

THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF ARMED FORCE AND THE ROLE OF THE CANADIAN ARMY

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Mrs. Ellis, Professor Bercuson, Professor Herwig, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed a privilege to be invited to present the second annual Ross Ellis Memorial Lecture in Military and Strategic Studies named in honour of a field officer who was described as being a born battalion commander much loved by his men. He apparently never wore a helmet, even in the terrible struggle for Walcheren Causeway where he went from trench to trench visiting his soldiers, oblivious to horrendous shell fire.¹ One wonders where we get such men.

It is also a great pleasure to see so many old friends (and relatives) here today. As a born and bred Albertan I am naturally delighted to be back in this wonderful city where I grew up as a subaltern so many more years ago than I care to remember. I use the term "grew up" rather loosely, of course, for it really meant living in Currie Barracks, then the best watering hole in Calgary, where pistol shots often rang out in the Officers' Mess, and cars occasionally crashed through the main barrack gate. Since I've been trying to get back to Calgary almost all my life, I remain indebted to Professor Bercuson and his colleagues of the U of C Strategic Studies Program for this opportunity to return.

What I would like to talk about today is the instrumentality of armed force and the role of Canada's army. As you know, Carl von Clausewitz was the first to develop a comprehensive theory of war as "a true political instrument, a continuation of political

¹David J. Bercuson, Battalion of Heroes: The Calgary Highlanders in World War II (Calgary: Regimental Funds Foundation, 1994), 181, 187.

intercourse, carried on with other means."² I am also of the view that he argued this precisely because it was the only way to make sense of the wanton destruction wrought by war. From his study of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), which heaped more devastation upon Germany than any other conflict up to World War II, he was probably well aware that war had a natural tendency to run to extremes. In any case, he went on to conclude that only "[state] policy converts the overwhelmingly destructive element of war into a mere instrument."³

I am nonetheless aware that there are many that would argue that war is less an extension of policy than the breakdown of policy. According to Thucydides, men also go to war for reasons of fear and honour as much as for political interest. If we are to believe Anatol Rappoport there are at least two other categories of war besides the political: the *eschatological*, with its messianic character and overtones of Armageddon; and the *cataclysmic*, with its ethnocentric and disease-disaster variants. Similarly, John Keegan has argued that war is not the continuation of politics, but rather the product of culture and a habit. But be that as it may, none of the foregoing schools of thought provides us with any absolute reassurance that war, either inter-state or intra-state, will become passe soon. In fact, no one has yet managed to explain adequately why human beings fight. Nor have the causes of war, despite a voluminous literature on the subject, ever been satisfactorily determined.

For these very reasons I do not find myself in disagreement with Cigna's assertion that Clausewitz advanced a universal theory of what war *ought* to be. In short, without an element of rationality war can become little more than an act of senseless violence and indiscriminate destruction. As explained by Clausewitz, moreover, the political object or war aim also constitutes the key restraint that prevents war from running to the absolute extreme. It not only determines the military objective to be reached, but the amount and kind of force to be used. The more intense the motives for war, the more closely will the military and political aims coincide, and the more military and less political will they appear.

²Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed./trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: University Press, 1976), 87.

³*Ibid.*, 606

On the other hand, the less intense the motives, the less will the military's natural tendency to violence coincide with political directives and the more political will the conflict seem. Clausewitz further noted that in the latter "limited war" case, where "policy is directed only towards minor objectives, the emotions of the masses will be little stirred and they will have to be stimulated rather than held back" as in the former more "total war" case.⁴

Above all, Clausewitz held war to be a social phenomenon that was: more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to a given case. As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make a remarkable trinity -- composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force; of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.⁵

I personally consider this to be a matchless description of war and it serves to warn us that policy based on reason is but one third of the pie and hence constantly open to usurpation by hatred and chance. That war continues to manifest more human than technological traits could also explain why it has periodically transmuted over the years. In associating war's dominant tendencies with the people, government, and army of a state, Clausewitz further highlighted the vital importance of the connection between an army and the people from which it springs. In short, armies can be no more independent of their citizenry than they can be of their governments. And in democracies where people choose their governments this is even more the case.

