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In My View

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IN MY VIEW . . .

The American Century

Sir,

This is still the American century. The paradox, however, is that the influence of the United States now is a function, not of its military or economic power, and not even of its political leadership, but of its willingness to tolerate competition from nations once dependent on it. American influence also springs from the fact that, of all major nations, the United States has become the first to deal with the major social dilemma of the end of the 20th century: the reconciling of individual freedom with the demand for prosperity. The key to prosperity in a world of relatively open, competitive markets is disciplined innovation, yet it is clear that prosperity, the product of that innovation, is coupled with demands for individual freedom of choice that run counter to the discipline required to keep a whole industry or nation competitive.

The United States did something right after World War II: fostering the reconstruction of Europe and Japan. As a result, the world is now divided into three camps economically: (1) prosperous nations, with economies that benefit most of their citizens, (2) command economies that are stagnant or faltering, and (3) potentially prosperous nations whose leaders have not yet figured out that their long-term benefit is intimately tied to that of the majority of their fellow countrymen. All three camps are dominated by the United States, but not in ways which we or they seem willing to acknowledge.

For example, Japan is terribly dependent on the United States because the United States is the prime market for Japan's products, and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Put another way, we are the golden goose they dare not kill. As the Soviet Union admits to its own economic problems, on the other hand the United States and Western Europe—with their pluralistic and materialistic popular cultures—serve as prime alternatives to the authoritarian socialism of the Communist party. Khrushchev was wrong, 30 years ago, when he said that the confrontation was

between communism and capitalism. It was, instead, between the developing, tumultuous unofficial culture of the Western Alliance and the repressive official culture of the U.S.S.R. The first has proved more adaptable and resilient than the second. Finally, even nations such as Brazil and Saudi Arabia are driven by the United States and its allies. The United States, Japan, and Western Europe provide the ruling oligarchies of such "third-world" countries with models of economic development and nightmares of what kinds of popular pressures development will unleash. The oligarchies now dominant in most third-world nations are still having trouble learning that such popular pressures are almost impossible to control, but they haven't much choice in the matter. The American model, with its Asian variations, is driving the world. It cannot be resisted. Even Iran will acknowledge it someday.

Yet the success of the American model was never assured. It was the product of determined human action in a setting that permitted (sometimes barely) a level of pluralism that allowed space for both discipline and freedom. In short, it was a near thing, and it will remain—always—a near thing. This has been the difference between the United States and the U.S.S.R., and the distinction between historical success and failure. Despite an ocean of words to the contrary, the United States is never sure where it's going or how to get there; the Soviet Union has been certain of both. But it is important to remember that the game has been touch and go. Russia looked pretty attractive to lots of Americans in the mid-1930s, and for good reason.

This country is now in the midst of a quiet constitutional crisis. Power is spread around enough so that many different kinds of social and economic groups can (and do) claim the benefits which the government, acting for the whole community and controlling community-wide resources, dispenses. The result has been a creeping fiscal crisis, with groups pushing for and receiving benefits that have been paid for by borrowing. The problem has become constitutional in nature because it has generated a debate over which branch of government should decide who should receive the benefits which public agencies hand out. A more fundamental issue—rarely addressed—is whether government should have such benefits under its control at all.

The real problem, however, reaches beyond the United States and its constitutional traditions. People everywhere want choices, but they also want guarantees against the risks that making choices entails. Choice implies a kind of discipline. If you choose badly, you're stuck with the consequences; you have to accept them. What the American model has held out is an expansion of choice *and* ways around unpleasant consequences of choice. Expanded services and a strong national defense are paid for with borrowed money, placing convenience ahead of discipline. People all over the world now sense that they can have choices and prosperity and still avoid conflict between the two. The United States has led the way along this road, and it is the United States that is wrestling with this problem now. Reconciling choice and prosperity is the greatest task the United States faces. Put another way, it will be the United States that will test the possibility that a free society can discipline itself. Now the weakness of the Soviet model gives the United States an excuse for avoiding the issue. That state of affairs cannot continue forever.

