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REDEFINITION OF SUPER POWERS' MILITARY STRATEGY

For the last forty years, the military strategy of the two super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, have been based on clearly well-entrenched premises, with the notion of uncompromised confrontation sustained and unyielded, much due to the application of technology and ideology as the basic tenets of their respective strategies. However, recent changes in the Soviet Union, and most remarkably, the Soviet decision to switch over gradually to a market economy, as well as the crucial collapse of the East European security structure, meaning most importantly, the demise of the erstwhile ideological homogeneity, have all contributed greatly in distorting the political and ideological content of Soviet military strategy, as understood through the writings of long-known Soviet military scholars.

On the other hand, the American response to the Soviet initiatives suggest a clear shift in their earlier-sustained premises of deterrence-biased confrontational strategy, more likely to be augmented further by wider, vague, and an even more abstract structure

of a strange mix of unprecedented technology inputs in the form of the 'Strategic Defense Initiative' on the one hand, and perhaps a more down-to-earth politico-strategic planning that takes on the task of monitoring a unified Germany, as well as what many conservative Americans call 'The Third World Threat Potential'.

This paper is an effort to reidentify the character of super powers' military strategies in the changed global and regional context, to redefine the priorities of their new military realities based on a threadbare analysis of the possible areas of continuity of long-prevailing strategies that have survived the last forty years. It will concentrate on an examination of the comparative Soviet and American approaches to military strategy with a conscious recognition of post World War II realities. A thorough appreciation of the basic traits of strategy along with a comparative analysis of interpretation offered by one super power regarding the other's strategic postures would be a key element in an effort to redefine the evolving character of their respective military strategies.

A possibility that the super powers' approaches to military strategy would be marked by deep similarities despite the erstwhile odds in ideology have a certain degree of validity due to the argument that technologies are roughly similar for both sides although their stages of development have differed. Both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of each other's weapons systems have been marked by efforts to educate each other on perceptions of vulnerability, which have been more or less balanced through a long and painful process of acquiring a status of parity. Such a process has been possible to a great extent through

sharing of mutual positions of strengths and weakness that came out of long and protracted negotiations with an aim of securing agreements on strategic arms limitations as well as reductions, now extend to the tactical and conventional levels as well. Despite such similarities based on the weapons technology culture, it is possible to identify areas of military strategy where both the powers have diverged sharply on fundamental issues regarding the uses, limitations and purposes of military power as well as the rules of the game that are to govern it.

The degree of divergence is often ignored, leading to profound misperceptions and confusion regarding the behavioural premises of the super powers in response to an international crisis. The Soviet approach, at the one end of the spectrum, has been treated by Western strategists as instrumental, rigid and highly politicized while the Americans have chosen to look upon theirs as apolitical, moralizing and rooted in the early puritan and a more recent democratic tradition.

Americans had castigated Soviet military strategy for being rooted in what they consider as the intellectual and spiritual models of Machiavelli and Clausewitz. American strategic thinking, in its traditional approach, has looked upon the use of military force more as a romantic impulse that "erects boldness and initiative into patriotic tenets, but only in response to provocation".¹ American experts have often "looked on war and peace as two distinctly separate states. War has been viewed not as a continuation of policy but as a failure of diplomacy..... the American response to war has been to view it

1. Robert E. Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy*, Chicago; University of Chicago, 1957; p. 34.

as a use of force in a great moral crusade in which there is no room for the deliberate hobbling of American power."²

But such a highly emotion-triggered version was challenged by the post-War Korean experience of America when it was largely decided not to indulge in such 'dirty-little wars' where Americans were bogged down in indecision. The rise of modern deterrence strategists was a tribute to Morgenthau's view of 'Realpolitik', offering overwhelming prominence for ideas that dismissed ethical or normative values and suggested rather the preoccupation with problems of efficiency and economy in the application of force towards a given end. The rationale in this context while rejecting the earlier American tradition stood on two sellable premises. First, that military power had to be consciously translated into national security; and second, strategy and military policy could not be allowed to become ends in themselves but had to serve as controllable and predictable instruments of policy.

