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THIS IS THE END: DEFINING SUCCESS IN THE CONTEMPORARY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 changed the world in ways that scholars and historians are still attempting to understand. This colossal event transformed a bipolar system into a world where the United States (U.S.) became the unchallenged hegemon in the global order. A large number of policymakers within the Pentagon and State Department viewed these circumstances as an opportunity to exploit for the good of both America and the free world.[1] Other strategists worried about an uncertain future and adopted a wait and see strategy, in which the U.S. would reap the benefits of the "peace dividend." As Thomas P.M. Barnett stated in his book *The Pentagon's New Map*, "the grand strategy of the United States… was to avoid grand strategies" and maintain "strategic flexibility" in world affairs.[2] But the enemy and world order that the U.S. hoped for did not emerge. This was foolish and arrogant thinking, and as expected the operational environment that emerged was highly chaotic, unpredictable, and lacked a definable enemy.

The U.S. is now adrift in an operational environment in which it is reacting to situations in a "whack a mole approach" versus dealing with crisis in a holistic manner. The failure of post-Cold War administrations to create coherent strategy, provide proper world leadership, and properly identify the national interests has been a disaster. The lack of strategy has shackled planners at every level of government to utilize the interments of national power to direct resources in a manner that is consistent with U.S. national strategy.[3] Unfortunately, when strategy and leadership were available, as in the case of the George W. Bush administration, they were given in conjunction with bad policy and poor strategic decision making. This type of

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[1] Thomas M. Bennett. *The Pentagons New Map*. Putnam Books. New York. 2004. 1.
[2] *Ibid*. 3.
[3] General Anthony Zinni' *The Battle for Peace*. Palgrave Macmillan. New Hampshire. 2006 4.

decision making and strategy formulation is unacceptable for a nation as capable, powerful, and influential as the U.S. Likewise, incoherent national security strategies have led to poor decision making in determining where to intervene, and have subsequently led to an inability to define the endstate of any of its recent military interventions. If the United States is going to be successful in the contemporary operating environment, then all levels of government must correctly identify the ends to be achieved, the criteria for success, and the elements of national power needed to achieve the desired endstate. Failure to do this will keep American foreign policy adrift and lead to more of the disjointed policy that has guided the U.S. in the post-Cold War era.

This paper will define success in the contemporary operating environment. Specifically, the paper will show that to achieve success, the U.S. must understand the ends they are attempting to achieve and how to incorporate and appropriately recourse the interments of national power in a method that prioritizes America's limited resources. The paper will use the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine as a means of comparing and contrasting the 1991 Gulf War with the 2011 intervention in Libya. This comparison will highlight the successful and unsuccessful ways in which the U.S. has used the instruments of national power to achieve their ends and how it did or didn't define its criteria for success.

FRAMEWORKS

Ends, Ways, & Means – Spectrum of Conflict Model

The paper will analyze the use of the ends, ways, and means in conjunction with the instruments of national power by using the *Ends, Ways, & Means - Spectrum of Conflict Model* created by Dr. Tom Clark and Dr. Stanley Bruce. In this model, Stanley and Bruce show the manner in which ends, ways, and means, the instruments of national power, and the spectrum of

