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National Strategic Guidance: Do We Need a Standard Format?

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In February 1944, a directive from the Combined Chiefs to General Dwight D. Eisenhower defined in a few brief sentences the task for what became the largest amphibious invasion in the history of warfare:

> Task. You will enter the continent of Europe and in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces. The date for entering the Continent is the month of May, 1944. After adequate channel ports have been secured, exploitation will be directed towards securing an area that will facilitate both ground and air operations.[1]

The clarity, simplicity, and focus of the directive are remarkable. Military leaders would agree that such quality guidance is essential to the successful prosecution of war. But what of the national strategic direction currently given to our military and other departments and agencies? Is it not just as essential? How is this multi-agency strategic guidance formulated and issued, and does it routinely convey the necessary information to successfully wage a war? The potentially disastrous consequences of strategic failure demand an answer to these questions and an examination of both the process and product of national strategic guidance formulation.

Much has been said and written about the need to define and balance the ends, ways, and means of war before entering into a conflict. Yet, for all the importance placed upon a sound strategic concept, little has been written about the essential elements of strategic guidance. This article examines the current system for formulating strategic guidance at the national level and assesses the quality of that guidance. It then describes the essential elements of strategic guidance. Finally, it proposes a format that can facilitate the formulation and communication of comprehensive strategic guidance from the National Security Council to the executing federal departments and agencies.

The System

Strategic decisionmaking is an incredibly complex activity. Consider this description by former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld:

> Given the nature of our world, there are very few issues that are single department or single agency. For example, the matter of selling grain to Poland is simultaneously a matter of interest for the Departments of Agriculture, Treasury, State, and Labor, and for congressional relations, the general counsel, and probably several other departments and agencies. So it is not possible to turn government over to the cabinet and expect it to work. Coordination is needed. That is the responsibility of the White House. It falls essentially on the NSC to serve as the coordinator for the principal participants in the national security and foreign policy decision-making process, namely, State, Defense, CIA, ACDA, the Chiefs. But it also involves the analysis of foreign defense policy with considerations relating to economic policy and domestic policy.[2]

Strategic guidance, formulated and issued at the highest levels of the US government, is developed within a system that has specific participants, structures, and processes. Let us examine this system from two perspectives: that of the staff agency and decisionmakers who devise and publish the guidance, and that of the organizations and leaders who receive and implement the guidance.

The National Security Council System

Joint Publication O-2 states that "the President of the United States, advised by the National Security Council, is responsible to the American people for national security unity of effort."[3] The National Security Council (NSC),

currently composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, and other designated cabinet and subcabinet officials, is the principal forum for formulating, approving, and disseminating strategic guidance at the national level.[4] The NSC system includes the members of the council and the council staff, any supporting interagency committees, and their defined procedures.

The system's active participants, procedures, policies, and document names and contents are determined by each administration. They vary according to the nature of a crisis, the personalities involved, and the types of decisions required.[5] Accordingly, the NSC system usually experiences major changes following the election of a new President. Each new administration publishes a decision memorandum establishing and defining the NSC system and outlining the basic structure of interagency decisionmaking. These memoranda are broad in scope and do not directly address the actual form and content of strategic guidance nor the elements of that guidance.[6] Consequently, strategic guidance issued by the NSC varies significantly from one administration to another and, within a given administration, from crisis to crisis.

A critique of the nuances, differences, and scope of national policy formulation, approval, and dissemination peculiar to each administration is beyond the scope of this article. In most recent administrations, however, policy formulation has been increasingly managed by the NSC using interagency working groups or committees, some permanent and others temporary, chaired by the National Security Advisor, Vice President, NSC principal, or appropriate Assistant-Secretary-level official.[7]

Two general categories of strategic guidance emerge from this process: long-term strategic policy guidance and short-term strategic decision directives.[8] The first type addresses long-term policy objectives with either a worldwide perspective on an important issue or a long-term assessment of strategy in a specific region. It may also outline key national interests, values, and objectives. This guidance may be published in the National Security Strategy (NSS) or in memoranda written, coordinated, and distributed by the NSC staff, such as the guidance on the Strategic Defense Initiative (NSDD 85) or Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (PDD 25). Generally, the guidance provides continuity in foreign policy as it focuses, coordinates, and directs the various governmental organizations in applying their respective instruments of national power (military, economic, diplomatic, and informational) to meet strategic goals and objectives.

