

PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE MILITARY DOCTRINES

Arnold L. Horelick

May 1973

P-5026

The Rand Paper Series

Papers are issued by The Rand Corporation as a service to its professional staff. Their purpose is to facilitate the exchange of ideas among those who share the author's research interests; Papers are not reports prepared in fulfillment of Rand's contracts or grants. Views expressed in a Paper are the author's own, and are not necessarily shared by Rand or its research sponsors.

The Rand Corporation
Santa Monica, California 90406

PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE MILITARY DOCTRINES

Arnold L. Horelick *

"Classical" Military Doctrine

The "classical" 19th century military doctrines of Europe's great powers were expressions of a highly specialized art form that caused a great deal of mischief in the real world and had precious little redeeming artistic value. Their foundation was laid by a small group of peripheral military figures of the post-Napoleonic era, including men of great brilliance, like Clausewitz, who sought to bring intellectual order to and extract some broader meaning from the great wars of their formative years. Like most profound thinkers, they were often misquoted and seldom read. The official military doctrines of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were highly stylized, simplistically condensed glosses on the patristic writings, prepared by professional military men, often of considerably higher rank and invariably of lower intellectual stature, who combed the classics for maxims and "principles of war," losing in translation the deeper understanding of war that was their essence. The more or less explicit canons or "principles of war" formulated in this manner by the general staffs of the European powers became the conventional wisdom on the professionals, were taught religiously in the military academies, and, being pitched at a lofty level of abstraction and generality, provided military planners of the time with a rich mine of rationalizations for strategies that suited their temperaments and ambitions, but rarely served any enlightened national strategic purpose.¹

* Prepared for delivery at the International Conference on Comparative Defense Policy, United States Air Force Academy, Colorado, February 8-9, 1973. The author served as commentator for a panel on "Comparative Military Doctrines" and papers referred to in the text were those presented by the other panel members. The present paper will appear in a volume on Comparative Defense Policy to be published by the Johns Hopkins Press in 1974.

¹ For a trenchant critique of the vulgarization of classical strategic thought at the hands of the general staffs of the major European powers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, see Bernard

The popularity of formal military doctrines of the 19th century type entered into a well-earned decline after their catastrophic applications in World War I. While doctrinal writings of the "principles of war" type are still to be found in the field manuals of the armies of the world, they are little read outside of service academies, where, one would hope, they receive the attention they deserve. In any event, the real world influence of "classical" military doctrine is now negligible, and except perhaps for antiquarians and those interested in it as an art form, systematic comparison can serve no useful purpose.

It is probably a misnomer to refer to the systems of ideas treated in the papers prepared for this session of our conference as "military doctrines." They are incomparably broader in scope and range, immeasurably richer in content, reflecting inputs from an extensive and highly diversified set of intellectual sources, and they perform functions that extend far beyond the confines of professional military edification and indoctrination. In an era when deep concern over the actual or possible use of force has become the constant companion of statesmen and ordinary citizens alike, as well as of the military for whom such preoccupation was in times past a professional monopoly, the formulation and promulgation of military doctrine has, like war itself, become too important to leave to the generals.

The perspectives on military doctrine brought to bear in the papers written for this conference are quite diverse and there are fewer common analytical categories than a comparativist would like to see. This variety and unevenness is partly a reflection of inevitable differences in the interests, preferences, and styles of the individual authors; but more critical is the extraordinary diversity inherent in their material. The states whose doctrines are the subject of our inquiry include, at one extreme, the USSR, a superpower, armed with the full panoply of nuclear weapons and modern delivery systems, with military and foreign policy interests engaged on a truly global scale, but whose forces have not fired a shot in anger since the close of World War II except against their allies; and at the other end of the spectrum,

Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1959, pp. 21-70.

Israel, a small regional power, with military forces that are inconsequential by great power standards, but which has fought and won three conventional wars in as many decades, the last one against a combination of opponents that included clients of both superpowers.

