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by

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STRATEGY.

"Strategy is the business of preparing for and conducting war" (Naval War College, November, 1911.)

"Strategy applies to the distribution of naval forces, their armament and supplies in preparation for war or in the prosecution of war. It includes logistics. It refers to naval movements and dispositions made before contact with the enemy's forces." (G. O. No.135, Dec.26, 1911).

Strategy is "the science of combining and employing the means which the different branches of the art of war afford, for the purpose of forming projects of operations and of directing great military movements; the art of moving troops so as to be enabled either to dispense with a battle or to deliver one with the greatest advantage and with the most decisive results." (Century Dictionary).

Strategy is "the art of the leader or general"; "the practice of the art of war by an executive agent of a supreme government," (Maude); "the practical adaptation of the means placed at a general's disposal to the attainment of the object in view." (Von Moltke).

"This definition fixes the responsibility of the commander-in-chief to the government. He cannot be held answerable for the 'means', not even for the training of the 'means' for a particular operation, unless he be appointed to his task in

adequate time. He is charged with their employment within the limits of the theatre of operations assigned to him."

"Since, however, the 'means', that is, the conditions of the problems presented by war, are subject to infinite variation, it is clear that their employment can never be reduced to a 'science' but must retain to the full the characteristics of an 'art'. This distinction is essential and must be borne in mind." (Col. E. B. Maude).

It follows from the latter definition that the ability to wage war successfully cannot surely be derived from the study of military principles, in the same sense that, by adequate study, one can become proficient in a certain branch of mathematics or one of the less exact sciences. In war the same general dispositions will not always produce similar results, because of the infinite variation in the secondary conditions of the problem as regards the forces of each side; moreover, the effect of these conditions as regards an enemy cannot be known with any certainty, not to mention the uncertainty of the information concerning even the disposition of his various forces.

But though the theory of war can never establish fundamental rules of action, atill a thorough study of the history of campaigns cannot fail to elucidate principles and to prepare the mind of the student rapidly to form, from the complex

conditions of a strategic problem, a sounder solution than would be possible in the absence of such training and accumulated knowledge. The successful application of this knowledge necessarily depends very largely upon the character of the leader. The principles of strategy are not complex. In all warfare the object of the leaders has always been similar and clearly enough defined. The effort has been to bring strength against weakness, to strike an enemy in a weak point. The difficulty is in accomplishing this purpose.

"...in strategy everything is very simple, but not on that account very easy. Once it is determined from the relations of the state what should and may be done by war, then the way to it is easy to find; but to follow that way straightforward, to carry out the plan without being obliged to deviate from it a thousand times by a thousand varying influences, that requires, besides great strength of character, great clearness and steadiness of mind, and out of a thousand men who are remarkable, some for mind, others for penetration, others again for boldness or strength of will, perhaps not one will combine in himself all of these qualities which are required to raise a man above mediocrity in the career of a general." (Clausewitz - Von Cammerer, page 80).

"The doctrines of strategy do not go much beyond the rudimentary propositions of common sense; they can hardly be

called a science; their value lies almost entirely in their application to the particular case. We must with proper tact understand a situation which at every moment assumes a different aspect, and then do the simplest and most natural thing with firmness and circumspection. In this way war becomes an art, an art indeed which is served by many sciences. These latter are far from making a man a general, but where he is deficient in them, they must be made up by other qualities." (Moltke. Von Cammerer, page 214.)

Also the following from Von Moltke's Instructions for Superior Commanders (Von Cammerer, page 275):

"The doctrines of strategy do not go much beyond the rudimentary propositions of common sense; they can hardly be called a science; their value lies almost entirely in their application to the particular case."

How Moltke wished this sentence to be understood is apparent from a remark that he made ten years later, when discussing a problem in applied tactics:

"If one wishes to answer such questions as are set here, one likes to look for certain rules and axioms. Such, however, can be offered only by science, which in our case is strategy. But strategy is not like other abstract sciences. These have their invariable and precise truths upon which we can build and from which we can draw further conclusions. Example: the

right-angled triangle. Now we read much in theoretical books about the advantages of 'operating on the inner line'. Nevertheless we shall have to ask ourselves in each case what at the moment will be the most advantageous thing for us to do. In our last problem we were also standing on the inner line, and knew the enemy's weakness near M; yet to none of the gentlemen did it occur to advance across the river against M.

Strategy is the application of common sense to the conduct of war. The difficulty lies in its execution, for we are dependent upon an infinite number of factors, like wind and weather, fogs, wrong reports, etc.

If, therefore, theoretical science alone will never lead us to victory, we must not altogether neglect it. General von Willisen rightly said: 'There is always one step from knowing to doing, but it is a step from knowing and not from not knowing.' "

Practically all writers are in accord as to the main principles of study, though there is of course difference of opinion as to the details. Also these details are necessarily subject to modification as a result of changes in materiel, the number of troops engaged, etc.

The following "main principles" of strategy are summarized from Col. James Modern Strategy, Chapter III:

Strategy, which concerns the movement of troops before they come into actual collision, seeks to derive from victory

greater advantages than is to be obtained from simply defeating the enemy, by placing the victor in a relative position before the battle to gain the greatest effect possible from his tactical success when won. For example, a successful battle that permits an enemy to fall back upon his base may leave the opposing forces of equal material strength, but one which cuts the enemy off from his base may result in his complete annihilation as a fighting force.

This latter aim is attained by:

1 - Ensuring superiority of numbers when striking a tactical blow.

2 - Covering the army's communication with its base.

3 - Threatening or cutting those of the enemy.

Superiority in numbers may be gained in one of two ways:

1 - The forces brought against the enemy may exceed his when united, or,

2 - Superior strength may be brought against units of his forces while dispersed.

Superiority of force may be due to:

1 - A more numerous army.

2 - Rapid mobilization, due to more efficient organization.

3 - More efficient means of transport -- better roads, railroads, or the free over-sea transport resulting from command of the sea and more numerous merchantile and other transports.

Superior strength against dispersed forces may be gained:

1 - From the enemy's faulty dispositions or faulty maneuvers due to lack of information or false information.

