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# MOBILIZING NATIONAL WILL TO SUPPORT NATIONAL SECURITY OBJECTIVES

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# TO SUPPORT NATIONAL SECURITY OBJECTIVES

by

Donald T. Poe
Captain, USN

## FOREWORD

This study is published by The National War College in accordance with its mission of "conducting research and study in the field of national security."

The research and writing for this study were performed by Captain Donald T. Poe, United States Navy, who is assigned to The National War College as a Senior Research Fellow.

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of either The National War College or any other governmental agency. References to this study should include the foregoing statement.

## PERSPECTIVE

United States involvement in military and political affairs outside its own borders has been cyclic. Our history is replete with radical swings from fully supported extranational excursions to withdrawals to the extreme of isolation.

During the period of World War II and the two decades following, the United States exuberantly rose to meet all global challenges, including some which might better have been left unsatisfied. But the nation, with a high level of unanimity, believed that its role was involvement and this generally was endorsed by our allies. Now, however, a new voice is heard in our land.

The war in Southeast Asia drags on, and as it does, the depth and vigor of the bitterness and dissent within the United States grow. This war is strongly denounced across a broad spectrum of our populace. Beyond this, and in some ways of more importance, there has been a change in the basic attitudes of the American people who now demand a significant "reordering of priorities." Because of these changes future Administrations may not have the freedom to use even limited force to promote U.S. objectives, and it appears that limited wars will be those for which support will be most difficult to obtain.

The United States, nevertheless, has a continuing role to play as a major world power which at times will require the potential or actual use of force. To ensure this ability the United States must regain the necessary elements of the national will.

The President and his supporters must recognize the problems of the recent past, the reasons for them and their solutions. They must then mobilize the key elements of the people, the elites, and with them provide the leadership which will maintain the United States as a world power.

## The War in Southeast Asia

"Nothing that we would possibly be accomplishing in Southeast Asia could balance or compare to what the war is doing to this country," said John Gardner in a Christian Science Monitor article in June 1970.

In its early stages the war in Vietnam was supported by a large majority of the U.S. people. In 1965, the Roper Poll found that 61 percent believed the U.S. role to be proper and only 24 percent believed that it was a mistake. In 1971 Roper reported that 61 percent of the U.S. people feel that a mistake has been made. Richard Rovere has said that "this is the first war in the century in which opposition is not only widespread but fashionable."

Vietnam triggered sweeping changes in America. It caused the downfall of the Johnson Administration, an increasingly critical evaluation of aspects of the Kennedy Presidency and a high measure of dissatisfaction directed at the current Administration.

The opposition as it began to form, seemed primarily to come from the influential intellectual elements of the country, the educators, the writers, the artists of all persuasion and the "liberal" wing. As the threat of global communism faded in their eyes and as the cost of the war in Vietnam grew, the war appeared less vital to the national interest. This nucleus of opposition has grown to today's majority who hate the war.

The war has been abhorred by a growing number of citizens for several significant reasons. Successive Administrations have failed to define clearly the justification for involvement. Statements have been made by the leaders giving as reasons, "Freedom for the peace-loving Vietnamese," "Containment of North Vietnam," "Containment of global communism represented by China," "The Domino Theory." These rationalizations essentially resolve into two: necessary defense of United States interests or the protection of the weak against a military aggressor. Neither has been used consistently or clearly as the goal of the United States; as a result the nation's confidence in its leadership suffered.

Compounding the problem of lack of confidence was the conduct of the war itself. It was managed on a "business as usual" basis. Revolutionary warfare was unfamiliar to the American people and indeed to

to the American military. The war was fought against a determined foe who saw his vital interests at stake. For him it was total war, which it certainly was not for the United States. Our superior technology in many instances was negated by the opponents' style of war to which we had difficulty in adapting.

The war now is the longest of our history. This length, together with the undecided goals, indecisive results and most decisive costs, have produced the growing malaise within the country. If the relatively restricted means employed did not (or could not) resolve the conflict, then the goal chosen, our own self-defense or the survival of Southeast Asia must have been invalid.