conflict relate to one another.[4] Likewise, the model is a good way to visualize and understand how all of these elements interact in the contemporary operating environment. Although primary focus will be placed on the ends component of the *Ends, Ways, & Means - Spectrum of Conflict Model*, it is useful in understanding how ends relate to ways, and the manner in which they interact with the elements of national power.
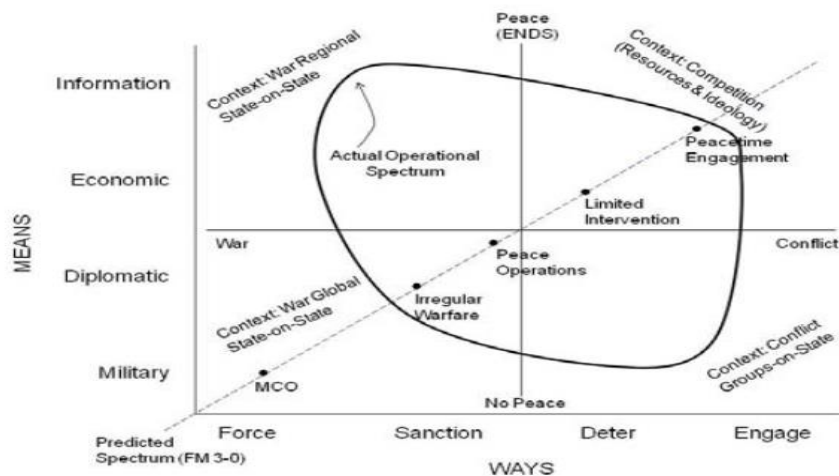
Figure 1.1 Ends, Ways, & Means – Spectrum of Conflict Model[5]

Instruments of National Power

There are numerous models that can be used to examine how a nation uses its "instruments of national power," but for the purpose of this paper we will use the United States Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0 *Operations*, which defines the instruments of national power as *diplomatic, informational, military and economic* (DIME).[6] According to Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*, the term "instruments of national power" is used to define strategy as a "prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized

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[4] Tom Clark and Bruce Stanley. *Applying Ends, Ways, and Means to the Spectrum of Conflict*. 2008. http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/117-clark.pdf?q=mag/docs-temp/117-clark.pdf
[5] *Ibid. 2.*
[6] FM 3-0*, Operations*, June 2008, 1-4

and integrated manner to achieve theater, national, and/or national objectives."[7] Although DIME will not be directly addressed again in the paper, a solid understanding of the instruments of national power is highly necessary if one is going to understand the formulation of strategy and achieving the desired ends.

Ends, Ways and Means

According to *FM 3-0 Operations*, ends ways and means are defined as the objectives, endstates, and criteria for success. This delineates what success looks like at the conclusion of an operation or action. Ends are the mechanism that allows "unity of effort among all elements of national power."[8] Ways indicate the manner in which a state will attempt to achieve the ends. Diagram 1.1, shows that ways can move along the spectrum of conflict from engagement prior to the commencement of hostilities to the use of force.[9] Ways indicate the sequence of actions that is most likely to attain these conditions (ends). Means, as illustrated in Diagram 1.1 are depicted as the instruments of national power that one would use in planning the ways they desire to achieve their ends.

CONTEMPORARY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

For the time being, nation-states remain the primary actors in the international order. Russia, China, and Iran serve as the principal state adversaries that the U.S. must manage. These nations continue to modernize their armed forces and continue to force reactionary measures from the U.S. and its allies through the use of limited-hybrid actions. These actions seek to advance their interests while avoiding military engagement and economic sanction from the west. This can be seen in Russia's recent involvement in both the Ukraine and Syria; China's

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[7] JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, September 2006, GL-29
[8] Tom Clark and Bruce Stanley. *Applying Ends, Ways, and Means to the Spectrum of Conflict*. 2008.
http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/117-clark.pdf?q=mag/docs-temp/117-clark.pdf
[9] Ibid. 2.

creation of artificial islands in the South China Sea; and Iran's continuing support for terrorist groups like Hezbollah. Although the United States still remains the lone superpower, its supremacy is being challenged and this will continue into the future. In addition to nation-state competitors, non-state actors are also creating enormous challenges for the U.S. and its allies.