Emerging crises or short-notice events normally generate the second type of guidance. In response to a crisis, the NSC or a special interagency planning group conducts time-sensitive analyses, determines appropriate actions, and issues strategic guidance through approved decision directives. They may also approve proposed courses of action or on-the-shelf contingency plans. These two types of guidance generally constitute the written directives that guide the execution of US national security activities.

Within this system and over time, memoranda and directives assume a predictable form as an administration formulates, coordinates, and publishes strategic guidance for similar activities. Because there are no formalized decision criteria or standard formats for issuing strategic guidance, the thoroughness and quality of that guidance varies substantially from document to document, from crisis to crisis, and from administration to administration.[9] The resultant products reflect a process that lacks both a standardized structure and a set of relevant factors to be considered and communicated before committing US elements of power.[10] What emerges is strategic guidance that tends "to reflect a lowest common denominator of agency positions, or an incoherent compromise of partly or wholly inconsistent views."[11] The guidance is usually so vague that powerful and sometimes recalcitrant bureaucratic agencies are free to pursue their own independent and often conflicting policies.[12] On occasion, this has contributed to disaster as strategies emerge from the interagency process with ill-defined ends, flawed concepts, or insufficient means.[13]

The Executing Agencies

The NSC is the sole agency of the Executive Branch that can issue authoritative directives to all government agencies.[14] The participating government agencies and departments respond to the NSC and, in turn, devise implementing plans and direct their subordinate elements in the execution of their portions of the strategy. Incomplete strategic guidance requires agencies to continually supplement their initial concepts or frequently respond to inquiries

from their field elements. In this manner, effective operations become dependent, in part, upon the internal communications channels of the various agencies controlling and monitoring their subordinate elements outside of Washington. Morton Halperin, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and member of the NSC staff, describes how the process can be utterly ineffective:

> Presidential decisions vary in specificity. They are often conveyed only in policy statements expressing a sentiment or intention. The statements may indicate in general that certain kinds of action should be taken but not say who should take them. Even if they do specify the actor, they seldom indicate when the action should be taken or the details of how it should be done. In fact the instructions are so vague as to leave all the actors free to continue behaving as they have in the past.[15]

Wide differences in agency internal procedures and communications capabilities complicate the dissemination of strategic guidance and the augmentation of that guidance once their subordinate elements are deployed. The Department of Defense, for example, has specific, well-defined internal procedures that address both deliberate planning and the crisis-action process as well as detailed reporting requirements that facilitate control. The department has standardized formats for issuing strategic military guidance to the Commanders in Chief of combatant commands. Conversely, the Department of State, despite having a formal organization and specific message protocols, has no established format for issuing guidance while directing diplomatic strategies in support of the national strategy.[16] Other participating government and nongovernmental agencies may have neither formal organizational structures nor standard communications procedures.[17] Consequently, DOD activities and compliance are much easier to direct and monitor, while other agencies may or may not have adequate lines of authority, communications, or reporting systems.

Carnes Lord, a former NSC staff member, highlights this incongruence: "What has perhaps been most neglected is the impact on national-level decisionmaking of the institutional fragmentation and lack of communication that characterizes the national security bureaucracy outside of Washington."[18] This fragmentation is aggravated by diverse agency cultures, philosophies, goals, organizational mismatches, political agendas, and competing policies that all serve to impede voluntary cooperation. Thus, the synchronization of the multitude of agencies involved in the execution of strategy depends necessarily on initial NSC guidance, the voluntary cooperation of disparate agencies, or active NSC control through fragmented channels. The nature of this system places an even greater reliance on the initial strategic guidance.

The NSC and subordinate agencies combine to create a disjointed system that depends on consensus, informal relationships, and loose interagency coordination. All too frequently, the strategy reflects the process. Comprehensive strategic guidance could offset the seemingly dysfunctional activities of the diverse players in the NSC system. Ideal guidance would ensure that opportunities for enhancing our national security posture would not be missed through a lack of strategic direction or by a requirement to compromise with other agencies all subject to the authority of the NSC. The required unity of effort can be established only by the President; that effort necessarily depends upon adequate and complete strategic guidance. Could a standardized form for disseminating guidance improve the process?