One could say, though, that for Canadians this is just so much academic discussion. In the first place, Canada has long stated that she "has neither the need nor the desire to initiate violence in the pursuit of political objectives."⁶ In other words, Canada has rejected the instrumental use of armed force in the aforementioned Clausewitzian sense. Our Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, has more recently even promoted the concept of "soft

⁴*On War*, 81, 87-88.

⁵*On War*, p. 89.

power," that is, using information dominance to produce favourable outcomes through persuasion rather than coercion.⁷ On the other hand, Canada has embraced peacekeeping and, in conjunction with allies, accepted peace enforcement tasks. Conceivably, therefore, she could be drawn into a major war by alliance or coalition connections much as she was in the Korean Conflict. The important point to note here, is that none of Canada's great power allies -- or any great power for that matter -- has similarly forsworn the use of armed force in the Clausewitzian sense.

In fact, in the United States, which still even refuses to adopt a "no first use of nuclear weapons" policy, the question is not one of the legitimacy of military force as a tool, but one of whether armed force should be used as a first or last resort. The implications are profound for it may well determine the future shape of the American army. On one side are those who favour an "imperial" force of regular volunteers who would be able to deal quickly with terrorists and the Milosevics of the world; on the other, those who advocate a "republican" army of citizen-soldiers to be mobilized only in defence of vital interests.⁸ US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright may well personify the first resort "imperial" camp as she was purported to have said, "What's the point in having this superb military ... if we can't use it?"⁹ The last resort "citizen-soldier" camp, in contrast, would rather use military force sparingly but in strength when used, and may be best summed up in the tenets of the Weinberger Doctrine.¹⁰ Whatever the outcome, and we must remind ourselves occasionally of this reality, this is not a military but a political question to be decided by the American body politic.

Personally, I have substantial reservations about the use of armed force as a first resort not necessarily in direct defence of vital national interests. In certain respects it strikes me as bordering on meddling, a throwback to the days of Metternich and Bismarck which saw the international armies of great powers intervene in the domestic affairs of

⁶Statement of Canadian Defence Policy, April 1992, p.5.

⁷Lloyd Axworthy, "Canada and Human Security: The Need for Leadership," *Intellectual Journal*, LII (Spring, 1997).

⁸Andrew J. Bacevich, "Losing Private Ryan: Why the Citizen-Soldier is MIA," *National Review* (9 August, 1999), 34. According to Bacevich, the problem of "propping up an increasingly wobbly" US all-volunteer "army with children" also exists.

⁹Colin L. Powell, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 576.

sovereign states from Italy to China. As peoples tend to have long memories, this has always been dangerous stuff, but perhaps moreso now as statesmen who have little idea of the limitations of military force often find it easier to send a Tomahawk missile to sort out a terrorist than continue to conduct difficult inter-state negotiations. As Clausewitz so wisely warned, we should not expect too much of armed force and war, the results of which have always to be translated into political gain before they can be deemed decisive. Military force is also at best an imperfect instrument, "other means" to an end that cannot be attained by normal means, which carries with it the inherent risk of war running to extremes and getting out of hand. In an ideal world, the best place for armies would be at home.

In any case, there is some reason to believe that interventions may become progressively more difficult to execute successfully as Western forces continue to draw down. Between 1985 and 1997 US defence expenditure fell from 6.5% of GDP to 3.4%; Britain's from 5.2% to 2.8%; France's from 4% to 3%; and Germany's from 3.2% to 1.6% (the equivalent figures for Canada were 2.2% in 1985 and 1.3% in 1997).¹¹ This international trend toward downsizing shows little sign of abating as France will further cut equipment spending by 3.6% next year while Germany intends to cut 3.7% from its current defence budget and keep reducing until 2003.¹² Meanwhile, serious recruiting shortfalls continue to plague the US and British armies which are short 20,000 and 6000 regulars respectively. For the first time in years, the US Army recently assessed two of its ten divisions as unprepared for a major war.¹³ Short of any drastic upheavals on the international scene (which of course always remains a possibility), I do not anticipate any changes in these general trends.

A conflict on the scale of Gulf War could hardly be fought today without a substantial military build up. And even at the time, the US was fortunate in being able to redeploy its heavily armoured VII Corps from the NATO central front to Saudi Arabia. If the Gulf War showed anything, it was that inter-state conflicts are still possible and that mass still counts

¹⁰The tenets were: (1) clear end state (2) public support (3) vital interests (4) decisive impact.