2 - By penetrating the enemy's strategic front, dividing his forces and defeating them by successive concentrations.

A more numerous army, better organization, and superior means of transport are initial advantages existing upon the outbreak of war when it is too late for the enemy to repair these disadvantages. They were possessed by Germany, in the War of 1870, which had 450,000 men to the French 220,000, in the field within fourteen days, also a much superior organization and railroad system.

Concerning faulty dispositions or maneuvers, these may result from a mistaken effort to furnish local defence at all points of a long strategic line by dispersing the forces along it -- a disposition characterized by Napoleon as a stupidity in reference to Joseph in Spain in 1808, and as "good against smugglers but never succeeded in war," in reference to the cordon system in 1814. In his first campaign he concentrated his troops and drove apart the more scattered Austrian and Sardinian forces.

The advantages that may be derived from penetrating the enemy's strategic front are illustrated by Napoleon's campaigns of 1796 and 1808, in which he not only brought superior numbers

against separated portions of the enemy, but cut or threatened their communications.

With regard to the protection of communications, a small invading force may subsist upon a densely populated enemy's country, provided it keeps on the move or occupies a commercial distributing center. Even a force of 30,000 men could not halt for any length of time without exhausting local supplies. But large bodies of troops require at all times constant communication with their home base, not only for practically all food supplies, but also for ammunition, war material, clothing, medicines, reinforcement, sending sick and wounded to the rear, etc. The maintenance of lines of communication is therefore imperative. They cannot safely be abandoned except to strike a blow under conditions which practically insure victory, in which cases they can promptly be regained; but defeat under such conditions might prove disastrous, as a beaten army can retreat with safety only in the direction in which it can make good its losses in warlike stores, equipment, supplies and men.

Strategy teaches the importance of concentration of effort to gain the power of overcoming an enemy's armed resistance. It shows the advantage not merely of defeating the enemy's armies but of inflicting defeat under conditions which will prove as harmful as possible in the way of diminishing

his fighting ability, while the strategic situation should be such that in case of tactical defeat the consequences shall be reduced to a minimum.

All modern armies are organized and handled upon the principle Von Cammerer states (Development of Strategical Science, p. 128):

"Our Prussian army organization, from the time after the war of liberation, is built upon the firm base of army corps, which already in peace time are almost formed in the same manner that they would be in war, and this has undoubtedly stood the test."

While the main principles of strategy are and always have been understood and can be readily acquired by any student, the same cannot be said of their application to the varying conditions of warfare and their adaptation to the improved efficiency of military weapons and appliances.

The Historical Department of the German General Staff states that: "History always confirms anew the old experience, that original and new ideas are very slow in being universally recognized in practical life." Generally speaking military nations have made radical changes in the handling of their armed forces only as a result of defeat. The strategy and tactics of the past have been adhered to until actual experience in battle has demonstrated their inadequacy. This conservative

tendency remains, though in diminished degree because the establishment of the General Staff system provides an efficient means for the systematic and thorough study of the probable influence upon strategy and tactics of improvements in weapons, communications, transport, etc.

In so far as concerns strategy, the questions of communication and transport have at times exercised a greater influence than changes in weapons.

Before the introduction of gunpowder and the maintenance of regular roads, the striking radius of armies was comparatively limited. Troops were obliged to subsist upon the country. But a small amount of supplies could be carried. Consequently if the enemy could offer resistance for a certain length of time, the invader would be obliged to return from the theater of war. Such resistance was usually in the form of fortresses placed upon the routes leading from the enemy's country. To make successful invasions, it was necessary to reduce these by siege operations. With important fortresses this required much time and great numbers. The numbers of men who could be sustained depended upon the distance from the home base, and the time produced exhaustion of supplies, both of which limited the striking radius; and the proportion of this radius to the dimensions of the country was a factor in its powers of resistance to invasion.

With the introduction of siege guns, the duration of sieges was very much reduced, while, on the other hand, the difficulty of supply was increased, the importance of good roads and the necessity of reducing the fortresses guarding them was enhanced. The comparatively great duration of wars and their political and non-national character, not only obliged the employment of mercenaries but rendered it impracticable to maintain them except by regular supplies.

Such soldiers were very expensive and the necessity for economising them had a marked influence upon the conduct of war. Also, the composition of the armies being similar, since both leaders and men frequently changed their allegiance, their training and tactics were also similar; and as under the conditions of such warfare the opposing forces were practically equal, they attempted to gain advantages by other means than fighting in the open. The natural result of these conditions, and the necessity that each army was under of protecting its communications to the rear, was that armies faced each other, in entrenchments extending across the hostile frontier, sometimes for months at a time, and attempted by various ruses to effect concentrations, cut communications, etc.

This system of warfare was broken up by the increased fire effect, skill and rapidity of maneuver acquired by the

highly trained infantry and cavalry of Frederick the Great, which enabled him to catch the enemy in the open, or flank his entrenchment and force him to fight in the open; and this method succeeded in all cases until the number of his enemies became too great to make it possible for him to attack them all before they were thoroughly entrenched. Such positions could not be stormed successfully with the artillery of that day, and he was eventually compelled to resort to the same methods as his enemies, which continued after his death.

Such methods of warfare were recognized by military students in France to be economically disadvantageous. They became convinced that the aim should be a crushing and decisive victory; that to this end decentralization of command was essential for a freedom of maneuver which they believed to be the only possible answer to the methods of Frederick the Great.

This led to the idea of the organization of permanent divisions of all arms, just before the outbreak of the wars of the French Revolution; and the necessities for self preservation in that war, a nation in arms fighting for its existence, compelled to guard itself against attack, by separate bodies acting under orders from the central authority, brought into existence the divisions of all arms, recommended by earlier reformers, and developed the means necessary to coordinate them. From this came the

realization of the advantages of troops of all arms operating from different bases for a common purpose.