There is no convenient term that adequately describes the range of concepts that are the subject of this session, but "military doctrine" seems too obviously restrictive and circumscribed to be employed comfortably even for shorthand purposes. Several of our authors appear deliberately to have avoided use of that term, presumably on those grounds, and in this paper I shall follow their example and employ either the term "political-military doctrine" or "strategic doctrine" as a matter of convenience.

Characteristics of Modern Political-Military Doctrines

Unfortunately for the comparativist, the great diversity of contemporary political-military doctrines applies not only to their content but extends also to their form. In few states is strategic doctrine systematically articulated or formally codified. Ideological regimes, for which the production of doctrines of all sorts is usually a minor national industry, provide us with the neatest sets of materials, but as the Lambeth and Powell papers indicate, they tend to obscure precisely those sensitive doctrinal issues that are of the greatest operative military and political significance.

Several West European states issue periodic White Papers on defense policy, but rarely do they even approximate comprehensive statements of doctrine. As Koldziej indicates with respect to the 1972 French White Paper, they tend rather to focus on budgetary, weapons acquisition and force level issues. The study of U.S. strategic doctrine is complicated by an incredible richness of diverse source material, the most important of which are Presidential State of the World Messages, Defense Secretary Posture Statements, and background briefings by the President's Assistant for National Security. On the whole, the student of comparative military doctrines will have to extrapolate from a large variety of uneven sources, both verbal and behavioral, military and non-military, and cut his way through the heavy fog of ambiguity that covers precisely the most vital issues.

Contemporary political-military doctrines owe their extraordinary complexity and comprehensive character to the post-World War II revolution in the environment of international relations. "Strategic" concerns and conceptual thinking about the role and use of force in interstate relations before the second world war had been confined essentially to the exclusive circle of major European powers, which alone fielded peacetime military establishments of any consequence. While these states, particularly after the rise of ideological movement-regimes, differed significantly with respect to their military goals, capabilities, national military styles and traditions, they were confronted by a more or less common set of military problems (how to fight yet another massive continental land war) that had not changed radically since the first round in 1914-1918. The "principles of war" endured, the cast of main characters remained remarkably stable, the instruments of war changed little and slowly from war to war, and military adaptation to technological change was even slower. The most decisive modern weapons available when World War II was launched -- airplanes, tanks, and submarines -- had all previously made their appearance as combat arms a quarter century before.

The fundamental reordering of the international system brought about by the second world war and its aftermath and the revolution in military technology introduced by the use of atomic weapons in its final stage altered this perspective entirely. The cast of characters in international politics changed radically. Out of the ruins of the old European-centered international system, two new superpowers rose to commanding political-military positions, with ideologies, traditions, and national styles radically different from those of the European states that had set the military tone for centuries before. There was an explosive proliferation of new independent states for which modern military establishments appeared either as vital instruments for achieving and maintaining independence and political control or as indispensable symbols of their new sovereignty. The qualitatively new military technologies developed at dizzying speed by the super-states transformed the nature of war and strategy more comprehensively at one stroke than all of the weapons introduced since the invention of

gunpowder, taken together. City-busting weapons and vehicles for delivering them almost instantaneously to targets over intercontinental ranges made available to political leaders the capacity to achieve directly and immediately strategic objectives that were only a few years earlier beyond the reach even of vast armies fighting long protracted wars.

Although the weapon systems associated with the new military technologies have been developed and deployed in decisive quantities only by the superpowers, and on a modest or token scale by only three other states, their existence has had a profound effect on the way in which statesmen and soldiers the world over must now think about the role and use of force in international relations. Fear of escalation to general nuclear war, or manipulation of that fear, is a pervasive fact of international conflict and in one way or another influences the political-military doctrines of all states.

Before these revolutionary new facts of military technology and international relations, the irrelevance of classical military doctrine of the 19th century European type stood starkly exposed. Future wars of concern in the nuclear age covered almost all points on the broad spectrum from great power general nuclear war down to insurgency wars in remote corners of Asia, Africa and Latin America; but the classical, now termed "conventional," world wars on the scale of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 which pre-nuclear military doctrines addressed almost exclusively, were relegated to the dustbin of military history.

