

# UNITED STATES

## POST-COLD WAR DEFENCE INTERESTS

### A Review of the First Decade



EDITED BY **KARL P. MAGYAR**



# United States Post-Cold War Defence Interests

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# Preface

Despite the seemingly total failure to predict the rapid and decisive collapse of the Soviet Union, and the uncontested departure of her Eastern European allies with whom she had formed the Warsaw Pact, media and academic experts rapidly championed the history of those events, as well as the termination of the Cold War. This entire development was a prominent example of difficulties encountered in perennial attempts to predict social phenomena, and failing that, to authoritatively explain what happened after the fact. At issue is more than merely redefining revolution, change, and control. Our policy makers, a wide range of professional operations analysts, and academic researchers need to address more than only current historical events and studies stressing quantification-structured methodologies. Regarding the Cold War, analysts had offered little predictive utility to the policy makers. Understanding social matters can profit from a philosophical approach. It must ask the most basic question: "What can we know?"

Why did the Soviet Union collapse? For that matter, why did the Soviets fight in Afghanistan? Why did Premier Nikita Khrushchev attempt to place nuclear weapons and missiles in Cuba? To questions of this nature, we are quite used to receiving a long list of conflicting explanations, theories, and often insider accounts – among which there is very little agreement regarding even the basic essentials. History revisionists recognize that there exist clashing views of micro and macro socio-cultural perceptions and assumptions regarding the political relationship between individuals and society. Today, a worldwide public debate asks if there exists a core of beliefs and values common to all societies, or are social and individual values culture-specific? Do all societies accept universal social phenomena (concepts such as "Human Rights", "Democracy", and "Freedom"), but differ in their respective interpretations in specific content? (For example, China considers full employment to be a basic human right.) Although analysts of war have counseled the need to know the enemy, and while astute observers since the time of Sun Tzu have also advised the need to know oneself, very few of these analysts have elaborated the concept to identify precisely what it is that we are to know.

What can we know? What can be known? Can I know how well the enemy knows me? That I correctly know the enemy? And can the enemy know that indeed, I know myself far more than he knows himself? In war, the uncertainty of the answers to these questions shapes the evolution of the war and determines the course to victory or defeat; survival, or death. Military planners must appreciate that there are severe limits to our knowledge of man's social condition. Whether the entire army, or only the individual soldier, all must realize that to obtain only quantified intelligence of the enemy, will omit the most vital information about him, that, if uncovered, will ensure a more certain victory on the battlefield. The Japanese had not understood the long-term counter offensive capabilities of their enemy when they mistakenly attacked the U.S. at Pearl Harbor. They fatally mis-assessed America's industrial strength and social resolve. Culturally closed societies (such as that of the Japanese, Enver Hoxha's Albania, and Iran under the Ayatollahs) have historically misjudged their relative power position. North Korea is a current example as well.

This existential, unpredictable context of war suggests that the current adoration of the concept of "information warfare" addresses precisely this lack of real-time battlefield knowledge. However, computing systems on the battlefield can dispense information only about physical or quantifiable factors, which, alone does not suffice for attaining strategic supremacy. Few troops in the field under an enemy attack would accept a computer-originated, vital decision or recommendation on battlefield tactics. Wars, in fact, are shaped by subjective socio-political forces that diminish computer relevance. Information in war is a force enhancer but not an independent force. All wars throughout history utilized information, and intelligence has always been vital. Technically, we have only improved accumulation and processing of information – but that type of information that is offered by this technology remains inherently limited to mostly physical components of war.

Elaborating analytic methodologies, however, can only be briefly acknowledged in the introductory chapter. Three themes are presented as central analytic points. The first theme emphasizes that what we do not know when embarking on, or in the midst of war, is at least as important as that which can be quantified or empirically verified. How passionate or irrational is the enemy? How motivated are his troops? What is their perception of the cause of the war? Their conception of a "Just War"? Do enemy soldiers respect their own war-fighting conflict culture? How well did the U.S. understand its enemy in Vietnam? In

that war, the U.S. had several thousand verifiable nuclear weapons available (out of theater) but we did not use them. Can the reasons for not using nuclear weapons be definitively explained? By deduction, numbers alone record that over 50,000 U.S. military personnel died in battle – perhaps in part because we did not utilize nuclear weapons for whatever reasons. Wars break out because there are great limits to our knowledge about the opponent's intentions, perceptions, values and power. Perhaps we are only slightly less ignorant about our own perceptual context. Hypothetically, if all factors of war were expressed only in terms of numerical power tabulations, (such as numbers of tanks, planes, troops, GNP, etc.) then, among adversaries, the comparative measure of power could be objectively determined before the war started and fighting the war would not be necessary. In actuality, only the military termination of a war reveals which side had the greater power at the outset. Similarly, we ought to be reluctant to declare victory in a war at its battlefield termination. Meaningful victory may more precisely be established some 10 or more years after the battles are over, as that qualification will more realistically reveal if the victor attained supremacy, not on the battlefield, but did he gain his original political objectives for change? Battlefield victory only starts the process of change – but the post-war phase introduces the constraints of new historical forces on the consolidation of authority. The wars against Iraq are an excellent example of this. The dialectical response is already in formation.

