoidance of nuclear war. (39:133)

While we bask in the "peace has broken out" euphoria, we need to ensure a national will to confront important national security policy choices. The perceived relative improvement in our security position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union does not come from diminished military capability, but rather from the

idea that they have "removed the threat" from the perception of the American public. The strategic rethinking of our security arrangements for the next 40 years is essential and will present significant challenges for our leadership. The national will to maintain deterrence, particularly nuclear deterrence, forward basing, and rapid intervention capabilities, will require a large investment of energy in a period of lower east-west military tension. The restructuring of the Soviet threat, the down-sizing of the "Soviet Bear" removes what has been the fundamental rationale for our existing military force structure. The chase is already on in Congress for the defense savings windfall which many wish to realize. The point is, the Soviets have recognized the value of the national will as an element of real national power. We need to ensure that the emerging interest to disarm does not produce a national will that decouples us from our current national military strategy without a sufficient Soviet political and military quid pro quo. For example, we must ensure coordinated strategic programs and arms control policies to support deterrence. We must also educate the public on the Soviet strategies involving both ideology and arms control. Posturing to take the initiative and high ground on these issues will enable America to forge a consensus supportable by the people, and a military sufficient to provide for national security. The influencing of national will, as Gorbachev

seems to have done, is evidenced by changing public attitudes, thereby framing the range of policy responses acceptable, supportable and sustainable in a pluralistic democracy. It seems clear that relative geopolitical power rises or declines with those national security options perceived imaginable by the respective societies. The national will dictates what is possible. The national will is pivotal because its influence on strategy affects all the other elements of power and provides the parameters within which power can be exercised. Why is it, then, that with such a broad acceptance of the significance of the psychosocial element of power there is so little assessment?

CHAPTER III

INTEREST, ASSESSMENT, AND POLICY

National Will on Strategy--A Lack of Interest and Assessment

In a society permeated by the scientific method of analysis there is less emphasis on behavioral components because subjective data loses leverage in analytical evaluations. This is reflected in the assessment of the psychosocial element of power which does not readily lend itself to objective evaluation. Its value is discounted precisely because it can't be quantified.

In the Fiscal Year 1990 Annual Report to Congress, presented by former Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, only a few words are devoted to the desire of the American people to support the proposed military strategy designed to achieve national objectives. Again, in the US Military Posture Fiscal Year 1990 Report, prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, very few words address national will as it relates to our military posture.

Essentially, what is not quantifiable is not evaluated. National will is never adequately assessed in terms of its impact on defense policy, defense resources, defense programs, and military posture. Certainly, because

something cannot be quantified does not mean that it is not valid.

National Will--the Policy Implications

With competing national views diluting will, a strategy can be eroded or ill-applied to the point of subverting the achievement of vital national security objectives. The United States, with its guarantee of free speech, heritage of individualism, and political pluralism, has a problem in securing a consensus in times of crisis. Additionally, the United States has difficulty sustaining support for difficult initiatives for whatever element of power the national command authorities choose to bring to bear. Vice Admiral James Stockdale, USN (Retired) describes the significance of national will in this way: "More than any other factor, military success or failure depends on moral sentiment, the ethos, the spirit of the man in the street." (46:176)

A country can have all the military tools, but without the will to use them, it expresses no power. (37:87) Combining our American historical experience with the policy failures of the sixties and seventies, America has emerged in need of reassurance of her competence to serve as a world leader.

If the United States is unsure of its course, or lacking confidence, it is in large part because of the policy failures of the last 25 years. We have not done well in

controlling our destiny, something we felt confident we could do in the early sixties. In fact, we felt we could do most anything. However, every nation has limits and we have ours. National security decisions must be based on vital interests; policy choices chasing secondary interests undercut the credibility and confidence in the policy-making and decision processes. What Vietnam didn't shatter, Watergate finished off. Questioning unsuccessful pursuits of perceived "vital interests" and institutions such as the presidency, left a vacuum filled by distrust and retrenchment. What became absolutely clear was the need for a logical, coherent, understandable and honest policy. Assessing what is truly a vital interest is essential. George Will has concluded in a number of political commentaries about the Reagan years that the American people support vital interests. They do not support costly secondary interest objectives. If you miss the call, you will be confronted with policy options unsupported by the American people. Thus, good assessment is crucial.

National Interests - An Important Assessment

National interests are in the eye of the beholder. In establishing a national strategy, we should be sure national interests are in fact, just that. There will always be a debate on the margins as to what is in our national interest, but on fundamental issues we must get it right. We must know the difference between vital interests and those

that are secondary. For example, defending Europe has always been at or near the top of our list of vital national interests. As in all things, the value can change, the cost can change, but leadership must be responsive to changes in the geopolitical structure to ensure a viable and supportable strategy that will remain credible to the American people. Without proper reassessment in a fluid and changing political-military environment, the government can be left supporting policies on what is, in fact, not a vital United States interest at all. For example, according to Frederick Hartmann and Robert Wendzel in Defending America's Security,

> President Reagan . . . encountered this kind of situation when he deployed Marines in Lebanon in 1982. Placed there initially as a part of a force whose mission was to separate the Lebanese factions by their consent, the Marines remained in Lebanon and became targets when fighting nonetheless resumed . . . Helping to unify Lebanon began to change drastically in its price tag. (25:42)

In Vietnam, we continued to widen a conflict and prosecute a war that, by 1968, had emerged as fatally flawed in its relationship to our vital interests. In Vietnam in 1968 and Lebanon in 1982, a change in the national will--a change from consensus--forced policy changes and therefore a subsequent withdrawal and a loss of American prestige and power. The important point is this: change must be expected and dealt with to deliver responsive and viable security alternatives.

> Both cases illustrate the point that, even in a war the commitment to goals is not necessarily absolute. Continuing the commitment depends on how important the

> goals are. Pity the nation that begins a conflict not prepared to see it through, but even more the nation that blindly persists out of stubbornness or vanity, regardless of the value of the objective or its revealed costs. Not the least of the initial costs will be the destruction of the consensus. (25:44)

The foregoing seems to demonstrate that in commitments with a high revealed cost, the national consensus seems to turn first. Especially with ferocious media debating and criticizing the risks. Bureaucracies by their very nature change more slowly--and that is the problem. Our democracy must be responsive to direction changes without appearing weak. The conundrum is that change or retreat must appear as positive and intelligent posturing in the international arena at a time when it may be a reactive withdrawal from stated interests. Proper and better assessment of the virtues of a commitment, up front, will reduce the risks.

Additionally, a better awareness of our national enables earlier decisions, so that changes can occur when the investment of national prestige and power is less. The result is better policy options and more precise identification of national objectives, resulting in better support for truly vital interests. The evidence indicates that we don't make very good assessments of what we really believe. According to Frederick Hartmann and Robert Wendzel, the consensus is that we miss the mark, probably because we are too confident. They lead you to conclude that policy

decisions often are not clear or understood when they should be. The implication is flawed policy.

Finally, the understanding of our national and vital interests is essential if we are to have the confidence to lead. Credibility is essential for support. If it appears wrong--perceptions change--there develops no consensus or will for support of policies. The past 25 years have brought America strong political, economic, and military power, but a crisis of confidence and an unwillingness to sacrifice present the United States with more limited policy options.

