Planning for Conflict in the Twenty-First Century
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Herodotus, The Histories

Foreword

Herodotus: Piloting a Stealth Bomber bound for Baghdad, I recalled his magnificent narrative of the wars between Greek and Persian. Opening night of Iraqi Freedom, 18 hours into the mission, eastbound from Missouri to Iraq; another 20 hours until our wheels would touch down at the home airfield, and I couldn’t shake from my mind The Histories. I recalled Herodotus’s digressions on the deadly flying snakes of Arabia, the Amazons who must kill a man before they can marry, the temple prostitutes of Babylon, and the fascinating excursus on Egypt. Herodotus is no mere fabulist, however. His work complements Homer’s epic poetry and also sets the stage for the Attic literature that bequeathed to us the mythogenic struggles at Marathon, Thermopylae, and Salamis.

In the midst of reflections on ancient history—and with the horizon lit by AAA and SAM fire—I released one 5,000-pound GPS-guided “Bunker Buster.” A trio of one-ton high-explosive penetrators followed. These weapons laid waste to a command center in the basement of Saddam’s main Presidential Palace—bringing to mind a lightning bolt hurled by Zeus. Broadcast live on 24-hour news channels, this moment was the culmination of 15 months of preposterously rigorous planning, coordination, and jargon-festooned briefings.

Despite my private inclination to view technology with other than idolatrous eyes, on the mission to Baghdad I found myself engrossed in the operation of computers, broadband satellite radios, digital engine controls, and guided weapons. I owe my physical safety and combat effectiveness to the wizardry of stealth technology, but my warrior
soul is by no means instructed by superheterodyne, nuclear-hardened processors, and blended-wing composite airframes. The gadgetry and processes—while often decisive in tactical engagements—can lead us to forget that war is first and foremost a struggle of will and mind, the most intense form of social interaction. This timeless truth has been brilliantly cast in Planning for Conflict in the Twenty-first Century. The book’s argument is cogent, grave, and majestic, embellished by ripping good humor and perceptive historical analysis. Hanley’s narrative strides through new and familiar terrain with a zest that is as pleasing as it is illuminating.

I find Hanley’s characterization of planning staffs and the officers who command these organizations especially engaging because Hanley is a gifted observer whose commentary deserves attention. Every system is perfectly designed for the product it begets. This holds true for the mind and character of the modern flag officer and strategist. No one would mistake any flag officer I have ever encountered for a dunderhead, but too often such an officer’s ambition centers on paying homage to, and defending, the bureaucratic system that has feathered his or her cap. The desire to get ahead, to make rank, attenuates or befogs one’s understanding of officership in the ideal. The most successful officers (based on the nominal qualifier of rank) are besotted with trendy enthusiasms derived from the sociological view of the MBA student. Professor Hanley dares to demand more from our leaders. He poses and answers decisively the question of how to educate officers in ways that increase the possibility that the U.S. Armed Forces will produce senior leaders endowed with the well-tutored and supple intellect of a Washington, Bismarck, Churchill, or Liddell-Hart.

If our planning staffs are to be damned for one thing in particular, it is that, in their hurry and bustle, they provide answers to the wrong questions. Their lodestar is a meretricious compound of intellectually arid doctrine and catchphrases destitute of substantive meaning. Planning becomes an exercise in discovering problems that conform to ready-made solutions. In taking on what really is an intellectually friable status quo, Hanley strikes a concussive blow. Witness his commentary on the disheartening absence of a clear-headed strategic plan for transforming Iraq into a reliable ally—cultural as well as strategic—of the United States.

We ignore at our peril the core of Hanley’s argument that a narrow ration of first-hand combat experience seasoned by bureaucratic sophistry can never compensate for the absence of historical knowledge fortified by a mind properly trained to wield it. As an active duty officer, I am indebted to Professor Hanley for the time we’ve spent discussing wars and generalship, past and present. I am honored by the opportunity to write a foreword to this splendid book, which is at
heart a work of reclamation. Hanley is a gadfly, an iconoclast, a stalk-and-ambush slayer of sacred cows. He challenges our basic assumptions about the planning and conduct of modern war in ways that should make those of us with recent combat experience grateful.

