

POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS
SINCE WORLD WAR II;

THE HISTORICAL SETTING FOR
CURRENT AND FUTURE
STRATEGY

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World War II: The Historical
Setting for Current and Future
Strategy (1965)

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THE HISTORICAL SETTING FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGY

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Preface

This study, "Political-Military Affairs Since World War II; The Historical Setting for Current and Future Strategy," has been performed by the Historical Evaluation and Research Organization (HERO) for the Stanford Research Institute (SRI), under Purchase Order 10024, as a subcontract for SRI's contract DA-49-092-ARO-10 with the Department of the Army. The study was initiated on October 18, 1965, on the basis of an oral understanding between the undersigned and Mr. Richard B. Foster, Director of SRI's Systems Science Strategic Center, in Washington. In the preparation of the study liaison with SRI has been maintained through Mrs. Anne Jonas, of the Systems Science Strategic Center.

This report is considered by HERO to be performance in full of the task assigned under the purchase order referred to above. Because of the extremely short period of time available to perform the study, however, HERO considers the report to be preliminary and tentative, and subject to possible future modification, if this should be requested.

The undersigned is the sole author of this study report. In its preparation, however, considerable assistance has been received from Miss Cheryl Keyser, HERO Research Assistant, and Mrs. Evelyn Fass, HERO Librarian. The undersigned is also indebted to the

following scholars for review of preliminary drafts, and for valuable comments and suggestions: W. Barton Leach, Professor of Law, Harvard University; Ernest R. May, Professor of History, Harvard University; Louis Morton, Professor of History, Dartmouth College; and Frank N. Trager, Professor of International Affairs, New York University. Valuable comments and suggestions were also provided by the following members of the HERO Professional Staff: R. Ernest Dupuy, Riley Sunderland, Grace Hayes, Gay Hammerman, Mary Hoyt.

As author, as well as Executive Director of HERO, the undersigned assumes full responsibility for the contents of this report.

T.N. Dupuy
Executive Director

Washington, D.C.
13 November 1965

POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS SINCE WORLD WAR II

THE HISTORICAL SETTING FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGY

Introduction--Historical Patterns Since 1945

In reviewing the confused, tangled, and unquestionably momentous events of the past two decades, it is difficult to see them in true historical perspective. We have, after all, experienced or read about many or most of these events at first hand. It is not easy to discriminate among them, or to see what has been truly significant, as opposed to merely interesting or dramatic.

It has seemed appropriate, therefore, to establish some kind of framework for these events, before reviewing them in detail. In this way, perhaps, perspective of sorts can be achieved.

In terms of political-military affairs, there appear to us to have been nine major historical patterns over the past two decades. Other analysts might find more or fewer such trends, by arranging differently the many strands of this portion of the web of history. These nine patterns, as we have distinguished them, seem those most closely bearing on this study.

Confrontation of the Superpowers

With respect to American political and military strategy--past and present--the one most significant trend of the past 20 years has

been the confrontation of the United States with the Soviet Union. From the close of the Second World War until today these two super-powers have towered over the other nations of the world, and the most important strategic fact of life for each has been the existence and power of the other. The friction, or conflict, which has resulted from this confrontation has been called a "cold war."

The Technological Revolution

It is likely that future historians may consider technological developments over the past two decades more important than the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Perhaps the most important such development is the emergence of nuclear power. Other significant technological developments include the new electronic communications marvels, enabling telegraph, telephone, and radio to be used in ways earlier undreamed of. ^{These} have reduced the time necessary to transmit ideas, and the time available to react to events. The related developments of automation and computerization have opened new areas of research and accomplishment, and new and improved means of transportation have reduced travel time, making the world seem ever smaller. Possibly the most dramatic technological development of our time has been the start of human conquest of space.

The World Political Revolution

We have seen one of the great tides of history manifesting itself more visibly and more immediately than has usually been the case in the rapid breakup of colonial empires in a very

brief span of time. Related to this--yet separate, and manifested in countries other than the former colonial dependencies--is the phenomenon of "rising expectations," which is, to some extent, also part of the economic revolution which we will note next below.

