

# A GLOBAL STRATEGY COUNCIL?

by

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Some years past, then-Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara remarked, "There is no longer any such thing as strategy, only crisis management." The incisiveness of these words is clouded by the irony that the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) and the techniques of systems analysis instituted more than two decades ago by McNamara and his "whiz kid" subalterns have become fully institutionalized facets of US defense planning. In the process, they have fed, and perhaps even accelerated, an anti-conceptual bias that is the antithesis of strategic thinking.

Judging from US performance on the international front in recent years, there is mounting evidence that we are witnessing the painful demise of bona fide strategic thinking in this country. Suggesting a sense of global vision that enables one to cope with the vicissitudes of the moment, strategy as purists know it has given way to an acutely reactive form of tactical opportunism. It is a malady that knows no political or ideological bounds; Democrats and Republicans alike, of liberal, conservative, and centrist stripe, must share in the blame.

Most closely attuned to this problem are the legions of armchair strategists who hail from academe and the influential think tank community, and who remain largely unfettered by the intellectual leveling effects of practical government experience. Edward Luttwak, for one, has argued persuasively in various forums that the formulation and execution of US military policy has grown bankrupt because of the failure to inform military policy with a strategic perspective. His contention is that strategic thought,

which requires the connecting of diverse issues into a systematic pattern in pursuit of *military effectiveness*, stands in fundamental opposition to the deeply rooted American cultural tradition of pragmatism, with its pursuit of *civil efficiency*.<sup>1</sup> Echoing this line of reasoning, Colin Gray has said, "Strategic thinking has been, and remains, alien to the mainstream of American thought on defense questions."<sup>2</sup>

These views resonate strongly for defense and foreign policy intellectuals, whose remarkably well-developed sense of the desirable stands as a beacon to change, but whose sometimes-infantile sense of the possible is an impediment to understanding. Therefore, if flesh is to be added to these bare bones of armchair criticism, we require words of confirmation from practitioners who actually have engaged in the formulation and implementation of national security policy. Not uncommonly, such words are hard to come by, for practitioners of note, in quest of immortality for their accomplishments, are wont to hew to an idealistic vision of what they know should have been rather than what actually was.

Portions of Zbigniew Brzezinski's self-exculpatory memoirs of his experience as President Carter's national security adviser, for example, ring hollow with the contradictions of the strategic disarray that seems actually to have characterized those years. Brzezinski notes:

It has often been said that the Carter Administration had no central strategy. I believe this to be incorrect . . . . By and large it did have a defined philosophical perspective and certain basic priorities.

However, events later on, notably growing Soviet self-assertiveness, did deflect the Administration from some of its original goals. Moreover, policy disagreements both vis-à-vis Soviet actions and over Iran created the impression of an Administration whose objectives were not coherent.<sup>3</sup>

A more accurate indictment, he suggests, is that the Carter Administration was overly ambitious and failed in its efforts to project effectively to the public the degree to which Administration policy was motivated by a coherent and well-thought-out viewpoint. Considering the centrality of the perceptual dimension to effective strategy in the modern era, this is a significant, even if inadvertent, admission on Brzezinski's part.

Somewhat in contrast are the memoirs of Alexander Haig, President Reagan's first Secretary of State. Making due note of Haig's penchant for hyperbole and his tendentious allusions to political and personal enemies within, one can discern from his account how and why the current regime has shown itself to possess little more acumen in the national security field than did its predecessor. With a studied obliquity polished by many years of successfully traveling the corridors of power, Haig notes that especially in the conduct of foreign policy, President Reagan has accepted flawed results. This has been due in no small measure to the absence of a disciplined structure capable of channeling the ambition, rivalry, and competitiveness "which are natural in men" (such natural drives presumably most evident in Reagan's inner circle of advisers) toward constructive ends. In the absence of such structure, confusion results (and has resulted). Where Reagan's policies have failed to achieve desired results, the "twin Samsons of populism and petty ambition" have almost always been present—undermining in the process the three pillars of foreign policy that Haig claims to have articulated to the President: balance, consistency, and credibility (in his 1981 confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he identified these three pillars as balance, consistency, and *reliability*).<sup>4</sup>

Haig lends substance to the widespread public perception of Reagan's laissez-faire leadership and insulation from the hurly-burly of the policy process by stating:

As Secretary of State, I was mortally handicapped by lack of access to President Reagan. Not knowing his methods, not understanding his system of thought, not having had the opportunity of discussing policy in detail with him, I had to proceed on the assumption that our principles and our instincts were roughly the same, and that the integrated framework of policy that I advocated would therefore be acceptable to him. It was not, as we have seen, fully acceptable.<sup>5</sup>

More dispassionate and objective is the assessment of Robert Komer, a widely respected veteran of public service who was President Carter's Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. In an article aptly titled "The Neglect of Strategy," he observes that the US military posture, rather than being geared mainly to our strategic priorities, tends to be dictated more by political factors, economic constraints, technological imperatives, institutional inertia, and interservice competition for constrained resources. As a result, there is an enormous "disconnect" between US strategy and posture. In fact, Komer insists, "one is tempted to ask whether, under most postwar administrations, the US has ever had much of a non-

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nuclear strategy beyond such broad constructs as deterring Soviet aggression, containing Soviet expansionism, honoring our commitments, or just staying flexible.”<sup>6</sup>

Why this concern with the seeming esoterica of strategy-making? Even conceding that US performance abroad in recent years has been marred by a litany of failure—Vietnam and Iran being but the most visible examples—somehow we have muddled through. Despite the economic and psychological burdens of the arms race, we have avoided war. Despite growing budget and trade deficits, our standard of living has improved. Despite the emergence of a passel of overseas competitors, we remain the most economically and technologically advanced nation in the world. It seems grossly disingenuous to reject such logic out of hand with the flippant rejoinder, “Yes, but . . . .” Nonetheless, that is the answer. Without an integrating conceptual framework, an agglomeration of discrete policies, however rationally constructed, does not a strategy make.

If one accepts the orthodox view of the future, it quickly becomes self-evident that “muddling through” is a luxury the United States can ill afford for much longer. The postwar consensus that once made it relatively easy to discriminate between friends and enemies, and to tailor responses to threats, continues to erode. The still-emerging global economy has made it virtually impossible to maintain the artificial demarcation between foreign and domestic affairs. Exaggerated resource and trade dependencies exert a profound influence not only on our commitments abroad but on our very definition of vital interests. The nuclear specter and concomitant advances in conventional weapon technologies magnify the perceived disutility of force, at least among the advanced industrialized nations. Together, these factors feed the transformation of influence relationships such that power devolves inexorably to the nether reaches of the globe and, with increasing frequency, into the hands of little tyrants who possess the moxie to seize and exercise it. Heightened levels of complexity and uncertainty, accelerating rates of change, and the spatial

shrinkage wrought by improved communications and transportation technologies cause even seemingly insignificant local phenomena to assume global proportions.

Superimposed on this matrix of environmental conditions is a Soviet empire wracked by almost psychotic levels of paranoia and pathological feelings of insecurity. This confluence of evolving environment and perpetual threat has prompted former President Richard Nixon, and before him the eminent British authority on revolutionary warfare, Sir Robert Thompson, to argue, with no little degree of insight, that we have been engaged in World War III since the closing days of World War II. World War III, asserts Nixon, is the first truly global war—no corner of the earth being beyond its reach. It also is the first truly total war, waged on all levels of life and society. Thus, the totality of the nation’s resources—military power, economic power, willpower, the strength of the nation’s galvanizing ideas, and the clarity of its sense of purpose—is vital to the outcome.<sup>7</sup>

What is needed, suggests Professor Morton Kaplan, director of the University of Chicago’s Center for Strategic and Foreign Policy Studies, is a “global strategy.” Unfortunately, as President Nixon laments, Americans are unaccustomed to thinking in global terms, and uncomfortable with the exercise of power unless directly provoked.<sup>8</sup> With this, Professor Kaplan is in wholehearted agreement. He observes that despite the remarkable achievements of the first Truman Administration, most notably the Marshall Plan and NATO, American foreign policy has not been illuminated by considerations of grand strategy or by coherent global considerations. Even President Nixon and Henry Kissinger do not elude this harsh assessment. They often are given credit for a grand conception of strategy for articulating at a high level of abstraction the concepts of a five-power multipolarity and of linkage. However, says Kaplan, “these appear to be rationalizations rather than explanations of policy.”<sup>9</sup>