Hanley’s book is erudite and jocular, with a classicist’s sense of irony. Any citizen who cares about the collective mind of our military leaders will profit by reading and rereading *Planning for Conflict in the Twenty-first Century*, which serves as an indispensable resource for us to rethink the nature and purpose of the education of American warriors and statesmen. I thank him for doing work that is every bit as noble as it is difficult.

As one begins with Herodotus, so one must end:

\[
\text{He is the best man who, when making his plans,}
\text{fears and reflects on everything that can happen}
\text{to him, but in the moment of action is bold.}
\]

Lieutenant Colonel Jason Armagost, USAF
August 2007
Sedalia, Missouri
I am indebted to a number of people whose advice, encouragement, and constructive criticism made this book possible: Lt Col Jason Armagost (USAF), Lt James Dolbow (USCGR), Professor Jeanne Heidler (USAF Academy), Lt Col Jim Lacey (AUS, Ret.), Professor James H. Meredith, Lt Gen James Mattis (USMC), and MCPOCG (Ret.) Vincent Patton III. Luck—or Providence—brought me into contact with the United States Naval Institute in 2005. I have benefited immensely from my association with Major General Tom Wilkerson (USMC, Ret.), CEO of the United States Naval Institute, the staff of the United States Naval Institute, and my colleagues on the Institute’s Editorial Board of Directors—all of whom breathe life into the Institute’s motto: “Transforming Defense through the power of ideas.” My students at the Joint Forces Staff College were an inspiration to me as well, particularly Lt Col Dave Tabor (USAF) and Captain Tom McDonough (USN). Most important, I am indebted to my wife, Terry, and my son, Bryce, whose love and encouragement sustained me throughout the research and writing of this book.
Introduction

This book is part essay and part memoir. Twenty years experience in the United States Air Force (USAF) has informed my views to a considerable extent, but the greater impetus behind this work came from a lifetime’s reading in military history. The eleven-year-old boy I remember was enthralled by the historical writings that adorned the shelves not only at home and in bookstores, but also the magazine rack at a nearby shop. My father, a nose gunner in a B-24 Liberator during the Second World War, would drive me to the neighborhood pharmacy where, once a week or so, I would be allowed to pick up one of the monographs from the Ballantine Illustrated History of World II series and, if he were in an unusually generous mood, a styrene plastic model kit (my favorites were battleships and tanks—upon which I inevitably imposed a personal signature, glue-stained fingerprints). The Ballantine editors also published a monthly magazine on World War II. After scrutinizing each issue soon after it arrived, I would dutifully file it away in one of the gold-embossed black binders that came with the subscription.

Reading the Ballantine books was for me something more than a pleasant diversion. I recall enjoying dinner out with what my father, at the time, remarked was an unseemly and greedy relish, my appetite having been abnormally stimulated earlier in the afternoon by reading Alan Wykes’ account of the death-dealing privation imposed on the residents of Leningrad by German forces that had invested the city. It would be false to say that the Ballantine authors made history come alive. History cannot help but live, and it doesn’t need to be
resuscitated or resurrected, if only because the present is a seamless outgrowth of the past. Though they hardly qualify as masterworks, the Ballantine books exemplify good historical writing. In only 160 pages—many of which were given over to photographs and drawings—the author of each volume provided a thoroughly engaging discussion of a given subject: battles, campaigns, weaponry, and commanders. It is very much to be regretted that the series is long out of print and that the paperback format—unlike the lucidity of the writing and the cogency of the argument—does not stand up well to the passage of time.

Nothing like the Ballantine series exists today, and even if there were such a collection in print one might wonder who would buy it? The rising generation would hardly be expected to constitute a readership. It is likely that the elegant prose would soon overtax the patience of contemporary adolescents and young adults—who, if they have a fancy at all to learn about the battle for Tarawa or the Raid on Saint-Nazaire, can pick up the television remote control and catch a twenty-minute video presentation. This is a pity. History rightly understood is a narrative conveyed by words on a page, the logic of which requires an understanding of the complex, at times contradictory, and perhaps unfathomable motivations of many people acting on circumstance. History can be neither expressed nor understood through a medium best suited to lowbrow entertainment and placed in the service of retailers peddling their wares—potato chips, automobiles, drugs—that claim to have eclipsed character and education in realizing contentment. It is true that there are plenty of history books published nowadays—clothbound, adorned with footnotes, and comprising many hundreds of pages, their authors impressively credentialed—but few if any of these can inspire in the same way that the Ballantine books nourished my imagination and impelled me toward a career in the armed forces.