¹¹*The Military Balance 1998/99* (London: Oxford University Press for the IISS, 1998).

¹²*RUSI Newsbrief* (12 December, 1999), 91

¹³*RUSI Newsbrief* (8 August, 1999), 59; and *Newport Daily News*, 10 November, 1999.

in warfighting. Only America deployed forces sufficiently numerous to match those of a strongly armed third-rate state. Neither Britain nor France, still powerful nations in their own right, could have taken on the Iraqi army without resorting to disruptive mobilization or even possibly going on a full war footing.

Future militarily interventions are likely to become even trickier, moreover, as weapons of mass destruction and ballistic and cruise missiles become more universal as a result of the exponential spread of technology. Though few have noticed, the West's monopoly on advanced military technology is, in fact, ending. Cutting-edge technologies are now within reach of as many as ten Asian nations from Israel to North Korea.¹⁴ In time, I expect that any nation that chooses to will be able to hit back to a greater extent than Iraq or Serbia were able to do during their respective confrontations. In anticipation of this, the Americans have already re-established a command reminiscent of Cold War national survival and civil defence organizations.¹⁵ The spread of the so-called second industrial-computer revolution is also more likely to call for heavier rather than lighter intervention forces in the future. The need for extensive war materiel supporting base infrastructure, which Saudi-Arabia possessed in abundance before the Gulf War specifically to accommodate large-scale intervention forces, will further ensure that mass will remain an essential ingredient of future military deployments abroad.¹⁶ The other option advocated by some Americans is to establish global reconnaissance-strike complexes at home.¹⁷

To sum up my views on the instrumentality of armed force, then, I would say that though Canada generally rejects using warfighting as a policy tool, most of the world's great and lesser powers do not. Canada could well have war thrust upon her; the moreso as some people in foreign high places still think all power comes out of the barrel of a gun. The trend toward downsizing can also be expected to compel most nations to mobilize in

¹⁴Paul Bracken, "The Second Nuclear Age," *Foreign Affairs*, 1 (January/February, 2000), 146-156. Thirty-eight nations have ballistic missiles with ranges of 300km; 14 with ranges of 900 km.

¹⁵The "Joint Task Force Civil Support" command under Brigadier-General Bruce M. Lawlor, a Vermont lawyer and National Guard officer, would work with major US civilian agencies in response to a chemical, germ, or nuclear attack. "Military Terrorism Operation Has a Civilian Focus," *The New York Times*, 9 January, 2000.

¹⁶Bracken, 153-155.

¹⁷Gen. Charles A. Horner (ret.), "Straight Talk About the Current Threats We Face," *National Guard* (December, 1998), 16-17.

the event of major war. In the interim, enforcement interventions are increasingly likely to call for massive force deployments because of logistical considerations related to their support and the explosive spread of computer technology worldwide. The entire world is going high-tech. Finally, despite claims of the breakdown of the nation-state and the peace-loving nature of democracies, both highly challengeable assumptions; there is little evidence to suggest that major inter-state wars will not occur in the future. As the Falklands, Gulf, and Chinese missiles raining off Taiwan showed, inter-state wars are unfortunately still possible.

On that sobering note let us turn now to the Canadian scene. If we were to compare the US and Canada, we would see that the latter though not a superpower is still a member of the G-7 and roughly one tenth the size of the former in population and economy. Canada's GDP is around US\$780 billion and the US GDP about US\$8,100 billion. In relative terms US defence appropriations of \$267.7 billion approved for 2000 would translate into a defence budget of \$26.7 billion for Canada. The reality, however, is a Canadian defence budget of some US\$7.8 billion, but 3% rather than 10% of the US defence budget.

Not counting a US Marine Corps of about 175,000, US regular armed forces numbering roughly 380,000 sailors, 370,000 airmen, and 480,000 soldiers (and 10 divisions) would translate into regular establishments of 38,000 for the Canadian navy, 37,000 for the air force, and 48,000 (and one division) for the Canadian army. Again, however, the reality is a Canadian regular army of but 20,000 and a total Canadian armed force of 60,000 regulars. By the British yardstick of 212,000 regulars in all armed forces for a nation but twice as populous as Canada, we should have double this number, including, proportionately, 50,000 regulars in the Canadian army.