Requirement for a Standard Format

From 1981 through 1983, Carnes Lord was Director of International Communications and Information Policy on the National Security Council Staff. In his words,

> Little systematic analysis seems to have been devoted to the question of the character of presidential decision documents on national security issues and their handling . . . . Generally speaking, there is little evidence of consistency in the occasion, the purpose, the format, or the specificity of NSDDs . . . . It would make sense to consider whether a wider range of documents ought to be available to the President for the dissemination of decisions of different types and levels of specificity and classification, with more rigorously defined formats to improve integration of presidential decisionmaking and facilitate implementation.[19]

Formats have long been used in organizations to facilitate communications.[20] They provide a common framework for the inclusion and transmittal of essential elements of information that apply to similar situations. Although formats do not guarantee quality, they can ensure that guidance is comprehensive and facilitate the communication of task-

oriented information. Through the use of standard formats, composers and recipients know in advance the sequence in which information is to be provided. This allows senders and receivers to simultaneously reason through deductive or, depending on the sequence, inductive thought processes to define both the general situation and their specific task requirements.[21] Standard formats also permit the deliberate sequencing of elements of information relative to their importance.[22] The adoption of a standard format for strategic guidance by the NSC could assist in the formulation of a more complete strategy and improve the comprehension of that strategy by the agencies required to carry out its provisions.[23]

The end of the Cold War has brought about a less dangerous but perhaps more complex world. Major Ralph Peters argues convincingly in his recent article "After the Revolution," that the United States and the military will be increasingly involved in "filthy missions" that will require multi-agency involvement that will routinely exceed the normal doctrinal roles and charters of all involved in the missions. These missions may include operations against transnational criminal, terrorist, fundamentalist, and political organizations that do not conform to standard foreign policy approaches.[24] The National Security Strategy of "Engagement and Enlargement" also has increased the frequency of US involvement in such missions and placed a greater emphasis on the roles of nonmilitary government agencies and nongovernmental agencies. The effective coordination of these agencies in unified, joint, and combined operations across the spectrum of conflict is becoming more frequent and complex. It is also essential to achieving national objectives. This strategic environment portends an even greater need for complete and comprehensive strategic guidance and supports the adoption of a standard format.

The Elements of Strategic Guidance

General Albert C. Wedemeyer, principal author of the Army's strategic plan for World War II, spoke of an approach to strategy that remains appropriate today:

> Strategy properly conceived . . . seemed to me to require a transcendence of the narrowly military perspectives that the term traditionally implied. Strategy required a systematic consideration and use of all the so-called instruments of policy--political, economic, psychological, et cetera, as well as military--in pursuing national objectives. Indeed, the nonmilitary factors deserved unequivocal priority over the military, the latter to be employed only as a last resort.[25]

Strategic guidance should provide elements of information that the appropriate government departments and agencies need if they are to take coordinated action and achieve the desired strategic objectives. These elements become apparent from an analysis of the theoretical requirements for directing strategic action, from the considerations and rationale for engagements outlined in the current National Security Strategy, and from an examination of the military's joint doctrine information requirements.

Theoretical Elements of Strategic Guidance

In theory, a coherent and effective national security strategy would efficiently align and balance the strategic ends, ways, and means in pursuit of our national interests and in consonance with our societal values.[26] The JCS defines national security strategy as:

> the art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military, informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security. It encompasses national defense, foreign relations, and economic relations and assistance; and [it] aims, among other objectives, at providing a favorable foreign relations position, and a defense posture capable of defeating hostile action.[27]

Logically then, guidance should address at the strategic level the ends, ways, and means for carrying out national security strategy. When specifying the ways, strategic guidance should direct and synchronize the activities of the appropriate agencies responsible for employing the diplomatic, economic, military, and informational elements of power.

The selected strategy also should provide the rationale for the policy by explaining the "why" of the strategic concept.