Deterrence and Doctrine

Even more profoundly important for the evolution of strategic doctrine than the new image of war associated with nuclear weapons was the change the new weapons induced in conceptions of the central purpose of military force. Before nuclear weapons, no significant distinction could be drawn between the deterrent and warfighting values of military forces. Forces were built to win wars; if their superiority was apparent to a putative opponent, he might be deterred. Deterrence, of course, is not a new strategic purpose discovered by modern nuclear war strategists.

But the destructiveness of nuclear weapons shifted the prime focus of military doctrine from defense, or warfighting, to deterrence, and the new technologies imparted to this distinction a significance that was no longer merely theoretical.² Different types of military force contribute in different degrees to the objectives of deterrence and warfighting. Forces that contribute substantially to one objective may be only marginally useful for the other, or even counterproductive. Multiple independently maneuverable reentry vehicles for ICBMs with zero CEPs (circular error probable) would significantly enhance the warfighting capabilities of the force that possessed them, but could be highly destabilizing with respect to deterrence. SLBMs with comparatively small warheads and modest accuracies make excellent instruments of deterrence but are poor bets for attacking military targets such as silo-hardened ICBMs.

Deterrence, by its very nature is a peacetime objective; defense a wartime goal. So as the focus of strategic thought shifted from defense and warfighting to deterrence, the peacetime deployment and political use of military force became the central doctrinal issues for most advanced states, and warfighting doctrine took a back seat. Some national differences in this regard will be alluded to below.

Everywhere the primacy of deterrence confounds the articulation of coherent doctrine. What one wishes, in peacetime, for the opponent to believe one would do in war may be the least desirable among the remaining alternative wartime courses of action if deterrence should actually fail. "Assured destruction" is a perfectly logical, if unpalatable, doctrine of nuclear deterrence; it is, in the presence of bilateral capabilities for implementing it, a suicidal doctrine for waging war. Because it inherently strains credibility, the logic of deterrence argues for conspicuously depriving oneself of alternatives (e.g., self-denying ordinances against "damage-limiting" capabilities such as civil defense, ABM, and counterforce capabilities). But policies to bolster the

² See the discussion of this distinction in Glenn H. Snyder, Deterrence and Defense, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1961, pp. 3-51.

credibility of an "assured destruction" strategic doctrine inevitably weaken the credibility of the deterring power's commitment to deter attacks against allies, a central commitment in the strategic doctrines of both superpowers. The logic of this argument is, regrettably, indefinitely circular.

Functions of Political-Military Doctrines

The political-military doctrine of a state must serve a multiplicity of functions, both internal and external. Internally, its prime functions are strategic orientation, policy guidance, and political mobilization. Through the formulation and dissemination of doctrine, the political and military leadership of a state hammers out an agreed set of broad views about the role of force in the international life of the country and communicates them throughout the national security community of the government, to the legislature, and to the public at large. The doctrine is supposed to provide guidance to the armed forces so that they may be organized, postured, and deployed in an appropriate manner; to inform the deliberations of the legislators responsible for committing the resources and raising the military forces required; and to mobilize a broad domestic consensus in support of the foreign and military policies of the government.

There is an inherent strain among these functions, the intensity of which varies in accordance with the domestic political system of the given state and the external political-military circumstances in which it finds itself. The doctrine must rationalize the existing policies, capabilities, and posture of the state in the light of authoritatively perceived threats to its security, interests, and values. How can threats be averted without sacrificing interests and values? Should a particular security threat materialize, how can it be confronted and dealt with successfully given the military capabilities available? No state in today's world can insure itself equally against all conceivable or plausible threats to its security interests. A major function of doctrine is to devise some measure of priority, usually through some weighted combination of probability and consequences,

that can be applied to the multiplicity of threats confronting the state. In its orienting function, the doctrine must answer the question: what is the best we can do with what is available to us? But in its role as guide to future policy, the doctrine must also address the question: how can we do better, given our potential, in confronting threats, preserving values, and advancing state interests? The tension arises from the gap that is almost certain to exist between the "what is" and the "what ought to be." If the doctrine exposes urgent threats that overwhelm existing capabilities for dealing with them, it risks internal demoralization. But if it adjusts the rank ordering of threats, interests, and values to accord with capacity, it risks complacency and weakens the utility of doctrine as a guide to future policy.