Notwithstanding this uncomplimentary comparison, it has recently been suggested that Canada downsize the regular army from 20,000 to 10,000 within the next decade.¹⁸

¹⁸David Pugliese, "Cut Troops by Half, Adviser Tells Army," *Ottawa Citizen*, 2 December, 1999. Colonel Howie Marsh recommended the army reduce its size by half within ten years and double its reliance on high-tech equipment.

For a nation of 30 million souls this would equate, relatively, to reducing the regular army establishment to below that which existed during the 1920's and 1930's. In 1921 Canada fielded 4,127 regulars out of a population of 8,788,000, which would be the rough equivalent of fielding 14,000 today. In 1939 she fielded 4,261 regulars out of a population of ten million, the equivalent of fielding 12,783 today. But even the current figure of around 20,000 is not much in excess of this; put another way, the equivalent of a 20,000 establishment today would have been 5,866 in 1921 (in fact, the 1931 ceiling of the Permanent Force was established at 6,925).¹⁹ In other words, our current regular standing army of today is already relatively close to being the numerical equivalent of the tiny Permanent Force that Canada fielded prior to World War II.

In light of the foregoing comparisons and declared government policy, the warfighting role of the Canadian army cannot therefore be other than that of a force of last resort. Surely no one can seriously argue that the relatively small regular army of today is, in itself, any more adequate as a force of first resort than was the pre-World War II Permanent Force in its time. Fortunately for Canada during the inter-war years, she possessed a reasonably workable mobilization plan based on a militia structure that paraded some 51,000 citizen-soldiers. Today the Canadian militia numbers but 18,500 and there is no long-range mobilization plan that would enable the nation to enlarge the army in an emergency. That there is no readily identifiable enemy on the immediate horizon does not negate this need; indeed, it would be prudent for Canada to at least have a long-range plan and national structure available for such a contingency. Again, if we were to equate Canadian to American reserves of 364,000 in the National Guard and 461,000 in the US reserve army²⁰, Canada should have 82,500 rather than 18,500 in the militia.

That reservists nonetheless continue to constitute 20% of every Canadian troop deployment for peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations confirms the manpower plight of the Canadian regular army. The unpalatable fact is, the Canadian regular army is now far too small to be able to operate on its own in either peace or war. To some extent,

¹⁹C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), 4-5, 34.

²⁰*The Military Balance*, 20-21.

this is little different from the situation prevailing in either the British or US armies, which have each been compelled by manpower constraints to make greater use of reserves. The major difference is that they are substantially larger in real and relative terms. The Canadian regular army in marked contrast, with barely enough critical mass to engage in peacekeeping tasks yet alone conduct warfighting training, can hardly any longer be considered a warfighting force-in-being. In the event of a major domestic crisis or war it will clearly have to rely on mobilization.

The trouble is that the regular army establishment has failed to recognize and face up to this reality. In certain respects, partly because of a lack of long-range vision, it has continued to conduct business as usual, routinely repeating past patterns, constantly reorganizing, commissioning studies, and generally reacting to the immediacies of the moment. General staff planning that might properly have addressed more dangerous remote contingencies has been hamstrung by bureaucracy. Meanwhile, the militia, which remains the natural basis for mobilization as well as a pool of computer-age civilian talent, continues to be neglected, almost ignored, except insofar as it is ransacked for bodies. I seriously doubt, however, that the regular army would be so ready to discount the worth of reserve units if they paraded more soldiers. But to attract the citizen-soldier you have to get rid of red tape and offer competitive remuneration -- and I am told that a private militia soldier can make more money bagging groceries! If there ever was an organization that could be sorted out by throwing more money at it, it must surely be the Canadian militia. The figures speak for themselves: out of an annual defence expenditure of around C\$10 billion, the total reserve army personnel budget for 18,500 militiamen is under \$200 million. In comparison, the wage bill for the roughly 17,500 civilian employees of DND exceeds C\$880 million per year, while that of the 20,000-strong regular army runs to slightly above C\$800 million.²¹In this respect not much has really changed, for of C\$12.1 billion allocated to defence in 1991-92, a weighty 57% went toward personnel related costs.²²As even the Americans are beginning to discover, the wage costs associated with maintaining standing regular forces are almost becoming prohibitive. In the land of no draft, voluntary reserves

²¹Globe and Mail, 10 September, 1999.