The United States, although possessing the strongest military in the world, has been held hostage to the wisnfulness of an American culture uncomfortable with the sacrifices necessary for world leadership. America is increasingly unsure if she wants to bear the burdens and pay the price for leadership. Failures of policy have led to a collapse of consensus and confidence. America's ability to be an effective leader of the Free World and defender of its own very real interests is eroding. While John F. Kennedy said "The torch has been passed to a new generation," it would seem reasonable to conclude, given the American policy experience of the past 25 years, that maybe that torch was dropped in the hand-off. Our American heritage inclines us to be less accepting of that torch of world leadership. The increased awareness of our historical experience, coupled with the failures of the sixties and seventies, has

enormous implications in the policy options available to the national command authorities. Acceptable policy options for national security decision makers and in turn the American people, are driven in large part by our American heritage and experience.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

The US National Will

What is our national character? The United States is a country with a Judeo-Christian ethic. It places great value on human dignity and life. Our American society expects our wars to be "just" and is uncomfortable with the nature of nuclear, chemical, or revolutionary wars because they present ethical uncertainties. (14:216) Historically, we are a nation with an isolationist mentality. We are also a nation that has never been threatened by attacks on our borders and, therefore, a people with an ambivalent attitude toward the need for military power. Additionally, John M. Collins in Grand Strategy Principles and Practices concludes antimilitarism (an aversion to standing armies and to compulsory service) is a trait of our character exhibited throughout our history. (14:210) United States options for military actions are limited by the pacifist-leaning character of our society. Although we are a society with many moods and transient attitudes, he continues to say that "the most important moods translate into national will . . ., which most authorities agree is a vital element in the

strategic equation." (14:213) Let's look at some of the historical underpinnings.

American Concern With Standing Armies

As early as the Revolutionary War, this nation began developing a set of beliefs against a strong military. Our experience with Britain and distrust of the garrisoned British soldiers led instinctively to a desire to minimize an army's influence. The colonies' struggle with Britain led many Americans to believe that a standing army threatened or robbed Americans of their liberties. In an excerpt from the Boston Gazette in 1768, Sam Adams said:

> It is a very improbable supposition, that any people can long remain free, with a strong military power in the very heart of their country. . . . History, both ancient and modern, affords many instances of the overthrow of states and kingdoms by the power of soldiers, who were rais'd and maintain'd at first, under the plausible pretense of defending those very liberties which they afterwards destroyed. Even where there is a necessity of the military power, . . . a wise and prudent people will always have a watchful & jealous eye over it; for the maxims and rules of the army, are essentially different from the genius of a free people, and the laws of a free government. (1:1)

While his view emerged from the leading revolutionaries of the time, it constituted an antimilitary orientation which, in time, influenced collateral issues. There were concerns that a powerful army could overthrow a republican government, sustain a tyrant, influence an assertive foreign policy, could create an ambitious and elite class, impoverish citizens, and coerce opposition. Americans have created

a balance. They have accepted both armies and war, but only as necessary to ensure the survival of democracy.

Americans' Concern with War

American heritage, constitutionally grounded, values life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. War by its nature visibly obstructs the lives, liberties, and pursuits of wealth and happiness of a growing and affluent America. In war, there is death, destruction, diversion of capital and labor, and a burden of taxes. Also Americans dislike the inclination of a social regimentation, inattention to injustice, criticism of dissenting public opinion, and increasing intolerance for foreigners. Another American concern stemming from cherished liberties is the concern that war will encourage stronger executive power which could continue into a peacetime period. Much of these concerns came from our historical principles of fair play, freedom of choice, and a sense that government should not control our destiny. A preliminary assessment holds that while we have been involved with wars, there is an American view so endemic to our soul that inclines us to avoid large military forces and involvement in conflicts that are not vital to our interests. Our history suggests a rather tentative tiger. In the last half of the twentieth century, with the United States emergence as a world leader, we were in many ways uncomfortable engaging the international arena as a legitimate world power.

From the beginning, we did fight a revolutionary war to create our country. We also continued in wars: in 1812, the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. These were fought principally to ensure an environment conducive to democracy here and abroad. In each case, however, they were to ensure vital interests essential to core values. James L. Abrahamson argues in The American Home Front that "Despite the legacy of armed conflict in behalf of representative government, many Americans have continued to regard war as a grave danger to the nation's democratic institutions and way of life." (1:2)

The Revolutionary War

Even before the Continental Congress declared America's independence Americans had to deal with a significant lack of internal support. Ethnic groupings, such as Scottish low-landers, religious dissenters such as Quakers, Loyalists--America's Tories--most notably from the back country of the Carolinas and Georgia, and even most Indian tribes formed a considerable level of opposition to American war efforts. As much as 25 percent of the white population stood in opposition to the war. Colonial militia and revolutionary committees had by 1775 essentially defeated, intimidated, and disarmed the neutrals or British loyalists. James Abrahamson again observes "That considerable achievement required the domination of as much as one quarter of the nation's white population and testified

to the energy of the Revolutionaries and the early effectiveness of their political institutions." (1:18) He continues:

> Individual state governments also impeded conduct of the war. "Weak state executives or executive councils . . . often failed to provide the forceful and flexible leadership required to rouse the public and meet the often unforeseen problems of a revolutionary war." (1:33)

Wartime events showed the Articles of Confederation, written in 1777, to be too weak to ensure effective prosecution of the war. The state governments' failure to satisfy Congressional requests for men, money, and supplies provided the seeds for future reform and the intellectual justification for a stronger national government. He goes on to say:

> The American war experience exposed errors in the 1776 assumptions that, "people were innately virtuous or . . . would willingly set aside personal advantage in favor of the public good and refrain from any self-interested infringement on the rights of others. (1:39)

His argument continues that the war revealed the following:

> Americans had not willingly sacrificed personal gain to the public need. After the rage militaire of 1775, they generally refused to serve in the armed forces. Farmers would rather exchange grain and livestock for British specie than sell it to the Continental army for depreciating paper currency. Townsmen regularly charged the farmers with inflating their prices or holding food supplies off the market to the detriment of urban dwellers. Merchants also traded with the British and abused governmental offices in pursuit of private profit. Everywhere those who profited from wartime prosperity spent their new wealth on a most unrepublican display of luxury while avoiding payment of taxes and refusing to subscribe to the government's war loans. Independence and republican ideology had unexpectedly failed to transform American society and create a nation of virtuous, public-spirited citizens. (1:39)

The behavior of the people throughout the war showed them to be unwilling to give up individual interests for the greater interests of the nation. The war, having tested institutions and values, provided ample evidence that the American government failed to mobilize the nation's will and resources for a quick victory. The failure of citizens to exhibit a national will in support of the public good led to a strengthening of the government. John Abrahamson concludes that the failure then of a national will, "the failure of individual Americans to behave as virtuous, self-sacrificing citizens led . . . eventually into the Constitution of 1787 and the next decade's Federalist administration." (1:41)

American Attitudes

We arrive at our decisions based on culturally ingrained biases and certain predispositions. Our feelings toward national defense are tied to our views of the world and ourselves. What kind of people are we? What are we comfortable with? How do we see ourselves?