This is the starting point of modern strategy, the materials which became available to Napoleon; that is, a nation in arms -- an almost inexhaustible supply of men, divisional units and commanders, trained to unhesitating obedience to field orders and accustomed to act upon their own initiative without guidance from superior authority; the idea of cooperation between separate columns for a common purpose; and a tradition that the word "impossible" did not exist for French soldiers.

This "nation in arms" was confronted by a radically different organization, composed of highly trained and very expensive soldiers, each representing an investment corresponding to $10,000 capital at the present time, and the risk of his loss by death in action, disease, or desertion if hardships were too great, seemed to justify the method of "strong positions", to which Frederick the Great had finally been forced to resort; and since the value of these positions depended largely upon the ground, military men lost themselves (as Clausewitz puts it) in debating whether "the battalion defended the mountain or the mountain defended the battalion".

The care of the private soldiers was such that commanders

would not report their units fit for action unless complete in all equipment and provided with regular rations for a certain number of days.

Command was centralized. The modern idea of "divisions" and "corps" did not exist, though the names were in use. Commanders of a number of units received orders, except on the battle field, from the central authority. There was no personal bond with their general. An example of the consequences may be judged from the defence made by Mack for his failure at Ulm, that the delay in his movements on the day of Elchingen was that when the news of the French attack was received he was busy writing out the orders for the following day, which occupied fourteen pages of foolscap and "did not contain one superfluous word". These methods, and an exaggerated respect for private property, hampered the mobility of troops, especially large bodies, and greatly influenced strategy by requiring magazines to be established on main roads and the dispersion of many troops to guard them, and requiring a widely extended front.

These conditions were fully taken advantage of by Napoleon, whose relatively unencumbered men were able to march through country formerly considered impracticable, and by rapid concentration break through the extended lines of the enemy. The rapidity of his movements was such that his

enemies' calculations based upon former data were often wholly in error.

Napoleon also developed the use of supported cavalry, backing it by a very strong advanced guard, sometimes one quarter of the troops engaged, so disposed as to be able to concentrate and meet an enemy's detachment coming from any direction. The object of this strong advance guard was to attack with such vigor as to hold an enemy until the divisions of the main army could crush him before reinforcement could arrive. This method was known as maneuvering about a fixed point, the point being fixed by the vigor of the attack of the advance guard. The rapidity of maneuvers enabled the troops to live off the country, where the population was sufficiently dense, but in thinly settled countries, when the system began to be understood, its advantages were largely neutralized by a system of evasion, which defeated to a certain extent Napoleon's principle of attack by the concentration of all possible forces upon the decisive point. The operation of this principle was restored by improvement in artillery and the method of its employment. Such skill and rapidity had been acquired by this important arm that Napoleon was able to bring masses of guns within case-shot range, break through the enemy's defence and then overwhelm him by a vigorous attack of in-

fantry and cavalry.

Success depended upon the ability of the troops of the advance guard to hold the enemy, at no matter what cost, until the final blow could be delivered with the whole force engaged.

As regards Napoleon's strategic methods, it was his practice to take advantage of his superior mobility to beat his enemies in detail. The latter, being accustomed to their deliberate methods, made no adequate allowance for his rapidity of movement. By marching 25 miles a day he was often able to bring his whole army in contact with one column of the enemy while the other was too far away to render any assistance. Or if they were too close for this maneuver, he would send a strong detachment to delay one column, often at the cost of heavy sacrifice, while he concentrated the remainder of his forces against the other. The principle is as old as war, but his great mobility enabled him to take full advantage of it.

Generally speaking, he believed in operating on interior lines with his army concentrated, or in a position to concentrate rapidly, and in attacking with the utmost vigor in massed formations.

"In the American Civil War, though the weapons on both sides were substantially of equal power, the relation between

the three arms was completely upset, owing to the introduction of the long range infantry rifle, which by its accuracy at long distances entirely destroyed the possibility of the Napoleonic attack in which previously all strategy had culminated.

.....relying upon the power of his artillery to blow a hole with case-shot in any battle formation which he conceived it possible to oppose to his men, the Emperor had simplified his strategical procedure to the utmost, suppressing all finesse and attempts at deception, and aiming only at the most rapid possible concentration of masses on the decisive point; and since armaments are more rapidly changed than ideas, his principles were maintained, even when the weapon changed, with consequences which proved most disastrous on the battlefield." (Maude, page 104).

Such methods have generally been condemned in modern times as impracticable because of the increased range of modern firearms, the modern method, advocated by von Moltke, being to concentrate on the battle field. Both methods are, however, considered by competent authorities applicable under certain conditions. The essential conditions for the successful application of the modern method are communications sufficiently rapid and reliable to insure reasonable accuracy as to the enemy's dispositions and your own maneuvers, and a commissioned personnel sufficiently well instructed to carry

out the Commander-in-Chief's general plan without continuous specific orders. This is illustrated by the following quotations from Von Cammerer:

"Von der Goltz Clearly pointed out the characterictic features in Napoleon's and Moltke's mode of proceedure, and declared both these methods as equally justified, and, according to circumstances, also applicable in our time. In a later explanation he started from the point of view that, for instance, Turkish leaders of troops do not yet possess that amount of tactical education, training, and reliable initiative which is the sine qua non for Moltke's method of operation."

"Napoleon was at that time on the whole quite right with his strategy of operating in massed formations; his immense successes prove this in the most splendid manner. But if he were living today he would of course no longer act in this way. He would have surely adapted himself to the completely altered conditions, in the same way as Moltke has done."

...."the altered conditions of the present, especially to the enormous increase of fire effect."....

"Moltke was the first soldier who had rightly recognized just this change in the fundamental tactical principles for strategic considerations." (Preface).

(Moltke)

"It is an error to think that we are concentrated if everybody is or many are marching on one road. We lose more in depth than we gain in breadth; for two divisions marching abreast of each other at an interval of four and a half to seven miles will more easily and better support each other than if they followed behind each other." (Page 216).

(Same) "Incomparably more favorable will things shape themselves if on the day of battle all the forces can be concentrated from different points towards the field of battle itself -- in other words if the operations have been conducted in such a manner that a final short march from different points leads all available forces simultaneously upon the front and flanks of the adversary. In that case strategy has done the best it can ever hope to attain, and great results must be the consequence."