These internally-derived tensions may be further accentuated by conflict with some of the externally-oriented functions of the doctrine. For the same set of political-military beliefs is also communicated to opponents, allies, and to the entire international community. Indeed, for the major powers with important interests abroad, the communication of doctrine to the external world has become a major instrument of foreign and defense policy. Ideally, the doctrine should dissuade opponents, reassure and encourage allies, and exert positive influence on other third parties. These functions may be difficult to reconcile. The doctrine is supposed to affect the perceptions of opponents, but if the gap between the image of reality projected in the doctrine and the opponent's perception of it is too great, the doctrine will lack credibility. In the international arena, the credibility problem is similar to the one that confronts governments internally in societies where acts of governments are subject to intense public scrutiny. With respect to allies, and depending on their relative degree of political autonomy, the doctrine must strike a balance between reassurance about existing arrangements and pressure to maintain or increase the ally's contribution to the common cause. The dominance of deterrence strategies has made the maintenance of such a balance particularly difficult, as the Brown, Orvik, and Kolodziej papers emphasize.

States are unequally constrained by the competing and partly contradictory demands placed upon their strategic doctrines. The strong are less constrained than the weak. But those with far-flung interests and multiple alliances are likely to be harder pressed than those without broad external responsibilities and alliance assets that require cultivation. Governments in comparatively "open" societies will operate with far narrower margins of credibility internally than authoritarian regimes; but in the international arena the asymmetries are less striking. Alternative civil-military relations in states will also exercise differential constraints on the formulation and promulgation of doctrine, for strategic doctrines invariably serve as arenas in the internal struggle to determine the allocation of resources within a society to the military sector, and within that sector, among the various branches.

Threat Perception and Doctrine

At the root of a state's strategic doctrine is its orientation toward those challenges confronting the state that involve the use of or threat to use force. In human behavior, the only reality is subjective. Whether an objective reality independent of men's perceptions of it exists is a question central to philosophy but largely irrelevant to politics. Threats to the security of a state make their impact on doctrine in the form that they are perceived by the leaders who control the state's destiny. Threat perceptions will vary from group to group and from individual to individual, but a viable state presupposes a consensus, or at least an effective accommodation of individual and group perceptions of national threat. This consensus arises from the identity of historical experience, political creed, and from the other common attributes that are the essence of statehood. Dissimilar political units are likely to generate dissimilar perceptions of similar threats. Of course, no two states will in fact be confronted by identical situations susceptible of interpretation as threats. But the variance in perception may be no less important than the variance in circumstances. Here we are dealing with the

differential impact on doctrine of predispositions affecting threat perception that characterize the political and military elites of the different states. The papers before us provide some instructive examples.

Brown points out that the low incidence of armed violence in the domestic historical experience of Britain has encouraged British opinion, and particularly its more liberal wing, "usually to take a more benign view of the outside world than the facts tend to warrant." Similarly, he calls attention to the "quiet but profound confidence of Englishmen that there will always be time to recoup initial setbacks," a national belief that engenders a toleration of under-insurance. By contrast, Bolshevik ideology, Soviet historical experience, and Russian political culture combine, Lambeth shows, to incline Soviet leaders toward an extremely wary global outlook that is frequently manifested in vastly overinflated "worst case" threat assessments.

Threat Manageability and Strategic Doctrine

A state's political-military doctrine also at least implicitly reflects its leadership's assessment of the manageability of the diverse strategic challenges facing the country. Ideology, historical experience, national style and character, and the idiosyncracies of powerful leaders weigh heavily in these assessments, biasing them in different directions, but there appears to be a universal tendency among statesmen and generals to attend more closely in formulating doctrine to challenges that seem manageable or manipulable at the expense of serious attention to others that may be graver, but appear clearly to be beyond the capacity of the state in question to control or influence substantially by its own means. If the potential for developing means to deal effectively with currently "unmanageable" threats is believed to exist, doctrinal neglect, avoidance or downgrading of such threats may merely be transitional, while policy addresses the question of providing an appropriate countering capacity. This option is most congenial to authoritarian regimes that can maintain the necessary separation of doctrine and operational policy free from public scrutiny at home and under a protective cloak of secrecy abroad.