American military policy thus turned to a new tradition, literally obsessed with an evolution of theories, doctrines, methods and models of conflict and warfare within the premises of deterrence, which in effect, converted merican strategic thought to be totally devoid of much of its political and ethical content. It succumbed to abstract metaphors, deductive theories, and conflict-management techniques. On the other hand, American strategists literally cancelled out Soviet approaches to the use of force for political purposes as couched by opportunism, deception and flexibility. William Kaufmann, for exam-

2. George Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950*. (New York: Mentor,) 1951; p. 59.

ple, saw the Soviets as "notorious practitioners of violence" and that, military strategy to them were "a highly flexible instrument of policy".³ The ideological polarization was also prefixed in minds of such middle-of-the road scholars like Robert Osgood when the latter arrived at the conclusion saying "the communist approach to war and the use of military power is as notable for its fusing of power and policy as the American approach is notable for its dissociation of power and policy".⁴

The relevant question at this point would be : can effective allegations be written off at this time because the Cold War appears to be politically terminated? These notions regarding military strategy may often defy the changed times and could just be proclaimed as time-tested since they have served as the conspicuous stabilizing influence for the two military institutions' search for a role identity.

In defining the deterrence-biased military-strategy of the U.S., while the past political and moral premises are rejected, the Soviets in turn, are said to have maintained an uncompromising doctrinal and political tradition, going back to Clausewitz, via, Engels and Lenin, through Stalin and his successors, in defining their own compulsions of strategy.

Clausewitz is still considered the spiritual father in defining Soviet military strategy - as an anti-thesis to deterrence strategists, based on his "rejection of both the optimism and dogmatism of the eighteenth century theory" that war was neither a scientific game nor an international sport, but an act of violence.

3. William W. Kaufmann, edited, "Military Policy and National Security; Princeton, New Jersey; Princeton University Press, 1956; p. 102.

4. Osgood, *Limited War*, p. 46.

Clausewitz is quoted saying: "We do not like to hear of generals who are victorious without the shedding of blood", because this leads to an under-appreciation of the terrible nature of war and might lead to a condition whereby, "we allow our swords to grow blunt.....until someone steps in with a sharp sword and cuts our arms off our body."⁵ It is not unfair to believe that Clausewitzian ideas still dominate the writing of Soviet military doctrines. Some of Clausewitz's earlier military doctrines are used by the Soviet writers to justify proposals for the offensive, mobile type of theater warfare, with or without the use of nuclear weapons.⁶ A Soviet scholar, I. L. Savkin is quoted to substantiate such view: "Since war has its origins on a political object, we see that this first motive that called it into existence, naturally remains the first and highest consideration to be regarded in its conduct.....Policy will therefore permeate the whole action of war and exercise a continuous influence upon it for the political design is the object, while war is the means, and the means can never be thought apart from the object."⁷

Such notions are in accordance with the view of Clausewitz that war can never be separated from politics and that should such a separation "occur anywhere, all the threads of the different relations become in a certain sense broken and we have before us a senseless thing without an object".⁸ Leon Trotsky, who founded the Red Army, is known to maintain

5. Quoted in H. Rothfels, "Clausewitz" in Edward Mead Earle, Edited, *Makers of Modern Strategy*; New York, Atheneum, 1966, p. 100.

6. Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Combat Forces Press, 1953, p. 16.

7. See Vavkin, "The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics", translated and edited by the U.S. Air Force (Washington: GPO n.d.) pp. 22-23.

8. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 16.

a similar view that war "bases itself on many sciences, but war itself is no science, it is a practical art, a skill, a savage bloody one."⁹

Interpretations of Soviet military strategy over the last fifty years or so by American scholars, based on Soviet statements as quoted above, have been rather too harsh. They have been cancelled out by American as belonging at the level of scholastics, and are said to adhere to obscure formulations of war and strategy. Western deterrence theorists have ridiculed Soviet military writing as excessively politicized, historical, as well as subordinated to the whims of ruling political elites, being rendered thereby "primitive and unsophisticated in comparison to what they consider the logically impeccable, tightly reasoned theories of deterrence and limited war."¹⁰

In their turn, Soviet military analysts have reciprocated with equal force, cancelling out Western strategic and limited war theory as simply too "pretentious, pseudo-scientific, and irresponsible". The American proposition that rules and restrictions could still be worked out while a nuclear war is unleashed, is considered as totally illusory by the Soviets. Infact, the authoritative volume 'Marxism-Leninism on War' is quoted to have judged "a cynical and deliberate falsehood the idea that "the prudence of the opponents will make it possible to coordinate nuclear targets against which these weapons will be armed".¹¹ Another Soviet military writer, Talen-

9. Quoted in Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1976; p. 482.

10. Roman Kolkowicz, 'U.S. and Soviet Approaches to Military Strategy: Theory Vs. Experience' *Orbis*, Summer 1981: Philadelphia; p. 311.

11. G. D. Arbatov, *Problemy Mira i Sotsializma*, no. 2. February 1974, p.46.

ski, is also quoted to have remarked : "When the security of the state is based on mutual deterrence with the aid of powerful nuclear weapons—rockets, it is directly dependent on the goodwill and designs of the other side—which is a highly subjective and indefinite factor."¹²

The valid point that perhaps emerges out of these mutually incompatible views on the part of writers on both sides is that these positions are not simply based on ideological contrasts so that they may just be erased at this time due to an end of the ideological debate. Rather, the impact of both ideology and technology together had forced certain basic and durable contradictions in their strategic doctrines which may have brought about irreversible positions. This particular point of view could perhaps be further substantiated if we pursue a closer examination of several areas of well-established Soviet rejections of a few crucial Western strategic concepts, which in turn, are too well-entrenched to change fast.

Soviets ridicule what they consider the apolitical nature of Western military doctrines. There is strong merit in their contention that in American military strategy, politics is subordinated to narrow technological and bureaucratic imperatives and to abstract notions of game theory and formal logic. A fascinating Soviet stand has been their argument that : "American strategic thinking—born predominantly of civilian defense specialists bearing legal, technical and distinctly non-military intellectual outlooks—is deeply rooted in the proposition that nuclear war is unwinnable in any practical sense ... it has also produced an

12. Talenskii, "Anti-Missile Systems and Disarmament" in John Erickson, ed., *The Military Revolution : Its Impact on Strategy and Foreign Policy*; New York : pp. 225-227.

increasingly predominant belief that deterrence stability (hence U. S. security) is best served by a strategic environment of mutual vulnerability. The Soviets reject 'mutual vulnerability' out of hand as an abdication of political responsibility".¹³

The Soviets are expected to consistently uphold what they consider as the political responsibility of ensuring the survivability of their population in the situation that war breaks out against a super power. They therefore tend to seek a formula to perceive a greater degree of human content on the question of political responsibility, beyond the strictures that are offered by deterrence theory.

A second Soviet argument that cancels out subservience to current American doctrines involves the continuing Soviet refusal to accept what they consider to be the 'status-quo supportive nature' of deterrence and limited war theories and its corollaries. While this Soviet position is linked with their ideological compulsions over the last seven decades or so, there is no evidence as yet that the Soviets have chosen to succumb to the Western perception of maintenance of the global status-quo through deterrence, although at this stage they may neither be too sure that they may choose to continue as before to work towards a new international system marked by the eventual victory of the erstwhile Soviet model of world system. The Soviets have, in the past, found such concepts like 'balance', or 'equivalence' as unnatural since they have implied the enshrinement of the statu quo, which is alien to the long-known tenets of their political, ideological and historical doctrines.