The rationale for strategic engagements frequently allows the executing agencies to anticipate strategic direction by defining and describing the overall intent of the engagement. In this regard, one analyst has pointed out, "Often, it is not that the official is totally uninformed or that he completely misunderstands his orders. Rather, he has no way of grasping the nuances behind decisions, no guidance as to why he is told to do what he has been told to do."[28] Although critical, the "why" is only one part of the full range of information elements. As Wedemeyer observed, generally a strategist must "answer the traditional questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how."[29] Conceptually, these constitute the total elements of a strategic concept. They are inclusive. What remains is to focus these elements as they pertain to strategic engagement.

Strategic Guidance Implications in the National Security Strategy

The February 1995 National Security Strategy directs that US forces will be prepared and deployed "to support US diplomacy in responding to key dangers--those posed by weapons of mass destruction, regional aggression, and threats to the stability of states."[30] The strategy defines the general principles regarding whether, when, and how forces will be employed. More specifically,

- The strategy specifies that decisions to use force are to be related to the degree of importance of the area or crisis to our national interests (vital, important, and humanitarian), and it specifies that a decision to intervene militarily will depend on the appropriateness of the use of armed forces and the degree of risk.
- The strategy calls for weighing the costs and benefits of the use of military force and outlines a series of rhetorical questions that should be answered before committing forces. These questions are designed to:

  address the alternative use of nonmilitary means;

  specify a clearly defined and achievable mission;

  compare the risks and costs of intervention with the resources required to achieve the strategic goals;

  assess the support of the American people and their elected representatives for a military intervention; and

  specify the criteria for success or failure and define an exit strategy.

- The strategy describes the general principles influencing how force will be used and the factors guiding unilateral or multilateral action.[31]

These considerations generally provide the rationale for involvement in an area or crisis and answer certain aspects of *why* a mission is being undertaken and certain aspects of *how* the selected strategy is to achieve the stated goals. Analysis and resolution of ambiguities related to these considerations is essential information for the executing agencies. Although the NSS procedures provide a reasonable foundation for establishing a common format for transmitting presidential guidance and decisions, the information needs of the military's joint doctrine require a greater degree of specificity than that anticipated by the NSC.

Joint Doctrine's Specified Strategic Guidance Requirements

Related to the theoretical and inferred elements of strategic guidance are the requirements outlined in current US military doctrine. The Joint Staff identifies the essential strategic requirements of the National Command Authority in JCS Pub 3-0. These requirements provide valuable insights into what guidance DOD requires to execute national strategy. According to joint doctrine, the National Command Authority should ensure that:

(1) Military objectives to be achieved are defined, understood, and achievable.
(2) Active service forces are ready for combat and Reserve component forces are appropriately mobilized and readied to join active forces.
(3) Intelligence systems and efforts focus on the operational area, including opposing nations and their armed forces.
(4) *Strategic direction is current and timely*.

(5) Defense and other governmental agencies support the [joint force commander's] employment of forces.
(6) The CONUS base and other combatant commands are ready to provide needed support.
(7) Allies and coalition partners are available when appropriate.
(8) Forces and supplies deploy into the operational area in a timely manner to support the [joint force commander's] concept of operation.[32]

These eight essential elements of joint warfighting requirements provide a good starting point for determining what guidance the National Security Council should provide to government departments and agencies. Although many of the elements pertain to other than DOD activities, the above list does not include the requirements of all involved agencies. Additionally, the NSC is not obligated, nor has it felt compelled, to conform to the doctrine of its subordinate Defense Department. Thus, there is a need for a standard format that subsumes the requirements of the Defense Department and other participating agencies and routinely provides adequate and comprehensive guidance.

The foregoing theoretical requirements, combined with strategic engagement principles and military doctrinal needs, provide the basis for establishing a format for strategic guidance. What remains is to determine how best to package the essential elements of information in a format acceptable to the NSC and federal departments and agencies. The format should facilitate the formulation of comprehensive strategic guidance for interagency coordination of crisis response or long-range planning activities.