Non-state actors are blurring the lines between civilian and military and the line between crime and war.[10] Radical Islamist groups like al-Qaida and Islamic State Iraq/Levant (ISIL), transnational gangs such as *Mara Salvatrucha* (MS-13), Mexican and Columbian drug cartels, as well as numerous ethnic, religious, economic and political groups are growing, adapting, and mutating faster than the U.S. and other nation states can find ways to counter their activities. Non-state actors typically peruse their interests through unconventional means and are masters at developing strategies to counter U.S. answers to the problems they create. The ability of non-state actors to acquire advanced weapons and technology on the black market has greatly enhanced their abilities. Coupled with cyber and other information technologies, these groups have transformed into formidable foes that are exceedingly difficult to target.[11]

Developing long-term strategies to deal with this wide range of issues is the great challenge of the U.S. Where the U.S. once had the Soviet Union as the defined adversary to underpin every strategic decision, today there is no clarity to bind these problems into a strategic architecture. The inability to grasp and deal with these challenges has placed the U.S. in a strategy deficit. This deficit has in turn created a chaotic American operational environment where it is hard to allocate, ends, ways, means to the wide-range of problem-sets. The go-to answer to many of these problems has been increasingly to use the military. However, as the

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[10] William S. Lind, Keith Nightingale, John Schmidt, Joseph W. Sutton, Gary I, Wilson. The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation. Marine Corps Gazette. October 1989. 1.
[11] Global Security.org. *Contemporary Operating Environment*.
http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/call/call_02-8_ch1.htm

U.S. continues to cut military spending and troop levels, while simultaneously increasing the amount they are used as the primary interment of national power, the U.S. risks over commitment and unpreparedness in undertaking its primary task: defense of the nation and national interests. Former Commander of Central Command, General James N. Mattis, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee stated that "With less military available, we must reduce our appetite for using it… absent growing our military, there must come a time when moral outrage, serious humanitarian plight, or lesser threats cannot be militarily addressed."[12] The problems that General Mattis identified are a symptom of not clearly identifying national interests and developing a strategy to pursue those interests.

NATIONAL INTRESTS & STRATEGY

National interests are defined by FM 3-0 as "National interests and policy define and inform military strategy. They provide a broad framework for conducting operations. A combatant commander's military strategy is thus an instrument that implements national policy and strategy." According to FM 3-0, strategy is defined as a "set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve national objectives. The President translates national interests and policy into a national strategic end state."[13] This in turn should guide and drive the way Combatant Commanders develop plans to accomplish the desired ends. When done correctly, the National Command Authority (NCA) consisting of the President and Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), in conjunction with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) ensures that the nation's military strategy is consistent with national interests and policy.

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[12] James N. Mattis. Statement of James N. Mattis before the Senate Armed Services Committee. January 27, 2015. http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Mattis_01-27-15.pdf

[13] FM 3-0, *Operations*, June 2008, 1-4

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee General Mattis stated that "By rigorously defining the problems we face you will enable a more intelligent and focused use of the recourses allocated for national defense."[14] One of the primary issues with the America's inability to define success is the lack of clear national interests and a strategy to support those interests. This lack of strategy leads directly to carelessly intervening in wars that the U.S. has no ideas on how to end and no real intention of winning. This has been a sharp departure from the Cold War focus of effort that enabled all the interments of national power to work in a clear and concise way toward the deterrence and ultimate defeat of the Soviet Union.

During the Cold War, the entire national security apparatus was geared toward a strategy of deterring and defeating the Soviet Union. Intuitions like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were created and resourced toward this end, and the actions of the U.S. and its allies were guided by this belief. In the 1987 National Strategy, President Ronald Regan highlighted the need to maintain the global and regional military balances vis-à-vis the U.S. The primary purpose of this balance was to assist threatened states in "resisting Soviet or Soviet sponsored subversion or aggression," and neutralize the efforts of the Soviet Union to increase its influence in the world and weaken the links between the USSR and its client states in the Third World.[15] These interests were supported by the belief that our national interests and strategy had to have three tenants: Realism, Strength, and Dialogue. This was a mature foreign policy for a serious time that remained relatively unchanged from the Harry S. Truman to the George H.W. Bush administrations.