13. Quoted in S. Lambeth; "The Political Potential of Soviet Equivalence", *International Security*, 1978, p. 38.

The Soviet strategy today, in the changed context of realities, may pardon the possibility of a revolutionary Marxist order for the near future, but any drastic reversal, in favour of the enshrinement of the global status quo appears out of context. Infact American scholars Alexander George and Richard Smoke have chosen to believe that : "Although the consequences of continuous frustrations and expansionist and anti-status quo aspirations are not easily predictable, they are nevertheless, 'not necessarily' benign."¹⁴ Even today, Soviet military leaders give no such indication that there is any element of subservience in their own strategic thinking. They rather patronise the message of caution to the U.S. to discard being provoked into seeking military solutions to international crisis.

The third important Soviet strategic rigidity vis a vis American thinking involves the so-called 'interdependent, controllable mutually balanced and self-constrained nature of Western doctrines of war which literally exasperate the Soviet thinking. The Soviets have always maintained deep skepticism regarding American claims with respect to control, limit, and 'fine tune' the application of force in war. Limited war is rejected by the Soviets as too unrealistic since they deny the idea that prudent opponents will coordinate their nuclear strikes and thus limit the targets, keeping material losses and human suffering at a minimum.¹⁵ This particular Soviet rejection of the American hypothesis on limited nuclear war is a

14. Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1974; p. 5.

15. Marshal of the Soviet Union, Chief of the Strategic Missile Force, N.I. Kyrlov. "The Instructive Lessons of History", *Sovietskaia Rossiia*, August 30, 1969.

matter on which, despite all the optimism of changes in super powers' relations, there is little room for any redefinition beyond the earlier-held premises of super powers' distancing. American military strategists have continued to accommodate the feasibility of limited nuclear war within the premises of the doctrine of Flexible Response. They have infact chosen to do so in order to invalidate the earlier-held doctrine of Massive Retaliation, whose threat-value, if it failed, left no room for the avoidance of total war.

Limited war is assumed to presuppose certain kinds of cooperation, coordination, constraints and self-denial by the belligerents. The U.S. has introduced several military doctrines based on cooperative and inter-dependent constraints, while the Soviets have chosen to dismiss them as highly speculative, superficial and unrealistic. The Soviets refuse to accept that escalatory pressures may not force a war to develop beyond the threshold and question whether it makes any sense to believe that 'intra-war bargaining' would inevitably materialise. Soviets reject the acceptance of restraint once the threshold is crossed. The implicit logic of limited war as the American writer Kaufmann put it, is : "While the enemy must be fixed and hit hard on the battlefield, and if possible, deterred from expanding the scope and intensity of the conflict, he must also be allowed to extricate himself from his adventure without a serious loss of prestige or substance. The conditions of limited war require a delicate balance between firmness and tolerance."¹⁶

On the question of nuclear weapons, American unorthodox views have clearly haunted Soviet scholars

16. V.D. Sokolovskii, ed., *Soviet Military Strategy*, edited and translated by Harriet Fast Scott, 3rd edition, New York, Crane, 1975; p.68.

and even the latter's acquisition of military parity could not change their rigidity in terms of faith in their own pet sense of values. The Soviet scholar V. D. Sokolovski aptly pointed out : "By its character, a limited war contains two problems : on the one hand, such a war must be conducted decisively and with the best methods—using the necessary forces and means to achieve the set political and military goals; on the other hand, in a limited war, the armed forces must be used in such a way as to reduce the risk of a limited armed conflict escalating into a general war to a minimum."¹⁷ The other problem lies in the greater availability of reactive options, ranging from no retaliation at all, to a limited nuclear retaliatory strike, or even, through miscalculation, to a much greater response with strategic and operational tactical means, thus unleashing an all out nuclear war. Infact, the American inclination to divide the categories between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons are considered very superficial by Soviets since they could easily trigger off false signals of miscalculations based on the destructive potential of both the types, irrespective of the magnitude of the damage. Clearly enough, any application of Flexible Response, would, from a Soviet point of view, carry the same inherent dangers that would prevail in the case of employing Massive Retaliation.¹⁸

It may be possible to observe thus that the end of Soviet ideological stagnation may not mean the collapse of the ideological basis of her military stra-

17. Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture : Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, Santa Monica Calif. Rand, 1977, p. 18.