There were other significant factors adding to today's despair in the American people. The mass media spread the horrors of the war as was never before possible. The result was fear and revulsion. The impact on morale is reflected in the high desertion rates, the widely applauded activities against the draft, My Lai and other such incidents and in some sectors at least, loss of face attending our current withdrawal.

The war in Southeast Asia has touched and troubled the American people as has no event since the Civil War, except perhaps the great depression of the 1930's. It has brought fear, distrust and deep divisions in the people. Its results will be felt for years to come.

## Changes in Attitude in the American People

Not only is the war in Southeast Asia strongly denounced by a majority of the American people but this attitude has carried over into a much broader denunciation of all war. R. W. Tucker in his monograph When is War Just writes:

> . . . the significance of Vietnam is not only that it has resulted in a new skepticism toward and distrust of the purposes to which American power has been put but even more that it has revealed a powerful sentiment against war itself. Even a small war--that is, small in terms of the quantitative destruction--may appear too destructive if men are no longer willing to tolerate war at all.

In a Time-Louis Harris Poll in 1969, it was found that the American people would not support action against North Korea even in the event of another Pueblo or EC-121 incident. Only a minority of Americans would support use of nuclear weapons to defend any other country including our NATO allies and only slightly more, still a minority, would be prepared to defend by any means, our weaker, smaller friends against outright communist invasion or home-generated revolution. In June 1971 the American Institute of Public Opinion found that 46 percent of those questioned felt that war is an outmoded way of settling differences between nations while only 43 percent believed that it is sometimes necessary.

Cantril and Roll (in Hopes and Fears of the American People) found in research polls conducted in 1971 that ". . . a clear majority (of the American people) now want the war ended even at the risk of a Communist take-over of South Vietnam," a sentiment that has risen markedly in the last three years (55 percent favor an immediate end as opposed to 36 percent who want to fight on). "Public attitude toward existing and future American commitments abroad is one of caution and selectivity." Seventy-seven percent believe "we shouldn't think so much in international terms but concentrate more on our own national problems. . . ." Sweeping as is this anti-war attitude, there are other changes in our society which are equally powerful.

There is a revolution in America. It is taking many forms and is manned by the most diverse elements whose goals are often contradictory, but the effects are mutually supporting.

L. S. Feuer in The New Student Left of the 1960's describes the anti-Americanism in this vocal group as ". . . a rejection of all the fathers stood for." The New Left believes in destruction of the existing world structure convinced that only through destruction can something new (which they are unable adequately to describe) be built.

The Counter Culture adherents, described by Charles Reich as those who achieve Consciousness III in accordance with the gospel as found in The Greening of America, also believe in a complete change in American society although not through outright use of force as espoused by those of the New Left. Con III believes there is already a non-violent revolution on the way which no one can deter no matter what the will or tools used. Another element of the Counter Culture also rejects the old culture--those

who have dropped out of society as a means of rejecting it: the hippies, the peaceniks, the flower children; those who fight with pacifism rather than activism.

Some say that the era of revolt has ended, that a feeling of futility and apathy is becoming dominant. While extreme violence, by the fall of 1971, was largely a thing of the past, the rejection by the youth of the mores of the past is growing--spreading to the small colleges and even high schools rather than remaining concentrated in the large, highly visible universities.

These groups and others of the sort have as their nucleus the disenchanted youth. But the call is so persuasive that support at times includes much greater numbers of the young and significant portions of the older generations as well. The collective voices cry for change, for cures of our domestic problems and in order to fund them concurrent reductions in funds devoted to national defense. The problems of the Blacks and the cities are now predominant in the eyes of these groups and support for their solution is still growing. Although criticism of our involvement in Southeast Asia accompanied and grew with the shift of attention and action to the domestic problems, it appears that this shift of emphasis would have occurred even if the war had not been our primary involvement. This "inward turning" reflects a desire that the nation concern itself primarily with its own problems and their cures rather than the problems of the peoples and nations of Europe and Asia.

Dr. Gallup's finding in 1970 that the American peoples' support for isolation was only 22 percent is not equivalent to the strong desire, almost consensus, on the part of the people to end the involvement in Viet Nam. Isolation is nebulous, anti-war is something to be seen and felt. The former is almost a dirty word, the latter is now almost holy. There will be the continued drive for international trade, the quest for increased knowledge of other peoples, an eagerness for closer contact with others (witness the degree of support for President Nixon's visit to the Peoples' Republic of China). There is a shift in the balance between domestic and external concerns.