Thus, disparagement of nuclear weapons in Soviet doctrine persisted until the USSR acquired respectable capabilities and continues today in Chinese doctrine even as Peking builds its nuclear force.

The impact of perceptions of threat manageability on political-military doctrines perhaps can be illustrated by comparing treatment of the threat of direct nuclear attack in the doctrines of a variety of states possessing unequal capacities for dealing with it by their own means and varying degrees of access to support from more powerful protectors.

1. Defense against all-out nuclear attack by a superpower. Defense, as opposed to deterrence, appears now to be an unmanageable problem even for the superpowers, and certainly for all other states. That the state cannot provide its people with a defense against nuclear attack has been an explicit part of West European political-military doctrines since the mid 1950s. The United States, after the loss of its nuclear monopoly and the gradual erosion of its "splendid" first-strike capability, flirted briefly with a comprehensive "damage-limiting" doctrine in the early 1960s but soon abandoned it as unfeasible, opting instead for a more or less unambiguous doctrine of deterrence-only, based on maintenance of an "assured destruction" capability against the USSR. While Soviet doctrine persists in asserting that it aims at ensuring the USSR's survival in a general nuclear war, the force of this assertion has been progressively attenuated in the past decade by acknowledgements of the catastrophic destruction that would be inflicted on all belligerents. The extent to which a Soviet "victory" in nuclear war could under any plausible circumstances be anything but Pyrrhic is evidently still a contentious issue, but the supreme priority of deterrence in Soviet doctrine is now unmistakable. It remains to be seen whether the Soviet Union's recent joint undertaking with the United States not to develop or deploy nationwide ABM defense systems foreshadows an explicit doctrinal acknowledgement that prevalence in nuclear war is no longer a viable concept.

2. Self-reliant deterrence of such an attack. At present this can appear to be a clearly manageable problem only to the superpowers and is the central preoccupation of their military doctrines. China, which perhaps has the potential to build a nuclear capability of superpower proportions, appears to be implementing a policy that aims at achieving self-reliant strategic deterrence, but has yet to develop, or at least to surface, a corresponding doctrine. For the time being, as Powell shows, the issue is dispensed with doctrinally by a cavalier assertion (a form of denial?) and a process of threat transformation in which the unmanageable is converted into the congenial. By adopting a survival criterion compatible with the extermination of up to half the population of the country, Chinese doctrine confidently asserts that the country, even without a nuclear capability of its own, could "survive" a full-scale nuclear attack. The nuclear-armed opponent, having exhausted the possibilities of victory through employment of air-deliverable nuclear weapons, would then have no alternative but to launch the massive land invasion of China which Maoist "people's war" doctrine is so conveniently tailored to defeat in a protracted war of attrition and annihilation.

Among the remaining states, France, which lacks both a present capacity and the potential for acquiring nuclear capabilities approaching superpower levels, maintains a doctrine of ostensible strategic self-reliance based on the concept of "proportionate deterrence:" Paris was well worth a mass to Henry IV, but she will not be worth the loss of Kiev to the Kremlin. The French rationale is analyzed in detail in Kolodziej's paper, but for purposes of the present discussion it should be noted that French belief in the efficacy of their deterrence doctrine is integrally linked to the existence of a strategic nuclear standoff between the superpowers. In this respect ambitious French claims for the force de dissuasion are just as dependent upon U.S. strategic nuclear power as the far more modest British claim that the UK's small nuclear capability makes an independent contribution to American strategic deterrence of a Soviet attack on Europe.