This World Political Revolution, and the growing recognition of human dignity that accompanies it, have had some serious effects on the underdeveloped countries of the world. As these peoples have groped for nationhood, they have been obstructed by several things. Despite apparent achievement of liberty, or equality as nations, they have lacked the resources or technical/skills which have enabled the older and more established nations to prosper. Lacking experience, they have found that the democratic processes do not seem to work well or easily. The result has been political instability. And, in natural efforts to gain the things they want, or need, these nations have often contributed directly to this instability by getting themselves involved in the dangerous confrontation of the superpowers.

The Economic Revolution

This has had several manifestations. One has been the growing industrialization of the world, even in its less advanced regions, and a tendency of the more industrialized nations to approach the previously unparalleled American standard of living. Another has been the phenomenon of "rising expectations." This, however, has more often than not accompanied the inadequate capabilities of the underdeveloped nations. Partly because of

the "rising expectations" of the new nations, and partly because of economic facts of life which have permitted the older nations to develop earlier, there has been an increasing economic gap between the developed and the undeveloped nations of the world.

Contributing to this increasing economic gap has been the world population explosion. The dangers and threat of this are most evident in countries like India or China, with vast populations to feed, relatively scanty agricultural resources and even scantier means to increase these resources. Such nations must scramble to increase their inadequate agriculture by three per cent or more per year, just to keep up with the growing population, and before they can hope to achieve any real economic advancement. This situation also exists in many of the potentially rich countries of Africa and Latin America.

One of the most significant developments of the postwar era has been the ability of the capitalist nations to harness capitalism, and to make it evolve into a cooperative effort of all segments of society, in a way totally unanticipated by Marx. From this economic fact, from the tremendous productive capacity of the more developed Western nations, and from the technological revolution which it has spawned, may come ways and means of overcoming the more somber aspects of the economic revolution.

The Growing Importance of International and Regional Organizations

This has been an era of internationalism. Despite its failures and weaknesses, the United Nations has enjoyed a number of

successes. So, too, have its various economic, cultural, and political subsidiaries. The concept of regional political organizations, to work/^{more or less}within the overall concept of the United Nations, but involving only interested nations in problems that are primarily regional and local, has been developed in several areas.

International economic organizations have also been quite successful, including world-wide enterprises as the World Bank and GATT, as well as local or regional economic cooperative activities such as the European Common Market.

The Conspiracy and Challenge of International Communism

The confrontation of the superpowers would undoubtedly have dangers and crises even if the idea of communism had never existed. (There was no communism to affect the relations of Athens and Sparta, or of Rome and Carthage.) Nevertheless, the scope of the Cold War, the violence and the brutality that have marked the World Political Revolution, and a large measure of the bitterness and hatred in the world today must be attributed directly to the conspiracy of international Communism. The virulence and emotional impact of this ideology can best be compared with the religious forces which so severely wracked the civilized world for more than a millenium, roughly between the years 622 and 1648.

The Recent Trend Toward Polycentrism

During part of the past decade, centrifugal forces have developed in both of the great/^{sets of}alliances which the superpowers built

up in the years following World War II. Although both the United States and the Soviet Union have been embarrassed and frustrated by this trend, as is noted later in this paper, Soviet Russia has suffered more from it than has the United States.

Efforts Toward Arms Control and Disarmament

Over the past century there have been a number of individual attempts to establish some kinds of controls and limitations to the employment of armed force among nations. There has been nothing to compare, however, with the world-wide intensity and sophistication of the search for arms control in our time. It is in large part the result of growing realization by all mankind of the potentialities of nuclear weapons, and a feeling of desperate need to control the use of such weapons before they are allowed to destroy civilization as we know it.

New Elements in Military Strategy

If only because of the development of nuclear weapons, this generation of military men has been faced with the greatest problems of transition in military concepts, doctrines, and strategies that have been known in the history of military affairs. A few examples will be illustrative.

Weapons have for the first time become determinants of strategy, instead of merely implements of strategists. From the availability of these weapons has grown a new concept of limiting conflicts through possession of almost unlimited power. The concept of deterrence, known to man since force was first used

against another human, has achieved a subtlety and refinement in our time that has never been known before.