The decade of the 1970's is unique in that we face simultaneously the problems that have been created by the war in Southeast Asia and the demanding problems within our own country, neither of which is a result

of the other nor is solved or even significantly ameliorated by the solution of the other.

The results of these discontents in our land are additive and mutually reinforcing. They will limit the freedom of future Administrations to take actions which might have been considered necessary in the past 25 years.

Dr. Philip Handler, President of the National Academy of Science has said, "Clearly this is no quickly passing phase. It is a profound movement expressive of man's innermost yearnings, albeit as yet without a sense of direction. No society is untouched, none will ever be the same."

## National Will

This significant change in the attitudes of the American people has occurred at a time when the United States must continue to be prepared to deter, or if necessary fight, limited war when such is clearly in the national interest. The problem resolves to the will of the national leadership to levy the requirement upon the people and the will of the people to respond. The primary problem of defense is not military hardware but to maintain the necessary political support. Our interests will likely be endangered if our enemies conclude that our domestic divisions mean that while we have the capability, we lack the will to use it.

Segments of the American people are now trying to justify their changes of attitude by describing the problem as having gone away. Many say that the United States has no real interest in Southeast Asia and that a communist-dominated Vietnam is really not so bad after all. Others argue that American force levels should be significantly decreased in Europe; that Russia is becoming a twentieth century capitalist state and that Eastern Europe would really rather be on the side of the West.

American involvement abroad with military force is not as probable in the decade ahead--partly because of Vietnam, partly because of the "inward-turning," partly because of a change in the national will. In combination these forces amount to a denial by the people of the United States of the nation's role as a world power, a role which can be played only by being prepared to exercise force across the complete spectrum of war if U.S. interests dictate.

We must learn how to restore our national self-confidence. Belief in the rightness of our action is vital. The will to mobilize strength in support of crucial national security interests must be engendered in the American spirit. Among the most difficult problems our national leaders will have to face in the years to come are those which literally require that U.S. forces be engaged, and, concomitantly, to generate the will to act when the leadership determines that action is imperative.

## The Obligations of Power

While the changes observed in the national attitude will affect the prosecution of U.S. national security objectives, it appears that the leaders in the United States, from whatever their position in the spectrum, will ensure that we retain a sufficient nuclear ability to constitute a credible general war deterrence, and are determined that we be prepared to support vital national interests related to survival. The weight of the force thought to be necessary will vary from spokesman to spokesman, and in the view of many, some may opt for a force that is marginal or even deficient; but it appears that none would knowingly permit the United States to drop below the level of preparedness which he sees as minimum.

Whether such resolve may be rallied in support of what future Administrations might define as "necessary limited war" (in which neither U.S. survival nor mode of life are clearly at stake) is not as sure.

The routes to limited wars which could validly involve the United States are many. Emotional issues such as Israel defending herself against a coordinated Arab League have in the past and can in the future be expected to inflame the American people to such a degree that some U.S. action will be demanded. In such events national will is not in question, however, balance of power questions will continue to arise which will appear to the national authorities to require U.S. involvement. These may be major power confrontations centered on lesser powers, as in Cuba in 1962, or they may be by proxy as in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Such questions would include wars between lesser powers in numerous areas throughout the world where our interests are involved. Protection of U.S. nationals overseas, whether in private business or on official governmental missions, must also continue to warrant action when their safety is in question.

The examples are almost limitless in a world as small as ours, with nations in closer and closer contact. Requirements for limited war, with U.S. involvement, are more probable than the converse.

With nuclear parity both the United States and the U.S.S.R. are freer to take actions in limited wars (at least those not directly involving both) than if the strategic situation were less stable. This then permits limited war on a broader geographical scale, with at times broader political objectives and even a greater use of force than if parity did not exist. Khrushchev in his illuminating speech in January 1961 said: "There will be wars of national liberation as long as imperialism exists . . . we have helped and shall continue to help people fighting for their freedom."