We have grown to be a prosperous people. We like stability, and we believe in law and order. Both lend security to our world. We view ourselves as having a responsibility to lead the world--at least in a moral sense--that our political and economic systems would be of the greatest benefit to others. Our tremendous and rapid growth in this century led to a confidence, at least until

about 1968, that we should and could solve the major problems confronting not only us but the world. For example, in 1945 we wanted to contribute to the United Nations, to bring our energies to bear to ensure a stable world in our image. This reveals itself in several of our predominate attitudes, activism, idealism, pragmatism and optimism in problem solving. We are an active people. Before World War II and our emergence as a world power, that energy was funneled inward. In fact it was a significant influence in our development as a country. Hartmann and Wendzel in Defending American Security observed that, "Once pointed at a problem . . . Americans have an almost incurable itch to solve it." (25:27) This characteristic was expressed in the Marshall Plan in 1947 to help Europe, our stationing of forces in NATO and around the world, our peace corps initiatives and our involvement in Korea and Vietnam. Given the strength of the United States after World War II, there existed some sense of moral obligation to assist the less fortunate world that we found around us. Our sense of justice and fair play created impetus to act and in each case we virtually ran the show. This is evidenced in each case listed above.

Idealism and pragmatism emerged at the end of World War II in all efforts to solve global problems. Again they observed,

> In pure form idealism impels us toward considerations of principle: good versus evil, . . . pragmatism impels us toward negotiation, toward making a good deal, toward compromise, toward flexibility. (25:30)

Both traits are evident throughout our history. Idealism was evident in the early religious dissenters: the Quakers, Puritans, and Amish who came to America. Many came here because of idealistic principles. The roots of pragmatism are in our pioneering spirit. They go on to say, "These settlers quickly learned the techniques of spontaneous cooperation and flexible organizations that have been hallmarks of American culture ever since." (25:30) From our own experience, we have a strong sense of if it's not broken--don't fix it. Success seems to confirm what is the best or right approach.

In problem solving we are eternal optimists. We see problems as something to be fixed rather than something inherent or insoluble. Hartmann and Wendzel again comment that, "We think problems can be eliminated with progress and are therefore impatient with those problems that do not yield to treatment. We are not good for example on long wars." (25:31) We think we can approach everything with a positive attitude and solve it. We also think foreign problems will yield to solutions that have worked for us. Our international experience seems to indicate that we underestimate the complexities of a multipolar world or

darker side of the human experience. In so doing, however, we can be frustrated.

While all these attitudes serve America, it wasn't until the 1960s that we questioned whether these characteristics were serving us well. We questioned because we began to lose confidence in these beliefs. Our activism had led us to Vietnam; our idealism made us believe we could easily win; our pragmatism provided us with solutions that didn't work, and our problem solving proved to be ineffective around the world. Their argument concludes, "Not until Vietnam was the question raised forcibly whether we were trying to do too much in marginal situations around the world." (25:37) The problems, deep-rooted and irrational to many, led to a crisis of confidence and a reassessment of the American experience. We feel its effects today. Our national will is searching for a foothold, trying to build on a foundation shattered by the misjudgments of strategies gone wrong both domestically and abroad. The evidence seems to indicate that while we have a complex makeup of beliefs and values, their influence in a highly fluid, complex world is increasingly difficult to consolidate. Consolidation of a will for a coherent strategy is difficult because America is less confident of its ability to control its own destiny in a multipolar world.

From Attitudes To Our Domestic Environment

There is little doubt that American attitudes shape our security environment. World War II was a watershed, producing a new perspective of the world. Following World War II, a new international environment existed and the United States emerged with new attitudes about dealing with the security environment. Isolationism was gone, replaced by a global orientation with a confidence borne from the recognition that the United States was the dominant power in the world.

The pre-World War II period of traditional values--rejecting European-oriented responsibility--gave way to desires to influence political, economic, and social development around the globe. The United States, upon becoming a world power, accepted responsibility to pursue a better world. In the critical period of 1945 - 1950, our leadership was driven by a national will, uncomfortable with power politics, but driven to shape a world grounded in moral principles, with right purposes and right ends. While we appeared as an optimistic society, camouflaged below the cloak of confidence was an historical leaning toward a small military, a pragmatic diplomacy, and a reluctance to play power politics. The 1950s brought successes and prosperity, and therefore brought an American electorate expecting to participate in the decision process in a pluralistic democracy. Writers, such as Hartmann, Wendzel,

and Michael Boll also concluded, that by 1950, "almost all did agree that America must play a proper role as policeman to the world, whether or not in concert with other prospective policemen, and most Americans agreed that we had to procure and deploy forces accordingly." (25:12) In 1960, President John Kennedy came to office declaring, we "must pay any price, bear any burden." A substantial consensus, born in the late 1940s, was to be turned by the Vietnam war into popular dissension by 1968. Vietnam was the ingredient that broke the momentum of popular consensus and began the questioning of not only our national will but our values, institutions and basic beliefs across the spectrum of American society. While the world began growing more interdependent, Americans having lost the confidence to act, began retreating to Fortress America.

CHAPTER V

A FRACTURED SOCIETY

Since the United States' emergence as a world power during World War II, this country has been undergoing a restless and, at times, turbulent evaluation of its own national character. To a great extent, the domestic Vietnam experience is an example of a nation evaluating its national will in terms of its own perceptions, environment, and goals and finding it out of synch with the national policies (37:90). We can't help but ask the question, where and how did we go astray?

In the 1960s and 1970s, not just from the liberal left but throughout, there developed a questioning not just of our values, but of the rightness of the whole of the American experience. The antiwar movement came to criticize not just our policies but the whole sweep of the democratic process. It produced a generation distrustful not only of our leadership but of our institutions as a whole. It created a disturbing lack of confidence in the validity of the American way of life. Vietnam, Watergate, and the CIA investigations that followed left the country psychologically ill-equipped to formulate a coherent national strategy.

Additionally, Vietnam robbed us of our sense of direction. James R. Bullington in his Parameters article titled, "Americans' Battered Spirit: Our Security and Foreign Policy Dilemma" comments, we had become a nation without a compass, a nation without direction and purpose. (9:50) The Watergate cover-up, which further damaged the credibility and trust of the Executive Branch of government, stole from us the ability to overtly conduct foreign policy. The CIA investigations that followed eliminated much of our covert capability to carry out foreign policy. (40:72) America had arrived at the point at which she was without an ability and confidence to perform in her appropriate world leadership role. The proof of decline was most visibly evidenced in 1979. Iranians held our embassy and diplomats hostage for more than a year--and we could do nothing. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan and we could only turn off our Christmas tree lights.

A nation's psyche is like a child's: without any successes it loses confidence to act forcefully. The United States, its national will in disarray, retreated from its role as the world policeman. America's influence as a world power declined precisely at the rate and time it lost the will or confidence to act in support of our national strategy.