Proposed Format for Strategic Guidance

It is beyond the scope of this article to provide an inclusive format that could apply to all government and nongovernmental organizations for every crisis or engagement. Not every decision directive must address in detail all eight elements of the format proposed below, but none of the eight categories should be ignored in providing strategic guidance. The nature of the engagement, the amount of time for analysis, and the degree of prior planning may alter significantly the amount of detail required in guidance or directives. The description that follows does provide, however, representative types of the information required. Therefore, the types of information described in the following paragraphs should be provided in the preparation phase of an engagement or as soon as possible after an engagement has begun.

1. Strategic Context. At a minimum, this section should explain why an engagement is being considered. It should highlight the event, opportunity, or problem that led to the strategic action and why it is sufficiently important for the United States to be engaged. It should contain an assessment that provides an overview of the entire strategic situation while addressing the major influences on US alternatives. Content of this section could include US national interests and values at stake, the nature and intensity of the threat, conflicting or competing national interests in other regions, and an overview of the expected responses of other major actors who may have significant interests in the region or crisis.

2. Engagement Objectives. This section would address primarily what the engagement is to accomplish. It would specify the selected strategic objectives and should logically follow from the strategic context discussion. It also should portray a clear cause-and-effect relationship between the objectives selected and the underlying rationale for engagement. For example, an objective presented as an "end state" condition would describe the social, political, economic, military, and geographical status of the nations to be affected by the engagement. If applicable, this section could include a hierarchical set of end states reflecting optimal to satisfactory completion conditions and an assessment of their corresponding risks. Desired or proposed end states should resolve the problems or realize the opportunities defined in the section on Strategic Context.

3. Engagement Concept. This section would address when, where, and how the engagement is to occur and outline the concept for achieving the specified objectives. It would record the NSC's concept of how the prescribed objectives are to be attained. This concept should synchronize all agencies in time and space, coordinating their efforts, sequencing phases, and establishing priorities. When appropriate, a subparagraph for each agency, describing its assigned tasks or its unique role in achieving the overall strategic objectives, should be included. This section might also include detailed instructions to the participating departments and agencies. For example, it might address to the military such issues as mobilization, increased readiness, and pre-hostility force deployments; it might address to intelligence

agencies a discussion of space-based intelligence systems, in-country human intelligence sources, and area and opposing force analyses; for the Department of State it might address solidifying the support of allies and coalition partners, securing basing or overflight rights, or assessing the positions of other foreign nations. The foregoing are only representative of the range and variety of information required when developing the concept for interagency responses to presidential guidance or directive.

4. Marshalling and Sustaining the National Will. This section would focus on the domestic political environment. It should outline the concept for gaining and maintaining public support for the strategy. This portion could assign supporting public affairs tasks to governmental agencies consistent with the strategic concept. It also could indicate those aspects of the engagement that are not releasable to the public and establish the time or event that would trigger release of certain specified information. Finally, this section should assess the anticipated public response to likely or expected incidents associated with the execution of the strategic concept.

5. Command and Control and Organizational Hierarchy. This section would establish unity of effort for interagency planning and support at the national and international levels. It would establish lines of authority, responsibility, and reporting. It would designate the lead agency for the various phases of the strategic concept and the event or time that determines when responsibility as lead agency transfers.

6. Constraints and Special Authorizations. This section could specify any limitations on normal agency prerogatives and provide the rationale for their imposition. The rationale should explain in terms of cause and effect the relationship of the prevented activity to the predicted undesirable outcome. It also should define operations that are precluded and specify the fundamentals for establishing rules of engagement. This portion of the guidance would establish any special authority required by a department, agency, or individual diplomat and would specify authority for targeting the opposing nation's national command authority, country infrastructure, or other special targets as appropriate. Finally, it would specify those activities for which planning and coordination have been delegated and others for which decision authority would be withheld at the NSC level.

7. Strategy Review Criteria. This section would establish specific and tangible criteria that would initiate a reassessment of the strategic engagement. It would set timelines and milestones for such a review, possibly indicating degrees of success or failure. This part also would specify measures of effectiveness to be used in monitoring and assessing the performance of the participating agencies. Finally, it would articulate exit criteria short of mission accomplishment in terms of the overall cost, declining public support, competing national interests, or possible emerging alternative threats to the national security.