The paradox of the American century is that it has come despite a plan or a grand design. Indeed, the success of the American model is due to the fact that it rests not

on control but on the freedom to choose. However, prosperity is equal in stature to freedom in the American model, and the two ideals conflict. Prosperity demands productivity, innovation, and improvisation, and these, in turn, require self-discipline. But self-discipline is undermined by a political order which permits exceptions to it. Yet to arbitrarily close that political order would be to destroy the very freedom which is the key to an open, innovative society.

Paradoxes are the worst kinds of dilemmas. The United States is powerful because its social model is so unstructured and uncontrollable. The social model requires an open politics which is then vulnerable to pressures that reduce the competitiveness of the American economy. The economy, to be an agent of choice, must be open, placing American industries in a fiercely competitive international market which produces demands on the U.S. Government to shield domestic industries and individuals from overseas competition. Individual Americans, to be productive, must be willing to learn and shift skills as the world economy changes, but that requires a degree of self-discipline which individuals will find hard to bear and for which they will want "fair" compensation. Despite these problems, however, it is still the American century. The paradoxes arising from trying to combine freedom with prosperity must be solved by every society which follows or succumbs to the American model. The century is American not because we steer the boat but because we built it. No one steers it. That's the whole point.

Thomas C. Hone
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"We Are Entering a Dangerous Era"

Sir,

In the debate about "glasnost," "perestroyka" and "defensive military doctrine," we are missing a key point vital to our future: The communist approach to government is bankrupt, and we are entering a dangerous era.

The danger lies, paradoxically, in the attempts by both the Soviet and Chinese leaders to deal with their own failed totalitarian and centralized forms of government. In the excitement of coming to grips with new Soviet initiatives, we should remember that the *sine qua non* of any communist government is party control. If that control is threatened, as we saw recently in Beijing and are seeing now in the Soviet Baltic Republics, the party will always opt to reestablish it. What happened in Tien An Men square this June had already occurred inside the Soviet Union, but without the international media in attendance. In both countries, military force has been used to "restore order" and quell demands for self-determination and plurality of government. "Openness" and the free flow of information with the outside world appear to lead inevitably to a desire for political freedom, the antithesis of communist party rule, and yet progress seems impossible without it.

A friend, who had escaped from Hungary in 1956, once told me that "there is one thing that we should always remember about communists: you can vote them in but you can't vote them out." This statement is at the heart of the current Soviet

dilemma, and the question is whether communism, as a political methodology, can or will tolerate any competition. With the sole and tenuous exception of Poland, the answer appears to be no.

Lenin and his successors have long recognized that control and manipulation of information is the key to continued control by the communist party—even to the point of rewriting history, often several times, as party policies change. In the words of George Orwell (1984), “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present, controls the past” (with the operative word being *control*). The importance of this communist dictum is nowhere more evident now than in the Soviet Baltic States of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. By admitting that Soviet control of these formerly independent states was the subject of secret protocols of the infamous Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact with Nazi Germany in 1939—a fact long denied by Stalin’s successors—the Gorbachev regime has opened Pandora’s box and thoroughly undermined Soviet claims of legitimate rule with both the populations of these states and the world public. In this case, “glasnost” does not extend to openly discussing self-determination by hostage nationalities.

Gorbachev is walking a fine line between the need for progress and the bureaucratic need to maintain communist party control. His unilateral arms reductions and proposals for arms control have gained him international credibility. At his back, however, is a bureaucracy whose very existence depends on maintaining party dominance in all things. A serious misstep, or even a sequence of events that goes beyond his control in Eastern Europe or any of the several “captive” nationalities that comprise the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, could result in either a reversion to classic totalitarian policies or internal revolution. In both cases the West, and the United States in particular, would figure prominently as the external “bogeyman” that had caused Soviet problems, with all the dangers to our own security interests that that entails.