Vietnam: A Change in Course

By the end of 1968, it was clear that a fundamental shift was taking place in the world order. Our failures made it increasingly clear to us that we could not influence the international scene as we had envisioned in the past. The domestic and international dimensions of the change in this nation's ability to influence events jolted our fundamental beliefs about ourselves and our values. What brought about this crisis? Michael M. Boll in his book, National Security Planning: Roosevelt Through Reagan, concludes that,

> First, the most obvious in 1968, the failures of American policy in the Vietnam War had led to such divisions within society that consensus foreign policy was all but impossible. Campus teach-ins at colleges and universities throughout the nation were commonplace, and student violence erupted on the floors of the democratic convention in Chicago in spite of heavy police protection. . . . The campus disturbances and the growing counter culture among even the sons and daughters of leading political figures raised important questions as to whether a common agreement on preferred values was still possible. (8:155)

The important questions, in terms of national unity, could not be answered favorably. A reexamination of values, beliefs, and the very framework of the society was underway. For example, the congress reflected the national mood. The period of bipartisan support for key foreign policy issues was gone. By 1969 the senate voted 70 to 16. He goes on to say, "that henceforth no national commitment to defend an ally could be binding without action by both the executive and legislative branches." Again he observes, "Senate

reluctance to permit the continued autonomy of the White House in prosecuting the Vietnam War, in turn, reflected a significant shift in public attitude toward the entire notion of warfare and violence." (8:156) We began to question not just the Vietnam War itself, but all warfare and other violence that might be necessary in pursuit of national interests. The national will was directing America toward a reassessment of our domestic experience and a resolution of domestic problems. This was evidenced by public opinion surveys revealing that "Americans' willingness to sanction the use of force to defend other nations was lower in the 1969-1975 time frame than at any other time during the cold war." (8:156) There was other evidence of our distrust of the course pursued by our governmental institutions. By 1968, our fiscal dominance was declining--we failed to tax to support the Vietnam War--as evidenced by domestic inflation and a $25 billion deficit. By 1969 the Soviets had reached parity in ICBMs. In 1970, we were in a depression with 5 percent unemployment. All of these factors and more combined to make America appear unwilling to accept responsibilities of a world power. Karen Elliott House's article "The '90s and Beyond" published in The Wall Street Journal, commented on the shift in the visions of America's foreign policy.

> The domestic and foreign problems, so obvious by 1968, gave rise to a new vision of the international order in which the American role would be substantially different, certainly more modest, than in the preceding administrations. (28:1)

We lowered our sights and reduced our willingness to play in a global arena. Yes, there was some impotence, not always in power, but clearly in the will to use our power. We retreated to the security of a domestic agenda, realizing that with painful failures, we needed to strengthen our soul. We defined the world less in terms of conflicting interests and more in terms of competing interests. In terms of national policies, there was a lack of interest in and assessment of national interests. While the world had become multipolar, the United States became more regionally oriented in its thinking. The United States' influence, if viewed as a circle, was now drawn in. The challenge was to keep it from being drawn too tight. The historic task of defending freedom, begun in World War II, and carried on in the fifties to resist communist aggression, sustained by a domestic consensus that was deep and broad, was now gone. While this was principally brought about by Vietnam, the depth, speed, and scope of our decline in confidence and trust was brought about by a much larger set of events.

The Domestic Collapse

A new public attitude appeared in the 1960s. This attitude was born of the military failure in Vietnam but more important matured in a domestic and social protest movement at home. America looked itself in the mirror--and blinked! William Lee Miller, in his article "Our Unrest Is a Child of

'20s' and '30s'" captured the essence of the divisiveness of the times.

> A significant part of the protest movement of the '60s also took up serious social reform and national self-criticism, again in contrast to the comparative complacency of the years that had gone before. And then, toward the end of the decade, there developed on the left something else: a movement that went beyond irreverence, reform and national self-criticism in the direction of what it called revolution.
>
> It stood in opposition not only to national failings but also to the national ideals and established procedures. It was a protest not just against the '50s but against the whole sweep of the American experience, at least according to its most ferocious spokesmen. It stood in opposition not to particular injustices, not to the excesses of capitalism, not even precisely to American capitalism as a whole, but to the entire system, the entire, vaguely defined and virtually all-inclusive "Establishment"; in other words, not only to the specific faults of America but to America itself, including its moral core, constitutional procedures and liberal democracy. (35:131)

The real issues then, were not just our defeat in Vietnam, but rather the corrosive doubt and debilitating division at home. America could not perform as a world power, when it could no longer even come to an agreement on what its values, beliefs, and its vital interests were. In Vietnam we fought as much with ourselves as our adversary, and in the end we defeated ourselves. (48:8) Robert W. Tucker in his Foreign Affairs article titled, "Reagan's Foreign Policy" superbly focuses the implications surfaced by our Vietnam defeat and domestic division.

> The consequences of defeat proved very serious and nowhere more so than in the view we came to entertain of ourselves. . . . There arose a pervasive skepticism not only of the effectiveness of the nation's power but of the purposes to which this power might be put. Where the

> utility of American power was not discredited, its legitimacy was. (48:9)

In our "Age of Aquarius," we found ourselves living in a society fractured by interest groups and seduced by affluence. Somehow, so many of our values, rules, and disciplines were considered hopelessly old-fashioned and out-of-date. This period brought forth these slogans: "This is the me generation," "Take care of number one," and "If it feels good--do it!" Norman A. Graebner in his Parameters article titled, "The National Purpose" commented, Americans seemed to "have developed a looter's mentality to get what they can while there is yet time. Those unable to protect their interests have simply discounted the government's commitment to their welfare." (22:19) The words and feelings these slogans convey have influenced the national will, at the expense of the interests of society as a whole. Solzhenitsyn said at Harvard in 1978,

> The major defect in American life [is] the tendency of citizens to be bound only by law, not by conscience or morality. One almost never sees voluntary self-restraint. . . . Everybody operates at the extreme limit of the legal framework. (22:18)

It is these freedoms, endemic in a democracy, which enable national will to exert its great influence over national policy. (27:55)

We question, even today, whether the use of our military power is legitimate. It harkens back to our moral orientation. For example, the December 1989 invasion of

Panama was questioned, not in terms of its utility but in terms of its legitimacy. The United States as a world power is influenced in large measure by the domestic constituency and by the perceived legitimacy of the efforts. While this is good and proper, it does not bode well for support of pre-emptive or rescue types of missions, where there is no attacking adversary. For example, the 1970 Son Tay rescue attempt prompted generally negative public reactions. The raid led to generally unfavorable congressional responses and led to further anti-Vietnam sentiment in the Senate. Newspapers reacted negatively, as well. The Mayaguez operation, while garnering initial enthusiasm, brought much more criticism. Congress complained more about alleged violations of the 1973 War Powers Act than the military execution. As time passed congressional criticism became substantial, going beyond procedural issues. The national press, in a May 14, 1975 Washington Post editorial, went on to a point where they "progressively found more fault with the operation, suggesting it was no famous victory, was perhaps unnecessary, and violated common sense." (16:A10)

What these events suggest is a shallow domestic support for military actions which is still evidenced today as we gingerly proceeded with the Grenadan and Libyan raids, and Panama JUST CAUSE operations. In looking back over the sweep of the eighties, the Reagan Administration, while improving the military element of power, was still unable to

influence the national will as an ingredient in developing national strategy. The ability of this country to employ its own psychosocial element of power to secure national objectives must be suspect. Americans have just not shown the interest or aptitude to sustain an effort. The United States, for all its current efforts to improve defense, must recognize that national will defines the possibilities for effective participation and leadership, both politically and militarily in the international arena. Maurice Tugwell describes very well the vulnerability that still exists even with our armed forces strengthened: "We may close the window of nuclear opportunity, improve our rapid intervention capability and strengthen our fleets and armies, but if we lose the war of ideas or ideals, we may suffer defeat with our war machine intact." (48:49) This country, with the greatest and most effective military force in the world, is vulnerable because we still fail to appreciate the principle that "destroying the . . . resolution to resist is far more important than crippling [a nation's] material capabilities." (14:214) America, following Vietnam, Iran, Lebanon, and Iran-Contra is less effective in foreign policy because the nation as a whole lacks the will and confidence to function effectively in its leadership role.