²²"Making Sense out of Dollars," 1991-92 Edition, Directorate of Costing Services, Chief of Financial Services Branch, Assistant

are the next best option.

To reorient the Canadian army around an expanded militia would therefore make good sense from a personnel cost and manning perspective. Perhaps even more importantly, the army would stand to gain an enhanced domestic constituency and connection to the Canadian people unlikely to be matched by either the navy or air force. It would also place a much higher priority on the regular army training the militia, which the former would have to do in any case in the event of a war. I fully realize, of course, that this represents a return to the pre-1939 system that I so roundly criticized in my book on Normandy, but the essence of my criticism was that the Permanent Force establishment failed to focus on warfighting and thus badly let down the Canadian taxpayer in one of his greatest hours of military need. Surely we should be able to do better than this the second time around? Today we have vastly improved methods of training through computer simulation that allows soldiers individually and collectively to "learn by doing."²³ We also now possess the technical competence to conduct advanced research battle labs and war games. Integrated digitized army battle command systems coming on line should even make it easier for all elements of a national army to continually practice warfighting doctrine and decision-making. In short, I see no reason why the Canadian regular army, if it set its mind to it, could not support the revitalization of the all too long neglected Canadian militia.

The challenge will be to produce not just numbers, but a professional army with stronger ties to the people of Canada than currently exists now. I intentionally use the word "professional" because I hold it to be more a function of training and education in the military sense than a question of whether one is a regular or reserve. In other words, a reservist who studies the military profession in greater depth and participates in more field exercises than a bureaucratized regular must perforce be more professional. We also have some good examples of this from World War II, namely, Brigadier Stanley Todd who rose to be CCRA, 2 Canadian Corps and Major-General Bert Hoffmeister, GOC of the 5th Armoured Division. Both officers were dedicated militiamen before the war, with Todd most

Deputy Minister (Finance), National Defence Headquarters, 1991, pp. 12, 28, 38.

²³Directorate of Army Training, "Learning Through Desk Top Simulation: The Rationale for Acquiring a Canadian Version of TacOps,"

notably spending a lot of his time on the unglamorous "puff table" learning to be the best gunner possible. The result was predictable, in war somebody had to know something about gunnery -- and the militiaman knew.

One sure way to reduce the chances of ever again being blessed with the likes of such officers, including Ross Ellis and others, is to turn the militia into a service support organization of mainly medical, logistical, signal, and transport units. This idea, most recently advanced in a VCDS directive²⁴, ostensibly aims to solve the problem of service support shortages by (of all things) having reserves serve overseas while more costly regulars stay home. One suspects, however, that the real roots of this idea lie in the American total force concept adopted out of hand by a Canadian army that may not have fully understood the underlying reasons behind its original introduction in the US Army. The post-Vietnam brainchild of General Creighton Abrams, the concept was intended to make it impossible for future American administrations to commit US army field forces to war without the mobilization of reserves, which, politically, required public support. To ensure that this would happen, Abrams rather cleverly placed the service support organizations on which field force deployments depended in the reserves. Hence committing the field army meant calling up reserves, which meant, in turn, having to have public support. In short, Abrams insisted that the army would not go to war again without the involvement and tacit approval of the American people.²⁵ For obvious reasons and those that have been explained, the Canadian case is hardly the same as the American,²⁶ and marginalizing the militia any more than it already has been is liable to lead not to an increase, but to the further erosion of Canadian public support for the army at large.

Again, a far smarter move would be to rejuvenate the militia as a national institution, which may ultimately prove to be the salvation of an army caught in a unification

The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin, 3 (August, 1999), 34.

²⁴Vice Admiral G.L. Garnett, "VCDS Force Guidance," 26 November 1999.

²⁵Brig. Gen. Robert H. Scales, *Certain Victory: The U.S. Army in the Gulf* (Washington: Brassey's, 1997), 18.