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[14] James N. Mattis. Statement of James N. Mattis before the Senate Armed Services Committee. January 27, 2015. http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Mattis_01-27-15.pdf
[15] United States, *1987 National Security Strategy*, Washington D.C. The White House. 1987 https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/1987_national_security_strategy.pdf

Today U.S. strategy is not in the same place. Although Cold War structures like NATO remain in place, they no longer have anything to unify and focus efforts. The 2016 National Security Strategy of the U.S. sits in stark contrast to the clarity of its 1987 predecessor. The current strategy states that the U.S. must deter attacks on the U.S. homeland and threats to the U.S. and its allies.[16] However, it also talks about the mitigation of global infectious disease outbreaks and the effects of climate change. Only in the last bullet of the strategy does it talk about dealing with weak and failing states.[17] Although there is mention of terrorism, nowhere in the document does it clearly define a U.S. enemy or how they plan to use the instruments of national power to deal with it. Although the strategy talks a great deal about working with allies and coalitions, it fails to provide the clarity of purpose necessary to lead other nations in a cause with actual endstates. If the U.S. expects allies to follow, it must be credible and lead with coherent strategies that our allies can support. The lack of priorities makes the U.S. incapable of allocating recourses in a judicious manner, and the U.S. can no longer afford to play the international game in this manner. It is inefficient, expensive in lives and money, and doesn't do justice to the U.S. standing in the world as the lone super power. Stumbling from crisis to crisis is no replacement for a coherent strategy in which all the elements of national power understand and are appropriately aligned on what to do.

Shortly after taking office in 2009, President Barak Obama stated "As Commander-in-Chief, I have determined that it is in our vital national interests to send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan. After 18 Months they will begin to come home."[18] This was an interesting statement because it outlined two critical concepts. First, if something is declared a

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[16] *Ibid.* 5.
[17] *Ibid.* 5.
[18] Dr. Peter Mansoor. *The Parameters of Mission Success: How Environmental Complexity is Frustrating Contemporary Efforts to Employ Power to Achieve Strategic Ends*. Canadian Forces College, National Security Program (NSP). PowerPoint Presentation.

'vital national interest' then that interest, being vital, should receive all available resources. Second, if the interest is vital, it should be conditions based, vice time based withdraw. These contradictions are just one example of how out of touch the strategic level is with understanding ends, ways, and means. Presidents Obama and Bush are both guilty of giving the military endstates that are too large, too complex and too difficult to achieve with the resources and time allocated. The primary dysfunction in this area rests in not using a practicable set of criteria for entering and ending conflict, and likewise forgetting the guidelines used in successful military campaigns like the 1991 Gulf War.

THE WEINBERGER/POWELL DOCTRINE

The Weinberger/Powell Doctrine is a list of criteria governing when the United States could commit troops in military engagements. The doctrine was publicly disclosed by U.S. Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) in a 1984 speech entitled "The Uses of Military Power" delivered before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. In his speech SECDEF Casper Weinberger laid out his vision for how, and under what conditions, the U.S. would go to war. What later became known as the Weinberg/Powell Doctrine (General Powell was an aid to Secretary Weinberger at the time) was a direct result of the lessons of Vietnam and was intended to guide decision making in a manner that would not lead to further quagmires. The doctrine was comprised of the following six points:

1. The U.S. sould not commit forces to fight unless the vital national interests of the U.S. or its allies are involved.

2. U.S. troops will be committed wholeheartedly and with the clear intention of winning. Otherwise, troops should never be committed.

3. U.S. troops should be committed only with clearly defined political and military objectives and with the capacity to accomplish their assigned objectives.

4. The relationship between the objectives and the size and composition of the forces committed should be continually reassessed and adjusted if necessary.

5. U.S. troops should not be committed to battle without a "reasonable assurance" of the support of U.S. public opinion and Congress.