There is a third option, but one that the history of communism seems to belie. That is the acceptance of some form of pluralism in the governing of communist states. No one denies that most of the Soviet and Chinese people are better off now than under the tsars or the war lords. In that sense, at least, communism, as a form of political organization, has worked. The question that faces all of us in the coming years is, Can communism evolve into a form of government that allows freedom of thought and speech, that allows real representation of minorities, and that allows the formulation and open discussion of alternative approaches to the future?

For us, this should be a time to reflect thoughtfully on our own progress and to watch carefully what is occurring in the communist states. The dangers inherent in a communist swing back to repression or in policies that lead to anarchy or internal revolution should be in all of our minds as we watch the Soviet and Chinese leaders try to deal with modern reality. Their answers to these questions will affect all of us.

E. D. Smith, Jr.
Captain, U.S. Navy
Naval War College

Dial 911-U.S.S.R. for Arctic Rescue Assistance

Sir,

In the wake of the "Save the Whales" incident which occurred off the Arctic coast near Barrow, Alaska during October 1988, there have been considerable afterthoughts about the merits of interrupting a natural process which has probably been taking place throughout eons of time. National and international opinion has both supported and opposed the decision to invest over \$1 million in an effort to save three, later two, California grey whales. The real benefit of the public and private funds that were expended in this Arctic drama was not in saving some stranded behemoths of the deep, or at least it should not be. Rather, the true beneficiaries were the nations of the world who were provided with a demonstration of recent technological changes that have now opened the Arctic Ocean to maritime commerce and other uses. It also showed the wide disparity in technological capabilities between the Soviet Union and all other countries for utilizing the Arctic Ocean in the twilight of the 20th century.

It is worth contemplating how much more money might have been spent by the United States and other countries if the Soviets had not come to the rescue. It is also worth speculating as to whether any amount of money could have saved the whales were it not for a true icebreaking capability by reliable surface ships. It is gratifying that these now gold-plated whales may be happily basking in the warm waters off the coasts of southern California and Mexico. Meanwhile, much more valuable and important assets are silently patrolling the depths of the Arctic Ocean in the name of freedom, and they routinely pass under the multiyear ice cap which blankets the top of the world.

In 1958, the U.S. submarine *Nautilus* became the first vessel to reach the geographical North Pole—a feat that was possible only because of the technological advancements in nuclear propulsion incorporated into the *Nautilus*. Subsequently, a number of other countries began sending submarines into the Arctic Ocean. Still, throughout most of the 1970s, the Arctic Ocean remained of limited importance to the submarines of the world. That situation changed dramatically, however, when a shift in Soviet strategy initiated the deployment of their ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) under the protective blanket of the Arctic ice, thereby forcing the United States and other Nato powers to begin routinely deploying state-of-the-art, nuclear-powered attack submarines under the Arctic ice as well. The past decade has witnessed a headlong rush by the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, as well as the Soviet Union, to send submarine patrols to the Arctic Ocean.

For all of the countries now involved, modern, nuclear-powered submarines are tremendously expensive ships, equipped with some of the most advanced technological secrets that their sponsors are capable of putting on board. They are also much larger than the typical submarine of the World War II era and have much larger crews. Reflecting on all of this, as well as on the West's flailings in trying to save a couple of whales a few hundred yards off Alaska's north coast, raises the question: What then happens if a "friendly" submarine becomes disabled under the ice? At that point, not only are many lives at risk, but also a \$1 billion investment in current technology.

Before the Soviets began routinely deploying their SSBNs under the polar ice, they had already developed the capability to conduct deep-sea salvage operations in the Arctic Ocean. Their ever-expanding fleet of nuclear-powered icebreakers has steamed to the North Pole and has conducted extensive operations within the multiyear ice pack. In addition to their icebreakers, they have an extensive fleet of ice-strengthened salvage ships; and their ice-strengthened fishing vessels, many as large as medium-sized freighters, also have considerable salvage capabilities. This allows the U.S.S.R. an almost inexhaustible number of options to rescue or salvage one of their underwater boats should the need arise.