The second theme concerns the importance of elevating the concept of “timeframe”. Victory in war is ephemeral. Objectives pursued by war may dictate one strategy for an immediate, short-term gain, but a long-term desired effect may require a considerably different strategy for acquiring the objective. Precisely when does a war end? This question is especially relevant for wars in the Third World – most of which tend towards prolongation. A representative example is offered of America's short-term objective to facilitate United Nations programs to feed and inoculate the young children in Somalia starting in 1991. However, in the absence of a massive, long-range international effort to address the underlying causes of Somalia's political collapse, the short-term action, namely, the disbursement of medicines and food, ensured that in the long-term there will be more surviving, but frustrated youths who will be available to increase the ranks of the active, anarchic agitators. Do we have answers to these dilemmas?

The third theme elaborates a theory of “Historical Forces”. Herein it is postulated that widely held popular assumptions identify great



powers as being particularly aggressive and who order, design and establish the world's power hierarchy and systemic rules of conduct according to their own opportunistic and self-aggrandizing interests. However, the realities do not support this contention in that the creative opportunities of all societies, weak or strong, encounter the disruptive power of Historical Forces, which greatly restrict initiatives and options among alternative policies, and systemically compromise, in dialectical fashion, policies – once implemented. In war we set out on a well-planned projected linear path, but are soon deflected by exogenous opposing historical forces that often bear consequences worse than the original issues. Did Versailles create Adolf Hitler? Did Hitler give rise to the aggressive Soviet Union? Did an aggressive Soviet Union engender NATO, which in turn fathered the Warsaw Pact? Just what led to the proliferation of nuclear weapons? And what response might the U.S. expect should a pre-mature Star Wars defense system be erected?

The current U.S. defense budget comprises about 45 per cent of the world's total, and no one is in a position to realistically threaten the U.S. in any but a terrorist capacity. Besides the clamor for a Star Wars defensive system, other very advanced weapons systems underway or under consideration including the F-22, JSF (Joint Strike Fighter,) DD-21 (new class destroyer,) F-18 (Super Hornet) the V-22 (Osprey,) and an airborne laser weapon capability. All these initiatives will be challenged by as yet unknown Historical Forces, which cannot be ignored by our strategic planners. This raises a question: have we examined if terrorist tactics is the dialectical response to America's unsurpassable conventional and nuclear offensive capabilities? Will Star Wars fuel world-wide terrorist strategic escalation? And, who will feel compelled to oppose these strategic advances by these new weapons systems?

The contributors to this collection of essays were tasked to investigating several major areas of evident military and public concern regarding the changes in various strategic sectors during the first decade of the post-Cold War era. Who won the Cold War and what has been generated by the victory? Are we now more secure? Just what has changed in the way the military performs its present-day mission? Have technology advances been incorporated meaningfully in our current weapons arsenal? Have we improved our strategic information collection and analytic ability?

The first section of the book offers an introduction to the critical dimension of the concept of change. Its objective is to inform the mili-

tary and political planners that our knowledge of the consequences of introducing major policy changes is very greatly restricted. We may be confident in our analytic abilities but we must also respect the enemy's and our own ignorance. These three themes introduced above comprise the analytic base of the introductory chapter.

The second section offers a range of topics that touch on some of the more prominent developments in the realm of international relations. No effort was made to be comprehensive in global coverage as this alone would occupy a huge volume. Some major extant international institutions are briefly examined in order to offer at least an operational context in which the technical changes are taking place. Social currents and changing value systems are more influential on policy formulation than a mere review of only comparative, quantifiable data such as force or weapons numbers.

The third section considers the depths of the changes taking place in the maintenance of the national military forces during the transition period. Weapons systems, changes in types of warfare, personnel issues and defense budgets, force structures and doctrines, air power's evolution, and the state of war industries are reviewed by experts, most of whom have, or have had active, advanced U.S. Air Force military careers as officers. The final section is not a summary but a listing of some of the likely subjects of change to be encountered by U.S. defense forces in the future.

It is important to emphasize that the contributors to this book are writing in their own personal capacities and do not represent the official views of any national military or political agencies of the U.S. Government, nor that of any foreign government. This book forms no part of any policy-making effort or of a military facility classroom curriculum. We, in the civilian realm, are fortunate in our opportunities to compare notes with so many highly informed military professionals who are allowed to express their perspectives outside of their official responsibilities.