"The above strategic doctrine is in actual contrast with Napoleon's deeds and words. Yorck von Wartenberg's book shows that he:

'considered the movement of masses on one line of operation and the pressure of masses on one point of the enemy's lines as the climax of all strategic wisdom'.

"Twice or three times he made use of accidental circumstances which caused him to operate so as to enter the field

of battle from two different directions with the object of enveloping the enemy; but those were with him only exceptions. And what with him was an exception has become with Moltke the rule; what was with him the rule was with Moltke the exception". (Page 218).

"Goltz was the first to emphasise in strategic science the characteristic difference between Moltke and Napoleon, which is constituted by the contrast of uniting all forces before the battle and uniting all the forces during the battle. He is of the opinion that both these different methods of operation may even in our day co-exist and must co-exist, because Moltke's method presupposes confidence in the practical and proper initiative of subordinate leaders, which is not everywhere justified. Indeed, the battle of Pharsala on May 5th,1897, has clearly show that the Turkish generals are not yet ripe for Moltke's method of operations, which the Turkish general staff expected of them. Goltz had trained that staff, and if he acknowledges the force of circumstances in the manner he does, we must surely pay due regard to that." (Page 240).

As previously stated, the main principles of strategy are not complex -- it is their successful application which is difficult, especially in handling the great masses of men which constitute modern armies, or nations in arms, ready to be mobilized with unprecedented rapidity. The problem of handling such masses involves almost fundamental changes in

methods and very marked improvements in the training of the commissioned personnel. Wars are no longer the quarrels of rulers leading mercenary armies, but are political units in which the people are vitally interested, since it is nations, and not simply rulers, that are at war for what they believe to be their moral rights. It is no longer a question of the cost of killing expensive mercenaries, but a contest for the defeat of another people, or the infliction upon them of sufficient damage to make them willing to concede the claims of their adversary.

Clausewitz declares that "war is only a continuation of state policy by other means"; -- "that war is only a part of political intercourse, therefore by no means an independent thing in itself."

In order that a nation may carry out its settled policies, it is necessary that it be prepared at all times to sustain these by force of arms against those nations which may oppose them, and therefore not only that its forces be adequate and be organized, equipped and trained according to modern principles, but that their strategic disposition be such as to permit their employment with the maximum efficiency in case of war against their probable enemies. Except in the case of countries having a common land boundary, successful war is not probable without the employment of both land and sea forces.

This is expressed in Maude's Evolution of Modern Strategy, page 4, as follows:

"Whenever and wherever this may overtake us (G.B.), one thing remains a reasonable certainty, the final decision, the knockout blow, can only be given by the shock of land forces, for the reason the Sultan of Turkey neatly expressed in the remark that "ironclads cannot climb hills'. No nation, least of all ours, possesses patience enough to endure the strain war must place upon industry, till starvation does its slow and relentless work, and since the command of the sea will almost certainly after a time fall to us, we shall have to go to the continent to reap the harvest our fleets will have sown."

In the employment of land forces, all authorities point out that no possible perfection of plans, preparations, and strategic dispositions on the part of the leaders, can insure success unless the quality of the forces, their morale, discipline, organization and training are at least up to the modern standard of possible enemies, and they are sustained by the moral force of the nation. In fact, strategic dispositions must necessarily be largely controlled by all of these qualities. Maude states, page 4, that "it is the character of the individual units of the army that primarily controls the execution of the commander's designs. In other words, that a general does what he can, not what he

would like to." Also page 12:

"In other nations the sense of the need of submission to discipline has become hereditary; with us it has almost to be re-created from the beginning, and the essential need of our machinery is, to use a metaphor, a boiler in which to generate the driving force of national opinion, and insure a pressure sufficient to keep in motion against all friction the fighting forces, whether land or sea, in face of the enemy."

The importance of the attitude of the nation, -- its determination to succeed by accepting the necessary sacrifices,-- is of the highest importance, and it is the business of the military leaders and troops to give effect to this attitude. This essential spirit, and the discipline that alone can render it effective, should be communicated to the men by their leaders, by their firmness, strength of character and ability, since nothing adds to the effectiveness of troops so much as confidence in their leaders. This is illustrated by the following quotation from Maude:

"Having (Sherman - to Atlanta, 1863) successfully maneuvered the Confederates out of their position in several successive encounters, he suddenly sent his troops at the front of the opposing intrenchments, to teach his men obedience, as he said, and to demonstrate to his enemy that he was not afraid." (page 45).

"In the campaign of 1796, Napoleon convinced everyone 'that here at last they had to deal with the true strategist; the living embodiment of the highest "art of the leader", which art is not evinced in the mere dictation of orders, or even in the sifting of intelligence, but by superior will-power impresses itself as irresistible on friend and foe alike." (Page 51).

"Marengo had established his reputation on such a pinnacle that, henceforth, his orders met with a readiness of unquestioned obedience in excess probably of anything known in history before or since. It was not merely that he had the right as Emperor to command; but it was the trust and confidence of all ranks in his infallibility that procured for him a zealous service up to the limits of human capacity for endurance, which far transcends, in the energy it communicates to the motion of masses of men, the momentum imparted by perfunctory obedience to constituted authority." (Page 64).

"The principal factor of success in war, whether modern, mediaval, or pre-historic, is confidence between men and leaders." (Preface).

"Its essence (Clausewitz's work) lies in this, that it views war as the 'struggle for the survival of the fittest' among the races, and shows how the human element in it dominates practically all other considerations. The will to succeed

and the courage to endure are the two essentials, and, given these, Victory may be achieved under the most adverse conditions." (Page 97).