On the other hand, the United States and its Nato partners may have only a few, if any, viable options for conducting the rescue or salvage of a disabled submarine in the Arctic. In the hostile Arctic environment, a lack of options can be fatal, not only for grey whales trapped under the ice but for people and equipment as well. As mentioned previously, Nato attack submarines are in the Arctic Ocean in increasing numbers, primarily in response to Soviet SSBN deployments. While the Russians began deploying their SSBNs to the Arctic only after they were reasonably certain that they could retrieve a disabled boat, it appears that the West has had neither the time nor interest to develop a similar capability. Now, as the number of Nato submarines operating in the Arctic continues to increase, so too does the likelihood that one of these boats will eventually experience disablement.

If the title of the recent incident near Point Barrow could be changed from "Save the Whales" to "Grey Lady Down," perhaps this incident would serve to highlight the sad state of affairs in U.S. Arctic research and operational capabilities, thereby making the expenditure of money much more worthwhile. However, if the incident is forgotten, and there is no follow-up on that initial investment, then, when one of those "friendly" grey ladies does go down beneath the Arctic ice, perhaps we will have to dial 911-U.S.S.R. for a true Arctic rescue capability. They would love it . . . can we afford it?

David W. Orr
Major, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
Anchorage, Alaska

Keeping Blue Honest

Sir,

The following articles in the *Naval War College Review* have as a premise that various complex aspects of warfighting can be examined through wargaming: Frank C. Mahncke, "From Technology to Tactics: Finding the Missing Link," Spring 1989, pp. 98-107; Peter P. Perla, "War Games, Analyses, and Exercises," Spring 1987, pp. 44-52; Michael Vlahos, "Wargaming, an Enforcer of Strategic Realism: 1919-1942," March-April 1986, pp. 7-22; and Peter P. Perla and LCDR Raymond T. Barrett, USN, "What Wargaming Is and Is Not," September-October 1985, pp. 70-78.

Each of these articles has a particular theme: Mahncke—tactics and technology must go hand in hand; Perla—"wargaming . . . allows for the continual adjustments of strategy and tactics by both sides in response to developing results and events not

seen in campaign analysis"; Vlahos—use of wargaming in developing strategy; Perla and Barrett—"the true value of wargaming lies in its unique ability to illuminate the impact of the human factor in warfare."

All these aspects will help the R&D scientist, the technologist, and the warfighter to better appreciate and understand the complexities of an uncertain future engagement. However, another critical dimension that must be considered is the creativity of the opposition.

In the typical wargame setup, a Blue and a Red team, as well as consideration of neutrals and nonbelligerents, are modeled. The Blue team is usually given the future "bag of tricks": new technology options and a range or set of possible future concepts that may be feasible in the time frame of the game. These concepts may be tailored to a particular theme or cluster of technologies or may be drawn from a broad spectrum.

The Red side is most likely to be projections based upon certain evidence or predictions. This, however, only forms the baseline for Red. A key ingredient that must be addressed and included in any wargaming scenario is to allow the opposition the same ability to be creative as is given to the Blue side. This does not mean that Red should replicate Blue's way of thinking or approach to warfighting, merely that Red must be allowed to "do its own thing."

Recent examples remind us that creativity does not necessarily mean new technology. In 1967, Nasser closed the Gulf of Eilat to Israeli shipping using a circa 1908 vintage British gun. In Korea, General MacArthur was faced with a plethora of circa 1910-type mines. In Vietnam, our superior bombing forces were held at bay by a vigorous opponent who used geography, terrain, and weather to his advantage.

Thus, in a technology wargame setting, it is imperative to model Red to include its brain. A straightforward approach of an "unthinking" Red, using only projections of Red capabilities, can and will lead to an unsatisfactory and unrealistic modeling of Red's dynamic wartime warfighting capability. This in turn can cause Blue to believe it has answered, or at least addressed, the issues of concern and has obtained a feel for the "correct" direction or course of action to pursue. To a degree this is true, but it must be tempered by the realization that Red may not do what Blue expects.