United States participation in limited war in Third World states is philosophically opposed by some of our thinkers because such intervention could lead to unhealthy suppression of legitimate goals of those peoples. For the past two decades, the United States has generally argued for stability as opposed to change through force, a policy which in turn supports incumbent (and sometimes unpopular or repressive) regimes. United States involvement in these countries has, in certain instances, undoubtedly inhibited change of government which sometimes is the only means for progress and for long-term peace. However, in some circumstances, the United States national interest may require stability even at the cost of deferred progress in other nations.

Some argue for attempts to deter certain limited wars by using influence in the underdeveloped nations to create a climate hostile to insurgency. While deterrence, if accomplished, is undoubtedly the best way to solve the problem, our ability to provide the resources and to decide sufficiently in advance, which regimes to support in the variety of areas throughout the world where such might be required seems difficult to the extreme.

In the Nixon Doctrine, the President has diagrammed the Administration's policy for the fulfillment of the nation's global responsibilities. Many have interpreted the Doctrine as a deliberate withdrawal from external involvement. It seems, however, that the Doctrine recognizes public opinion but intends that the United States shall maintain an ability to influence the action with force if necessary, when the use of force is determined to be in the national interest. "The Doctrine seeks to reflect these realities: That a major American role remains indispensable. . . ." The Nixon

Doctrine is in some respects vague and open to interpretation. It is a philosophy, not a detailed plan of action. But it does describe an intent for the United States to continue to be involved in world affairs.

Despite the general rejection of external military involvement, despite the difficulties inherent in the conduct of limited wars, and despite the inherent difficulty in the generation of domestic support for any limited war (because support is limited just as the war is), the United States will have to be prepared selectively to deter limited war, if such is possible, or if not, prepared selectively to participate in them. U.S. interests abroad may come under some form of attack, sponsored by communism or others. We may even have limited war forced upon us. The United States as a world power cannot escape this.

Lincoln Bloomfield in "After Neo-Isolationism, What?" has said:

> The trouble is that if the United States is not willing to use its military power directly to intervene in local conflict situations that may upset a local or regional balance, this country may nevertheless still have to act. United States' interests may still be involved, or a larger peace may be threatened. . . .

## The Errors of Our Ways

To plan the future and to determine how to mobilize the national will, the leadership must look at the errors in the decisionmaking and conduct of our past experiences in limited war. Those in Korea and Viet Nam are our most revealing.

In both wars leadership failed because of the prolonged length of the war with the attendant higher casualty rates, and the fact that the goals of the wars were never made clear to the American people, or to some elements of the leadership as well, if in fact the goals were ever strictly defined at the top echelons.

In Korea the initial objective of the United Nations (with the United States as agent) was to repel the North Korean invaders back beyond the 38th parallel. When this objective was successfully achieved, the goal was changed to a reunification of all Korea. But when the Chinese Communists rolled across the Yalu, the objective was shifted again because

of circumstances, not definable national interest, to that of preservation of South Korea. In Vietnam a variety of slogans were used to describe the shifting U.S. objectives, ranging from protection of a friendly and defenseless people to containment of international communism. The goals changed from victory in the South to a negotiated peace.

Future decisionmakers of the United States must carefully review the history of the past two or three decades and more carefully define the nation's goals, applying new criteria in determining the national interests.

In this redetermination of U.S. interests, the leadership must insure that the objectives are in the range of feasibility and attainable at a cost which will not exceed the gain. There must be a balance, based on national interests, between the needs and costs of external goals and those of internal problems. This balance must be achieved with a greater appreciation for the fact that there is no one else who will solve our domestic problems but that international problems do not necessarily or universally require a U.S. solution. The cost factor must not only treat the cost of the attempt but also the cost of failure or rejection of the attempt. If a President cannot be assured of making the cost fit the goal, he must be more chary in his attempt to reach the goal. It seems obvious that the world, at least in its "Small War" arena, does not need the United States as much as it did until say, 1960, or at least as much as we thought it did.

Frederick H. Hartmann has recently said that when an international problem develops the leadership must:

(a) Decide what the United States wants the result to be;
(b) Determine who will probably act, what the action will be and who will likely oppose, and from that
(c) Determine what needs to be accomplished that can be accomplished only by the United States.

In short, U.S. national goals must be redefined to determine what is necessary.