In the final analysis, it is intellectual flaccidity here at home more than it is some grand Soviet design of world domination that

creates a "present danger." That this should be so is attributable to a variety of factors—some intellectual, others merely structural and procedural. Some of the most noteworthy of these problems have been highlighted by John Collins in his authoritative study *U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique*, which was undertaken at the request of six reform-minded legislators, including Republican Congressman Newt Gingrich and Democratic Senator Gary Hart. Collins found, among other things:

- Disagreement on fundamental goals, which often are poorly identified (even undefined), makes it difficult or impossible for US defense decisionmakers to advise the President adequately or to give subordinate planners proper guidance.

- Divided loyalties and jurisdictional disputes pull the system apart at every level, causing cross-purpose planners to put a greater premium on intra-system competition than on partnerships.

- Neither selection nor retention policies consistently people the system with top officials or staff assistants who are prepared by education and experience to perform effectively.<sup>10</sup>

The true significance of these findings is not that they represent eureka-order insights, heretofore unknown, but rather that they are the synthesis of long-recognized, long-festering conditions noted repeatedly by scholars and practitioners alike. To date, however, remedial measures have been cosmetic at best—both in conception and in implementation. This is thundering tribute to bureaucracy's ineradicable resistance to change; but no less does it attest to the almost uniformly uncreative remedies that have been proposed—those revolving predominantly around the now-hackneyed, and largely moot, question of whether foreign policy should be centered in the White House or the State Department. This in itself is symptomatic of the collective myopia that afflicts us, for strategy is, by any measure, a more all-embracing concept than foreign policy; yet it rarely enters into the domain of public discourse.

Meaningful change, if ever it is to be effected, must begin with the structural and procedural modifications that over time will lead to more fundamental, less tractable intellectual adjustments. Structural change, in fact, is absolutely essential, for the existing institutions of government charged with responsibility for various aspects of national security affairs have shown themselves to be both ill-equipped and ill-disposed to assume the holistic perspective that effective, globally oriented strategy-making demands.

Zbigniew Brzezinski has suggested that in the years to come the President will need a more deliberate mechanism for national security planning than presently exists. This will call for an institution in which longer-term national strategic and diplomatic plans can be formulated on an integrated basis. It is important that such a body be an interagency organ, including a concern with international economics, since, Brzezinski believes, each department (State and Defense primarily) plans strictly on its own, "in the light of its own inevitably narrow departmental perspective."<sup>11</sup>

Like all large, bureaucratic organizations, the Pentagon and the State Department share characteristics that effectively remove them from consideration for providing broad-gauged, nonparochial advice to the President. Henry Kissinger has lent to this discussion the reasoned eye of both scholar and practitioner in observing:

A large bureaucracy, however organized, tends to stifle creativity. It confuses wise policy with smooth administration. In the modern state bureaucracies become so large that too often more time is spent in running them than in defining their purposes. A complex bureaucracy . . . favors the status quo, however arrived at, because short of an unambiguous catastrophe the status quo has the advantage of familiarity and it is never possible to prove that another course would yield superior results . . . [The] strong inclination of all departments is to narrow the scope for Presidential decision, not to

expand it. They are organized to develop a preferred policy, not a range of choices. If forced to present options, the typical department will present two absurd alternatives as straw men bracketing its preferred option.<sup>12</sup>

The organ created to ameliorate such bureaucratic impediments was the National Security Council (NSC). Chartered by the 1947 National Security Act, the NSC was designed specifically to “advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.”

In practice, the NSC, and more specifically the full-time staff that supports the President’s national security adviser, has manifested inherent flaws that make it as ill-suited a body as the individual departments to provide for the formulation of global strategy. First, the NSC has, with few exceptions, emphasized foreign and military policy issues to the virtual exclusion of related domestic policy issues. Second, the statutory membership of the NSC itself is not broad enough in composition to ensure the full integration of economic (including financial, industrial, and trade), technological, and psychological “warfare” matters so crucial to present-day national security affairs. Third, the NSC has performed much more of a clearinghouse function than it has served as a source of thoughtful, authoritative advice and counsel. Fourth, depending on the personality of the national security adviser and the peculiar operating propensities of the President, the NSC has, on occasion, become an instrument for the partisan advocacy of specific policies. Fifth, not infrequently the NSC has become the President’s shield against, and surrogate for, departmental advice, rather than an orchestrator and integrator of departmental initiatives. Finally, the composition, seniority, and experience of the NSC staff generally have not invested it with the legitimacy

necessary to exact respect from either the departments that must execute policies or important external audiences (such as Congress and the media). Furthermore, the rate of staff turnover from administration to administration has seriously inhibited continuity. As a consequence, policy consensus has not been purchased lightly.<sup>13</sup>