²⁶Though VCDS Force Structure Guidance contains the howler that: "the US reserve forces are already well on the way to adopting the kind of force structure that Canada envisions for its own reserve forces." Ibid.

straightjacket. Admittedly, this will call for imagination and creativity as well as money, but the regular army has never seriously entertained such an option for the past generation. Perhaps it is time that it did. Among some of the initiatives that might be profitably explored are: promoting the idea of service rather than career in the army; trading costly DND civilian slots for militia positions; streamlining militia recruiting and increasing training days; linking shorter-term regular hitches with later service in the militia; re-establishing Canadian Officer Training Corps in universities; and even allowing any Canadian citizen who wishes (and meets the standard) serve as a peacekeeper. Whatever steps are taken, however, we would be well advised to heed the wisdom of General Guy Simonds who stated that: no nation, not even the richest, can afford to maintain continuously "forces in being" capable of meeting major unforeseen emergencies. There must be reserves of partially trained personnel which can be called upon in emergency.²⁷ And we in Canada, he went on to say, "have to get along as best we may with an entirely voluntary system, whatever the difficulties."²⁸

If we take a close look at the militia today we can actually make out the real army of Canada, the one that has its living roots deep in soil of the Dominion, the one that won Canada's wars. You can see it in the names: the British Columbia Regiment, the Calgary Highlanders (my old regiment, the King's Own Calgary Regiment), the Regina Rifles, the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, Le Regiment de Maisonneuve, The New Brunswick Regiment, The Prince Edward Island Regiment, the Nova Scotia Highlanders, and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. They are as much a part of Canadian history as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and we should all be equally proud of them. For they indeed make up Canada's army --- the one with its roots in the people and the one that her citizens will still surely rally round if the war tocsins sound. If they are lucky they will have leaders like Ross Ellis, "the finest soldier in the battalion," according to his men, "a man who has been through everything with us and who knows us better than we know ourselves."²⁹ Perhaps, in the final analysis, this is what armies are

²⁷Lt.Gen. G.G. Simonds, "Commentary and Observations," in The Canadian Military: A Profile (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1972), 285.

²⁸Ibid., 286

²⁹Bercuson, Battalion of Heroes, 181

really all about.

This, in turn, returns us to the question of where are we now? Has the age of the mass conscript conventional army truly passed once again and the era of the long-service *armee de métier* arrived (and here we could ask up front the following question shown on this slide)? Has Clausewitzian inter-state war really been superseded by what Martin van Creveld termed "non-trinitarian" low-intensity conflict akin to that prevalent in Europe before the Peace of Westphalia in 1648? As you know, however, van Creveld had no sooner made this argument in his book, *The Transformation of War*, than the largest inter-state conflict since Korea broke out in the Persian Gulf.

In a review of van Creveld's book, Sir Michael Howard noted that "Historians are as liable as anyone else to seize upon an ephemeral trend and project it into the future, and Dr. van Creveld seems to have fallen into that trap." Of course, van Creveld could still be right that future wars will be fought by guerrillas and terrorists rather than by armies, but neither he nor anyone else can be certain. Surely it would be unwise to assume, as did the British between 1919 and 1932, that there will be no "great" (as opposed to small) war for ten years? Neither can one reasonably expect an army trained chiefly for operations other than war to be as proficient in warfighting as one trained for war. This, too, was a lesson learned by the British Army, which up to the eve of the Second World War was little more than a colonial gendarmerie charged with garrisoning and protecting the Empire. Though often engaged in internal security operations and small wars against second-class enemies, it remained better suited for imperial policing than for conducting modern warfare on a continental scale.

As for van Creveld's assertion that guerrilla warfare might well be the wave of the future, the more one examines its modern revolutionary variants, the more one can see the critical significance of the Maoist third conventional stage. The Civil War in China was won in 1949 by the huge conventional forces of the People's Liberation Army. Likewise, North Vietnamese regular soldiers and tanks proved decisive in the Vietnamese War. Perhaps the biggest mistake Western forces make is to get decisively

engaged in such conflicts during the second stage, the guerrilla stage proper, when more effective preventative action could be taken during the first stage in the rough proportion of 75% administration and 25% fighting. In short, the best way to deal with potential guerrilla wars in the future may be to head them off before they get seriously started through socio-economic rather than mainly military measures. The second best may well be to wait and destroy them conventionally in stage three. In any case, I would personally hesitate to rule out the chance of inter-state conventional war occurring again in some unexpected circumstance or quarter. The Falklands and Gulf wars took the world by surprise and there is no reason to believe that we will not be so taken again. It also strikes me as ironical that in the former case strategy turned once more on the marching pace of infantry, while in the latter the number of divisions still counted as a factor.