6. The commitment of U.S. troops should be considered only as a last resort.

However, despite the clarity of the doctrine, there have been many critics, most notably former Secretary of State Hennery Kissinger, who criticized the doctrine's lack of flexibility and see it as an effort by the military to limit the freedom of policymakers.[19] Although criticized and brushed aside by many in the defense and foreign policy establishment, clear cut policies like the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine could have brought much needed clarity to the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya.[20]

Comparing the first Gulf War and the Libyan intervention demonstrate a sharp contrast in the appropriate use of force. Primarily, these case studies clearly show that when the U.S. strays from using the military only to advance national security it opens a Pandora's box that is excedengly difficult to close. Colin Powell, while serving as Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under the Clinton administration fought with Secretary of State (SoS) Madalyn Albright incessantly over the appropriate use of force. In one extremely tense conversation with General

[19] Michael A. Cohen. *The Powell Doctrines' Enduring Relevance*. World Politic Review. July, 22, 2009. http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/4100/the-powell-doctrines-enduring-relevance

[20] Frank Hoffman. *A Second Look at the Powell Doctrine*. War on the Rocks. February, 2014. http://warontherocks.com/2014/02/a-second-look-at-the-powell-doctrine/

Powell over the use of force in the Balkans, Secretary Albright stated "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?" To this, Powell quickly shot back with "GIs are not toy soldiers to be moved around on some global game board."[21] This exchange aptly describes the differing schools of thought within the national security apparatus of the U.S. Likewise, it highlights the views of using military force when the NCA decided to use force in both Kuwait and Libya.

FIRST GULF WAR

The first Gulf War of 1990-1991was the first large scale implementation for the Powell/Weinberger Doctrine. President George H.W. Bush clearly stated why "U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf are vital to the national security" and then drew upon all the instruments of national power to resolve the conflict in a peaceful manner.[22] The Gulf War was backed by both domestic and overseas populations through a robust diplomatic and information campaign led by SoS James Baker.[23] This effort included engagement with Iraqis in an effort to avoid war, engagement with Israel to stay out of the conflict, and massive efforts with the Arab states to keep them involved and active contributors.[24] This vigorous diplomatic effort was reinforced by a United Nations (UN) mandate and clear political and military objectives – the removal of Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait that did not involve nation building or U.S. occupation of Iraqi territory. Militarily, the use of force was used as a last resort, and only after diplomatic negotiations continued until the last minute. However, when force was applied it was used overwhelmingly and there was little doubt that the military would be able to accomplish their

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[21] Michael A. Cohen. *The Powell Doctrines' Enduring Relevance*. World Politic Review. July, 22, 2009. http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/4100/the-powell-doctrines-enduring-relevance

[22] George H.W. Bush. *National Security Directive 45*. The White House. Washington D.C August 20, 1990.

[23] Michael A. Cohen. The Powell Doctrines' Enduring Relevance. World Politic Review. July, 22, 2009. http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/4100/the-powell-doctrines-enduring-relevance

[24] *Ibid.* 3.

objectives.[25] The largest point of contention during the operation was that some felt that the liberation of Kuwait was not in our vital national interests.[26] Without a doubt, this is a debatable notion, which is why congress only narrowly passed an authorization to use force. That being said, the 100 hour war was a major success in the eyes of all allied participants and serves a model for how to appropriately use the American military. However, in the ensuing decades, the U.S. slipped backslide into its old ways as the outcomes of Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Libya clearly demonstrate.

LIBYA

Libya, in contrast to the First Gulf War was the antithesis of the Powell/Weinberger doctrine. The military intervention in Libya did not meet any of the criteria set forth in the Powell/Weinberger doctrine and the results are clear. Unlike President George H.W. Bush, President Obama did not outline why the intervention was in our national interest and was unable to get the support of Congress and the American people. The stated objective of the operation was to prevent the slaughter of Libyan civilians, but this was not an objective that was consistent with U.S. national interests.[27] Through robust prodding by France and the United Kingdom to help them secure their oil interests, Libya was identified by National Security Advisor (NSA) Susan Rice and SoS Hillary Clinton as being in the vital national interests of the U.S.[28] Although the Libyan mission might very well have been in America and NATO's moral interests, it most certainly was not a tangible U.S. national security interest. Likewise, Libya had no clearly defined endstate or exit criteria established prior to the commitment of forces. The lack of exit strategy and plan for a post Gaddaffi Libya was highlight by President Obama in an interview