But beyond this redefinition is the obvious prerequisite of belief by the people in the honesty of their government. Credibility is an overworked word, but the United States is doomed to much greater pain if credibility is not restored. Future limited wars will not be supported if faith is absent.

If the cost of a war seems increasingly high to greater numbers of the American people while the leadership continues to believe that the national interest demands the action, that leadership is failing to make its views known to the people. Too many times in the past it was thought that the American people were incapable of understanding the problem or the reasons for action and the leadership succumbed to paternalism. In some eras it appears that the leadership has attempted to manipulate the American people rather than lead by means of the objective traits of credibility and honesty. The people innately want to believe in the President, he is the leader of all of them. If he demonstrates credibility he will be believed, as no source of information is given greater weight than is the President.

The wars that will cause the greatest anguish for and produce the greatest rejection by the American people are the "limited" wars, those not involving national survival or even seriously threatening the quality of life of the people but which have been determined by the national leaders as required in the national interest--either to forestall larger wars or to satisfy moral or treaty obligations to our friends. These wars, "limited" by definition, must be kept limited. They must not absorb disparate proportions of the nation's wealth or manhood. The cost versus benefit must always be to the fore in the trade-offs and decisions of the leadership.

Corollary to the above, the "limited" war must be short. If either the Korean or Viet Nam wars could have been satisfactorily concluded with limited cost in a relatively short time, the present problems would not exist.

The mistakes made by the United States are the source of our troubles. Our leaders must learn from them and apply the solutions in the exercise of domestic political power. Only then can a solid base be made for support of future national objectives.

## The Decisionmaking Process

Where does power reside in the United States today? How can it be used to modify prevailing U.S. attitudes?

Public participation in foreign policy is unstructured and informal, and it varies from issue to issue, yet it is real. The voter may have

relatively little interest in abstract or general foreign policy problems, but he will have significantly greater interest in those that directly touch him--by taxes or by conscription.

Gabriel Almond in an early work on influences in policy making categorized the members of the public as occupying one of four strata. There is the "general public" with a variety of interests, but probably no strongly held beliefs, at least not for significant lengths of time or much farther afield than the immediate environments. There is an "attentive public" which is informed and interested in national problems and which constitutes the audience for the foreign policy discussions. It contains those who are sufficiently concerned; they have views, are listened to and are influential. Third is the "policy and opinion" leaders, those who argue the issues and are listened to by the attentive public and the decisionmakers as well. Finally, there is the "official or executive leadership," the decisionmakers, primarily governmental.

Although the American political system incorporates no process or mechanism for direct access to decisionmaking, there are the groups and individuals with power and influence who, through interest and dedication, reserve to themselves an active role in some form or other. These "elites," the "policy and opinion" leaders, are the key to the structure of public opinion and public support. The elites are the most fruitful targets for a President's leadership efforts. They are the catalyst which can mobilize the will of the people to respond to the charge of the President. They provide the required strengths for the exercise of national leadership.

The elites are speaking to and for larger groups which results in the formulation of opinion. A gifted leader puts into words ideas which are only vaguely felt or perceived by the larger group. When this is skillfully done, the leader finds that he has a following. The key to decisionmaking is the mobilization of the elites.

The elites are not specifically a ruling class, but they do possess power. They usually, but not always, function by the exercise of influence rather than by direct action. Their separate strengths vary from issue to issue and from era to era. Some students argue that ours is a pluralistic society with a very decentralized power structure, yet the functioning of the United States Government with its most obvious centers of power influence seems to disprove this theory.

The several elites which are described below are illustrative, and given only cursory treatment, but they are the major elites which add their voices and influences in the evolution of the nation's foreign policy.

The intellectuals, those who "think" and are most anxious to contribute their thoughts, are key to the thinking of others. Their power stems from the honor generally paid to those of intelligence. This power is growing for as time goes on, the level of education increases and the teachers, especially in the higher levels, are among the leaders in the groups of intellectuals.

Undisputed power accrues to those who distribute the views of others. Mass communications, especially television, have provided a means for each of the elites to make its views known as at no time in the past. National issues are now settled on a national basis, with an increasing awareness of the facts and of all the nuances of these facts. Although it seems true that the communications elite cannot in itself manufacture opinions, it is a major tool in the distribution of them, and it does contain the ability to "editorialize," to provide emphasis or deny it.