While the ability of the leader is of the highest importance, as has been shown in many instances, it is not to be assumed that the vast armies of modern times could be successfully controlled in all of its units by one man alone. Napoleon possessed this power to an extraordinary degree through his capacity for working 20 hours a day. Mack was busy with his 14 page order for the next day when he was surprised by the enemy. The strategic handling of modern armies demands not only an extensive division of labor, carried on by a modern general staff, but the thorough education during peace of all subordinate commanders in the doctrine and methods of warfare adopted, defining the scope of personal initiative and responsibility. This may be defined as follows:

"Initiative is the word which expresses the mental qualities of the officer who 'knowing the general aim of the fleet or force in which his command is a unit, strives to attain that aim by going beyond the letter of his instructions while obeying them in the spirit'. The classical example is to be found in Nelson's conduct at St. Vincent, when, instead of obeying Jervis's order to 'tack in succession', he wore his ship out of the line and fell upon the returning enemy."

This may be further illustrated by the following quotations:

"To make a corps or divisional commander efficient, you must first have a staff trained to accept responsibility; to invert the process is merely to make confusion worse confounded. There were no officers in Austria trained to responsibility, and hence Army Headquarters still had to issue detailed orders to every battalion -- the system which had cost them, as previously explained, the defeats of 1796 and 1800 in Italy." (Maude, Page 76).

"Our problem is to develop intelligent confidence in peace-time, so as to eliminate the internal friction which automatically develops in an army from the clash of conflicting points of view and varying standards, both of knowledge and intelligence.

....."The only way to make a man realize that he has not been gratuitously sacrificed to the crass imbecility of an incompetent staff is to train him to understand the limitations under which that staff is by the nature of things compelled to work, and then, by filling his mind with the accumulated experience of others, i. e., with military history, enable him to see that his duty lies in the subordination of himself to the welfare of his comrades, and not in the display of his personal tactical ability.

"You require to develop character not to develop initiative. Of that there is generally enough and to spare, and it seems to me that by the present system of teaching men to understand their exact importance in the whole hierarchy and the difficulties by which the exercise of command is trammeled, we shall, when the emergency arises, find that the latent spirit of self-sacrifice, and duty to which the nation unquestionable owes its greatness and triumphs in the past, will sufficiently respond." (Maude, Page).

"Certainly Clausewitz and his school fully realize what Napoleon's personal presence always meant, but they knew, too, that such men were exceptional, born, not made, and elected, as the safer course, to devise a method of training average men to give a uniform average of sound leading as the best antidote to the exceptional merit of a born leader." (Maude, Page 97).

"Members of the Prussian General Staff are selected by a qualifying test, and it is this test, "as opposed to the competitive one, which is the essential cause of the excellent results obtained by the Staff considered as a whole. It gives them command of a supply of practical men whose wits are sharpened and characters strengthened by intimate contact with human nature, and eliminates that most dangerous breed which, disliking contact with the everyday conditions

of their existence, seek to escape from it by devotion to the study of books whose meaning they cannot fathom, because they are ignorant of this very knowledge of men as they really are, from the best opportunities of acquiring which they are most anxious to escape.

"Given a competitive system, and such men are almost bound to survive to the exclusion of better soldiers, for their clerical and studious habits soon bring them to the front on their office stools, from which lofty elevation they in turn condition the subjects to be studied and the books to be issued to succeeding generations, with the ultimate result that after half a century intellect is eliminated from the competitive examinations and cram work, pure and simple, becomes the standard." (Maude, Page 101.)

"Napoleon's Army of Reserve in 1800 and the Grand Army on the Rhine in 1805 were very deficient in many supplies, but in spite of this condition won great victories through the decision and energy of their leader. Similar deficiencies in 1870, though in comparatively trivial degree, immobilized the French generals. The official account shows 'forgetfulness of the teaching of war, and points most clearly to the need of the thorough organization of a teaching organ in every peace-trained army.'

"Napoleon's orders were understood and carried out.

The same forms were used in 1870, but were imperfectly carried out because the Napoleonic traditions on these matters had entirely faded out of the lower ranks." (Maude, Page).

The contrast between the French and German armies in 1870 illustrates modern methods of control -- showing the influence of the teachings of Scharnhorst and Clausewitz.

"On the one hand, an army which only the personal magnetism of Napoleon the Great could have moved; on the other a nation in arms, which proved itself manageable by very ordinary men. On the one hand, a system so sacrificed to intense individualism that no two commanders could act in unison; on the other, individuality so trained and subordinated by a common education that, in spite of an almost total absence of anything approaching genius, the sum of individual intelligence and good will overcame the internal resistance of the machine, and, in spite of mistakes and imperfections in the subordinate commanders, always ending by bringing a sufficient numerical superiority to bear on the decisive points."

"We have, thank God, no model, no normal form of action, and therefore no superior officer ought to fall into the mistake of wishing to direct the course of an engagement upon lines of his own choosing."

"Troops once engaged are beyond the control of the

higher commander, and interference on his part is therefore impossible on active service. But what applies to active service also holds good in peace time, unless we abandon the principle that nothing must be learned on the parade ground that has to be unlearnt again on service." (Col. Von Spohn-- "The Art of Command").

According to the modern strategic theory, as developed particularly by the Germans, the former practice of developing a complete plan of campaign is considered defective, except in so far as concerns its general lines as defining the strategic object to be attained, but even this may be subject to repeated changes.

In Moltke's memoirs of 1868-69, on which the "strategical deployment" of the German armies in 1870 was based, "the whole problem is reduced within the limits of the 'knowable', and no step beyond the moment of collision is allowed to influence the decision; all efforts being limited to the concentration of every available man, horse and gun in three armies within supporting distance one of the other, before the enemy's possible action could interfere with either." (Maude, page 114).

"The wise commander adopts the simplest plan for the attainment of his purpose, because even then the difficulties of execution will tax his energies to the utmost." (Clausewitz).

Clausewitz's teachings saved the Germans from the errors suffered by the French through lack of initiative.

"With every mind in the army (German), certainly in the commissioned ranks, concentrated on the true objective, 'the enemy's field army', and on its destruction, the work of finding, holding, and final crushing of that army would have accomplished itself even without Moltke's initial impulse -- not that the battle need have taken the form it actually did take, but the corps would have marched to the sound of the guns, and, no physical obstacle of distance or the ground intervening, a twofold numerical superiority would have been bound to tell." (Maude, page 121).