3. Reliance on a superpower ally possessing an independent deterrent force. This is a more or less explicit doctrinal tenet of all the European states, France excepted, that are formally allied to one of the two superpowers. While leaders of such states often acknowledge quite bluntly that deterrence of nuclear attack cannot be ensured by the forces under their direct command, they may achieve some sense of indirect control of the nuclear attack problem through their participation in the affairs of the alliance providing the instruments of deterrence. Characteristically, at least for junior alliance members enjoying a relatively high degree of political autonomy, the strategic doctrines of states in this category are oriented more toward problems of alliance management than toward dealing militarily with the threat posed by the superpower opponent. Thus, the March 1972 majority report of the Commission of Civilian and Military Experts appointed by The Netherlands Government to assess problems of Dutch defense in the 1970s, states: "The Netherlands' defense effort must be seen as a contribution to the creation of a political climate in which the American President is enabled to maintain both United States nuclear and conventional contributions to NATO..."³

While the political-military doctrines of these states all reflect a common dependence for nuclear war deterrence on the alliance of which they are members, small states comparatively removed from the main line of East-West demarcation in Central Europe are likely to manifest a stronger inclination than, say the Federal Republic of Germany, to hedge their bets. The FRG's doctrine stresses the crucial importance of a multi-national, particularly U.S., military presence on its territory, stockpiled American nuclear weapons and forward defense to ensure the earliest possible coupling of alliance and American deterrence capabilities to the contingency of an attack upon itself; however, the Scandinavian NATO allies, as Orvik shows, seeking to avert automatic linkage with the high levels of destruction that would be associated with any major war in Central Europe, permit neither the stationing of allied forces nor of American nuclear weapons on their territories.

³"The Future of Dutch Defense," Survival, Nov.-Dec. 1972, p. 294.

Iceland provides a particularly striking example of the propensity of states to concentrate national energies on manageable problems rather than squandering them on challenges, no matter how grave, which they cannot hope to control. Utterly helpless against any direct attack by the Soviet Union, Iceland spends nothing on military forces and in its day-to-day external conduct is largely preoccupied with fending off, sometimes quite aggressively, what it regards as the commercial incursion of competing fishing nations, which include quite prominently its NATO allies, Britain and West Germany.

In a typology that lumped together indiscriminately the junior partners of the two major alliance systems, the Warsaw Pact countries of Eastern Europe would have to be placed side-by-side with the European NATO allies of the United States. The utility of such a typology for generalizing about the salient strategic doctrinal preoccupations of its members is, however, limited. Among the Pact allies, only the GDR leaders can regard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country to be dependent on the alliance leader's protection to a degree comparable to the European NATO allies (indeed, more acutely dependent, since without the Soviet guarantee the internal threat to the viability of the East German state would almost surely be unmanageable). Polish and Czechoslovak fears of West German irredentism, fears that provided some genuine national interest justification for their alliance with the Soviet Union, have been substantially appeased in recent years, while for at least one Warsaw Pact ally, Rumania, the only serious threat to its independence is the alliance leader. While the main thrust of the military-political doctrines of the European NATO allies is aimed at maintaining a close coupling with U.S. military power, Rumania's necessarily implicit strategic doctrine enjoins Bucharest to promote the creation of a European political-military climate in which its superpower ally will lack both incentive and pretext for rendering "military assistance" of any kind.

4. Reliance on Irrelevance, Neutrality, and the Indivisibility of Peace. For states lacking both independent means of nuclear retaliation and alliance ties with powers possessing them, strategic deterrence is

not a viable doctrine. For most states in the world, security against nuclear attack must be derived from its sheer irrelevance to any contingency in which they and a potential attacker might plausibly be involved. The leaders of small neutral and nonaligned states may not unreasonably believe, and elevate their belief to the level of doctrine, that their country's aloofness from both Blocs offers no provocation to either; that its strategic insignificance removes the temptation to wage acquisitive war; that its security is safeguarded by spillover from the pervasive fear of escalation that is attached to military employment of nuclear weapons anywhere against anyone; or, that in the final analysis, it will accommodate or yield rather than accept the risk of nuclear destruction entailed by forcible resistance.

Larger states in this category that do have evident global or regional strategic value may also rely on a potential attacker's perception that its superpower opponent attaches such a high value to denying the assets of the threatened nonaligned state to its competitor that it will assume a protective stance toward it even in the absence of alliance obligation. India is the prime example of such a state.