Having spent more than twenty years on active duty has taught me the foolishness of placing great faith in experience that is divorced from a cultivated historical understanding. In reflecting on my time in the USAF, one realizes that a great majority of the day is spent discharging humdrum obligations—mastering one’s technical specialty, keeping abreast of administrative matters, wearing out the periods of inactivity on deployments with shoptalk and other strains of light banter—while the duty to study one’s profession, and a duty it must always be, declines in status to an exotic and dispensable pastime. What happens to most of us is that we become increasingly absorbed in our careers, and gradually the weight of obligation and habit produces an efficient administrator or technician utterly bereft
of intellectual resourcefulness and allergic to rigorous, independent thought.

At first glance this frame of mind might appear unexceptionable—service members are expected to skillfully operate the bureaucratic and technical machinery of the modern military—but for officers who by rank or position are expected to exercise sound judgment on strategic and operational matters it can be dangerous. Commanders and war planners most especially should unceasingly develop their critical intelligence, or at least keep it from ossifying in the sterile atmosphere of bureaucratic culture. It is a misfortune that the outlook of the technician and administrator has come to dominate our profession. Our doctrine and our attitude to professional education have enshrined the idea that war is largely a mechanical activity rather than an intense form of social intercourse—a state of affairs that can only disquiet the student of military history.

I was moved to write this book in part by my experiences as a faculty member at the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC), Norfolk, VA. The underlying weakness of the Joint & Combined Warfighting School, which handles the bulk of the college’s students, is that the curriculum is based on the terribly misbegotten idea that an officer can be prepared for service on a joint staff—which among other duties produces war plans—by taking a course of a few weeks duration that focuses entirely on administrative matters. I was able to observe firsthand the establishment of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS), which was intended to offer a postgraduate education in war planning. Sadly, JAWS turned out to be nothing more than a gargantuan replica of the shorter course, with little prospect of improvement given the entrenched culture of the institution. The Joint Forces Staff College—which can only reflect habits of mind that obtain throughout the Department of Defense (DOD)—is devoted to producing bureaucratic minions, rather than strengthening the intellectual ability of officers who will help write the war plans upon which our national security ultimately depends.

The old saw that war is too important to be left to generals is, I think, foolish because it is unhistorical; it is akin to asserting that the practice of medicine and law are too important to be left to physicians and attorneys. But as officership deteriorates into a synonym for “technician/administrator,” and thus grows estranged from its traditional connotation “resolution in the service of sound judgment,” the canard that military officers cannot be trusted to wield ideas might yet prove to be true. The present volume will have served the military profession, and so the national interest, if it helps to generate reform on how the armed forces train, educate, and promote officers who shape
our military strategy and write our war plans. Collaterally, my hope is that military readers in particular will discover the professional and intellectual improvement that wide reading in the masters of historical narrative offers to them.

March 2007
Kissing Camels Estates
Colorado Springs, CO
Chapter 1

Lessons Not Learned: Strategy, War Plans, and the United States Armed Forces

The most influential official document of the twentieth century came not from the desk of a head of state, but from the hand of an officer in charge of a military planning staff. The aims and assumptions of the Schlieffen Plan reflected the vainglory of European civilization, as well as the antagonisms and rivalries that in maturity would undermine a culture more than 500 years in the making. War is the single greatest actuator of human progress and misery, and one cannot understand the twentieth century—culturally, politically, demographically—without grasping the causes of the First World War and its aftermath. War plans determine whom we fight, how we fight, where and under what provocation we fight—and to a large extent they shape the peace that follows. All plans take into account the uncertainty of war, but those that are judiciously conceived limit the unattractive options that confront civilian and military decision makers once the shooting starts.

In the American mind, the establishment of a general staff devoted to building war plans in the abstract has always been a faintly disreputable idea. There are a number of reasons for what seems to be an implausible cultural trait, given the supremacy of our military might at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Like most every other nation, the United States was established by war, which in our case was less a revolution than an act of secession realized by violence. But unique among major powers in the Western world, the founders of the United States quite consciously eschewed anchoring their legitimacy in military prowess, either their own or that of their ancestors. The
United States was and perhaps still is seen as a grand experiment: a country founded on rights that inhere in the individual, and that is devoted to free enterprise. The ideas—the perfectibility of man, the decadence of existing social and political orders in Europe, the primacy of reason and experience in explaining phenomenon—generated by Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire, Adam Smith, Rousseau, David Hume, and the Encyclopedists shaped the mental outlook of the author of the Declaration of Independence most especially.

