



CURRENT STRATEGIC THINKING AND MILITARY THEORY
IN THE U. S. AND WESTERN EUROPE

Professor William Emerson

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Reviewed by Col. R. W. Bergamyer, USAF on 15 October 1963

**INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES
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and
Military Theory in the U.S. and Western Europe

23 September 1963

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION -- Dr. Charles E. Barrett, Member of the Faculty, ICAF	1
SPEAKER -- Professor William Emerson, Visiting Professor of Maritime History at the U. S. Naval War College	1
GENERAL DISCUSSION	21

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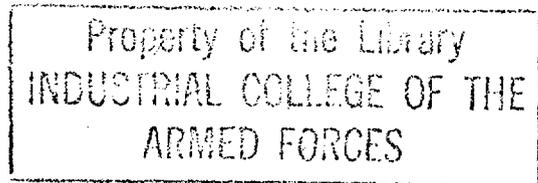
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DR. BARRETT: Our topic for this second in our series of three lectures on modern warfare and strategy is, "Current Strategic Thinking and Military Theory in the U. S. and Western Europe."

We're fortunate in having as our speaker, Dr. William Emerson, Assistant Professor of History at Yale University, and during the current year, visiting Professor of Military History, at the Naval War College.

Dr. Emerson.

DR. EMERSON: Thank you, Mr. Barrett. It's a pleasure to be here at the Industrial College. This is my first visit here. I've been to Fort McNair many times because the Office of the Chief of Military History is just across the wall here, and I've spent some time over there in various capacities from time to time.

It is a well-known American syndrome that professional men during their years of activity give a lot of thought to what they're going to do when they retire. Metropolitan newspaper men, notoriously oppressed by the thrust and press of their daily rounds, like to think in terms of retiring to run a rural county weekly, and chronicle local miscarriages - thefts of chicken coops, and automobile accidents on the highways and by-ways. I don't know about military men, what plans they harbor. Perhaps bomber pilots think in terms of retiring to Fort Sam Houston and opening up bowling alleys. Infantrymen think in terms of running foot-care clinics, etc., etc. But, as a professor, I well know what my retirement objective is; it's to open up a lecture bureau which has the purpose of assigning lectures for other people to give, preferably one's friends, and preferably rather stupefying sub-

jects.

Current strategic thinking and military thinking in the United States and Western Europe, all to be done in 45 minutes; I didn't know it was 45 minutes until just five minutes ago, so if you notice a certain flurry at the end of the lecture it means that I am dropping out an additional 15 minutes in passage. At any rate, whatever the care and labor in doing so, it's always a pleasure to draw up a lecture on a sufficiently ample subject like this one. As used to be said in my undergraduate days of the Stork Club in New York, "At any rate, it keeps the kiddies off the streets."

Now, when the military historian - ~~am~~ a military historian - looks at recent military theorizing; and by recent, I mean in this century, it is hard not to note in this theorizing a certain shrillness of tone and a certain instability of purpose. If one casts one's mind back to the early 19th Century military thinkers, the classic philosophers of war, among whom, I suppose, Clausewitz and Yomany (phonetic) would take first rank, this impression gains force. To take merely Clausewitz himself, whose work is less regarded nowadays than perhaps it should be. One encounters here an orderly and an ordered, though by no means simple view of war.

He was dealing, like the men of his age, with the armies primarily, but the same was true of naval theorists, whose structure, purposes and capabilities were well-established, well-known and within wide limits, perfectly calculable. Perhaps more important than that, Clausewitz and his peers were dealing with states - political units - whose structure, whose concern and whose objectives, if you please, were equally calculable and were equally well-known. Moreover, this runs through every page of his writings. He was dealing, as were the states with which he dealt, with a political and military system in which each state had a role to play proportionate to its power and its position, and the operations of which sys-

tem were fairly well established and fairly calculable.

As a result, there is in classic military thinking and theorizing a sense of the limits of the thing, the outside limits beyond which neither the individual units nor the system itself can venture. And, in case of a conflict of interests between two member states it was assumed, and it was always the case, that coalitions could be put together - perhaps out of rather disparate members of the system - to restrain any single powerful overruling member of the system. This, of course, was the history of European diplomacy aimed against Spain and Austria in the 30 Years War. It was the history of European diplomacy aimed against France in the great wars of Louis XIV, and later of the Napoleonic Period. And later it was the military history of Europe as it was aimed against Prussia and England in the intermediate wars.

The fact is, I think, that we can say that before about 1870, or 1880 anyway, the principal aim of the modern state as we knew it up to that point, was a fairly simple one. This was military security. It had other purposes, but these purposes were neither so far-reaching nor so complicated as was this single one. These states were power units. Their (resonnette?) was power. It was not for nothing that Louis XIV had etched on the barrels of his royal cannon his royal arms and the Latin slogan, "Utema Rasio Regum," the king's last argument.