Practically all of the other historical patterns noted above have, in one way or another, affected modern strategic thinking. For instance, from the Communist conspiracy has emerged a new concept of "wars of national liberation," in which an ideology has harnessed and modified old and well-known methods of making war. The technological revolution has brought a weapon system--the long-range strategic bomber--to perfection in our time, and has already made it obsolescent. From the impingement of the technological revolution and the economic revolution has emerged an essentially civilian concept of cost effectiveness to affect all modern strategic thinking.

* * *

In presenting the major facts of the two post-war decades on the following pages there has been no attempt to treat the events in terms of these nine major historical patterns, since this would result in an awkward and repetitive presentation. In the conclusions, however, a distillation of the most significant of these events has been organized in relation to the nine patterns discussed above.

Part One--The First Decade, 1945-1955

The World at the Close of World War II

At the close of World War II the Old World was in ruins: physically, politically, economically, and psychologically. Elsewhere, save in some islands of the Pacific, the war had had relatively little physical impact, although there were indirect effects which had not yet become apparent. In the New World the United States had miraculously, under the pressure of global war, suddenly achieved the reality of a power potential which had been foreseen more than a century earlier by Alexis de Toqueville and emerged from the war as perhaps the strongest nation in all history.

Within the Eurasian "Heartland," however, despite the devastation the war had caused, it had also provided both an impetus and an opportunity for the new force of communism to inspire and exploit the qualities of toughness and dynamism in the Russian people. The victorious Red Army, largest in the world, securely held all of Eastern and Central Europe up to the Elbe River. The Soviet Union emerged from the war as the second power in what had become essentially a bi-polar world. De Toqueville's prescience was thus doubly confirmed; he had suggested that the United States and Russia would some day confront each other as competitors for world leadership.

But while the Soviet Army was consolidating its hold on the areas it occupied in East and Central Europe, the United States

was simultaneously responding to American public pressure for the rapid demobilization of ^{its} the wartime military establishment. The result was virtually to destroy the American armed forces, as experienced specialists were discharged and inexperienced recruits filled their places. ^{American} The public did not realize that the United States had returned from this war ^{yet} with world-wide commitments ~~and~~ ~~was faced~~ with occupation ^{responsibilities and} duties such as this country had never ~~performed~~ ^{performed} before.

^{Many} ~~The~~ American ~~people~~ and ^{many of} their leaders, ^{furthermore, had} however, did not see ^{any reason for} ~~any reason for~~ ^{concern} ~~concern~~ about ^{lack} ~~lack~~ of military power. With the

signing of the UN Charter in October 1945, the world had taken a major step toward the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means. For the first time the United States was party to a plan for world-wide cooperation. The UN Charter provided for maintaining international peace and security by a Security Council composed of the five major victors of World War II as permanent members--China,

France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States. ^{The nations} ~~was to~~ ^{provide a Military Staff Committee which should assure adequate} ~~cooperation~~ ^{peace} ~~during the war,~~ ^{power to preserve} US leaders hoped that the wartime alliance could be continued in a postwar environment of peace. It soon became apparent that this was wishful thinking.

The Second World War left Russia severely weakened physically. Her land had been ravaged, cities and industries destroyed, people left homeless, and the population reduced by at least ten per cent.

Reconstruction of the country required an enormous effort. As a ^{obvious} response to the need for rebuilding and ^{to understand the} the desire to ^{take up with} ~~surpass~~ the

(the limited and opening nature of)

power to preserve peace

West, a new Five-Year Plan was initiated which aimed to increase industrial production by over 50% of the prewar level.

occupation with domestic reconstruction
However, domestic troubles had not in any way altered the Soviet aim for world Communist revolution. Soviet intentions became clear immediately upon the surrender of Germany. *At Yalta the US* The US, British, and Russian zones of occupation in Germany (France did not receive a zone until later, and then it was carved out of the US and British zones) *in West Germany, as a sector in Berlin, these were* and in Berlin had been decided at the Yalta Conference. However, the Red Army *had* occupied Berlin and agreed to

evacuate the US-British sectors only after these two countries withdrew their forces from the Soviet zone *in East Germany*. The access routes of the Western Allies to Berlin were severely restricted, because advance planning and negotiations *during the war* had been inadequate. The Soviets *quickly* made it quite clear that they expected soon to take over all of Berlin, and *after Western Allied troops arrived in the city, the Russians* they did everything possible to encourage the Western Allies to withdraw *as soon as possible* from the city.

influence
In the division of Austria the Soviets exhibited the same intransigent attitude and put as many blocks as possible into agreements *with* the other Allies for free access to Vienna. As in Germany, the Russians looted the country, carrying back to Russia everything movable and valuable. It seemed clear that they intended to incorporate their zone of Austria into their East European satellite bloc, just as they were doing in East Germany.