The first commander in chief of the American army accepted the appointment not with an eagerness born of an appetite for martial glory, but with the modest reluctance of one who sees military service as a civic obligation. Washington’s military reputation was built on his achievements in the service of the Crown during the French and Indian War, but he thought of himself not as a professional soldier, but as a gentleman who made his living as a planter. “Tho’ I am truly sensible of the high Honour done me in this Appointment,” George Washington wrote to the President of the Continental Congress (16 June 1775):

yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and Military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important Trust: However, as the congress desires I will enter upon this momentous duty, and exert every power I Possess In their Service for the Support of the glorious Cause: I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for the distinguished testimony of their Approbation. But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every Gentn. in the room, that I this day declare with utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the Command I am honoured with.¹

How different in character and temperament was Washington from the French general who midwifed modern France!

American indifference to martial culture was not lost on distinguished observers from abroad. Alexis de Tocqueville says nothing about the armed forces of the United States, apart from making a prediction that the growth of commerce will require the development of a first-rate navy. Seven decades after the publication of Democracy in America, James Bryce observed much the same thing. In the fifteen hundred pages that comprise The American Commonwealth, only a few paragraphs are given over to commentary on American military power—and on this point Bryce can be said to echo de Tocqueville in his remark that a unique feature of American life is that a lively patriotism coexists with a diminutive military force and a desire to avoid war. From the start, then, Americans have viewed war as an aberration—neither a defining part of our past nor a necessary or inevitable constituent of our future. Naturally enough, the idea of planning for wars
that might never come to pass has been at odds with our national character.²

Also contributing to America's aversion to the founding of a general staff devoted to war planning is our British legal heritage. Standing armies were held to be the instrument of tyrants. When the last English king who asserted royal prerogatives was put to death in 1649, he was replaced by Oliver Cromwell—a general who, on the way to establishing a despotism of his own, employed his new model army to dispense with the legislature he professed to serve. The Continental Congress, for example, steadfastly rebuffed General Washington's plea for the establishment of an office that would handle ordinary staff duties, on the grounds that doing so would give too much power to a military commander. And even after a "Board of War" was created, the Continental Congress controlled most of its functions.³

The first seven decades of our existence were relatively peaceful when compared with the European experience over the preceding two centuries. The Civil War was, for us, an anomaly. On the one side, an inadequately provisioned force that was expertly led, fought with great skill to achieve a limited strategic objective; on the other side, a large and well-provisioned army, comprised, for the most part, of volunteers, but equally endowed with talented commanders [late blooming though they were], succeeded in bludgeoning its opponent into submission. In the years following Appomattox, the armed forces of the United States fell into the mold that had been cast for them at the nation's founding. The chief duty of the army was to put down the belligerence of Indian tribes, quell domestic disturbances [usually the result of labor disputes], skirmish with enfeebled rivals such as Spain and Mexico who sought to challenge Manifest Destiny, and pacify a handful of petty colonial territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific. The navy—of a suitable size by 1900 and, unlike the army, thoroughly modernized—guarded our commercial shipping routes and kept watch over our coasts.

In spite of the immense achievements of the Prussian General Staff in the war with France 1870–1871, indifference toward operational planning obtained among America's senior military leadership through the first years of the twentieth century. Up until that time the United States made no serious effort to plan for war in any systematic way. The usual practice was for the president to seek a declaration of war from Congress, followed by a rapid expansion of the ranks by volunteers. In the mean time the president and his advisers would devise strategic objectives. Thanks in large measure to Alfred Thayer Mahan, in the early 1890s the Navy War College began drafting war plans that reflected America's standing as a newly hatched world power, but these drew no connections between operational and strategic objectives,
and—of much greater importance—nothing was said about the peace sought by the other side. One plan, for example, was based on war with Great Britain, but it took no account of what might provoke the conflict, nor what political and diplomatic aims were to be achieved, and not much thought was given to collaboration with the army. At about the same time, the army began studying the possibility of British aggression against the United States. The notional plan that army officers came up with centered on an invasion of Canada. The navy was not consulted.\(^4\) In spite of their flaws, these exercises were wholly commendable, but they reflected neither a mature understanding of war planning (as exemplified by the work of the German General Staff), nor the priorities of the War Department.