Now, by comparison, recent strategic thinking, in this century, say, has, I think it is not unfair to say, been characterized by a lack of balance, a tendency to swing back and forth from one extreme to another, and, as I mentioned before, a certain shrillness of tone. Now, no doubt this is partly attributable to technological causes which have been weighty in their effects; and the countless weapons changes that have occurred in series and in an accelerating way since 1914, have certainly contributed to the dismantlement of military theory.

It was said by a British military historian, Sir John Fortesque, that the Duke of Marlboro, if he had been reincarnated 100 years after his death and given command of the Duke of Wellington's Army in the Peninsula, he could have commanded that Army with hardly the necessity for an interim briefing; he could have just stepped into Wellington's command post and taken over, so slight had been the technical changes intervening. This, of course, compares most strikingly with the present situation where weapons systems are hardly put into the field before they become obsolete or obsolescent and ultimately obsolete.

But despite this, I think that we can say the main characteristics of contemporary strategic thinking were evident before technological change began to make itself felt on European war with its greatest weight; that is, after about 1914. For instance, I think if one looks at Prussian German strategic thought in the last quarter of the last century, after their great victory over France, one begins to detect this divergence from the classic precepts of strategy and a wandering into uncharted by-ways and by-paths. I'm thinking particularly of the Prussian writers, Von der Goltz and Bernardi, both of them serving officers, and most notably, perhaps, of the great Chief of General Staff, Count Schlieffen himself, whose military thinking was unbalanced, and whose military planning was disastrous for Germany, committing them to a war far beyond German capabilities of winning in 1914, on a complete misapprehension of the political and military situation.

What begins to happen after about 1870 or 1875 is a tendency towards a divorce-ment of strategic planning from basic political concerns. And with that divorce-ment a tendency for strategic planners to utilize, or rather, to carry out in default of political action, basic political rights; to usurp, so to speak, the powers of the state itself. Now, the reasons they did this are rather complicated. I don't have time to go into them now; I would entertain questions on the matter if

you choose afterwards; but suffice it to say that in all the combatant countries before World War I, one had this divorcement between the statesmen and the soldiers. And this was as much the fault of the statesmen themselves as it was the soldiers. In many ways the soldiers simply stepped into a vacuum. Perhaps this reached its most extraordinary point in a statement made by the German Quartermaster General, General Ludendorf, in one of his essays written after the First World War, in which he specifically repudiated the Clausewitzian premise that war is a continuation of policy by other means. In fact, he reversed it and said, "In the struggle for life which assails every nation, policy, properly speaking, is a continuation of a never-ending war between states," a complete reversal of the Clausewitzian formulation.

Now, the reasons why this should have happened are, I think, worthy of some consideration, although they may seem far afield of my subject today. In my view they are, or should be, of central concern to modern military planners. Because, these facts arise, I think, not primarily out of military considerations, but out of philosophical or political considerations - specifically out of the nature and character of the modern state. For the fact is - and it requires very little reflection - that the range of concerns of the modern or contemporary state far outreach the rather narrow and limited interests characteristic of the older states with which the classic military theorists dealt. Not only is military security a concern, but the domestic improvement both socially, educationally and politically, of one's citizens is a concern of equal or perhaps even greater weight.

And, from the point of view of setting policy goals, at the same time that the state has broadened its concern, its own structure has become increasingly characterized by what we might call "pluralism," in the sense that authority is not so clearly located as was the case in the older states with which Clausewitz had to deal. This is as true, I think, of totalitarian states if they're compared

with the older form of states, as it is of democratic states. Such states cannot have alternate authority vested or centralized narrowly at the top. Rather, this authority is spread and littered throughout their structure, and it is shared very widely by various groups and classes of people; often groups and classes which have very little in common with each other and very little contact with each other.

To put it in a word, we're dealing, now, with nations and not with states; or, at the very least, with nation-states, where authority is decentralized rather than centralized. You may remember that at one crucial point in his political career Mr. Franklin Roosevelt, when the issue was put to him of who should be Vice President, in a famous phrase said, "Clear it with Sidney," Sidney being Sidney Hillman the head of the CIO. Suffice it to say that it is very hard to think of Friedrich the Great, or Napoleon, or even George III, clearing it with Sidney, or, indeed, clearing it with anybody.

Now, the implications of this for military men, I think, are fairly obvious. I suppose all soldiers will agree that military forces are the servant of the state, and that they should be designed and employed to carry out the interests of the state. This is the theory of the thing. It's clear cut and widely accepted. But the fact is, that since these broad-reaching changes that I've mentioned, all tending towards the popularization of the state, dating from the latter part of the last century, it has become increasingly difficult to define for military or other purposes, the interests of the state. Because, there is, in fact, so little agreement in the modern state with its complicated and pluralistic structure, about what its purposes are.

Louis XIV could engrave on his cannon the slogan the slogan *Ut arma Ratio Regum*. If we engrave things on the cannon barrels of the modern state it might be more apt to say, "Quo Vadis," or, "What the hell goes on here?"