Experience has long shown that Presidents, recognizing the nature and shortcomings of existing institutions, will turn to organized bodies outside the system to alleviate the burden of dealing with difficult and controversial issues. Presidentially appointed commissions are the most frequently used mechanism for this purpose—the Scowcroft Commission on strategic nuclear forces and the Kissinger Commission on US Central America policy being notable recent examples. Composed of individuals of nationally recognized stature, such bodies offer five attributes that existing government institutions generally are unable to provide collectively: the *authoritativeness* of widely acknowledged experience and expertise; the *respectability* that goes with widespread name recognition; *independence* from pre-established institutional positions, and from Presidential influence and preferences; *bipartisanship*, resulting from the representation of a range of politico-ideological viewpoints; and *broad-gauged, long-range perspectives* that contrast with the narrow focus and short-term crisis mentality that run government from day to day.

Despite the advantages offered by commissions, and thus their continuing prevalence, the one additional attribute they possess—their *temporary, ad hoc* nature—seriously diminishes their overall utility for formulating, and advising the President on, global strategy. This requires a degree of *continuity* that only a permanent body can provide. Whatever form and mode of operation such a permanent body might assume, clearly there is a need to investigate the idea thoroughly.

Unknown to most of the general public, the idea of creating a permanent organizational entity dedicated to global strategic concerns is not new. Six independent

proposals along these lines have been made within the last decade alone. Substantively, all of these proposals share the common recognition that: (1) there is a crying need for the comprehensive integration of all the elements of power at the nation's disposal—military, political, economic, technological, psychological, etc.; (2) existing institutions are incapable of providing such broad focus; and (3) therefore, a new mechanism must be created for this purpose. From the more pedestrian standpoint of salesmanship, these various proposals also share certain commonalities: they have received virtually no public exposure; they have not been adopted by forceful advocates on Capitol Hill capable of bringing them into public view, stimulating much-needed dialogue, and thereby inducing even incremental change; and, as a consequence, there has been no serious consideration of, much less action on, such initiatives by either of the last two administrations. It is illuminating, therefore, to review what has been proposed.

*The Taylor and Allison-Szanton Proposals.* In 1976, two almost-identical proposals were made: one by Maxwell Taylor, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the other by Graham Allison and Peter Szanton, both fresh from major research responsibilities with the Murphy Commission (the Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy).<sup>14</sup> Both proposals call for the abolition of the NSC and its replacement by a new body of expanded membership (labeled the National Policy Council, or NPC, by Taylor; the "Ex-Cab," or Executive Committee of the Cabinet, by Allison-Szanton). The members of this new organ would be the present four statutory NSC members (the President, the Vice President, and the Secretaries of State and Defense); the Secretary of the Treasury; the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (now Health and Human Services); and a newly created representative of US economic interests (dubbed the Economic Representative of the President, or Ec-Rep, by Taylor). Other Cabinet officers and agency heads could participate in discussions of issues relevant to their responsibilities.

Taylor's NPC would be supported by four working panels representing the four principal sectors of national policy: (1) foreign-military-intelligence, chaired by the Secretary of State; (2) economic, chaired by the Ec-Rep; (3) fiscal-monetary, chaired by the Secretary of the Treasury; and (4) domestic welfare, chaired by the Secretary of HEW. Under the Allison-Szanton scheme, the main body would be supplemented by various Cabinet subcommittees and by ad hoc task forces consisting of small numbers of subcabinet officials and White House staff members.

Taylor would have an NPC staff, headed by an able staff director, to supervise the internal functioning of the council, prepare the agenda for council meetings, verify the readiness of papers for presentation to the council, record the President's decisions, disseminate orders to the proper agencies for implementation, and follow up on progress in executing those orders.