As Editor, I express my gratitude to the Associate Editors Lt. Col. Bradley S. Davis, Professor Charles T. Kamps and Major Vicki Rast (Ph.D.) for their essential responsibilities and division of labor. I also valued my association with my colleagues, the well-informed and able chapter writers. They provided substantial insight and expertise, and distilled much information into readable text from which all may profit. We certainly did not agree on all aspects of "change" as an applied concept, but their own individual conceptions were encouraged, and in the spirit of academic freedom, allowed to prevail. I thank them all.

The titles of military and civilian analysts are listed mostly as of the day of submission of their final drafts. Several have been promoted or assumed new assignments. My communications with some authors was greatly impeded by the events of "9/11" when the Pentagon became a target and took a direct hit by one of the four unfortunate hijacked airplanes. This was followed by the anthrax affair which further impeded normal communications with those reassigned to the Pentagon. I also wish to thank Major Gary Ang of the Singapore Air Force who offers an interesting perspective of a very sensitive region. He too writes in his own, personal capacity and not that of any government agency of the Republic of Singapore.

Finally, the transformation of our ideas into a book was expertly accomplished by the patient folks at Palgrave Macmillan, U.K. Special "Thank Yous" are extended very gratefully to Ms. Alison Howson, Ms. Kerry Coutts and Ms. Shirley Tan, my main editorial contacts. And at this side of the pond, Ms. Yuna Braswell, the friendliest face at A/U-ACSC at Maxwell Air Force Base, was a pleasure to work with. I am grateful to her.

Karl P. Magyar

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# **Part I**

## **Introduction**



# 1

## History After the End of History

*Karl P. Magyar*

"History, like a Stoic God,  
leads the Wise Man, but drags the Fool".

– Georg Hegel

### **War as contested change**

The evaporation of the Cold War has left us with a plethora of analytic literature that examines the emerging but altered international strategic environment, political realignments, ideological rethinking, technological advances, and a new interest by the public in the culture of war. Perhaps the most emphatic alteration of the strategic environment has been the shift in the security paradigm from traditionally conventional wars and nuclear capabilities to the spate of highly visible terrorist activities. Terrorism allegedly threatens the socio-technologically developed states with new conceptions of force application in pursuit of highly ambitious, but also, ambiguous political objectives.

War is all about contested change. Traditionally, wars represented closely Carl von Clausewitz's portrayal of war as a duel – on a larger scale. War had concerned contrasting perspectives of a common political interest of two competitive, officially established, authoritative state entities. Each side enhanced its power by the acquisition of allies and incorporation of the latest technologies in weapons design and procurement. At its apogee, this paradigm culminated in both World Wars, genocide, and the use of two atomic bombs. Thereafter a hierarchy of globe-wide powers competed at building formidable nuclear arsenals that probably were responsible for deterring the outbreak of World War III.



In the days of the Cold War one of the most prominent security changes had witnessed the erratic development paths of the disparate Third World states, as well as the ideological attractions and limitations of Third World socialism. Whether fighting for independence from the colonial powers, or contesting for domestic ruling authority in their fledgling, newly-liberated states, most wars in the last half century have been Third World civil wars whose outcomes were largely determined by external interventionists. In most of the conflicts neighboring states or distant Great Powers soon aligned themselves with one or the other side. The Third World became surrogate battlefields and supplied the sacrificial political victims for Great Power interests. The 1940s and the 1950s were especially years of guerrilla warfare that drew their inspiration from Maoist China's Great War. Although the major insurgencies have today been resolved, they have not been completely eliminated in locations such as Colombia, Peru, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

With the numbers of large insurgencies having declined, the next conflict form to emerge as a challenge to international peace and security is the widely reported terrorist offensives.<sup>1</sup> In our modern age, terrorism exploits the inherent weaknesses of democracy with its political power dispersal, social segmentation, and the stress on individualism that allows the emergence of active opposition to governmental institutions and to pursue alternative structures. In a sense, terrorists preach revolution, but their agendas approximate anarchism.

The term "terrorism" is greatly abused and has recently been portrayed the major aggressive threat to the security of the U.S. and other industrially-developed states. It is a mistake to rank the terrorism we have encountered to date, as an integral entry of a hierarchy of conflict levels. Foremost, terrorism as we know it today is usually perpetrated by non-state actors with competing political agendas. They may form a complex fraternal network of alliances with sympathetic regimes but these are only temporary commitments. Regarding the wars against Iraq, in view of some of the aspiring Islamic fundamentalist agendas for the region, Iraq, Israel and the U.S. by deduction, could have made a common alliance against those Islamic Fundamentalists who seek the ouster of all monarchist and secular republican regimes. Those with secular regimes and remaining monarchies comprise most of our allies in the Middle East. In effect, the U.S. served Al-Qaeda's needs by eliminating Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. He had posed one of the biggest obstacles to Islamists as well as to the existing terrorist cells and units resident in the region.