18. Michael T. Clare, "Wars in the 1990s : Growing Fire power in the Third World"; *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*; May 1990, pp. 9-13.

tegy. The Soviet position stands out to fill up the void of speculative formulations in American nuclear strategy. Soviet assumptions strongly repudiate any strategy that rests totally on nuclear options. From such a perspective, any hope for a radical redefinition of super powers' military strategy would demand a total dismantling of nuclear weapons as well as all related systems. But current American strategic formulations indicate greater refinement of their military technology—to the point of taking it to such high level of destructive magnitude that even the current nuclear stockpiles of both super-powers could then be rendered as totally obsolete in terms of the deterrent effect. The current American thinking may be approximately assumed as : while they consider the Soviet missile arsenal as still formidable and capable of destroying the United States, they perceive the Third World nations as the greater danger in view of the latter's supposed ability to acquire nuclear weapons.¹⁹ While the SDI concept is being shrienked from its original form, the American interest seems to turn towards the anti-missile defense system of a particular type that would be more limited and less costly. Such new concepts involve, for example, Protection Against Limited Strikes, (PALS) which could be operationalized by 1996, with a far reduced cost compared to the 55-billion-dollar pricetag of the previous SDI formula. The PALS idea has not gone through as official policy yet, although it gains viability since over the past two years, the SDI programme, moving ahead with anti-missile technologies have been losing political grounds.²⁰

The Soviet Union shows far more enlightened common sense through its own substantive arms cuts

19. *The Bangladesh Observer*, October 14, 1990.

20. George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, p. 20.

programmes while it vehemently disqualifies the logical compatibility of the American SDI concept. The fact that the US Congress has already started cutting the SDI budget indicates that the earlier 'Star Wars' goal of defending against an attack of thousands of enemy missiles no longer fits the evolving picture of a reforming Soviet Union. On the other hand, the current global power structure appears to have acquired a new political label, with a new term coined, known as 'unipolar' situation, meaning, that the post-Cold War realities have placed the United States in an exclusive position of shaping the future political destiny of the evolving international system. On the contrary, the multipolar character of global power centers have not really altered in any significant way since, regional or sub-systemic issues, mid-ranking powers and diffused global regimes still function with the same pace of continuity as in the Cold War years.

Under such circumstances as noted so far, a possible reason for the grave distortions that the Soviets identify in American ~~self-image~~ of military strategy is that military theory and doctrine in the U. S. have remained rooted in the American tradition to the extent that laws of warfare in the nuclear era have been bent to conform to American preferences, such as, the massive use of strategic rather than conventional or tactical forces, substituting technology for manpower in view of their own high costs of human lives, primacy of military considerations when warfare begins and other similar notions.²¹

The American strategy continues to reflect typically a set of very practical concerns and preferen-

21. Quoted in Joseph D. Doughlass, *The Soviet Theater Nuclear Offensive*, Vol I of Studies in Communist Affairs, p. 113.

ces, sometimes based on an obsessive notion of enjoying prior advantage over Soviet disadvantage, as if they still held all the nuclear trump cards vis a vis still primitive Soviet operational strategy. For the entire post-War period, the US held the view that the Soviets refused to comply with deterrence with evil motivations in mind, so that instead of directly confronting the USA in the European theatre, they could challenge the latter in areas remote from Europe, resorting to what the Americans labelled as 'Commissar strategy'. This was meant to be, in American minds, non-confrontational, risk-avoiding and even, shrouded in ambiguity. The USA had looked upon this as a strategy of a vague mixture of confrontation and negotiation rather than a direct challenge, hard-headed stand enunciated by the American posture of deterrence, often labelled by the Soviets as a 'Cowboy strategy'.²² Basically thus, the Soviets have been thought to have nurtured a highly politicized, ends-means approach while the Americans chose to look at their approach as an ends-means teleology.