Under the Taylor plan a Center for Policy Research also would be created, patterned along the lines of two widely dissimilar institutions: the National Institutes of Health and the National War College. The center's overall mission would be to study the causes, prevention, and cures of some of the principal ills of government, economy, and society, and the formulation of policies for coping with them in their present and projected forms. A collateral responsibility would be the training of officials for future participation in research programs and policy formulation.

*The Wedemeyer and Collins Proposals.* Near-identical plans also have been proposed by retired Army generals Albert C. Wedemeyer, chief architect of the Victory Program that provided the blueprint for America's conduct of World War II, and Arthur S. Collins, Jr., former Deputy Commander-in-Chief, US Army Europe.<sup>15</sup> Both would create a national advisory body—called the National Strategy Council by Wedemeyer, the National Strategy Advisory Group by Collins—which, as an official agency of the federal government, would analyze long-range US interests, identify clear strategic objectives, clarify national

problems, and formulate recommendations on national strategy, considering the full range of economic, military, technological, and social elements of national power.

Possessing strictly advisory functions, this new body would be an objective, non-partisan agency of such competence that it would be accorded the prestige and authority (though obviously not the formal power) of the Supreme Court. It would not replace any existing government agency, including the NSC, which would continue to be responsive to the President for daily advice, guidance, and action. Since the organization would enjoy semi-autonomous status comparable to the Federal Reserve Board, it would have no formal connection with the NSC or any other part of the White House. It would be entirely free from political entanglements with current operations, from the budgetary activities of the executive and legislative branches, and from congressional control and special interest groups. Advice would be provided regularly for the enlightenment and guidance of both the executive and legislative branches and, when appropriate, for the general public as well.

Membership would consist of 11 or 12 distinguished citizens appointed to long terms (8-12 years is suggested by Collins; up to life, by Wedemeyer) by the President and Congress. These would be men and women of wisdom and vision, unquestionable patriotism, and mature judgment, from the fields of politics, economics, history, law, business, and the military. Each member would have a small professional staff, and there would be a small secretariat for the body as a whole.

The council, or group, would be located at Fort McNair, in Washington, D.C., the site of the National War College, which would become a supporting research and educational arm renamed the "National Strategy Center."

*The Watson Proposal.* Most modest in scope is the recent proposal of Thomas J. Watson, Jr., chairman emeritus of the IBM Corporation and former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup> In arguing for the renunciation of politics-as-usual and a return to bipartisanship, Watson considers the trend

toward blue-ribbon commissions, such as the Scowcroft and Kissinger commissions, to be a mere palliative. Such ad hoc task forces, he justifiably believes, may be perceived by the public as little more than devices to gain wide support for the President's views.

He therefore calls for the creation of a permanent National Security Commission, authorized by legislation and possessing a broad mandate and built-in independence to ensure that its findings would be widely accepted as nonpartisan. Membership would comprise individuals of great personal stature and experience in national security affairs and other fields (e.g., former Presidents, Secretaries of State and Defense, and private citizens of widely acknowledged integrity and good judgment).

The commission would take up only watershed issues of US-Soviet relations and would be charged with assessing the future consequences of current government decisions. It would serve only in an advisory capacity. Presidents would be free to reject or ignore its advice, but only with the most measured caution since commission members would represent considerable nonpartisan wisdom. Congress also could seek the commission's advice and publicize its views in hearings, if so desired.

*The Global Strategy Council Proposal.* The most ambitious plan put forth to date is that of the United States Global Strategy Council.<sup>17</sup> An ad hoc organization of private citizens, the council was founded in December 1981 following the failed attempt of its founder, Raymond V. Raehn, a Virginia real estate developer and former naval officer, to capture the attention of high Administration officials to consider an official government body of the same name.

The original plan, which called for the creation of a Global Strategy Council as a national advisory arm of the President, contained four general features. First, the term "global strategy" would be intentionally popularized by a high-level group having the President's official sanction. This would supplant the often confusing term "foreign policy," thereby clarifying the necessity of strategy over mere policy. Second,



this high-level group, working independently of the existing system, would produce strategic options which the President could compare with the options produced within the system. Third, whether or not its options were selected by the President, the expertise of the high-level group would enable it to articulate an appropriate and convincing strategic rationale to Congress and the American public. Thus, in effect, the members of the group could serve as the President's "strategic spokesmen." Fourth, the very existence of the group would legitimize the concept of global strategy and provide a suitable basis for educating and training global strategists and for developing a career track for their subsequent utilization.