Consciousness and Sacrifice

While three administrations in the seventies limited foreign policy objectives due to the dominance of our Vietnam

consciousness, former President Reagan seems at least to have checked America's reverse in her global role and position. But the consciousness remains.

The old cold war consensus that had broken down over Vietnam, was still not even close to being overcome. Robert Tucker's article in Foreign Affairs, titled "Reagan's Foreign Policy" concluded that, despite all the pre-'81 talk about ridding ourselves of the Vietnam syndrome, the record shows Reagan was unable to remove the principal constraints on the use of American power--"the public's disinclination since Vietnam to entertain substantial sacrifice on behalf of foreign policy objectives." (48:12) The key words here appear to be "substantial sacrifice." Those unwilling to bear a sacrifice, lack a will to support a policy. For example, President Reagan's Nicaraguan policy was constrained by both public opinion and congress, and in the end crashed with the Iran-Contra affair. Additionally, the Reagan Administration continued an assertion of an American interest in Lebanon. The only alternative to withdrawal was a lengthy American commitment of substantial forces and Mr Reagan eventually had to withdraw. Robert Tucker goes on to say that even throughout the Reagan years it was still evident that,

> Vietnam had taught that where the public did not perceive compelling security interests to be at stake, its support of military intervention was contingent on costs remaining modest and the duration of intervention being brief. An inexpensive and quick success, then, is the

> solvent of serious public disaffection. . . . Grenada and Libya met almost perfectly the prevailing constraints on the use of force. (48:16)

The foregoing seems to demonstrate an essential point, the national will is supportive only so long as the exercise requires little sacrifice. Sacrifice was one of the essential tenets of the pre-Vietnam consensus. While Mr Reagan gave us a new spirit of "feeling good" about America, there was no inclination to sacrifice for a better America. Again, Nicaragua is a constructive example. With even just a cursory review of the evidence, the policies throughout the 1980s that required some sacrifice, never could generate a public commitment to allow them to be employed. Reagan made us feel better, but he never required anything of us either.

> From the outset, the great appeal of the president's policies was that they demanded so little of the public while promising so much. . . . Thus the principle Reagan legacy in foreign policy may well be just this: that the nation's 40th president transformed what had been a disposition not to pay for the American position in the world into something close to a fixed resolve not to do so. If there is a consensus today in foreign policy, this must be regarded as its central tenet. A disposition to want more than the nation was willing to pay for. (48:27)

This approach was evidenced by our budget deficit and failure to pay for the means necessary to truly be a world leader. It was evidenced by the failed assumption that economic growth--which didn't occur--would eliminate the need for increased taxation. What is evident here is the public's failure of will to sacrifice for the national need. This in turn is usually evidenced by the Congress'

unwillingness to enforce such sacrifice. The large federal budget and continuing consensus for no new taxes meet the wants of the public--the desire to keep but not to pay. President Bush continues to avoid the issues of requiring a sacrifice for world leadership. His statements such as "Read my lips . . . no new taxes!", leads me to conclude that the political winds still measure our will, to sacrifice, as too fragile an area to confront.

Overindulgence

If there was a consensus from the Reagan years, it was the sense of good feeling, at least in comparison with years that had gone before. The evidence seems to indicate an America satisfied with the good life and living it abundantly. In fact, life is often so good it becomes seductive and diminishes the willingness to sacrifice for it. For example, George Will in his Newsweek article, "How Reagan Changed America," commented,

> Americans want low taxes and a high level of services. Big surprise. Big deficit. The deficit is the numerical expression of a cultural phenomenon--the Americans' determination to live beyond our means, to consume more than we produce. (50:16)

The trade deficit underscores the fact that this nation clearly consumes more than it produces. Senator Moynihan has called our lack of will to give back for what we take, "A hemorrhaging of reality regarding the fiscal requirements for strength and prosperity. This is a consequence of the narcotic of cheerfulness." (50:16) The foregoing seems to

demonstrate a lack of responsibility and an unwillingness to give up something for the betterment of all. The domestic issues of our day, taxes, base closings, support for allies, forward basing, all have a personal price and in each case we are inclined to want someone else to pay the bill. Security requires a commitment to bear some burdens. While we feel better about ourselves we are still not inclined to bear the burdens of leadership. Samuel P. Huntington, in his Foreign Affairs article "The U. S.--Decline or Renewal?" commented about some of the nation's visible and disturbing trends.

> Declinists literature sets forth images of a nation winding down economically, living beyond its means, losing its competitive edge to more dynamic peoples, sagging under the burdens of empire and suffering from a variety of intensifying social, economic and political ills. (29:77)

From the evidence it would seem reasonable to conclude that our problems are more an internal lack of will than a relative erosion of the military, political, and economic elements of power. In all these elements there is little doubt that America, if it chooses to assert itself, still clearly has the greatest capacity to wage war, lead, and produce than any country in the world. Our difficulties do not lie in our military forces, our commitments abroad, our political system, or our economy. For example, while our institutions are strong, we fail to recognize the status of that strength. Karen Elliott House writing in The Wall Street Journal observed,

> It is a paradox pointed out by many foreign admirers, particularly in developing nations, that America seems to be losing confidence in the correctness of its course at precisely the time that other nations increasingly seek to imitate it. (28:1)

The foregoing comments by George Will, Samuel Huntington, and Karen House all seem to demonstrate that while our institutions are strong, we are not.

America's problems lie within its citizens. People are the cause, the institutions around America evidence only the symptoms. The reason is, is that this nation's citizens fail to accept the reality that all is not cheerful, and that success requires work, dedication, and sacrifice. World leadership has a cost. Samuel Huntington again observes,

> If the United States falters economically, it will not be because U.S. soldiers, sailors and airmen stand guard on the Elbe, the Strait of Hormuz and the 38th parallel; it will be because U.S. men, women and children overindulge themselves in the comforts of the good life. Consumerism, not militarism, is the threat to American strength. The declinists have it wrong; Montesquiev got it right: "Republics end with luxury; monarchies with poverty." (29:87)

It would seem reasonable to conclude that this overindulgence is a narcotic, which dulls our senses and leads to a low level of tolerance for dissonance. For many, the reality of feeling good becomes more important than confronting the difficulties of world leadership.

CHAPTER VI

CONSENSUS

America feels better about itself because it has chosen to ignore the difficulties and trade-offs of our time. The overindulgence, while it creates a sense of satisfaction, is leaving for future generations the problems we fail to confront today. If there is a consensus of will today, it is a national consensus to neglect to come to grips with difficult questions. America's politicians do it, America's governmental institutions do it, and corporations do it. It's a recognition too of the difficulty of fighting the fight. The energy to force change--change for the good--is rarely seen as sustainable. It is in recognition, too, of the lack of consensus and national will to accept a sacrifice for other interests than ourselves. The yuppie generation brings a legacy of individualism, radicalism, distrust, and a counterculture of values not supportive of compromise, giving, and sharing. The youth of the sixties and seventies changed a focus of society inward not outward. Consensus building, coalition building, is nearly impossible when institutions and leaders accept only the needs of their group over the needs of the nation. The loss of acceptance for compromise, sacrifice, faith, fair play, and trust is the

tragedy born in our domestic revolution. We live at the extremes, to get all we can get at others' expense. Integrity in this process has been lost to a looter's mentality. A national consensus is essential for a strong national will, but it is the key element eluding our collective national psyche. It is because, to acquire consensus, you have to give up, let go, trust, and sacrifice for an ideal or idea which is not your own. That is an uncomfortable practice for a generation that lost its faith in the course of the American experience. A generation that set its own course in pursuit of the American dream. Where has it taken us? What are the difficulties in developing a national consensus to support and bolster a fragile national will? For if we are truly to strengthen our will, we must generate consensus, consensus on a vision of America.