"Moltke convincingly showed how utterly wrong it would be to act in the course of events by a rigid system, and to overlook the requirements of the moment. In conformity with Clausewitz's definition, 'that strategy is the employment of the battle to gain the end of the war', he demanded that the strategist should make the best use of every successful action, and base upon it his further plans, even though he had thought out things differently before the action.

'' Strategy is a system of expediencies. It is more than a science; it is the application of knowledge to practical life, the development of the original leading idea in conformity with ever changing circumstances; it is the art of

acting under the pressure of the most trying circumstances''

"In this spirit he himself (Moltke) acted in an exemplary manner, and with the lofty calmness of a philospher, even though his plans were often painfully disturbed by faults and mistakes of the lower grades. As soon, however, as he was at some liberty to trace the principal outlines of fresh operations, his fundamental ideas became again at once apparent." (Von Cammerer, pp. 212-13).

Every effort is being made in the training of modern armies to increase mobility, not only of the troops but of all methods of transport, as a means of gaining strategic advantages. Maude states (p. 24): "Endurance on the march is strategically at least equal to courage in face of the enemy." Also (p. 23): "As between troops of equal fighting value, mobility is the ultimate deciding factor." .... "if military history teaches anything, it is that ordered mobility must tell. The army that every day reaches points five miles farther in advance than its adversary expects, so completely upsets its plans and destroys its morale that victory follows almost as a matter of course."

With modern armies, the mobility necessary to form advantageous strategic combinations cannot be attained without decentralization, and subsequent concentration on the battle field. The necessity for mobility, and consequent decentralization, the advantages and dangers of the latter,

and of the kind of peace training of the nation and of its officers and men necessary to render it effective, may be illustrated by the following:

"Nothing trains a man's judgment better than thinking out the orders necessary to meet a given situation, and submitting his ideas to the criticism of any one possessing, by mere length of service, a little more practical experience.

"Over and above the advantage accruing to the individual from both learning to think and acquiring the habit of reducing his thought to writing, the ultimate gain to the army in mobility, which must ensue when the system has taken firm root in the service, is enormous. Mobility, as we have seen in the case of the Austrian armies in Napoleonic days, is not so much a matter of marching power, but, with large forces, is dependent upon the time and certainty with which the orders for movement are drawn up, and to secure this rapidity decentralization is imperative.

"Now, though it is probable that not one man in a hundred can write absolutely ideal orders for anything, it is a matter of experience that, with reasonable practice, probably ninety-five out of a hundred will write practical orders good enough to be readily understood if the number of units is not too great, and 'provided always' that their recipients also have themselves been trained to appreciate the difficulties and conditions under which orders in the field always

have to be given." (Maude, p. 131).

"Our forefathers in Marlborough's time recognized the drawbacks inherent in decentralization, and met them by allowing their subordinates no lattitude at all, and in view of the restricted areas and numbers with which they were concerned, they were probably right; but with the enormous access of numbers in arms the outbreak of the French Revolution called into being, and still more the greatly increased areas over which the range of modern weapons compels us to operate, decentralization has become inevitable, and with it its corallary, viz.: military education; but the term must be accepted in its broadest sense, and we must realize that even the subaltern, nay, the very private in the ranks, must be taught to understand the mechanism of war, so as to be able to reduce in his own person the friction which clogs even the simplest evolutions desired by the leaders to its lowest possible expression.

"To achieve this end, we want yet one further link in our educational chain, viz.: provision for the intelligent instruction of our men in military history. 'What men have done, that men can do', is a saying that can be made to apply to every rank, and even when, by dint of much practice, we have all become past masters in the writing of orders, their execution will still make demands upon all the resolution and

heroism of which the recipients are capable.

"If men have marched shoeless and in rags in the past, if regiments have stormed positions leaving 60% killed and wounded in their tracks, and did not complain, they can do it again, for human nature changes very slowly; but they must be taught that these things are expected of them by the people at home -- and since knowledge of things military springs first from the army, it is in the army that the beginning must be made.

"The nation (Great Britain), in 1899, had sunk to such a depth of military ignorance that it really did not know that bloodshed was a usual consequence of the armed collision of combatants. Hence the outbreak of hysteria with which they received the news of our casualties in the early engagements of the war, and, as a consequence, the reluctance of too many of our generals to risk decisive action. But as against a European enemy, what use could any general make of such subordinates ? Even Napoleon could have won no victories had he been held to account for the lives of his men in such fashion by his countrymen; and unless we take steps in time to bring home to the nation (and we can do this only through the army) that, in the words of Clausewitz, 'One should teach the soldiers how to die, not how to avoid dying', all tactical and strategical training will be in vain." (Maude, p. 134).

A close adherence to the study of the theory of strategic advantages has in the past resulted in tedious campaigns that were largely competitions in maneuvering and with little bloodshed. The futility of this practice in modern wars was made clear by the practice of Napoleon, and later by the precepts of Clausewitz, who states:

"The destruction of the enemy's military force is the leading principle of war, and for the whole chapter of positive action the direct way to the aim."

.....

"Let us not hear of generals who conquer without bloodshed. If a bloody slaughter is a horrible sight, then that is a ground for paying more respect to war, but not for making the sword we wear blunter and blunter by degrees from feelings of humanity, until some one steps in with one that is sharp and lops off the arm from our body."

"Make your decision quickly, and throw every available man, horse, and gun against the chosen wing for attack, whilst distance alone renders the enemy's interference difficult, if not impossible".

Maude states (page 49) that "the first principle in the conduct of war is to be as strong as possible at the decisive point".

Clausewitz states (page 145,Von Cammerer) that the

fundamental principle which should be inherent in every attack is "Strength against weakness, front against flank, superior force against inferior force, masses against the decisive point."

Von Cammerer shows, in concluding his book, that there has been considerable development in strategy during the 19th century, but states that though some of the principles may be "eternal", a great deal that holds good at present will surely be subject to change.

"It is always risky to prophesy. But who will doubt that a navigable airship, for instance, as a practicable instrument of war, will produce an enormous change in tactics and strategy .'