Now, since 1945 - and I'll return to something I mentioned earlier - changes in weapons technology have greatly exacerbated this tendency that I've already mentioned. In fact, this is, I think, reflected in the scope, as it's called, of this lecture as it was laid down on high by the curriculum board here and sent to me. The scope was to analyze the principal concepts of military strategy and related theory in the United States and Western Europe, which, in my view, is getting the cart before the horse. Theory comes before strategy, but here we have an inversion. In a way I was reminded here of a complaint that a Hungarian Communist deep thinker or theologian made back in 1953. Looking over the situation there he observed, "Facts have out-run theory," which is about the worst admission that a communist could make.

But, truth to tell, military planners here, and in Europe, since 1945 have, in the old World War II phrase, "really been living off the cables." This is perhaps an exaggeration, or it is partly exaggerated. But I think if we look back over the planning history of the last 15 years we will see military planners and commanders constructing, shall we say, expedients under tremendous pressures, to cope with threatening situations which appear to be getting out of hand; or, situations which were getting out of hand and which appeared to be threatening, but not always were. At the same time, here and in lesser degree in Europe too, military planners have been attempting to fit new weapons, weapons of tremendous power and unmeasured effect, into tactical and organizational structures which have proved very resistant to change in this, or in any other way.

Perhaps the best example of this is the domestic history of the United States infantry divisions since 1945. I haven't followed every change in its structure; I tried to for awhile but gave up because new infantry divisions succeeded old infantry divisions almost simultaneously with newer-styled infantry divisions suc-

ceeding the new ones, and I understand we have what is called a "road infantry division" now. They're putting this on the road, which represents, if I'm not mistaken, the fifth or sixth attempt to give form and structure to this basic fighting unit. This experience could be repeated in the history of the other two services as well. And all this, as I said before, against a political background, the aftermath of the great destruction and dislocation brought by those two convulsions which we call the "First" and "Second World Wars," which has left the political landscape rather littered and confusing.

Above all, military planners and statesmen as well, have been animated during this period by the conviction that they were dealing with new and absolutely unique forms of politics and of war, for which no precedent existed, for which history had very little to teach; a frame of mind, in a word, which is conducive both to excess and, at times, to something like despair.

By way of summing up, then, military planning in the last 15 years has been carried on against both a short-range and a long-range background of rapid change, of considerable confusion both of purpose and of procedures militarily. And as a military historian I think the period that we are going through may most aptly be compared with the 16th Century in Europe. I invite any of you who are interested in military history, to make this comparison. For here we had a period which bears many points of similarity to our own, a period of the collapse of old institutions, most notably the Catholic Church under the reformers of Northern Europe; a period of rapid changes in weapons and in fighting tactics; and in engineering, fortifications and logistical procedures; and perhaps most importantly, a period in which for the first time in modern European history almost every individual power unit was pitted in a great world war, the first of the European world wars which brought down almost all the existing institutions of Europe and cast her, politically as well as mili-

tarily and religiously, into something of a period of collapse.

In many ways, what we have seen in our own lifetime has been the collapse and transmogrification of the system of European politics and European strategy which emerged from the 16th Century and lasted for something like four centuries thereafter.

Now, in dealing with the problems of the recent period, since 1945, say, the history of this period, militarily, is so close to us - and you as officers are so closely acquainted with the details of that period, more closely than I, perhaps - that I don't think it necessary to go into any great length in discussing the chronology or the evolution of the period. What I would like to do for the few minutes remaining to me, is glance for awhile at what appear to me to be three main strategic problems that we have been dealing with - often indirectly - during this period, to relate them, perhaps somewhat cursorily, to present military thinking, and by way of conclusion, to point out what in my guess is going to be the main tendency of the next decade before us.

I take it that the three main military problems we've been dealing with might be summed up as follows: First, obviously nuclear power and thermounuclear power; secondly, the problem of scale, the scale of events and of the antagonists on the world scene at the present moment. And, in a way, although I mentioned this second, we encountered this problem of scale earlier, chronologically, than we really faced up to the problems brought by nuclear power. It is, it seems to me, basic to our strategy at the present time, and in the future it would be basic even if the secrets of the atom had not been discovered and applied to military uses. What they did was merely accelerate a tendency that was there from the time that the United States and Russia stood victorious over a prostrate Nazi Germany in 1945, and over a prostrate continent as well.

Finally, the problem of cost. Cost in both the military and material sense, but cost in the human sense too, both in terms of brute manpower and in terms of specialized manpower with high technological attainments, applying these attainments to the purposes of war and weapons design. Now, this problem of cost, seen in the broadest sense, has been with us from the beginning of this period. Of course, it has always been with us in a way, but it certainly has become more important in the last 15 years. In my view, from now on, during the remainder of your careers as military planners, the problem of costs is going to be dominant. It is going to decide, in the last analysis, most military issues. And in my view too, it is at the moment at the root of the growing and ominous drifting apart of civilian and military thinking in this country and elsewhere in the Western Alliance, and in some ways, as nearly as we can determine, in Russia itself.