No Compass - No Course

We are in a period where the sharing of a vision has stopped and arguments go on. It is safe to say we are in a transitional period, a time following the breakdown of the post World War II consensus, and in a time before some new agreement is reached. When the image of the world shatters and stereotypes lose their strength, the painful process of reaching a new consensus begins again. The controversy that exists among domestic groups is the redefining of rival global images so that we can enjoy a common perspective for viewing our problems. (25:16) Throughout history, there are

periods of consensus and periods of dissension. Since we are now in a time of dissension, the policy dilemma is to maintain public support during this period. In this effort most characteristics of a society impart both strength and weakness. American individualism, mobility, and competition encourage innovation but weaken cooperation, institutional loyalty, and commitment to broader community goals. The American constitutional system, well designed to maximize liberty, is ill-designed to produce sustained and coordinated action to deal with serious long-term problems. (29:93) This is notably evidenced by a failure to deal with budget deficits and representative of the fact that there is a lack of a definitive American agenda. The budget has little direction because there is no consensus on a new image of America. Within these periods of dissension, there is more partisan politics, less bipartisan agreement, and less statesmanship. Congress has great difficulty dealing in a pluralistic process without consensus. Frederick Hartmann and Robert Wendzel in Defending America's Security observed,

> Consensus, of course, even at its most complete, never means unanimity, merely a sufficiently stable working majority. After all, most national security power problems have no easy or obvious solutions that can induce easy and complete popular agreement. There are few Pearl Harbor types of issues to galvanize and unify public opinion. (25:13)

The fact of the matter is our Congress has not enjoyed a sufficiently stable working majority and popular agreement on national security issues. They continue, "much uncertainty

accompanies such defense and national security decisions [and] if . . . leaders wait for a new Pearl Harbor in a nuclear age, little may be left to salvage." (25:13) It would seem reasonable to conclude that, especially in Congress, a major problem is the dissonance, dissension, and lack of cohesion endemic when there is no consensus. Congress, where everyone must be elected and is dependent upon that sufficiently stable working majority, that is missing, inclines itself toward internal stagnation and conveys the mentality of a loss of will. Parochialism, constituency politics, vested interests, distributional coalitions, and elitism all contribute to a society becoming mired in a network of collusive deals in which everyone else's benefits to everyone's disadvantage. A modern view of the decline-renewal continuum is succinctly described by Samuel Huntington when he writes, "a society declines when bureaucratic stagnation, monopoly caste, hierarchy, social rigidity, or organizational obesity and arteriosclerosis make innovation and adaptation difficult or impossible." (29:88) The evidence seems to indicate that without a consensus on a national image, the American democratic system is increasing politicized away from the leadership necessary to forge a new course. These are not the issues on the margins, but essential policy and fiscal decisions necessary for responsible government by a world power. Decisions on the trade deficit, budget deficit, industrial investment, drugs,

environment, social security funding, United States forward basing, military base closing options, weapons procurement mixes, and education all have serious and long-range implications for America and no national constituency. Failure of decisiveness is a product of a timidity to risk--to reach for possibilities that have political costs. Our national will, still in transition, is a missing influence essential to a strong America.

Difficulties - Trade-offs - Opportunities

The foregoing seems to demonstrate that consensus is not easy to come by. Congress reflects so much of our country because it represents people from across our country. It is a superb departure point to look at other difficulties and influences that make consensus a fragile commodity in the United States today. Our cultural experience and domestic experience combine to dictate our reaction to the influences around us. Here are a few that come to mind.

In a broad sense this is a multipolar world. It is complex, and having dealt with policy failures for 25 years, we are having difficulty adjusting to a highly fluid world. Not only are we in an era of transition, so is the rest of the world. It is difficult to visualize consensus with this much change.

Following the Vietnam failure, Congress and the Executive split. The War Powers Act of 1973 and the reporting debates since, are subsequent examples of distrust

between the two. Consensus on a common course, mutually supportive, is essential if Americans are to increase their faith in their governmental institutions.

Capitalism, generally respected around the world, is viewed as a national strength. But it is disturbing that capitalism to excess divides and destroys America. Capitalism and the greed for wealth evidenced in the savings and loan industry bank closings, large corporate bankruptcy filings, and poor quality products do not bring a consensus from America that we are on the right course.

Interest groups, that secure for a few certain benefits disproportional to the whole, divide and raise questions of legitimacy and propriety. Military bases kept open for only political purposes diminishes the credibility of the leaders to govern wisely. Excesses in political action payments, speaking fees, and trips raise questions of integrity among our leaders.

The media, a cherished and fundamental institution, hold great influence in developing or destroying consensus. Hartmann and Wendzel in their book To Preserve the Republic, comment on the influencing of the media on the national agenda.

> The media--are important in determining what the public will think about, in setting the agenda for public consideration. Although the media seldom can make something an issue if the people are wholly uninterested, they can greatly stimulate and intensify interest if a degree of concern already exists. (26:132)

While the media do not determine basic attitudes, they do influence to a significant degree, what is played and how intently it is played. The Stuart murder in Boston in October 1989 comes to mind. It seems clear that consensus, in a visually oriented, media society with constantly conflicting and competing claims, would be difficult to develop. Clearly, for example, "in early 1982 the fact that the press kept asking President Reagan whether he was planning to send troops to El Salvador greatly intensified public concern over the possibility." (26:133) This illustrates that the media does have influence and power and it can be a great source of impact--good or bad--on consensus.

Another issue, related to the press but much broader in scope, is our national penchant for self-criticism. There is nothing quite like kicking someone when he is down. We do it to ourselves. The American spirit encompasses many moods and this is one that impedes progress toward developing a positive image. We spend more time wringing our hands and questioning not just the substance of issues but even the points on the margin. We question not only if things are done well or right but whether it is legitimate. Every exercise from the Libyan raid to the Panama JUST CAUSE operations needs to have flaws exposed, but it's as if we can't let stand something that appears to be good. This

national self-criticism was born in the 1960s and has a divisive influence on consensus today.

Individualism brings to America a great spirit for adventure. But with the collapse of our value system in the sixties, individualism has led to drug use, which led to a drug abuse epidemic in the eighties. Promiscuity in morals, ethics, and values led to significant societal problems of broken families, single parents, AIDS, and crime by the eighties. Individualism led to a psychological self-centeredness illustrated best by the sayings of our generation, "Do your own thing," "Look out for number one," "Do what you wanna do," and "Go for all you can get--you only go around once." Not the stuff consensus is made of!

Ours is a very optimistic society, but very emotionally oriented. We are subject to large mood swings because of our emotional orientations. We want to win, but we can't stand to deal with losing. For example, we know who wins the Super Bowl but we seem unable to remember who else got there and lost. The real admired value is winning. The Lombardi quote is memorable: "Winning isn't everything--it's the only thing." We don't like a loser, there is no second place. The world, though, is not so ideal. In wars you have losses. With policy choices you have pluses and minuses. In the end we experience cognitive dissonance and are a society without a will to deal with the dissonance and get on with the tasks of world leadership. In so going we are chasing

perfection to avoid defeats. We risk less, to avoid being confronted with relative declines around us. Consensus is not nurtured in a high-speed race through life.