"And on that account it is so highly important that intelligent labor should never flag, that we should never cease to inquire and examine, and that we should never be in a state where we imagine that we have finished with every outward and inner preparation for war.

"What a hundred years ago was the ruin of Prussia was in the first instance the complacent conviction that the heirs of Frederic's fame were still towering high above all others. Today we are, thank Heaven, far from such infatuation, and our army is not wanting in honest and untiring zeal. As long as so many intelligent forces are active, we may look forward to a sound progressive development."

In so far as concerns the main principles of strategy, they apply to warfare of all kinds, whether on land or sea. In any particular case of attack, the effort should be to bring "strength against weakness, front against flank, superior force against inferior forces, masses against the decisive point".

In order that a nation's land and sea forces may have the best possible chance of accomplishing the maximum results, it is not alone necessary that they be organized, trained and led in accordance with the accepted principles of strategy, but also that they be so disposed as to be, upon the outbreak of war, in such position in respect to the forces of probable enemies that they may be able to act with the greatest possible advantage in the shortest possible time. This involves a consideration not only of the positions of the mobile forces, but also of their bases of supply and lines of communication in relation to those of the nations whose interests are believed to be opposed to the policies which we consider essential to our national well-being.

Manifestly, the details of the strategic distribution of forces, defences, bases, etc., cannot be determined without a knowledge not only, though particularly, of the policies of our own country, but also of the policies of those of the great powers with whom we are most likely to be

in conflict.

To cover all contingencies would require detailed strategic plans and forces adequate to carry them out, with reference to each nation, or probable combination of nations, whose policies conflict with our interests and the importance of whose armed forces render it probable that they might attempt to enforce them. No nations have, however, a military policy of such wide scope, being relieved from this necessity by the mutual jealousies of other nations and the consequent "balance of power" which it is their constant effort to maintain. For example, it is possible that a coalition of all the principal military powers of Europe could be formed against Great Britain, but as the necessity of maintaining the balance of power renders this impracticable, the military policy of that country is confined to the probable combinations that might be formed against her.

There may, however, be a policy of such vital importance to the political existence of a country that all necessary sacrifices, in the way of providing adequate armament, must be made to maintain it. For example, the peculiar position of Great Britain, her dependence upon uninterrupted oversea trade, and communication with widely separated colonial possessions, render it imperative to gain and retain command of the sea in any probable conflict. It is for this reason that a feature of her declared military policy has been to

maintain a minimum sea force at least equal, not to a possible coalition involving the principal nations of Europe, but to the combined sea forces of any two powers plus ten percent.

The United States has no such vital policy, in the sense of that just indicated; that is, no policy that is vitally necessary to her existence as a nation. Moreover, no foreign power has announced a policy vital to its own existence as a nation which would very seriously effect our material interests, let alone our national existance. For example, assuming that some power should, in the interests of its colonial expansion, decide to dispute the Monroe Doctrine, and should succeed in doing so by armed force, there would be no immediate menace to the national existence of the United States. If, however, public sentiment proved so strongly in favor of maintaining this doctrine, independent of the purely material interests involved, as to consent to the sacrifices necessary to create forces sufficient to maintain it, the result would be a serious war, the outcome of which would be determined by the strength and persistence of the sentiment -- the doctrine would be maintained, or it would be given up when it was no longer considered worth the sacrifices the progress of the war showed to be necessary.

Corbett states (page 41, Some Principles of Maritime

Strategy): "A modern instance is the recent Russo-Japanese war, which was fought for a limited object--the assertion of certain claims over territory which formed no part of the possessions of either belligerent. Hostilities were conducted on entirely modern lines by two armed nations and not by standing armies alone. But in the case of one belligerent, her interest in the object was so limited as to cause her to abandon it long before her whole force as an armed nation was exhausted or even put forth. The expense of life and treasure which the struggle was involving was beyond what the object was worth."

While the United States is not directly concerned in the balance of European powers, still it is apparent that the rivalries between those powers afford us a considerable measure of protection, in the sense that the necessities of the strategic disposition of their sea forces to guard against the aggresion of their neighbors renders it extremely improbable that any of them would consider it advisable to send the whole, or a large proportion, of their sea forces to operate against us particularly at such great distances. For example, in case of conflict with Great Britain, it may be assumed that she would be under the necessity of keeping control at least of the waters

adjacent to her home coast, as opposed to Germany; and the same applies to the fleet of the latter country in case of conflict with her.

It is the business of the statesman to weigh the value of his nation's policies and the force of public opinion that would probably support them throughout disputs due to various causes, to estimate correctly the probable influence of the hostility of the enemies of our possible enemies, and with these factors as a basis determine the kind of war that should be waged in support of a particular policy, and the minimum armament and maximum intensity of war required for maintaining our most essential policy. In this connection Clausewitz states that "the first, the greatest and most critical decision upon which the statesman and the general have to exercise their judgement is to determine the nature of the war, to be sure they do not mistake it for something nor seek to make of it something which from its inherent condition it can never be. 'This', he declares, "is the first and the most far-reaching of all strategic questions". (Corbett, page 25), also the following, page 39:

"The smaller the sacrifice we demand from our opponent, the smaller presumably will be the means of resis-

tance he will employ; and the smaller his means, the smaller will ours be required to be. Similarly, the smaller our political object, the less value shall we set upon it and the more easily we shall be induced to abandon it" (Clausewitz) ...."There may be wars of all degrees of importance and energy from a war of extermination down to the use of an army of observation. So, also, in a naval sphere, there may be a life-and-death struggle for maritime supremacy, or hostilities that never rise beyond a blockade" (Corbett).

As our territory is separated by sea from that of all probable enemies that could wage serious war against us, it follows that our main reliance for defense must be upon the efficiency of our sea forces and the positions upon which they are based. Any such conflict in which we may be engaged would probably be a limited war, which "is only permanently possible to island powers or between powers which are separated by sea, and then only when the power desiring limited war is able to command the sea to such a degree as to be able not only to isolate the distant object, but also to render impossible the invasion of his home territory" (Corbett, p.54).