Now, let me turn back to look first at this question of scale that I mentioned. It is so obvious that perhaps we take it for granted and give it less attention than it deserves. Military history shows, back over the whole of modern war that there is at any given time, something like an optimum size and structure for sovereign power units. This size seems to be set by a kind of two-way complementary, I should say, relationship between resources on the one hand and organization on the other; in a word, the organizing capability to make those resources useful for the purposes of the state, whether military or otherwise.

From time to time one encounters states which are simply too big for their own good. The Holy Roman Empire, or the German Reich, in the later medieval age and in the 16th Century, certainly fall into this category; by far the largest single power in Europe, in almost any way you want to measure power, but with an organizational structure which was unequal to the task of making those resources available for political, social and military purposes; and as a result, defeated, undermined

and turned into something like a satellite of the French political system of the 17th Century and 18th Century, from which Germany only emerged rather recently, much, I might add, to the dismay of Europe.

Put in military terms I think we may say that this optimum size of power units may be measured in two ways; first, the ability to produce balanced forces. In other words, the ability either to find within one's own borders, or acquire outside them, all of the categories of force necessary to make war. This is really a very old story. We are much aware of it nowadays, I suppose, because of the problem of nuclear sharing. But it was a serious problem for all of the powers in the 16th Century. Interestingly enough, only the Swiss really mastered the technique of fighting successfully with pikes. Neither the Italian nor the German powers could produce within their own borders, pikemen. It is true that some South Germans took to this; the French never did. The French were never able to produce pikemen. It is an odd thing, isn't it? Hardly anything seems so simple as carrying a large pole around ~~in~~ formed bodies of 200 men, but for reasons that lie in national psychology the French simply never mastered the art. As a result of this the French kings for hundreds of years were reliant on Swiss pikemen to balance out their own forces. In other cases one was able to develop one's own pikemen. The Spaniards, for instance, took to pike-fighting with great success. Perhaps this is a reflection of Spanish psychology; that strain of pessimism and fanaticism which runs through the nation, accommodated them well to pike-fighting.

Perhaps I've led off on a digression here, but at any rate the ability to either procure outside or within one's borders the wherewithal of military power, however that power may constitute itself at the time. Secondly, depth; depth of resources both militarily and in terms of manpower to repair the ravages of battle and of war. And alongside this too, depth in the territorial sense; for the tendency since 1500,

increasingly has been for the smaller states to provide neither the depth nor the balance necessary for the successful prosecution of war.

I might note here that on either of these heads, balance and depth are shortcomings that may be made good by certain advantages of strategic position, or of geographical position. And, of course, this applies particularly to sea power, or states which can rely on the sea and can utilize it. Great Britain is a great example of a state whose power was far out of relation to its resources, because of her ability to exploit her island position. And one should not overlook that the same was true of the Netherlands in the 17th Century, when, despite the disproportion between their population and the French population, for instance, the Netherlands was a power of the first rank. The same, of course, was true of Venice in an earlier day.

But with this qualification I think we may say that only such states as can produce balanced forces in sufficient depth can qualify as first-rank powers under the circumstances of any time. Other powers tend to cluster about them; other interests - sometimes contradictory interests - seem to cluster about them, and in effect they become power centers.

Now, of course, the situation since 1945 has been a bi-polar situation with only the United States and the U.S.S.R. qualifying as first-rank powers under each of the three categories that I've mentioned. It's interesting to note that this very rarely has happened in European or modern military history; that you have a bi-polar configuration. Generally you have a multilateral configuration, and the bi-polar situation, though it's not fatal, is certainly a serious one because there is simply no slack in the situation. The two great ultimate powers are liable to be drawn into a confrontation over a wide range of interests which don't effect their own security concerns directly, and the possibilities for disaster are quite

obvious and quite ominous.

This bi-polar configuration has underlain all Western strategic thought since 1948, to put it at the very latest. Russia, having in company with us, destroyed Germany, emerged from the war with what seemed to the Russian leaders, at any rate, like almost limitless possibilities of aggression open to them. It is clear now in retrospect that Stalin pursued these possibilities with tremendous and on the whole commendable prudence and caution. He was very careful about pushing them too far. And it is wrong, I think, to say that Stalin's aims were basically aggressive. His aims were perhaps defensive. However that may be, we were faced, as hardly needs recalling, with one aggressive Russian step after another, from the time of their occupation of Bulgaria and Rumania in 1944, right on down to the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950.

And, this Russian aggressiveness came up against a kind of definite impotence in Europe - in a ravaged and dismantled Europe - which made her defense necessarily an American commitment which we took up increasingly after about September 1947. The result was Western European union in 1948, NATO in 1949, and SHAPE in 1951; an attempt to shield Europe from Russian aggressive purposes by means of a military coalition.

NATO was supplemented by that rather unfortunate agglomeration, the central pact, CENTO, whose members seemed only to have an alliance with the United States in common, really, and CENTO, of course, was supplemented in the Far East by SEATO.

To sum this up, what we have is an American commitment; the commitment of American policy all across the globe in alliances with over 50 nations, and in many various places, including some very peculiar ones.