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[25] *Ibid*. 3.
[26] *Ibid*. 3.
[27] Christopher A. Preble. *The Weinberger Powell Doctrine and Libya*. Cato Institute – Podcast. March 28, 2011. http://www.cato.org/multimedia/daily-podcast/weinberger-powell-doctrine-libya
[28] Dick Morris. *Libya Fails Powell Doctrine*. The Hill – Online. March 22, 2011. http://thehill.com/opinion/columnists/dick-morris/151329-libya-fails-powell-doctrine

with Fox News in April, 2016 when he admitted that his biggest mistake during his time in office was "Probably failing to plan for the day after, what I think was the right thing to do, in intervening in Libya."[29] This is quite an admission from a man who was elected in 2008 on a "no more Iraq's" platform. But despite recent history, President Obama repeated the same mistakes as his predecessor. Although the story of the Libyan intervention is still being written, it is clear that the country is a disaster and that the very people the U.S. intended to protect are in a worse position than when before the intervention. The Libyan debacle also serves to highlight in many respects SoS Hillary Clinton and NSA Susan Rice's expansive view of U.S. interests that is focused primarily on protecting human rights globally vice advancing the national security of the U.S.[30] The disastrous results of this expansionist view can be clearly seen in the fact that in the wake of Gaddafi's fall: Tribal groupings, militias, Islamist, insurgent groups are competing for power, and a two front civil war has ensued, giving ISIL a new sanctuary.[31]

CRITERIA FOR SUCCES

What does success look like in the contemporary operating environment? According to U.S. Marine Corps Brigadier General Julian Alfred, "success means "to make good, thrive, prosper, flourish, or progress in order to accomplish a favorable aim or outcome."[32] General Alfred goes on to define winning as, "to acquire, be victorious, or triumph as a result of a fight."[33] In the contemporary operational environment, success or winning is based more on

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[29] Dominic Tierney. *The Legacy of Obama's 'Worst Mistake': There's a problem with the American way of war*. The Atlantic. April 15, 2016. http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/04/obamas-worst-mistake-libya/478461/

[30] Dick Morris. *Libya Fails Powell Doctrine*. The Hill – Online. March 22, 2011. http://thehill.com/opinion/columnists/dick-morris/151329-libya-fails-powell-doctrine

[31] Dr. Peter Mansoor. The Parameters of Mission Success: *How Environmental Complexity is Frustrating Contemporary Efforts to Employ Power to Achieve Strategic Ends*. Canadian Forces College, National Security Program (NSP). PowerPoint Presentation.

[32] Alford, Julian D. and Cuomo, Scott A. *Operational Design For ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer.* Joint Forces Quarterly. Issue 53. 2nd Quarter. 2009.

[33] Ibid. 93.

assessment than fact.[34] Consequently, there is a great deal of subjective criteria that determines success or winning. A nation's criteria for determining whether or not a military intervention was successful lies in the stated endstate of the operation. As shown earlier, determining endstates has become a lost art, where clearly defined criteria, as demonstrated in the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine have given way to esoteric statements and lectures about the need to "stay the course," conduct a "surge," or use a "whole of government approach." This methodology has replaced other, equally as bad criteria for success, in which metrics such as the amount of enemy territory occupied, body counts, and loss of equipment were used to define success. However, this nebulous middle-ground between "staying the course" and "body counts" is very dangerous because these are metrics and political statements without substance, which ultimately moves the U.S. no closer to its endstate. Instead, one should look to history instead of mathematics and new-age theories about success in conflict.