Concerning the most advantageous strategic form of war, Corbett states, page 69, that Moltke "held that the strongest form of war -- that is the form which economically makes for the highest development of strength in a given force -- 'is strategic offensive combined with tactical defensive' -- "the

use of this form of war presupposes that we are able, by superior readiness or mobility, or by being more conveniently situated, to establish ourselves in the territorial object before our opponent can gather strength to prevent us. This done, we have the initiative, and the enemy, being unable to attack us at home, must conform to our opening by endeavoring to turn us out. We are in a position to meet his attack on ground of our own choice and to avail ourselves of such opportunities of counter attack as his distant and therefore exhausting offensive movements are likely to offer".

Our maritime strategy should conform to the principles which govern a war in which the sea is a substantial factor. "Naval Strategy is but that part of it which determines the movements of the fleets when maritime strategy has determined what part the fleet must play in relation to the action of the land forces." (Corbett, page 13).

Our sea forces should be of sufficient strength to enable us to maintain control of the sea in conflict with those nations whose policies we believe to be opposed to ours. The efficiency of these forces should be increased by the establishment and equipment of naval bases on our home coasts and in our oversea possessions, located in the most advantageous strategic positions with reference to our possible enemies.

The land forces should be of sufficient strength to prevent invasion of the home territory and should be concentrated at strategic points for this purpose, and also to facilitate the training necessary to acquire skill in the handling and supply of large bodies of troops.

As the nature and magnitude of the forces for national defense must depend primarily upon the national policies and the estimate of the resolution with which public opinion would be likely to support them, the details can be safely determined only through the assistance of the statesman. When they have decided what it is intended to insist upon, that is, our policies, the military authorities can determine the nature, extent and disposition of the forces necessary to enforce them with the desired intensity.

In the absence of authoritative information, the military strategy of the United States can be determined only in its general lines, as based upon an assumption as to the policies and their importance. The generally accepted policies may be assumed to be as follows, given in the order of their relative importance:

1. The Monroe Doctrine, designed to prevent further encroachment by European powers in America.
2. Exclusion of Asiatics, designed to prevent the immigration of the lower classes of Asiatics whose standards of living would, if admitted in sufficient numbers,

materially reduce that of our people of similar classes.

3. The Open Door, or Equal Opportunity, Policy, designed to assure to the United States, and other powers, equal opportunities for trading in certain far eastern countries, particularly China. This is opposed to the policy of Spheres of Influence, which is a familiar policy governing the relations of certain European powers with those of less civilized countries. The latter policy seeks to establish territorial limitations within which the country concerned claims exclusive rights of trade or the establishment of restrictions that give its subjects material trade advantages.

The effort which the United States would put forth to maintain these policies can be judged only by the force of public opinion which apparently sustains them. Expressions of this opinion in reference, particularly, to the Monroe Doctrine, but also in reference to the Exclusion of Asiatics, would seem to indicate that the country would make the necessary sacrifices to maintain them by force of arms. This may also be true in reference to the Open Door policy, though the estimate of its relative importance by public opinion seems to be less than that of the other two.

The Monroe Doctrine was adopted at the suggestion of Great Britain. Moreover, our commercial and sentimental relations with that country seem to render improbable a

difference over this policy. The same is not true in reference to Germany, which country not only declines to recognize the justice of the Doctrine, but is also supposed to desire colonial expansion in South America. China is not a military or naval power of importance and is not, nor can she soon be, in a position seriously to oppose our policy of exclusion. Japan, which ~~has the same desires in regard to the emigration of her lower classes,~~ also resents this policy as a reflection upon her civilization, possesses a powerful and growing navy and land forces greatly superior to ours, all based upon positions ~~of~~ strategically well placed with respect to our inadequately defended possessions in the Philippines. She is also materially interested in opposing the policy of the Open Door. It would therefore appear that our military policy should be based primarily upon the assumption of probable aggression on the part of Germany and Japan; and since it is reasonable to assume that either country would take advantage of our being involved in conflict with the other, we should be in a position to maintain our policies against both of them.

This does not mean that our military forces, or our naval forces alone, need be equal to the combined forces of these two probable enemies because, for the reason already stated, the necessities for local defense would preclude the employment of their entire strength against us.

The question as to the proportion of their forces

that they would probably be able to employ is one the determination of which concerns the statesman as well as the military authorities, as the latter could not reach a reliable conclusion without intimate knowledge of the political relations of our possible enemies with other nations -- the questions in dispute known only to the officials of the various departments of foreign affairs -- nor could the former reach a reliable decision without the advice of the latter.

It would probably be sufficient if our naval forces were maintained at a strength of fifty per cent greater than that of the strongest of these two possible enemies.

But independent of the details of the various elements of the forces that may be considered necessary, it may be stated that the maximum employment of these forces for the purpose indicated would require the establishment of at least the following strategic positions for the proper support of the fleet during war:

1. Two naval bases on the Atlantic and Two on the Pacific coast. By this is meant, not navy yards with the limited facilities of any one of those now established, but positions adequately defended against land and sea attack and containing sufficient docks and repair facilities for restoring to the line of battle the damaged ships of an entire fleet in the shortest possible time.

2. Advanced bases, containing docking and repair facilities and adequate supplies for the fleet, in the most advantageous positions practicable for extended operations. Such bases should be established in the West Indies, at the Panama Canal, Galapagos Islands (to prevent their occupation by a possible enemy), Hawai and Guam. Bermuda would be an advantageous position for such a base if in the future Great Britain should be induced to cede the island to us.

The Panama Canal will, when completed and in successful operation, considerably increase the value of our naval force by decreasing the time required to re-enforce the fleet in either ocean. In order to realize this advantage it will be necessary to insure our being able to hold the canal against any possible attack by land or sea, at least against a sudden raid such as might be delivered before the fleet could be brought to its support. Perhaps the most urgent necessity, besides an increase in the building program, is the establishment on the Pacific coast of at least one adequately equipped naval base.

Wm S Sims
Capt, U.S.N.
March, 1912