Now, it may be argued whether all these areas truthfully are vital to American security. In bi-polar situations such arguments simply go unheard. The motto of

the bi-polar world was perhaps given by the Great Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great, who, apropos of the politics of her own time commented, "Those who aren't gainers are losers." And, unfortunately, in the bi-polar situation, anything that we aren't holding is thought to be lost, although perhaps some of these places - I'm thinking of Laos now - might be considered well lost in view of their local configuration.

What is beyond argument, in my view, perhaps not in yours, is that such commitments have resulted in a vast and dangerous over-extension of American military capabilities. Note I do not say potentials, but capabilities. This is true, I think, both quantitatively in terms of the actual force that we dispose, and qualitatively in view of the kinds of force that we dispose. The latter fact, I think, often goes unremarked. Our power like Britain's power before us, takes its character from our position. That position is rather extraordinary and this places limits upon our power, so much of which necessarily is locked up on the sea and in the air, which makes it difficult for us to contend with continental powers, even as was the case in British history before our own.

Now, these problems of scale are related to the second category of problems that I mentioned, and these arise out of the question of fitting nuclear weapons into the picture. The advent of nuclear power after 1945 has tended, as I mentioned, to exaggerate the question of scale. For the fact is, that only the United States and the U.S.S.R. have the wherewithal to be nuclear powers in the real sense. One should perhaps make an exception for Britain here, although it does appear that Britain is finding it increasingly impossible, or difficult at any rate, to maintain her nuclear deterrent.

As to France, we'll just have to see whether France will be able to do any better than Great Britain here or not. I suggest that it will be not. But, beyond

that, the question of nuclear striking power colored almost every military problem of the last decade, from the level of high policy down to the level of tactical organization. If it has colored them, on the other hand, truly, it cannot be said to have solved any of them finally; indeed, it has complicated them the more. In the first instance, the problem of over-extension of American forces, particularly in Southeast Asia, was attempted to be solved by the doctrine of massive retaliation put forward by Mr. Dulles early in 1954. The idea behind this, of course, was to economize on the use of American forces by relying on nuclear strategic striking power.

In another way what this amounted to was a determination to escalate any clash with Russia, automatically, and by publishing the fact that escalation would follow on almost automatically and therefore to deter Russia. Massive retaliation was a brand of snake-oil to out-snake-oil any snake-oil ever put on the market. Now, it had a rather short run as a policy. And indeed, I think historically it is probably accurate to say that it was always more of an expedient designed to deal with specific and rather dangerous situations in Korea and in Viet Nam, than it was an American policy in the long-run. At any rate, it had one obvious weakness; this was the question of how such a policy would work in event of the Russians gaining something like nuclear parity, or even nuclear disparity with us. It was based in the last analysis on the assumption that all conflicts should be turned into total conflicts.

Now, at the time that Mr. Dulles was modifying and qualifying his massive retaliation stand, to the massive applause of our European Allies, and their encouragement, interest was re-focused on another field - limited war. I think it may be said that up until 1950 it was something of an article of faith, at any rate, in the U. S. Army and the U. S. Air Force, that all wars in the modern age were auto-

matically and unavoidably, total wars. This notion was overthrown, partly, I think, by the work of civilian scholars and civilian historians, but with a great assist from the Koreans - the North Koreans specifically - and the Korean War. For, what happened in the Korean War was a limited war which might have warmed the heart of any 18th Century militarist; a war fought within fairly obvious and tacitly-agreed on limitations on both sides, which tended to be in the long-run, rather symmetrical.

Now, the beneficiary of both this civilian scholarship and of the Korean War, so to speak, has been, I think, theologically at any rate, the U. S. Army, which, up until 1959 really believed in limited war, and which, well into the last decade, tried to get into the nuclear act every way it could, and finally wound up as the residuary legatee, so to speak, of limited war with its ancient and somewhat checkered history. I think this was borne out by Army planning and NATO-SHAPE planning for the defense of the central sector in Europe. For, from the beginning, NATO planning was for a total war, calling for rather massive forces - 90 divisions, 60 of them to be deployed on the central front; to be mobilized upwards to 90 within 30 days after the outbreak of war; in other words, World War II all over again.

When it became clear, about the middle of the last decade, that the European states were unwilling and probably unable to produce manpower on this scale, it was attempted to apply nuclear strategy to the problem of limited war. And, I think we've wound up with three theories, all three of which relate to our NATO strategy in some part, and perhaps rather incoherently.

First, there's the trip-wire or plate-glass theory, massive retaliation tripped off by a small but flexible force. Whenever, in military history, a force is obviously too small for its mission, it's always referred to as "flexible." Alongside this was the idea of limited nuclear war, which Henry Kissinger, among others,

spawned in 1956 - and then strangled in 1960. Henry is the only academic I've ever known who got one promotion for writing a book and another promotion for refuting the book four years later. Kissenger's theory and his limited nuclear war theory always had the weakness that when you talk to exponents of nuclear war you found them inclined to locate their nuclear war in oases, Saharas, or jungle swamps, but didn't really prefer to talk about the situation as it is to be found in Europe where a distinction between limited nuclear war and total nuclear war calls for a certain imagination.