That bloc was rapidly taking shape. The Soviet army had established rigid dictatorial control over the devastated occupied countries, completely ignoring the joint occupation agreements

which had been ^{established in principle} ~~provided for~~ at Yalta and Potsdam. In Poland and East Germany the Russians imported their own puppet Communist regimes to take over local civilian administration under the supervision of the Red Army. In Bulgaria and Rumania local Communists, protected and supported by Soviet troops, soon were able similarly to take over the governmental machinery, through a step-by-step process, culminating in the establishment of professedly democratic puppet governments. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia the local Communist parties were less immediately successful, but the democratic popular governments which arose from the ruins of the war were completely subject to the Soviet occupation authorities. Of all of the nations of Eastern Europe, only Finland was able to maintain a modicum of independence from Communist control. Tito's Yugoslavia was an even more special case. Largely liberated from the Germans through the efforts of its own Communist Partisan army, Yugoslavia was nominally independent. It was, however, partially occupied by Soviet troops, and economically dependent upon Russia.

The nations of Western Europe had been left physically and economically ruined; their peoples were exhausted and were appalled by the apparently hopeless prospect of facing the enormous physical task, and cost, of reconstruction. The governments, unable to meet the most urgent needs of impatient, dissatisfied people, became increasingly unstable. At the same time the colonial nations of Europe--primarily Britain, France, and the Netherlands--were faced with further troubles in their far-flung possessions, as the colonial peoples, eager for independence, became aware that economic and

political weaknesses in the mother countries were providing them with an opportunity to gain independence. Thus there was a ferment of unrest not only in Europe, but also in the European colonies in Asia and Africa. This situation of ferment, combined with the weakness of the colonial powers, was made to order for the international Communist movement and was consistent with the Communist theory of the tides of history. The Communists were quick to exploit the opportunity.

The occupation of Japan was following a pattern much different from that which had been set in Germany and Austria--and which was being repeated in nearby Korea. By virtue of the American victories in the Pacific, the United States decided to assume full and direct responsibility for the postwar occupation of Japan. General Douglas MacArthur, who had been appointed Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers for the Japanese surrender, retained this title in his new capacity as the military governor of Japan. The Allies were given a voice in the formulation of occupation policy through the establishment in Washington of a Far Eastern Commission consisting of representatives of all of the nations that had taken part in the war against Japan. The policy directives of the Commission were sent to MacArthur through the US Government. In Tokyo, MacArthur presided over an Allied Council for Japan, which included representative of Russia, China, and the British Commonwealth. The Council's functions were advisory and consultative, however, and MacArthur soon made it clear that he would not permit its deliberations to

interfere with his decisions or policy in carrying out the Allied or American policy directives which he received from Washington. Quickly and efficiently the American military government established its authority over Japan, leaving the details of administration, however, to the Japanese government, which operated under very close American surveillance and control.

In the recently liberated former Japanese possession of Korea, however, the situation was far different. When Russia entered the war against Japan, she had explicitly adhered to the provisions of the Cairo Declaration, in which the United States, Britain, and China had announced their objective of assuring the emergence of a free and independent Korea from the war. But, after having occupied that part of Korea north of the 38th Parallel in accordance with agreed terms of surrender for Japan, the Russians insisted on perpetuating this arbitrary and temporary military boundary. The 38th Parallel became a rigid international frontier, and the Russians set up a Communist puppet regime as a nominal government of North Korea, under the control and supervision of their occupation forces.

The situation in China at the close of the war was extremely confused and complicated. During the war Mao Tse-tung's Chinese Communists had nominally closed ranks with the National Government of President Chiang Kai-shek against the common Japanese enemy. The Communists, however, had taken advantage of this apparent unity to increase their strength and to gain control over large areas of China. As the end of the war approached, American observers in China were disturbed by the obvious preparations of both the National