According to Prussian military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz, victory is "tripartite and consists of three elements: the enemies' loss of material strength, his loss of morale, and his open admission of the above by giving up his intentions."[35] This is still valid for many types of conflicts, but what about defeating a group like ISIL? This is a group that is likely not going to ever give up or admit defeat. Likewise, there is no surrender document or formal means of bringing closure to this type of conflict. Success or victory in this context is more like to be equated with the ability or Middle Eastern states to deal with ISIL without or with limited U.S. help. However, there is rarely, if ever, the political will to succeed when success will likely take decades and possibly span three or four presidential administrations.

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[34] Chong Shi Hao. *A Swift and Decisive Victory: The Strategy Implications of What Victory Means*. Prizm Magazine. 4, No 4. 2013.111.

[35] Chong Shi Hao. *A Swift and Decisive Victory: The Strategy Implications of What Victory Means*. Prizm Magazine. 4, No 4. 2013.111.

There is reluctance in Western nations to commit blood and treasure to stabilize states and promote effective governance. This reluctance has resulted in a succession of failed interventions.[36] Military intervention undertaken with half measures without the full backing of the government and people are doomed to fail from the beginning, as can be seen in America's recent conflicts. The unwillingness to commit the necessary resources has led to the U.S. attempting to win through the use of drones and Special Forces. However, this is means of containment stupidly being substituted for strategy. In the current political environment, this may be the best western nations can do.

According to the U.S. Special Forces Command White Paper, published in January 2016, there is a need to stop thinking about the contemporary operating environment in a linier manner. Specifically, the western way of devising plans for combat center around defining a center of gravity and moving along a logical path by phase until you accomplish your stated objectives.[37] If all objectives are achieved, then you win. This is a linier and methodical way of viewing the world, which stems from the American infatuation with World War II where success and winning were very easy to understand. However, in the current operational environment, 'time-based operations' now reign supreme over 'conditions-based operations'. In this type of environment, it is exceedingly difficult to determine the criteria for success since that criteria might not be met in the stated timeline.

Under conditions such as the ones described above, the war you don't get into may be the best decision for the country. Conflicts in which our national interests are clearly at stake garner the necessary support to see the conflict to successful termination. When the U.S. fails to

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[36] Dr. Peter Mansoor. *The Parameters of Mission Success: How Environmental Complexity is Frustrating Contemporary Efforts to Employ Power to Achieve Strategic Ends*. Canadian Forces College, National Security Program (NSP). PowerPoint Presentation.
[37] United States Special Operations Command: White Paper: Design Thinking for the SOF Enterprise. January 27, 2016.

properly define its interests, it finds itself in predicaments like Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. Using the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine or similar guidelines will go a long way to defining the criteria for success in the contemporary operating environment.

THE WAY AHEAD

Reexamination of U.S. national security interests is of primary importance. A national security interest should be defined by what the U.S. is willing to go to war to protect. Based on these interests, the U.S. needs to develop an overarching strategy that guides its decisions and actions in dealing with a wide array of threats as diverse as Russia, ISIL, drug cartels, and cyber security. Strategy development should address a wide variety of issues to include, but not limited to, determining whether security arrangements like NATO and the UN are still relevant, paying down national debt, and reinvigorating the interments of national power to enable them to operate in accordance with our national interests.

The instruments of national power need to be funded and resourced appropriately. General Mattis stated before the Senate Armed Services Committee that "with les military available, we must reduce our appetite for using it."[38] The military budget gets the largest percentage of the national budget, but should be the least preferred option. The U.S. Department of State needs to be "weaponized" and much more aggressive in its approach with a mandate to avoid conflict. Diplomatic efforts must be the primary means of accomplishing the national strategy. This should be coupled with a robust information campaign that not only informs and leads our allies, but also to warn our enemies.