It is unlikely that the Soviet Union, despite the transformation of international system, may choose to completely give up its relationship of a military competitor to the USA, or even turn towards the status of an ally in defense of each other's interest in all vital matters, irrespective of the Third World reaction against Soviet subordination to the US. But this could still happen if, by a weird stroke of irony, the Soviets chose to relegate their identity from the status of a super power, or if there is a gradual dismantling of the Soviet Union itself, whereby, each of the Republics of the Union choose to determine

22. Graham E. Fuller, "The Emergence of Central Asia", *Foreign Policy*, Spring, 1990, pp. 49-67.

their own status within the European hierarchy. Such remote prospects appear to be avoidable with the current Nobel Peace prize-winning Soviet President's delicate and unprecedented moves at seeking Western economic participation in the Soviet economy as well as his painstakingly slow yet non-provocative use of the Soviet constitutional mechanism in order to pioneer a voluntary basis for maintaining the currently-fragile integrity of the Soviet Union.

Soviet military strategy will remain deeply rooted in her geo-political realities despite the current changes in the systemic structure. The unification of Germany brings into fore the problem of maintenance of the future European balance and this would perhaps be more secure and manageable when placed within the parameters of a super powers'—dominated power structure. The Americans are most unlikely to ever retreat to isolationism. On the other hand, the 'unipolar' notion could turn out to be a dangerously simplistic and deadly illusion for her, that could provoke her to nose-dive into military operations, end up in a quagmire and ultimately unfold the necessary events leading to a global holocaust.

As much as the military strategy of the superpowers had rested on the confrontational dynamics institutionalised within the framework of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact, this is one particular area with a specific set of altered characteristics, which calls forth the question of redefinition. With the removal of East Europe as a possible theatre of confrontation, the Soviets have now lost what was known as their outer defense perimeter or the first line of defence. The Soviet military strategists would now have to reevaluate the threat structure from the Western front, which for all practical purposes, is almost zero. A future, militarized Germany could be a

hypothetical threat but the Soviets really do not find it that way, at least for the near future. On the other hand, never have the frontiers of Europe been so devoid of any serious rupture or even ever been committed to the maintenance of territorial status-quo as they are today.

Soviet strategy may take into account new possibilities that may emerge from her southern flanks, notably, the rise of the fundamentalist tide that could sweep through her Muslim-dominated republics, in case the current popular wave of Arab revivalist undercurrents gain a passionate level of growth. The military forces of the Soviet Union may find greater degree of exposure to the type of warfare that the Soviets confronted in Afghanistan, i.e. protracted guerilla warfare in rough mountainous terrain, if at later stages, nationalist upsurge in Central Asia might dictate, along with a possible American connivance, an option to employ the military in a bid to curb secessionist struggle, inspired by co-religious groups from further South in the Middle East.²³

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in terms of operational significance implies that the Soviet Union would now have to restructure its military strategy without taking into account the possible loyalty of the East European states, which in any case, was questionable during the last forty years of rigid Cold War. The presence of Soviet troops in these states had served as the compelling basis to ensure subservience. In a way, the Soviet military strategy can now be restructured to use Soviet forces for her own territorial defense only rather than compel its military manpower to defend or perhaps usurp other peoples' destiny. The democratisation as well as the transition

23. Thomas J. Welch, "Technology Change and Security; *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1990.

to the market economy would also have a likely impact on the long-held military values. Recent outbursts among the ranks regarding resentment on being used to quell popular unrest in Azerbaijan, would testify the existence of vocal, conscious and increasingly humanist sentiments creeping their way into the minds of ordinary soldiers.