The goals of the council have remained relatively constant over time. In codifying the need that exists within this country for strategic enlightenment, they provide a clarion call for those who would seek a fundamental restructuring of the existing national security machinery. Key among these goals are the following:

- To strengthen a strategic orientation within the government and elsewhere that permits the United States to cope better with global conflict and promote common strategic objectives among allies.
- To promote common strategic objectives between the executive and the Congress as a basis for solidifying a bipartisan approach to US global affairs.
- To promote a broad, integrated approach to US global affairs that consists of a sound balance between political, economic, military, psychological, and moral elements, together with a matching budget mechanism that coordinates these elements while at the same time remaining flexible enough to meet changing conditions.
- To institutionalize a national strategic memory.
- To promote innovations in the conceptions and procedures of the national security system.
- To promote the selection and training of qualified individuals for a role as future US strategists.

As the council's plan has matured since 1981, it now has come to encompass a more

structured set of elements. First, a bipartisan *Presidential Commission* would be established under the direction of the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs. The commission's mandate would be to determine: if the goals defined by the Global Strategy Council are valid; if there is sufficient attention being paid to the integration of tactical and strategic objectives in the day-to-day formulation and execution of national security policy; and if an Office of Strategic Affairs is desirable within the White House.

Second, if deemed desirable by the commission, an *Office of Strategic Affairs* would be established under the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs. Its purposes would be to implement the goals approved by the commission; to ensure that strategic analysis is integrated into the regular policy process; and to inculcate the members of the NSC staff with a strategic orientation.

Third, as appropriate, an *Institute for Strategic Affairs* would be established. This would be a graduate-level institution to educate and train executive branch personnel with national-security related duties; staff members of appropriate congressional committees; selected Senators and Congressmen, both newly elected and on a periodic refresher basis; key personnel representing public policy organizations; and selected faculty from prestigious universities.

Finally, *Committees on Strategic Affairs* would be established within each house of Congress. The significance of this particular measure is borne out somewhat by the words of Maxwell Taylor, who, in discussing his own proposal for a National Policy Council, remarked:

It is most unlikely that Congress would be willing to adjust its own committee organizations to dovetail with the panels of the National Policy Council, an adjustment which though not essential would be most desirable for effective collaboration between the Legislative and Executive branches.<sup>18</sup>

Several dozen distinguished citizens from all walks of life have lent their names to the Global Strategy Council as "members." These include, among others, such in-



dividuals as former CIA Director William Colby; William Hyland, editor of *Foreign Affairs*; Bobby Inman, former Deputy Director of the CIA; Lyman Lemnitzer and Thomas Moorer, former Chairmen of the JCS; Clare Boothe Luce, former Congresswoman and Ambassador; Lyn Nofziger, former political adviser to President Reagan; Norman Podhoretz, editor of *Commentary*; Brent Scowcroft, former Presidential Assistant for National Security Affairs; former Senator Richard Stone; and Physicist Edward Teller. When considered in conjunction with the stature of the other individuals who themselves have proposed restructuring the existing national security machinery, this should generate a strong signal that change is in order. That the issue has yet to be brought fully into public view, much less to stimulate actual reform, is due cause for concern.

None of the alternatives discussed here is, in and of itself, complete or without flaw. But each, in its own way, could contribute to more effective global strategy and, by association, to enhanced national security. Therefore, we need neither reflexive change nor obstinate refusal to change, but rather a reasoned public dialogue that will enable us not only to appreciate the intrinsic value of strategy but also to assess candidate mechanisms for fully institutionalizing its effective practice.