In expressing his opposition to Elihu Root’s move to create a general staff in 1902, General Nelson A. Miles, chief of staff of the army, asserted that good generalship obviates the need for detailed planning. “As far as a plan of campaign is concerned,” General Miles declared during congressional hearings on the subject, “that must depend on circumstances, and if a general is not able to make a plan and carry it out \(\textit{instantly}\), he is not competent to command an army, or a division, or a corps.”\(^5\) General Miles was no doubt motivated by parochial and self-serving concerns: Root’s General Staff idea threatened the authority of the office of chief of staff of the army. Even so, the intellectual underpinnings of Miles’ argument reflected America’s limited experience with modern war. It is unlikely that General Miles or any other influential officer had read \textit{On War}, though Clausewitz’s ideas were critically evaluated in Jomini’s \textit{Summary of the Art of War}, a book that was widely known in the United States in the nineteenth century and provided the theoretical basis for such military doctrines as existed. An English translation of \textit{On War} appeared in 1874, but there is little evidence to suggest the book was much read on the western side of the Atlantic. Even so, Miles’s viewpoint can be said to reflect the distinc-tively romantic notion of genius that Clausewitz adapted to the profession of arms in what is perhaps the most engrossing section of his book. It is far more likely that General Miles’ perspective was informed by indifference or a misunderstanding of recent German victories over Austria and France, and fortified by an uncritical appreciation of Napoleon, Charles XII, Wellington, Gustaphus Adolphus, and Julius Caesar. These legendary commanders triumphed because of their robust battlefield intuition and the élan of their troops. Operational planning for them was never much more than an ad hoc consideration of transport and logistics. Before the age of Helmuth von Moltke, up-and-coming field commanders most often were tutored by brilliant and charismatic patrons; deliberate war planning was never put in the form of a system.\(^6\)
A word must be said about Elihu Root (1845–1937), who served as the United States secretary of war from 1899 to 1904. Apart from a brief stint in the New York militia, Root never served in the armed forces. When President McKinley asked him to replace the feckless Russell A. Alger as secretary of war, Root suspended his flourishing legal practice in New York and uprooted his family, not to pursue fame or fortune, but out of a highly developed civic-mindedness, and probably also because he assumed his tenure would be brief—a refreshing sabbatical from the familiar routines of law. Perhaps because he was untouched by the traditions and crotchets of military culture, Root brought intellectual vibrancy, enormous energy, and an impermeable disinterestedness to his job, which allowed him to see clearly the inadequacies of the status quo. He possessed a keen apprehension of both the flaws in contemporary military culture and the specific remedies that would most effectively address them. Root imposed systematic operational planning on a United States Army that had at least mildly resisted the idea up until that time and for a short while afterward. His achievement stands as a rebuke to the habits of mind that bureaucracies often encourage: dim-witted inertia born of careerism, reflexive contempt for ambitious ideas, and truculently parochial self-seeking.

Root was also endowed with a prescient understanding of America’s strategic circumstances. The extirpation of Spain from the Western Hemisphere and our acquisition of her overseas possessions, in combination with our astonishing industrial and demographic growth, meant that the United States had become a world power whose exalted position would bring forth competitors and enemies as well as allies. Root also appreciated the ramifications of technological advances on military operations. No commander could ever again enjoy the luxury of a panoramic view of the battle, as had been the case up until the first half of the nineteenth century. The rapid mobilization of vast armies comprised mostly of conscripts and reservists; the extended range and accuracy of artillery; the development of the magazine-loading rifle; the steam engine; the advent of the machine gun, the telegraph, and the field telephone: these things would make command in the field infinitely more difficult, and perhaps impossible, were not an efficient staff system in place to invigorate and discipline the creation, transmission, and execution of military orders. Root understood that the great warlord approach to fighting—in which an illustrious commander, sometimes by his mere presence, determined the outcome—must yield to the demands of administration and the ineluctable industrialization of modern combat.

Incredible though it may seem given the work of Elihu Root, the United States Army did not begin working in earnest on what we
would nowadays consider deliberate war planning, until the middle of President Woodrow Wilson's first term, which was shortly before the outbreak of war in Europe. War Plan Orange dealt with the possibility of Japanese aggression against the Philippines. War Plan Black assumed an attempt by Germany to dominate the Western Hemisphere by invading the United States directly, or by establishing a base of operations in the West Indies.