Finally, there's the question of arming ground forces with tactical nuclear weapons. And, of course, the NATO forces now, on the central front, have been given a considerable Tac nuclear striking power. This has raised problems of its own; problems which, I must say, alarm me almost more than any others. For, not only is there the question of the human and architectural effects of the tactical employment of nuclear weapons; there is also the question of command control of these weapons, the control of which and employment of which, is at the moment vested at a rather lower level than seems to me consistent with our overall policy interests.

It does seem too, that the addition of nuclear striking power to conventional forces, far from economizing troops, requires more troops to repair the tremendous gap which nuclear bombardment would bring in our ground array. On the whole it does seem that this policy is one in which the Soviets with their manpower advantages perhaps have the drop on us.

Meanwhile, finally, events in 1956 to '9, were overtaking the whole nuclear picture. The emergence of the missile against which no defense was capable, or at any rate, has been put forward to the present, and along with it the evident growth of Soviet strategic and tactical striking power, resulted in what we might call a counter-deterrent situation, with the Russians in a situation, perhaps not to

damage us as badly as we can damage them, but to damage us enough to make us turn aside from such a confrontation, except at obvious advantage. What we're in now is a period of nuclear stand-off, to use the British phrase, in which we have found that the specialization of nuclear weapons has led us away from rather than toward economies both of force and expenditure. We have a whole family of nuclear weapons with an immense apparatus to run, house and employ them, with the cost proportionate, and at best, a very uncertain application in event of war.

In the long-run it would seem that the addition of nuclear power to our armory in the last 15 years has brought us rather uncertain advantages, and is becoming increasingly, I think, to be looked on as a form of insurance which is useful for protecting, but not particularly useful for advancing national interests.

For the general trend of this last period, is that strategic facts, I think, about since 1955, have rejected simplicity. But any theory based on the notion of a dominant weapon with others ranged about it has proved unequal to the strategic and the political and psychological needs of American policy. The theory of a dominant weapon probably does great injustice to military history; certainly it has failed to fit the needs of the last decade. And the tendency increasingly, in theory at any rate, if not altogether in practice, has been toward a balance of forces both in the air and on the sea, and on the land, with no single weapon considered to be decisive. Each weapon, as has been the case time out of mind, relying upon a family of supporting weapons and agencies to make its operation possible, and a period in which it has proved difficult almost to the point of impossibility, to assign clear-cut missions to forces.

We have at present at least four Air Forces, in my estimation, with the Army Air Force coming on strong and breathing hard on the U. S. Air Force. And the range of Army employment all the way from our divisions in Europe down to our

jungle striking teams, etc., etc., simply allude any single simple categorization. What we have found, I think, in the last 15 years, is the basic unpredictability of the purposes to which military power has to be put; the inability therefore, to tailor forces for any other than general purposes, resulting in forces which have flexible uses and are far less efficient than they might be, could their use be more clearly foreseen. In a way, I think this is a reversion to what has been characteristic of most of military history back across the ages.

Well, I said I was going to have to drop out something; I'll have to drop out cost. But you all know about that. If you don't know about it, have a talk with Navy friends of yours in the Pentagon who have been spending the last couple of months trying to think up ways of saving the future of the carrier fleet from Mc Namara's band.

In the next decade, it seems to me, the pressure of costs both human, technological and material, increasingly will make themselves felt. We'll have to cut more corners. We'll have to produce forces less well-designed than we would like them, to confront the enemy. But, it is an enemy, we should remember, who is encountering the same kind of problems himself, and perhaps in an even more acute way than we. As a result, I think the period immediately before us is going to be a period of increasing strategic asymmetry, in which Russian forces will develop more along the lines laid down by Russian needs and Russian interests, and our forces will develop more along the lines laid down by our needs and our interests rather than by the idea of any inevitable confrontation between them.

This is the situation which Great Britain faced many times in her history; the necessity of accommodating herself for the moment, though not forever, to a power situation which her own forces did not equip her to deal with. It is also, I would add, the basis for a detente between the Russians and ourselves, and there

is so much to suggest that this will be the next great step in the history of the post-war period.

Meanwhile, as concerns Western strategic thinking, I think that if something of a pause occurs in the Cold War, this might be beneficial for the long-run. As I've mentioned, our strategic thinking in the West in the last 15 years has been undertaken in an atmosphere of crisis, of pressure, and portents of doom. This is not the kind of atmosphere in which sound, long-range goals can be conceived and set. All the evidence, as I read it, is that the communist tide, which always was something of a post-war phenomenon, is ebbing; that Russian Communist resources have been/^{as}seriously over-strained in an attempt to exploit the temporary dismantlement of Europe after 1945, as ours have been in attempting to protect Europe. And now that this modern dogmatism is assailed by schisms, and I guess you really have to be a theologian to appreciate how deeply the split between Peking and Moscow enters into all of their concerns, it seems to me likely that the communist powers may be entering into a period of immobilism such as we've seen before in their history, which will give us breathing space.