Congress must be the catalyst for this much-needed public dialogue, for the system itself will not self-correct in the absence of external pressure. Bureaucracy has a way of beating down and swallowing up even the most resolute iconoclasts. Once a person becomes part of the system, he inevitably becomes captive of it and forced to defend it against all foes. Thus, the belief fed by the system—that all change is merely change for its own sake—becomes a bogey that perpetuates the insidious effects of sameness for the sake of sameness. In this regard, the early experience of the Global Strategy Council is worth noting. Responding by letter to the council's attempt to bring its proposal to the attention of Vice President Bush, retired

Admiral Daniel Murphy, the Vice President's chief of staff, observed:

The draft [Global Strategy Council paper] displays some very sound and imaginative thinking. However, we are for the most part committed to making our existing institutions work better, such that creating yet another one for strategic thinking is a good idea whose time has not yet come. I am personally not convinced that "strategic thinkers are not by nature very attracted by departmental positions." That is where the action is, and I believe we have some pretty good strategic thinkers in this Administration.<sup>19</sup>

Lest there be a temptation to accept such bureaucratic legerdemain at face value, we would do well to acknowledge the principle embodied in the following words of Thomas Jefferson:

I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions, but laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still a coat which fitted him when a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors.

In the most abstract sense, an institution is an accepted, identifiable set of values for which there is a broad measure of consensus. Some organizational structure generally exists to serve as the tangible instrumentality and guarantor of those values. Accordingly, the full institutionalization of strategy and strategic thinking would seem to call for a legitimating organizational framework that is better able to achieve the normative criteria agreed upon by such authorities as Generals Taylor, Wedemeyer, and Collins, Ambassador Watson, and others: coherence,

continuity, integration, bipartisanship, independence, etc.

Strategy provides an intellectual compass for steering course through the demands of the governing environment. Its raison d'être is the avoidance of war, as we have been told by perhaps the most distinguished strategist of our day, B. H. Liddell Hart, and over 2000 years before him by Chinese scholar Sun Tzu. The acme of skill is to achieve one's objectives without resort to force. This requires the sophisticated orchestration of the many other elements of national power with which the United States is blessed. If ever there were a way to unite hawks and doves, militarists and peaceniks, armers and disarmers, and thereby to build the national consensus needed to carry us through the turbulent decades ahead, it is through the collective adoption of a more refined strategic sense. In the near term, organizational change promises to be the most fruitful path to such long-term intellectual growth.

#### NOTES

1. See Edward N. Luttwak, "On the Meaning of Strategy . . . for the United States in the 1980s," in W. Scott Thompson, ed., *National Security in the 1980s: From Weakness to Strength* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1980), pp. 259-73.
2. Colin S. Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security*, 6 (Fall 1981), 21-47.
3. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), pp. 56-57.

4. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 353-56.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 356.
6. Robert W. Komer, "The Neglect of Strategy," *Air Force Magazine*, 67 (March 1984), 51-56, 59.
7. In his book *The Real War* (New York: Warner Books, 1980), Nixon devotes a full chapter (pp. 17-45) to specific discussion of World War III, although his views on this are a theme throughout the book. For Thompson's views, see p. 166.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
9. Morton A. Kaplan, "Global Policy: The Challenge of the 1980s," in Kaplan, ed., *Global Policy: Challenge of the 80s* (Washington: Washington Institute for Values in Public Policy, 1984), pp. 7-53.
10. John M. Collins, *U.S. Defense Planning: A Critique* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1982), p. 197.
11. Brzezinski, p. 538.
12. Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 39, 43.
13. For especially illuminating and thorough critiques of the NSC, see I. M. Destler, "National Security Advice to U.S. Presidents: Some Lessons from Thirty Years," *World Politics*, 29 (January 1977), 143-76; and "National Security Management: What Presidents Have Wrought," *Political Science Quarterly*, 9 (Winter 1980-81), 573-88.
14. Maxwell D. Taylor, *Precarious Security* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), pp. 105-23; and Graham Allison and Peter Szanton, *Remaking Foreign Policy: The Organizational Connection* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), pp. 78-80, 84.
15. Albert C. Wedemeyer, "Needed Now: A National Strategy Council," *American Legion Magazine*, 116 (February 1984), 17; and "Memorandum on a National Strategy Council," unpublished (9 July 1983); and Arthur S. Collins, Jr., "Salvaging National Interests: The National Strategy Advisory Group," *SAIS Review*, 4 (Winter-Spring 1984), 131-43.
16. Thomas J. Watson, Jr., "Establish a Security Panel," *The New York Times*, 29 November 1983, p. A31.
17. Virtually all of the proposals of the US Global Strategy Council are contained in unpublished, generally undated papers, which can be obtained from the council's offices at 6861 Elm Street, McLean, Va. 22101.
18. Taylor.
19. Correspondence dated 9 October 1981.