Because of Europe's neurological role in the conflict of Great Bloc interests, the neutral and nonaligned states of that continent must be regarded as a special subset. The East Scandinavian states of Sweden and Finland belong to this subset, along with Switzerland, Austria and Yugoslavia. But even among this narrower and select group of states major differences in their circumstances, location, size, historical experience with potential enemies, and military capabilities, make for considerable diversity in their political-military doctrines.

Yugoslavia has developed a vigorous and innovative doctrine of "total national defense" unmistakably directed against the threat of invasion from the East. For Finland, on the other hand, the restraints imposed by her peace treaties with the Soviet Union, as Orvik indicates, make any realistic military doctrine a dubious proposition. Finland's limited permitted military capabilities are clearly inadequate to cope with any aggression which her only putative opponent, the Soviet Union, might be determined to launch. But they probably are adequate for

dealing with border control problems against any opponent except the Soviet Union and hence (hopefully) might in the event of war fulfill the function of denying the USSR a pretext to occupy the country to secure the northeast approaches. This is a thin reed upon which to rest the security of the country. Hence, the burden of Finnish doctrine is on maintenance of good relations with the Soviet Union, coupled with efforts to promote a broader European policy aimed at crisis avoidance (neutralization of the Nordic area, promotion of various forums to deal with European security).

Sweden, on the other hand, larger than Finland and unconstrained by treaties with either of the superpowers, can hope to mount forces large enough to persuade a potential aggressor that the costs of aggression might outweigh the gains. Of course, since the costs that Sweden could impose upon an attacker like the Soviet Union would in no case be substantial, this presupposes that the expected gains would only be regarded as marginal. To encourage such a cost-benefit calculation in Moscow, Sweden has developed a doctrine designed to impress, particularly upon the Soviet Union, Sweden's determination to preserve its neutrality under all circumstances, including the invasion of Norway and Denmark. The point is to discourage a preemptive Soviet attack in the event of a decision to invade the West Scandinavian NATO states.

An Operative Warfighting Doctrine

The fundamental security problems of one state in the sample selected for this session have escaped the nuclear threat compass that has directed the course of this inquiry. The state is Israel, and its strategic doctrine merits attention if only because of its demonstrated power and efficacy. Israel's is a warfighting doctrine par excellence, but in almost all other respects it is the antithesis of the old "classical" military doctrines. For while classical doctrine was dogmatic and canonical, very slow to change fundamentally or to adapt to technological innovation, the strength of Israel's doctrine, Handel argues, rests precisely in its flexibility, dynamism, adaptability and openendedness.

What distinguishes Israeli political-military doctrine from those of other states is the perception of threat that drives it and its unwillingness to tolerate "unmanageable" security challenges. In the Israeli perception, the Jewish State is confronted by a mortal threat that is unremitting and essentially undeterrable. Deterrence is a desirable objective, but it must not be pursued at any significant cost to warfighting capacity. Israel's "first strike" capability against its Arab neighbors offers a continuing provocation to them, but it is not negotiable in the currency of deterrence. The difference between this threat perception and the perceptions of other states with which we have dealt is critical. For Israel, a doctrine of deterrence-only or even deterrence-mostly is unacceptable because the consequences of defeat in the event of failure of deterrence are so asymmetrical; for Israel, national if not physical extinction; for its Arab enemies, another humiliation and another enforced pause before yet another round.

Finally, the nature of Israeli strategic doctrine confers upon it one advantage over the deterrence-oriented doctrines considered earlier that is of particular importance for the study of the efficacy of comparative military doctrines. A major doctrinal failure will be evident in both cases: defeat for Israel and almost certainly the dismantling of the Jewish state; and in the second case, the out-break of general nuclear war. But while Israeli victories in war are a measure of the success of its military doctrine, the non-occurrence of general nuclear war offers no reliable assurance that the strategic doctrines employed by the nuclear powers to deter it are sound and effective. We can assess doctrines of strategic nuclear deterrence with confidence only in the event of their failure. So long as the survival of mankind depends on nuclear deterrence, we can only pray that the doctrines that have been created to ensure deterrence are never put to the test.

Horelick

PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE MILITARY DOCTRINES

P-5026