The members of the uniformed elite at the policy making level have power and are anxious to use it for what they believe to be the right. With annual budgets in the scores of billions of dollars, and with more than two million men in their commands, they can exercise power which is real. These leaders, whether agreed with or not, speak with authority and are listened to.

Industrial leaders, like those of the military, exercise their power through their influences on the dollar and on people. They decide, with obvious influence from the buying public, what should be made, how it shall be made and what it will cost. Despite the power of labor they can decide who will be hired, how many and how much they will be paid.

The federal civil service, together with the other nonmilitary professional elements of the government exert a very real influence. The bureaucracy membership is much larger in size than any other entity in the nation. Its influence upon the Congress is tremendous and its payroll is among the most significant in any category. The bureaucracy provides the "action officers" from whom stem the first approaches toward new methods and new solutions.

Political leadership provides the means for "running the country." It provides the members of the Administration and of the Congress and sometimes more significantly, the county chairman and the ward leaders. It provides the leadership of the nation.

Old Society, containing elements of all of the above, also exists separately as an elite which usually (but not always) has wealth, political power, and industrial or military aspects. It most certainly overlaps the intellectuals and, because of the aura it possesses, is an elite with influence.

Yet this description is far too simple, for the elites, depending on the issue, find that they are split within themselves at the same time as they find themselves melding into others. There are sub-categories within the elites and stresses and strains in attempts to provide the dominant voice and major influence. As the issues change there are permutations and combinations within and between the elites, and when there are, as in the real world, numerous issues, the elite makeup becomes confused, diverse and difficult to categorize. Through this constant shifting, combination and amalgamation of memberships, issues are voiced and decision influences are brought to bear.

The elites are becoming more complex because of increased communications, ease of travel, greater education and sophistication of the people and the greater diversity and mobility in society. The leaders of these elites find it more difficult to determine whom they are leading. C. Wright Mills says there is no prime elite, and Eric Hoffer says there is not a mass culture but that we are a nation of elites. While the masses undoubtedly hold opinions, at least more so than in the past primarily because of communication, they still follow their own elite leaders. The relative weight of opinion has not changed; the elites still function but now they have greater numbers of followers. Elites are competitive, and as not uncommon in human affairs, are often self-serving.

While there is, in fact, a prime elite or combination of them, depending on the issue, the era and the mood of the people, it is impossible finitely to predict its makeup or goal at any future time in any set of circumstances. The elite affiliation now striving for immediate withdrawal from Southeast Asia would probably be equally strident in opposition to a United States involvement in Latin America in support of an incumbent regime, but would

likely demand United States action should Israel appear to fail under attack by Egypt. Yet this same elite grouping might be shattered by a powerful attempt to intervene (on either side) in Northern Ireland.

Despite the contradictions, the elite structure is alive and well and through it a government must operate in seeking its goals and discharging its responsibilities.

## Mobilization of the Elites

Future Presidents will find it incumbent to learn the lessons from the past, profit by them, and use them in their attempts to persuade elite leaders that United States interests, and thereby, their own, are best served by their support of these vigorously evaluated and clearly defined policies and goals. But even a large measure of support by the elites may not always lead to the Promised Land.

There are some who hold that events are the prime movers of public opinion. Lloyd A. Free, President of the Institute for International Social Research, has said, "It's usually events rather than persuasion or propaganda which trigger national changes in popular attitudes." Lincoln Bloomfield has said, ". . . only a clear and present danger will override fears of getting involved. . . ." Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., said in 1932, "There is finally that great event apparently uncontrollable and unpredictable that moves public opinion as nothing else can." These thoughts are illustrated by President Roosevelt's inference that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had made his task of leading the country into war much easier. The overpowering event such as Sarajevo, Pearl Harbor or the North Korean invasion of the South will likely be unassailable in its influence on the public will. These "uncontrollable and unpredictable" events will shape the nations future. But events less cataclysmic can be of varying or even contradictory value to the various elites and can be used to advantage by alert leadership. The Reichstag Fire, the Tonkin Gulf incident, the Cuban Missile crisis, whatever the historical evaluation of them, were events skillfully used by the then current leadership, whether national or factional.