In order to develop this aspect of playing Red, a cadre of personnel who are irascible and cantankerous need to be a component of the Red team. They will keep Blue honest. They will make the Red team a more dynamic and unpredictable opponent and will provide alternative insights into how to "think Red."

The Red team must be capable of conducting business as usual, but in addition, technology wargames need to take into account intangibles, uncertainty, and creativity. If Blue is allowed to play "what if," then Red must be given the option "so what." This option can provide for negating our advanced technology through new tactics, new combinations of future weaponry, using old weaponry in unexpected ways, using Blue's ROEs to Blue's disadvantage, or using Red weaponry in ways not anticipated by Blue.

We must keep foremost in our warfighting simulation the fact that our opponents, whoever they may be, have the resources of the human mind; and that can be as deadly as the most advanced technology.

Alan S. Victor
Warminster, Pennsylvania

More on Bumps in the Black Sea

Sir,

In your Spring 1989 issue, Professor Harry H. Almond, Jr. presents a long legal analysis of rights of innocent passage, attempting to support the American position in the February 1988 bumping incident in Crimean territorial waters. But his arguments are very difficult to follow. He asserts the U.S. position in the *Pueblo* incident of 1968 to be that given in an American statement uttered on 8 February 1968, immediately after the *Pueblo* was seized by North Korea (62 *Am. J. of Int'l L.* 756 (1968)). But that statement was reversed by many others in the months that followed. The key documents, with the final exchange of correspondence, were published in 60 *Dept. State Bulletin* 1-3 on 6 January 1969, reproduced in 8(1) *Int'l Legal Materials* 198 (1969). I analyzed the situation with quotations in an article, "Some Legal Implications of the *Pueblo* Incident" (18 *Int'l & Comparative Law Quarterly* 961 (1969)) and see no need to repeat the quotations or analysis here.

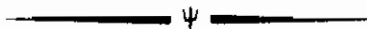
Further, Professor Almond persists in regarding the 1949 *Corfu Channel Case* as determinative of legal rights of innocent passage in Crimean waters without mentioning that the International Court of Justice in that case specifically restricted its assertions of the rights of innocent passage through territorial waters as follows: "It is, in the opinion of the Court, generally recognized and in accordance with international custom that States in time of peace have a right to send their warships through straits used for international navigation between two parts of the high seas without the previous authorization of a coastal State, provided that the passage is *innocent* [emphasis sic]."

Are the Crimean waters part of a "strait"? Are they "used for international navigation"? Was the passage "innocent"? I know of no definition of "strait" that fits the waters in which the incident occurred. I know of no figures for Crimean waters comparable to the 2,884 ships cited by the Court as using the Corfu Channel and visited by Corfu Customs in a period of one year and nine months, or to the historical usage by British warships extending back 80 years. As to the innocence of our passage, whether it is in the interest of the navy or not, President Reagan accepted the general law of the sea terms of the 1982 United Nations Convention as binding on us by unilateral declaration in 1982. If that declaration is given effect, then the key term restricting passive intelligence gathering does not mean whatever we can argue it means; it means what the parties to the Convention intended. It seems significant that at the negotiation it was called "the *Pueblo* Clause." I do not understand how passive intelligence reception can be construed to be "innocent" within that context. If our unilateral declaration is legally ineffective, as I believe, then the general law most persuasively stated in the *Pueblo* correspondence applies, and we are still wrong.

Therefore, I see no point in carrying on a highly technical legal discussion and will leave Professor Almond the last word in this forum, if he wants it. In the wider forum of maritime powers, the last word will, in my opinion, rest on other factors; and by taking a legalistic approach that notoriously distorts the facts and misstates

the law, we have already lost. That is the usual result of presenting an adversary argument as if it were a legal analysis.

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