Even when war broke out in Europe, updated editions of Plan Black and Plan Orange reflected our isolationist temper more than strategic reality. In early 1917 the United States had drawn up plans based on the possibility of a Japanese invasion of the West Coast. The plan for Europe envisioned an American expeditionary force launching an offensive against Bulgaria via Greece, and attacking German forces in France in concert with the Dutch army. No serious consideration was given to fighting as part of a coalition that included the French and British armies. Much of the blame for this rather pathetic state of affairs must be laid at the feet of President Wilson, who preferred moral preening in the guise of diplomacy and only reluctantly asked for a declaration of war, after the wide publication of the Zimmerman telegram and the German decision to unleash unrestricted submarine warfare forced him to do so. The armed forces deserve censure as well, if only because the plans endorsed by the senior leadership took no account of the character and likely trajectory of the war then in progress.8

The outlook of the manager and the technician had come to dominate American culture by the mid-1920s, and this, combined with our irenic temper, gave license to—indeed conferred a special authority on—a mechanical approach to war planning.9 One sees the modernist temperament on display in contemporary American literature—two unforgettable characters come immediately to mind: Jay Gatsby and George F. Babbitt—and in popular culture from the 1920s onward. Ancestral wisdom, a reverence for the past, and skepticism about change in any form: the American experience largely repudiated these habits of mind, and in its stead embraced an orgiastic conflation of the future, with progress coupled with an eagerness to equate what is old with error and obsolescence. The idolatry of commerce could not help but influence the armed forces. Witness the founding of the Industrial War College in 1924, which was intended to offer courses on business administration, the large-scale purchasing of military supplies, industrial technology, and the like—in other words, fields of knowledge that would bear on mobilization and the provisioning of forces in the field. Strategy as an idea did not figure largely.

In the 1930s the War Plans Division—a legacy of Elihu Root—working in concert with the Army War College, produced the Rainbow
plans that shaped successful operations in World War II. But even this brief and rather dim flickering of intellectual vitality soon disappeared beneath the exigency of how the war was fought. At the end of the day, we managed to defeat Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany as quickly as we did, because the war was determined less by maneuver than by attrition. Operational plans centered on logistics. In the Far East the chief challenge was not the possibility of a major counteroffensive by the Japanese, but our ability to deliver sufficient quantities of materiel at decisive points, while denying the same to the enemy. In Europe the situation was much the same. Victory hinged on the expeditious movement of fuel, munitions, and replacements of men and heavy goods to the front. By the time of Operation Overlord, the German armed forces had been greatly weakened by three years of hard fighting against the Soviet Union. Many of the best officers and NCOs, as well as the bulk of their equipment, had perished in Russia. It’s worth recalling also that the German army’s greatest defeat—far more catastrophic even than Stalingrad—was inflicted by a series of Soviet offensives during the summer of 1944. Between July and September, the Wehrmacht had absorbed more than two million casualties at a point in the war when they could no longer be replaced. Hardly less important is that by mid-1944, the political climate in Germany inhibited the operational decisions of the few remaining field commanders of proven ability. The coerced suicide of General Erwin Rommel in October of that year adumbrated the miserable state of the Wehrmacht’s battlefield leadership. The most efficacious way to win against the Germans was to overpower them in much the same way as a barrel-chested street brawler might pummel a bleeding and exhausted professional boxer who stepped from the ring into the back alley. To note this, of course, is not to disparage the heroism of long-serving volunteers and that of the citizen soldiers who fought beside them; rather it acknowledges the expedient approach—if often costly in lives and matériel—of fighting the war in a way that played to our strengths, while minimizing our weaknesses.¹⁰

One offshoot from World War II was the enshrinement of industrial processes in all aspects of military operations. The limits of this approach were demonstrated in the Vietnam conflict, but perhaps that lesson remained obscure on account of strategic calculation in the nuclear age—with its emphasis on the enormous destructive power of weapons that could be launched with the push of a button. What good are moral and psychological factors in a scenario shaped by mutually assured destruction? Given our historical experiences, it is hardly surprising that our planning method up to the present day betrays an indifference to things that cannot be measured, weighed, or reduced to a bullet statement.