Beyond this, the fascinating examples of each of the Republics, led by no less than the redoubtable Boris Yeltsin as the President of the Russian Federation, declaring that state law would precede Soviet law, and promoting a chain effect across the country, would indicate, that Soviet military planners would have to tread a very cautious path of reconciliation with the tide of democratisation. Infact, Soviet military strategy would have to deal substantively with the question of offering a more worthwhile living standard for the military career, so that military morale may remain at least tolerably safeguarded in the face of all the changes underway and in protest against the long-prevailing standards of economic subsistence as a way of determining the basis of existence. On the other hand, never have the Soviets ever enjoyed such a total lack of any external threat to their lands.

Thus, her defense build-up would work towards a gradual consolidation of her super power image but without any need to indulge in the type of self-imposed policeman status that the USA has chosen to thrust upon herself. Perhaps, the long-prevailing premises of political indoctrination which had reinforced Soviet military strategy cannot just be shed off overnight. In the context of limitations of legitimacy in terms of projecting a sense of direction for, what was a traditional totalitarian political culture, the obsolescence of Marxist-Leninist precepts can only be replaced through a time-consuming evolutio-

nary process. Also the question of ideological baggage as an integral part of Soviet military strategy may become irrelevant as we move on to a new generation of Soviet military scholars who belong to the post-World War-II breed and are less influenced by the painful, stoic irony of Soviet losses in wartime. These new breed of strategists are more likely to be susceptible to Western concepts of technology-biased interpretation of military doctrines in a future strategic order. Perhaps an important issue in Soviet military strategy would be the question of maintaining a high degree of marketability of her arms transfers abroad, ranging from highly sophisticated missiles and aircrafts to even advanced submarines. As the entire Soviet economy gradually undertakes transformation, it may be relevant to note the future status of such advanced weapons-producing sectors. It is unlikely that state-control over these sensitive and highly specialized defense establishments will be at all compromised.²⁴

American military strategy will have to reckon with the changing realities in the Third World. Some of the defense-oriented research establishments, as the Heritage Foundation among others, came up with the 'Third World Threat Potential' concept. Her defense strategy may be redefined to the extent thus that the removal of the Soviet threat makes room for new replacements within the Third World, particularly the nuclear-capable, anti status-quo states, opposed to exclusive American monopoly of economic interests.²⁵

For the Americans, the break-through in disarmament that came in the form of signing the

24. Michael Clare, *op. cit.*

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

I.N.F. Treaty, which for the first time, inserted verification clauses, making it possible for the monitoring process to still continue unimpeded, has now opened up prospects for strategic as well as conventional arms reductions. America's planned withdrawal from Europe in good numbers including an inclination to close down a few bases abroad indicate a shift in defense strategy but these would be unlikely to suggest any reversal of her planned potent global role-playing. Infact the emerging U. S. Maritime strategy indicates the rapid growth of her naval intervention capability, with faster ships, greater fire-power and a far more refined use of new technology. The U. S. encounters severe threat-notions with the gradual spread of chemical and biological weapons in states like Iraq or even Iran although it feels no such concern with Israel or South Africa. Even India is listed as a part of the Third world group with a scientific status of military technology that threatens the USA.²⁶

On the other hand, the US seems to pursue the USSR in order to bring about awareness of a common set of interests that the Soviets would be wanted by the US to recognise now since the conversion of the Soviets into a status-quo power. The amazing position of the Soviet Union is of course, the prospect that it would serve as a mediating power between the US and a Third World country, in case a military showdown appears inevitable, based on vital interests at stake. Such a role is exactly what, thankfully, it has been trying to assume, in the current Iraqi-US crisis. The Soviet Union, thereby could gain a tremendous degree of respectibility despite her currently deep

26. Mc George Bundy, Kennan, Mc Namara, Smith: "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance". *Foreign Affairs* Spring 1982, pp. 753-768.

internal malaise, both economic and political, if she acquires a degree of acceptability to the US, to whom its role may be genuinely recognised for the first time as a peace-maker.

