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U.S. GOAL

Fundamentally, national planning is related to survival, more importantly, survival without undue interference by others. Such comments imply that the United States must be able to act relatively free or independent of external influence. Noting that other nations have these same views, together with the reality that today nations are highly dependent upon one another, it is clear that striving for independence places these nations in continuous conflict, since one nation's gain in this endeavor can be another nation's loss.

Unless the United States and other nations can learn to work in harmony, each working for the common interest, the U.S. must strive to maintain or improve its capacity to act relatively free or independent of external influence. Inability to precisely determine whether a nation can maintain such a status quo, over the long run, makes it prudent to strive for improvement.

Therefore, stated formally, the U.S. goal is:

TO IMPROVE OUR CAPACITY FOR INDEPENDENT ACTION.

ATCH 1

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CONFRONTATION DYNAMICS

With the national goal as stated, the idea occurs that the U.S. should consider both military threats and related confrontation dynamics. The most serious of these possibilities involve limited or massive (nuclear) strikes by the Soviet Union against U.S. military or societal targets. In such cases, as basic options the U.S. may:

- Attempt to negotiate and not respond
- Respond in limited fashion, with concurrent negotiation; or
- Respond massively to destroy the Soviet Union as a nation.

If the United States attempts to negotiate and not respond, the Soviet Union and other nations will probably interpret this course as weakness, and recognize the Soviet Union as the dominant power. Such an appraisal together with follow-on political and economic actions by these countries could constrain future U.S. initiatives that would be inconsistent with the U.S. goal as previously stated. Therefore, the U.S. will more likely respond with a limited or massive strike, whichever is considered to be more consistent with her goal. Against a limited strike, the U.S. may choose a limited response within a context of negotiation. However, it is not clear whether negotiations will succeed or whether the Soviets would strike again. The uncertainties related to Soviet perception of U.S. strength and resolve, and vice versa, make it difficult to determine whether additional strikes are required or negotiations are chosen as more consistent with each nation's goal of trying to improve its capacity for independent action--at the others expense. Under these circumstances, realizing that additional Soviet strikes are possible, The United States may elect to respond massively. However, such a response could lead to nuclear catastrophe, and unacceptable loss of independent action for the U.S. relative to the rest of the world.

Against a massive Soviet strike, anything less than a massive response appears inconsistent with the U.S. goal; on the other hand, a massive response, as we have just shown, can also be inconsistent with the U.S. goal. This leaves the United States the prevailing options of:

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- Giving up the goal
- Striving for that goal, independent of nuclear exchange, or
- Striving for dominance, so that the United States has the capacity to destroy the Soviet Union yet survive to influence the rest of the world.

Giving up the goal implies that the U.S. is willing to become a satellite of another power (or a coalition of other powers). Such a result would be inconsistent with the social contract that exists between the government and its citizens (whereby the government provides for security and protection, while the citizens agree to constraints upon their individual freedom in exchange for that security and protection). Current political, economic and military actions by the U.S. do not support this option.

Striving for dominance presumes that dominance is possible, and that the U.S. is willing to incur the necessary political and economic costs in terms of more numerous and severe constraints upon political freedom and quality of life. Recent and projected U.S. policy (exemplified by "detente") do not support this option either.

Hence the implied rejection of options 1 and 3 suggests that the U.S. is striving to maintain or improve her capacity for independent action independent of nuclear exchange. In today's world this means the U.S. will maintain a credible nuclear deterrent--to preclude (or minimize) a nuclear exchange.

Pursuit of this option implies that the U.S. must maintain a credible Strategic Strike potential to counter a nuclear strike, yet maintain sufficient General Purpose forces to counter other threats as well. Clearly it follows that the overall Air Force planning task then is to develop and procure an appropriate Strategic and General Purpose force mix constrained by technological and economic resources available.

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B. H. LIDDELL HART -- "STRATEGY" -- 1967

His Orientation

- Personal Experiences with WWI trench warfare
- Study of Great Captains and their Campaigns
- Study of Great Theorists and their ideas

Strategic/Tactical Maxims

- Adjust your end to your means. It is folly to bite off more than you can chew...
- Keep your object always in mind, while adapting your plan to circumstances.
- Choose the line (or course) of least expectation.
- Exploit the line of least resistance.
- Take a line of operations which offers alternative objectives. ...thus put your opponent on the horns of a dilemma...
- Ensure that both plan and dispositions are... adaptable to circumstances. Your dispositions (formation) should be such as to allow... adaptation in the shortest possible time.
- Do not throw your weight into a stroke whilst your opponent...is well placed to parry or evade it.
- Do not renew an attack along the same line (or in the same form) after it has once failed.

AIM

Avoid a massive bloodbath and avoid widespread destruction, yet achieve victory, by adhering to the strength against weakness philosophy embodied in the above maxims.

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