If so, it is an occasion for American military men to take inventory of the changes, not only in this last decade, but in the last half century which itself has seen such far-reaching transformations in weapons, but perhaps more importantly in our position, both military and diplomatic in the world. The fact is that these changes have come upon us so fast that neither after the First World War nor the Second World War was such an inventory truly made. In the first period we relapsed into an isolationism, a final fling. In the most recent period we've been, as I've said, living off the cables.

Now, any such inventory of American purposes and policies will require a considerable military contribution. For, I think it can be said that our security

interests as apart from our strategic interests - and these are two different things - have not been carefully weighed and assessed in view of our own changed position and the changed world in which we live. Neither can it be said that in the recent past we have laid down national strategies which were aimed at security interests rather than strategic interests. Nor do we have the forces consistent, I think, with those security interests and domestic political realities. It is only on this basis - domestic political realities and national long-run security interests, that sound long-run goals can be glimpsed and sound policies achieved to put them in train. If you think it's impossible, I will content myself merely with saying that at another war college, and at a rather comparable period, Admiral Mahan did something like this for the American Republic - a great service - and it's not impossible that it can happen again.

Certainly, it will have to come out of the military with their acquaintance with these problems - a close day-to-day acquaintance with these problems - rather than primarily out of the civilians.

Thank you.

QUESTION: Doctor, what do you think the effect of General de Gaulle and the French position will have on the polarity of relationship between the U. S. and the U.S.S.R.?

DR. EMERSON: General de Gaulle is obviously proceeding on the assumption that the bi-polar world was a temporary phenomenon; has now come to an end; that the issues which separated Russia from Europe were never more than transitional; that she is a part of Europe; that the growing problem of China will tend to push her closer to Europe. Therefore, I think you can say that he has strayed along. He thinks in terms of a multi-polar rather than a bi-polar world.

As to the effects it's going to have on NATO and the European Economic Community, I would have to say I think that depends almost entirely on the length of the General's life, and on whether he decides to run for a second term - I believe it's 1965 when it becomes due. In my acquaintance, or experience, there's a tremendous drive for unity, both militarily and economically. In Europe it has a tremendous appeal to all classes of European people - soldiers, businessmen, students, intellectuals - but I don't rule out that General de Gaulle, by well-planned and calculated obstructionism, could slow that drive down for our lifetime.

In other words, I don't look upon him as being a kind of Lochinvar, but rather, as a realistic, tough-minded, calculating politician; a statesman who has been wrong, but who has been wrong far less than he has been right in his amazing career. I feel the way about General de Gaulle that perhaps I feel about some people - and perhaps you do too - that I disagree with him, but I respect him tremendously, and suspect that he may be right.

QUESTION: Sir, would this respect to General de Gaulle - not necessarily respect - include his possibility of making a deal with Russia?

DR. EMERSON: What kind of deal?

QUESTION: Economic, versus atomic.

DR. EMERSON: Why shouldn't he make a deal with Russia? I mean, what will they deal over? Will he sell them grain, or what? Will they provide him with nuclear weapons?

QUESTION: That's what I was thinking of on the one hand. But I didn't know what they would want in turn - perhaps the breaking up of NATO.

DR. EMERSON: I don't know. I think that de Gaulle would draw back at the moment, and as long as I can see into the future. I think that he would draw back from any approaches to Russia that would upset Germany. Now, German opinion is

almost unanimous, without regard to party or anything else, on this issue. And it seems to me that de Gaulle's conflict with us, if we can put it that way, and the British, is less one of opposition to Russia, than it is one of means; and that in the long-run he will prove perhaps as adamant in his approach to Russia, as far as really making any concessions to Russia; as we - perhaps more so. You know what he fears more than anything - an American deal with Russia.

His argument is that Europe must arm herself, and France, herself, in order to protect Europe against an understanding between the two great powers. After all, he was alive at the time of Yalta. And I think it's interesting to read the chapter in his book, on Yalta, which he looks upon as an American betrayal of European interests which don't bear directly on American interests. So, I think as far as deals go, that the monkey is on our back and not on his.

QUESTION: Doctor, the communists base their strategy on/^{unique}military science. Would you mention the main outline of the science and indicate whether or not you believe it might be at the root of the problems beyond the three nuclei you indicated.

DR. EMERSON: Well, do they base their policies on/^{unique}military science in your view?

QUESTION: Yes.

DR. EMERSON: Well, then, I'll have to ask you; how is it unique?

QUESTION: Well, it is unique in that it is based upon the philosophy of dialectical and historical detergence, according to their writings, according to their writings, and that it integrates all instruments of national power, not only the military, but the political, the socio-psychological, religious, etc., in an overall integrated effort to achieve specific objectives at specific times in history. I just thought that you might have some thoughts on this.

It's a reconciliation of the military and the political, certainly, there is no question about that. And I think it's possibly at the root of some of the problems in Vietnam.

DR. EMERSON: Well, I think if they do have a unique military strategy associating all instruments of power toward certain clear-cut objectives, they're fouling it up. I don't believe that they are. I think that the situation in the Russian War Office and the Russian Foreign Office is identical to what it is in ours. The guy sits there and says, "Oh, my aching back, Vietnam again. Madame Nhu is out of control - Mao Tse Tung and Ho Chih Minh. They don't have complete control over their operatives.