8. Strategic Contingency Options. This section would address branches and sequels for the central strategic concept. Branches are activities or phases that pose a high risk or have a high degree of uncertainty that can be expected and planned for. They outline alternative strategies that might be pursued based upon changed circumstances. Sequels are potential follow-on strategies that take into account the possibilities of success, failure, or disengagement without a decision. Branches and sequels are necessarily related to the strategy review criteria. At a minimum, this section would provide the exit strategy for the engagement.

The above format was used during a Strategic Crises Exercise conducted at the Army War College in March 1995. It proved to be remarkably flexible and effective in use during the 10-day computer-based exercise. War College students who used the format expanded the specific elements listed here and focused the exercise guidance to address a broad range of world crises. The scenario of the exercise included two near-simultaneous major regional contingencies in North Africa and the Middle East, civil war in southern Africa, commerce raiding in the South Pacific, international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in Latin America, and peacekeeping and peacemaking operations in Eastern Europe. The format proved adaptable and facilitated the formulation and communication of strategic guidance for each of the various contingencies throughout the exercise.[33]

Conclusions

As the United States breaks new ground in "filthy missions" in support of a ubiquitous global strategy of engagement and enlargement, the clarity of our purpose, the unity of our effort, and the effective employment of our scarce resources will become paramount concerns of senior leaders. Effective strategic guidance is the sine qua non of

workable foreign and defense policies. The consequences of failure at the strategic level are severe; Field Marshal Keitel pointed out at the Nuremberg trials that "a mistake in strategy can only be made good in the next war."[34]

The current ad hoc system of formulating strategic guidance is clearly not conducive to producing strategies appropriate to our foreign policy initiatives or responses to crises. American history is replete with tragic examples: Korea, the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, Beirut, Somalia. If we are to limit future strategic blunders, we need to rethink how we formulate, disseminate, and monitor the execution of national military strategy. Policymakers who place Americans in peril without a clear understanding of the strategic objectives--or what is necessary to attain those objectives--risk increasing the list of foreign policy failures. Lives will be sacrificed and too-soon forgotten as the institutional memory becomes absorbed either in the glory that envelops success or in the partisan political analyses of a failure.

Standardizing the format for preparing and communicating strategic guidance will not guarantee success. What it can do is provide a reasonably complete framework to help national leaders consider all relevant aspects of a proposed strategic engagement. Such a format also will facilitate the communication of those strategies to the agencies that must carry them out. Whether this format or an alternative is adopted, the policymaking apparatus must continue to refine its strategic planning system. When the United States acts, it should do so with clarity of purpose and unity of effort. Our country and its armed services deserve no less.

NOTES

1. Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, in the series *United States Army in World War II, The European Theater of Operations* (Washington: US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1951), p. 457.

2. Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., and Jacquelyn K. Davis, *National Security Decisions, The Participants Speak* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath/Lexington, 1990), p. 12.

3. Joint Publication 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)* (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J-7, 11 August 1994), p. I-3.

4. The National Security Act of 1947, P.L. 253, 26 July 1947 and amendments of 1949, 1953, 1958 (Washington: GPO). The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of the CIA are formally designated as advisors. The "NSC system" also encompasses interagency working group activities as specified in the agency operating procedures and relevant presidential directives specifying policy formulation.

5. A detailed description of the NSC system and the variance between the Carter and Reagan Administrations is covered in detail in Christopher C. Shoemaker's *The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions*, Association of the United States Army, *The Land Warfare Papers*, No. 3 (Arlington, Va.: AUSA, Institute of Land Warfare, December 1989).

6. See Jimmy Carter, *Presidential Directive/NSC-2, The National Security Council System* (Washington: The White House, 1977); Ronald Reagan, *National Security Decision Directive Number 2: National Security Council Structure* (Washington: The White House, 1982); and William J. Clinton, *Presidential Decision Directive/PDD 2, Organization of the National Security Council* (Washington: The White House, 20 January 1993), hereinafter *PDD #2*.