These examples of elements affecting the forging of a consensus are only a few among many. A more complex world, Congress and the Executive, capitalism, interest groups, the media, self-criticism, and individualism are all good for America. Any of these characteristics used or abused to the extremes is not constructive. It would seem reasonable to conclude that moderation, a sharing, a nurturing of values and institutions would develop consensus. A country's citizens more in tune with each other, with a trust and reassurance from each other, would generate a powerful, positive force. That element of a collective conscience is our national will--a powerful force when committed. There can be consensus. Epictetus, a Greek once said, "In all things, moderation." America, moderating its oscillating pendulum, can regain the consensus so necessary to be a stronger leader in the world.

The last two chapters detailed our national circumstance and hinted toward where we might be headed. In summary, Vietnam changed our course. The sixties and seventies changed our values and destroyed our trust in our institutions and in each other. The eighties brought some cheer, but no commitment to sacrifice for national ideals. We are a society living beyond our means without the

confidence to accept difficult realities. Therefore, we are a society vulnerable to large mood or opinion swings and a society unwilling to engage in intellectual assessments of decisive issues. There is still no consensus for sacrifice for the greater good, only a predominance to secure personally emotional and physical comfort.

It is the type of society that we live in and the strong and emotional participation of people that make national will influential, important, and impossible to ignore. Additionally, emotional participation can force into the background mature reflection on decisive interests affecting the country. Liddell Hart writes, "In a democracy, emotion dominates reason to a greater extent than in any other political system. No political system more easily becomes out of control when passions are aroused." (32:65)

Given the democratic system we have, and the emotional involvement of our citizens, it seems appropriate to emphasize again that television has a tremendous influence in shaping the values and will of a nation. Visual impressions, as Clausewitz pointed out, are more vivid than those gained by mature reflection. (30:18) Participation in a democratic society tends to enable opinion to swing in one direction or another. The freedom of the media to express a wide range of opinion limits our ability to build cohesion and therefore can be a vulnerability in a democracy. The lack of mature reflection complicates the problem of

developing a national consensus of will into a commitment. So it is in American policies today. No significant national purpose can be achieved as long as (1) there is no recovery of our national confidence to function in the world community, and (2) as long as narrow personal interests continue to supersede the broad issues that can benefit society as a whole. (6:18)

CHAPTER VII

NATIONAL WILL--A FORECAST AND COMMENT

While the future holds much promise, the important point is that this nation's future depends, among other things, on the amount of political suffering and of economic and social sacrifice that society in general and its leadership in particular are willing to endure to achieve national objectives. Considering our isolationist character and splintered society of today, there are only a few examples of adequate support for a national consensus. People are seemingly unprepared to make some form of personal commitment to sacrifice to stay on top in a truly national sense. The objective evidence appears to support the acceptance of a declining status quo. The country's experience with the slogans of this generation, evidenced by the splintering of the political processes, and the American public's living beyond its means has shown this to be the case. The United States will continually be confronted with a difficult road in its effort to be an effective world leader. The nineties bring a changing world.

The Nineties and Beyond

All events in our world point toward a transition from a bipolar to a multipolar world. No longer will the

United States and Soviet Union dominate an era. Multiple relationships in our foreign policy and the complexity of choices will make the world more difficult to lead. Our voice will not be the only voice heard. There is a convergence of opinion that in a highly fluid, complex international environment, Americans should develop an ability to deal with a world less inclined to follow our lead. We must be able to be actively engaged in trying to influence the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. The difficulties will be greater, the intellectual dynamics more fluid. It will require our diplomacy, if it is to be successful, not to be based on force but on confidence that we can respond in a less predictable and in many ways a more unstable world. With power more widely dispersed, confidence will be essential if we are to have the leverage of a world power in the nineties and beyond. The evidence indicates that, at this time, we still lack this fundamental confidence. Our national will is still too fragile to accept our shortcomings and overcome them with a confidence to act, exhibiting a willingness to sacrifice and accept risk in order to lead as a powerful people should. Karen House from her article "The '90's and Beyond" underscores this point.

> What is in doubt about America isn't the capability--or desirability--of American leadership, but rather America's will to lead. What is lacking, then, isn't either money or might but rather the kind of confidence, commitment and calling that has enabled far less powerful peoples--witness the ragtag Afghan resistance movement--to prevail. (28:1)

Alain Chevalier, former chairman of Paris-based LVMH has said "World leadership requires risks and sacrifice and I don't see America willing to do that anymore. You seem tired of leadership." (28:1)

As we move into the nineties, we are still tentative. Our national will is unsure and uncertain of the course America should take. Experiences of Vietnam, Watergate, Desert One, the Iranian hostage crisis, failure of the SALT II treaty ratification, the Lebanon Marine bombing, budget deficits, trade deficits, and Iran-Contra have left our will psychologically damaged. Additionally, our uncertainty has led other nations, seeing us unsure, to be uncertain about our leadership. This in turn creates more criticism of the United States and then more domestic self-criticism. This self-criticism has led to a lack of leadership--a lack of nerve. You've heard the old saying "nothing succeeds like success." American leadership clearly has not enjoyed sufficient success to exhibit the confidence to lead and, in turn, the American people willfully have not conveyed a trust in the American leadership and institutions that they will arrive at successful solutions. While Americans desire leadership, they lack the confidence to accept that leadership, as it is currently exhibited on the American scene. Karen House continues,

> If America has an Achilles' heel, it is a dispirited political leadership more comfortable with predicting American decline than committed to preventing it; more

> inclined to apportion blame for problems than to search for solutions; more focused on preserving institutional or personal powers than adept at preserving and promoting national strength. In almost every view, there is a shortage of guts in Washington, where officials elected to solve problems instead toss the toughest ones . . . to specially appointed and publicly unaccounted bodies. (28:1)

Issues such as funding social security, closing unneeded military bases to facing up to a budget deficit come to mind. The important point here is not that the process is slow--but that the process lacks the will. We've been there before. While we act strongly when pushed by catastrophe we respond slowly when confronted by incremental and gradual difficulties. In deteriorating circumstances, no consensus emerges to generate a confidence to act with any sense of decisiveness. Looking back, it isn't the first time in America's history that the country can be accused of not facing up fast enough to internal and external challenges. After all, it took Pearl Harbor to push America into World War II; it took Sputnik to shock America out of post-war complacency; it took an Arab oil embargo to make Americans acknowledge and act to rein in their energy profligacy. As Winston Churchill once said, "In the end, Americans will always do the right thing, after exhausting all other alternatives." (28:1) An essential point here is not just whether we will do the right thing, it is <u>when</u> we will do the right thing. Doing the right thing, for the right reasons, but at the wrong time can be disastrous. If we are too late

in adjusting or changing to the challenges around us, we lose our position, influence, credibility, and prestige in the world. In terms of a national strategy, this element is so important because performance dictates power, not the plans and policies which might be revealed as merely wishful thinking. Our confidence to act--decisively act--sends signals about our national will throughout the world. "Our opponents are constantly estimating changes in our power as well as changes in our apparent will to use that power." (25:61)

Success will come when we exhibit a grass-roots confidence in our political institutions--the president and congress for starters. We must realize some successes in solving our domestic problems, such as the budget deficit and trade imbalances. With success comes confidence, and with confidence a national will to act, using all the elements of national power, political, military, economic, and psychosocial--synergistically--to truly provide a viable national strategy.