QUESTION: Out of certain television data, while they don't have complete control, they're liable also to suggest that they don't have any big monopoly on fouling it up.

DR. EMERSON: Well, I certainly wouldn't deny that. Although, I would question whether we have a patent on it.

QUESTION: To go back into history a little bit, you mentioned the fact that Germany was taken into World War I by master planner Von Schleppen, in violation of all the rules and regulations, so to speak. Wasn't that a case of the Count of Beau-camp really anticipating the blitzkrieg by about 30 years in intending to smash the French before anybody else was mobilized? And therefore, considering that he thought a good knock-out punch, that maybe he thought his flank was solid? It didn't work.

DR. EMERSON: A good man, but before his time. Yes, I think so. What I referred to was this; that the planners hadn't been fully coordinated in the German Imperial Government. They had not coordinated with the Wilhelmstrasse, the Foreign Office, or with the Navy. In effect, the German Government which itself didn't have any particular war aims at the time of the Serbian crisis found that because of poor

coordination between the military and the political, it had, so to speak, a strategic pig in a poke. Now, this is a fascinating period in European history. For one thing, all of the European General Staffs felt that civilian views on strategy were ipso facto amateur and therefore not to be encouraged. And the civilians tended to go along with it. I mean, you no more advised Count Von Schlieffen than you advised your surgeon on how to take your appendix out; it was a professional and scientific thing.

But beyond that there was the obsession with security. The fact of the matter is that they kept the plans closed not only from the government, but from the heads of the departments, in order to protect military security. Admiral Tirpitz, for instance, who was the Secretary of the Navy in Germany, in his memoirs concedes that he did not know the Naval Staff's operational plan before the outbreak of the war. He did not consider this was his business. Now, it was to this, whether Von Schlieffen was right or wrong - I happen to think he was wrong - but it was to that that I referred in my remarks. And here's an interesting and probably true story.

The story is about the younger Moltka who succeeded Von Schlieffen in relations with the Kaiser. A couple of days before the war broke out in 1914 the Kaiser got word from France that the Frenchmen would not back up the Russians if they were looking for help. He said to Moltka, "Aha! Now we can simply turn on the Russians and defeat them without worrying about the French." Moltka, in his memoirs, asserts that his heart nearly stopped. He said, "How can I explain to the Kaiser that all of Germany's eggs are in one basket? No matter what happens, we attack France. It's a question of no war, or attacking France. All our planning has been aimed toward that end." So, he told the Kaiser - he was not a very bright man, but he got that picture pretty quickly - and Moltka himself recorded that the Kaiser came

to him and said, "Your uncle would have given me a different answer."

It was to this rather than the soundness or unsoundness of Von Schleppen's operational conception that I referred. The same was true with every other government, with the possible exception of the French Government. I think the French Government exercised a pretty detailed control over the deployment of French forces in the immediate outbreaks of war; the British Government, almost none. Really, half of the Cabinet didn't even know, in London, that Britain was committed to go to France's aid. It came as anything but a genial surprise.

QUESTION: You mentioned the passing, ominous and growing diversion between the government and military thinking. Would you comment on the nature of this split and the possibilities of healing it?

DR. EMERSON: It seems to me that the civilians at the Pentagon - the civilian leadership and a lot of the military leadership - are taking the initiative away from the service strategic planners and force planners, by requiring them to defend their strategic estimates, and also their intelligence estimates on a cost basis, applying, as I understand it - and having seen it in operation - the principle of marginal utility analysis to each added increment of national firepower, so to speak. At the moment my judgment would be that the services are not able to defend certain of their estimates, at any rate, on this basis. It has never been done before. The assumption has always been that military estimates cannot be taken as a whole; you cannot slice them up into added increments; each a new increment of security. This, to most military men, seems an unrealistic way to go about it.

But they have not been able to make that argument which is the argument, so to speak, of experience - combat experience - and a kind of traditional wisdom, stick against the civilian leaders who can point in the past to mis-estimates on the part of the military, and who are under this pressure that I mentioned, to keep the cost

down. I know I don't need to cite to you, for example, Skybolt, where the original estimate of its cost, weight and bearing were completely out of line with what the events proved. Or, I could cite the B-57 program.

So, I think that the civilian leadership over there feels that it has a very strong case, and whether or not its procedures for estimating cost estimates are sound ones, they're probably going to be as sound as military procedures which, in the past, have proved wide of the mark by anything from 300% to 1,000%. That is the way I understand it, having dealt with it perhaps indirectly from time to time, and from knowing people, so to speak, on both sides of the fence, and having friends on both sides of the fence.

It seems to me that people are talking at each other rather than to each other, and that the military have had the initiative taken away from them, and really can't defend many of their estimates on this basis.

DR. BARRETT: Gentlemen, I'm afraid that time does not permit any more questions.

Dr. Emerson, we want to thank you for a very scholarly and interesting discussion.