7. The framework of the current NSC system is outlined in *PDD #2*, p. 3.

8. Carnes Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), pp. 94-102. Lord proposes six types of strategic planning: strategic intelligence, net assessment, long-term planning, short-term planning, resource allocation, and crisis planning. Of these, only long-term, short-term, and crisis planning result in directives that are relevant to this analysis. Additionally, the differences in short-term and crisis strategic decision guidance requirements are not significant enough to warrant separate treatment.

9. The author attempted to obtain several decision directives for the most recent major strategic crises to analyze and empirically derive the required elements of strategic guidance and operative formats; however, the actual directives are

classified and compartmentalized and could not be released. An official who has served in the NSC Records Branch since the beginning of Nixon's Administration was contacted by phone and provided the stated assessment. Phone interview with NSC records official, Topic: Formats for Decision Directives and Staff Procedures for the NSC, National Security Council Records and Access Branch, Old Executive Office Building, 17th and Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C., 18 October 1994.

10. Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics & Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1974), pp. 235-38. See also Lord, pp. 156-58.

11. Lord, p. 31.

12. Ibid. See also I. M. Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 158-60; and Halperin, p. 235.

13. A discussion of the effects of concurrence-seeking on defective policymaking at the NSC level and the corresponding foreign policy failures can be found in Glenn P. Hastedt, *American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, Future* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1991), p. 168.

14. Draft Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (First Draft) (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J-7, 31 January 1995), p. II-3.

15. Halperin, p. 235.

16. Interview with Marc A. Baas, Deputy Commandant for International Affairs, USAWC, Topic: Procedures and Message/Cable Formats for Internal State Department Communications to Ambassadors, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 21 October 1994. See also Halperin, pp. 239-41; and Lord, pp. 158-59.

17. Draft Joint Pub 3-08, pp. I-3, I-10, III-8.

18. Lord, p. 158.

19. Ibid., p. 157.

20. For a history of the development of the Army standard operations order format, see Edward J. Filiberti, "The Standard Operations Order Format: Is Its Current Form and Content Sufficient for Command and Control," monograph for the School of Advanced Military Studies, Ft. Leavenworth, Kans.: US Command and General Staff College, 4 December 1987.

21. For a discussion of categorizing information during cognition see H. A. Simon, "Information Processing Theory of Human Problem Solving," in W. K. Estes, ed., *Cognition and Social Behavior* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1978), p. 275.

22. Generally information that is ordered first in sequence is considered by receivers as being of higher importance and is more readily remembered. See J. R. Hayes, D. A. Waterman, and C. A. Robinson, "Identifying Relevant Aspects of a Problem Text," *Cognitive Science* (1977), pp. 297-313, as cited in John W. Payne, "Information Processing Theory: Some Concepts and Methods Applied to Decision Research," in *Cognitive Processes in Choice and Decision Behavior*, ed. Thomas S. Wallsten (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1980), p. 95.

23. Robert E. Hunter, *Organizing for National Security*, in the *Significant Issues Series*, Vol. 10, No. 11 (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988), pp. 11, 42.

24. Ralph Peters, "After the Revolution," *Parameters*, 25 (Summer 1995), 12-14.

25. Cited in Charles E. Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present, Writing the Victory Plan of 1941* (Washington: US Army, Center of Military History, 1990), p. 18, as quoted from Keith E. Eiler, "The Man Who

Planned Victory: An Interview with Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer," *American Heritage*, 34 (No. 6, 1983), 38.

26. Former Army Chief of Staff General Maxwell D. Taylor defined strategy as "consisting of objectives, ways, and means." Cited in Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., *Military Strategy: Theory and Application* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 1993), p .3.

27. Joint Pub 0-2, p. I-3.

28. Halperin, p. 240. See also Destler, p. 198.

29. Wedemeyer as quoted by Kirkpatrick, p. 60.

30. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (Washington: The White House, February 1995), p. 12.

31. Ibid, pp. 12-13.

32. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington: DOD, Joint Doctrine Division, J7, 9 September 1993), p. I-9. Emphasis added.

33. Exercise brief-back, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 24 March 1995.

34. Brian I. Fugate, *Operation Barbarossa* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1984), p. 59, as quoted by John F. Meehan III, "The Operational Trilogy," *Parameters*, 16 (Autumn 1986), p. 14.

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