For our national will to be a viable contributor to our national power, the nineties must provide an environment that can allow for the development of an improved national self-image. This might happen as the sixties, seventies, and early eighties receed. Basically, we have fairly short memories. We will need to experience successes militarily, although small in scale, which will begin an incremental

building of confidence and trust. This could be evidenced by Grenada, the Libyan strike and Panama-type operations. Superpower world tensions should decline, which should reduce the national stress and consequences of our failures and help us to exert the proper responses on security issues. This is possibly being evidenced by the changes in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, the INF treaty, and as of this time, the appearance of progress in arms control talks, START and CFE. Taken together, these elements might provide an environment, as we move into the nineties, in which America will achieve various successes. In turn, this could reduce the endemic national self-criticism, which is so damaging to our national psyche. Finally, this might allow the people of the United States to rediscover and exhibit a trust in our leaders, institutions, and most importantly, in themselves.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

National will, as an element of power, provides the framework for painting the American experience. National will is important because, as Napoleon has observed, "The moral is to the physical as seven is to one." (24:144) American hearts lead to a willingness of American minds to rethink and reform some of the habits and institutions that have made America weak and its national will vulnerable in the eyes of serious people around the globe. While perception is a part of reality, a country's will is something deeper and more enduring than image. It is more precious than military power, political power, or economic power. When military, political, or economic power fades, they can be recovered. When a national will fades, it is almost irretrievable. The current difficulties of maintaining a collective consciousness in both America and the Soviet Union are evidenced by the need to rethink the basic images of the world structure so long believed to be endemic to each society. Additionally national will is important because the society of our principal adversary, the Soviet Union, increasingly recognizes national will as one of

the pivotal elements influencing a nation's ability to exercise power.

While national will is important, it receives little real interest and assessment for a couple of reasons. First, the United States, a nation created at the dawn of the industrial age, is a scientific and technical society. Arthur T. Hadley in The Straw Giant, Triumph and Failure: America's Armed Forces writes, "As we became a more mature nation we turned to science and technology to help us solve our problems." (24:278) We have an underlying orientation toward gadgets, weapons and things technological. Evident today is the American propensity to see high-tech weapons as the gap for military shortcomings. Second, as a scientific and analytical society, we tend to discount what we cannot quantify. Because we cannot place will in an analysis or in a broad design of strategies, we ignore its significance. It is discredited precisely because it can't be quantified. We all recognize the greater difficulty in dealing with the abstracts that are more difficult to see. It's this lack of vision that leads to less thoughtful applications in the political-military policy decision-making process.

The United States historical experience is one that has inclined America away from standing armies. In each of our wars, isolationism has been a pull on the political and social framework. George Washington, on leaving the presidency, warned of entangling alliances. From the

beginning, "America has tended intellectually to remain a Jeffersonian democracy, with Jefferson's distrust of all things military." (24:278) Also, Americans historically have tried to solve problems by leaving them behind. Early settlers such as the Pilgrims, came here, leaving other problems behind. Early settlers, when life was difficult, left for the frontier. The individualism, moving on, leaving problems behind, all are ingredients of the American culture, which is less nurturing of a national will to withstand adversity and develop consensus.

Since World War II the United States has witnessed a dismantling of a security status unprecedented in the annals of history. Arthur T. Hadley again observes,

> As late as 1950 the United States produced 52 percent of all the world's goods and services. America by itself represented the global balance of power. American alliances were in effect unilateral guarantees; recognized problems could be overwhelmed with resources. By the late '60s these conditions were disappearing. Nuclear parity was upon us. As Europe and Japan recovered and other nations industrialized, America's percentage of the total gross national product was declining. By 1970 we produced about 30 percent of the world's goods and services; today the figure is around 22 percent. (24:278)

Misunderstood and unsettling, the changing circumstance is an emotional event. Its consequences are made more important by the fractured society created by the American defeat in Vietnam. The domestic collapse of trust in our values, leaders, and institutions and the subsequent overindulgence portrays a character fragile and unsure of its influence on the course of world events. Without a clear course,

America's will fails to sacrifice for a national consensus to forge a new vision for the future.

The nineties and beyond will bring opportunities, but our success will depend on how we come to view our role in the world. The world is changing rapidly. Our notions of the geopolitical structures of our lifetime are being fundamentally altered. The national will must accept the changes and recognize legitimate opportunities for leadership, if we are to stay the course. The real character of a nation, its will to persevere, should be judged when circumstances are difficult. When all is going well--we expect to do well. The analysis must not be on how well we do when things are going well. The real test is how well we do when things are going badly. That reveals the true character of individuals, as well as nations. America's recent past suggests a difficult future. We must be able to overcome our domestic and foreign policy difficulties, to develop a domestic consensus and, in turn, a recovery of confidence. That confidence will allow for a sharing and sacrifice for the good of the nation. Too often in a pluralistic democracy, there are advocates for political constituencies, interest groups, and individual perquisites, but too few advocates for the good of the nation. The national will is the weakest element of power because there is no consensus on, or few advocates for, what is best for the nation.

Leadership must have the strength of character to tell the American people what they do not wish to hear, but should hear. Leadership needs to confront the public with the simple truths governing our position in the world. Our consciousness of who we believe we are as a nation must be linked to the costs of world leadership. Until there is a willingness to sacrifice for our national interests, we will not in any substantive sense, convey an image that resembles that of a world power.

In the 1990s, as the elements of military power merge to essential equivalence, the nonmilitary actors of power become more important. With balance in conventional forces and equivalence in nuclear forces, the economic, psychosocial, and political elements gain leverage. It could be argued that in 1990, the inherent strength of American political, military, and economic power has pushed the United States ahead, to emerge in a favorable position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. World opinion would likely conclude that we are well ahead. It is only our psychosocial element of power that is so fragile. We have the strength in the other elements of power. We simply need to regain our confidence to act in defense of our vital interests in what is now a highly fluid, dimensionally complex, multipolar world.

These observations provide no sweeping solutions. Rather, they suggest that we are all responsible and must play a mature role in shaping national strategy. We must be

engaged to lead and to recognize that with leadership comes sacrifice. At a personal level or national level our consciousness must not be so fragile as to make us unwilling to take risks in the effort to achieve greater things. Self-assurance and confidence will come with practice. More trust in our leaders and institutions will come with success and, with success, a buoyant spirit. Then, we must accept responsibility for the past and turn mistakes into a better future for our country. (17:viii).

When the United States wishes to counter some national security challenge, it will certainly have the military, economic, and political elements of power to do so. But as it stands now, consensus on the psychosocial element will come only after a widely perceived threat to our territorial integrity or in the wake of a catastrophe. To strengthen the national will the American people and their leaders must recognize the fact that, in a democratic society, national will determines the limits of achievable objectives. (6:19) Public support is the essential, all-encompassing glue in strategic planning. It defines the possibilities for achieving strategic objectives. Only when we are willing to sacrifice for our leaders and the national interests, and only when our national leaders seriously evaluate this psychosocial element of power, will we have a national strategy worthy of the name.

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