According to General Matts "Prioritization is needed if we [U.S.] are to remain capable of the most critical mission for whom we have a military: to fight on short notice and defend the

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[38] James N. Mattis. Statement of James N. Mattis before the Senate Armed Services Committee. January 27, 2015. http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Mattis_01-27-15.pdf

country. In this regard we must recognize we should not, and need not carry this military burden solely on our own."[39] The U.S. is $20 trillion in debt and this is a national security issue that requires immediate attention. With limited resources, the U.S. cannot afford to throw troops at any situation without national interests at stake. Humanitarian missions like the ones in Libya, Somalia, and Bosnia are not in our national interests and should not be undertaken. The U.S. should not be involved in foreign adventures that have no chance of an outcome that will advance our national interests. The political leaders continue to state that wars in the current operational environment cannot be won through military actions alone, but leadership is very quick on the military trigger, because the other elements of national power are to slow to the ball and don't have the recourses and culture to win in austere environments.[40] Issues like the remaking of the U.S. national security architecture are of great importance and perfectly suited for inclusion in an updated Goldwater-Nichols Act.

The Powell/Weinberger Doctrine should be the standard decision making structure in the determination to use military force. This doesn't imply a lack of flexibility in the application of the doctrine. However, the principles of the doctrine should guide decision makers in answering the fundamental questions of whether national security interests are at stake. If the answer is 'yes,' then the next question is: are the American people ready to resource the effort with the appropriate ways and means to be successful. If the American people and Congress are not convinced that the ends can be accomplished then the mission should not be undertaken.

In 1961 President Eisenhower told President Kennedy that Europe was growing increasingly dependent on the United States for its security and that the time was right to "bring

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[39] James N. Mattis. Statement of James N. Mattis before the Senate Armed Services Committee. January 27, 2015. http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Mattis_01-27-15.pdf

[40] Dr. Peter Mansoor. The Parameters of Mission Success: How Environmental Complexity is Frustrating Contemporary Efforts to Employ Power to Achieve Strategic Ends. Canadian Forces College, National Security Program (NSP). PowerPoint Presentation.

the boys home."[41] The same is true today, the Cold War has been over for nearly 30 years and U.S. allies need to do more if they are going to continue to be allies. The U.S. NATO allies have become dependent on American military and diplomatic welfare and this has retarded their interests in developing the military that meets the needs of the contemporary operating environment. The need to change is highlighted by the fact that nearly 80 years after the end of World War II, the U.S. is still securing Western Europe. However, it shouldn't be the responsibility or 322,000,000 Americans to defend 395,000,000 rich Europeans against 142,000,000 Russians.[42] This is in addition to doing the lion's share of the work against radical Islam, undertaken despite the fact that Europe has brought this threat into their home due to altruistic immigration policies.[43] If the West cannot define its enemies and speak honestly about these issues, then the Cold War alliances of the past are in serious danger of fracturing.

Islamic extremism and the spread of Islam around the world is a direct threat to the interest of the United States and its allies. Although the U.S. must always foster good relationships with our allies in the Middle-East, the United States should remember that it has a great deal more in common with Russia than Saudi Arabia, and American foreign policy should reflect this. If the U.S. wants to stay out of wars in the Middle-East and stop the temptations that are too great for some Presidents to handle, then let the Arabs and Persians figure things out on their own and make the Chinese police the Middle East to secure their oil supply. Oil is the primary driver of intervention from the First Gulf War to Libya and this should end.

CONCLUSION

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[41] Patrick J. Buchanan. *A Republic, Not an Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny*. Regency Books. Washington D.C. 2002. 385.

[42] *Ibid*. 385.

[43] Central Intelligence Agency: World Fact book. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/profileguide.html

This paper has clearly shown that if the United States is going to be successful in the contemporary operating environment it must clearly identify its ends and resource those ends correctly. America's foreign policy has been muddled since the end of the cold war and this must change. This change will only transpire within the framework of a foreign policy fit for America's standing in the world. This change is within the realm of possible as long as 'success' is clearly defined and America places its interests first. The ends must be achievable and realistic, but leave enough gray-area and wideness to allow for a range of end states at the conclusion of the conflict. The ability to be transparent and show that we have achieved our goals is essential in the American people's collective sense of victory. The conversation is headed in the right direction, but we need adults not amateurs leading changes.

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