A skillful balance of the various national activities can often provide solutions when perceived imbalances produce discord. President Nixon is exerting all effort to "wind down" the war in Southeast Asia. A Harris

Poll taken in October 1971 shows that 65 percent of the American people believe that the war is morally wrong and 53 percent believe that the rate of the withdrawal is too slow, yet 53 percent had "hardly any confidence" that the South Vietnamese government can keep the country out of the hands of the Communists. This clearly shows that the adverse opinion on the war in Southeast Asia has not yet reached a bottom and that the U.S. people believe our intervention was a failure; yet the President's popularity overall has increased during the past few months, primarily it seems because of his attempt to solve a domestic problem by the attack on all foes of the dollar and his trips to China and Russia which the people see as a quest for global peace. This apparent contradiction demonstrates that limited wars which future leaders believe necessary may be successfully attempted, even though unpopular, if the cost is kept within bounds and if the overall good exceeds the overall ill.

After the President has proved that he has adapted the lessons of the past to the problems of the present, has capitalized to the optimum on the events, and has properly balanced his program, he must build on the support he always holds, no matter the conditions. Despite the sophistication, even cynicism in the country and despite the war-generated despair, there is still a sub-stratum on which renewed patriotism can be built. The "rally round the flag" attitude still survives despite the unrest, bitterness and opposition. There can be support for the actions that need to be taken; there are the many citizens who will follow the Chief Executive and Commander in Chief.

Yet all of this does not provide the ultimate answer.

The possible combinations and permutations of participants and goals in limited wars of the future are too diverse to permit specific recitals of actions or forbearances, of strengths or weaknesses, of demands or concessions. The affiliation of the various elites of the uncertain future is ambiguous and the support which might be provided for undefined tasks cannot be predicted. These and other key questions can only be answered at the time in light of the facts of the world as it then exists. No leader can validly plan the specifics of elite mobilization. There is, however, a formula, simple yet of the utmost difficulty in execution.

The problem resolves into two basic demands upon a President in order to take the country into limited war:

Insure that it is required, and

Keep the goals honest and insure that they are understood.

If the President is successful in these he must satisfy two additional and difficult requirements. He must:

Keep the war limited, and

Keep it short.

This will require the ultimate of our leadership--but even the ultimate that can be delivered by a mortal cannot invariably (or possibly even frequently) be expected fully to satisfy these demands. Yet, this is the task. The President, and those who support him, must satisfy the elite leaders that he has done his best to solve these requirements. It is then the role of the elites to muster the support. But if after all means have been prosecuted and all strengths exerted, this support is denied and a consensus cannot be obtained, then United States involvement is not in the national interest. If the will does not exist and cannot be generated, the action should not be attempted.

## Prescription and Prognosis

The current and projected state of national will forecasts a problem to the national leadership in its attempts to exert U.S. force overseas, even in those areas and in those roles where hard thought convinces the leaders that U.S. involvement is required. This condition of will is not likely to improve by itself in the near future. It therefore rests upon the President and his supporters to lead the mobilization of the elites by convincing them that the goals are valid and that the cost is right. To achieve this, he must realistically have analyzed the relative costs versus gains. He must exert all effort to be frank with the American people and to transmit valid signals to our allies and adversaries alike.

The President must trade on the popularity and credibility he will accrue if he is careful in his choices, honest in his description of them and vigorous in their prosecution.

The President ordinarily will not be able to generate the key event which will galvanize the national will behind him, but he will be well advised to pray for it and, if he is discerning enough, he will permit it to happen and give it proper direction and support when it comes upon the scene.

The mobilization of the elites calls for the highest caliber of statesmanship and politics, and a delicate blend of philosophy, faith and muscle and, beyond that, honesty, determination, a strong personal will and good luck.

With these factors and realistically selected goals, our leadership will have above-average chances to keep the United States a major world power, albeit playing a role somewhat reduced from that of the past 30 years. The pendulum will swing again, but until it does, we must not only content ourselves with the new perceptions but, in fact, relish them. To do otherwise is to our great misfortune.