A more complex possibility emerges when one confronts future readjustments of US military strategy in the context of NATO and Europe. On the one hand European integration involves greater autonomy for common European ideals and a possible opening of a whole range of untested prospects in the form of co-existing with a unified Germany and absorbing Eastern Europe within the purview of common European security structure. If the Soviet Union chooses to build up links with such integration efforts based on her pan-European identity, it would be very difficult for the US to undermine or discourage the process even if it hurts the long-established degree of influence which she had literally monopolized through the post-war European recovery initiative.

American military strategy will have to reckon with the reality that a less imposing role would be a painful spillover effect of any drastic American military withdrawal from Europe. On the other hand American strategic options that had long provided the nuclear umbrella for Europe cannot be written off. Even the doctrine of "First Use" which became controversial in the early eighties through a proposal from American strategists to withdraw that particular option, clearly fulfills NATO's long-held military doctrine that it will be the first to use the nuclear option, in case of even a conventional military advance westwards.²⁷ Today, the 'first use' option remains intact and thereby, the premises of deterrence quite obviously continues to be the overarching military strategy for Europe.

NATO has however added a few new clauses in its London Declaration, which clearly offers a new lease of

life in terms of updating the treaty in line with changing regional context. Its objective to monitor the level of future military capability of Germany and to maintain German defense policy within the parameters of NATO's commitments are important developments that indeed add up to strengthen a far, renewed dimension of operational significance to American military strategy. The USA would have to rely, in the final analysis, on the dexterity of its weapons arsenals as the driving force in contributing to the maintenance of the European status-quo. It would be fascinating to see how the USA would militarily respond if there was a similar act committed in Europe by Germany in future, the way, Iraq had chosen to act in annexing Kuwait. Of course, in reality, that would be a most remote possibility. Nonetheless, American military strategy will clearly be redefined in those lines in terms of future relevance in Europe because, other than that, the Soviet expansionist image is much too ridiculous to hypothesise any more, now that East Europe has crumbled and the Soviet republics are on their way to maximize their independence quests from centralized authority.

In the beginning of 1991, the Middle East became the venue of the most dreadful war—a result of redefined American military strategy that could perhaps be avoided in the Cold War days of deterrence. Termination of the Cold War has dangerously elevated the prospects of US-initiated intervention in the Gulf region. American strategic policy on the question of Palestine, for example, is marked by a typical degree of stereo-typed obsolescence despite changed realities regarding radical regimes. In fact, the refusal of the US to reconcile to the idea of Palestinian statehood has indicated that the US military strategy today refuses to serve impartial ends. It is rather guided by a driving force that outlines

national interest through shrewd Machiavellism, an arrogance of power and sheer opportunism as far as the question of safeguarding Israeli values are concerned. Israel's military strategy continues to serve as an extension of US military strategy and there is simply no evidence to indicate any redefined posture in the US strategy that departs from the path paved out of sheer muscle force as far as US support of Israeli occupation policies are concerned.

Indeed, the US military strategy today appears far more suspect to deal with global security when compared to the sobriety and flexibility of Soviet military strategy in terms of reckoning with the reality of defeat. Soviet military strategy, following her withdrawal from Afghanistan, had involved the most genuine sacrifices in terms of bowing down to the wishes of the people in East Europe and notably, in East Germany. American refusal to accept Palestinian statehood, on the other hand, indicates a dilemma of morality, a crude display of hypocrisy and a sharp indication of arrogance of power which bears all the trappings of unleashing the most dangerous outburst of violence from a region, which, if treated fairly, could have certainly helped to recreate the type of confidence in US military power that had allowed her to emerge as an acceptable moral force out of the results of the two great World Wars.