Strategy Research Project

Weathering the Storm: Organizational Change to Facilitate Grand Strategic Coherence

by

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Abstract

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composed of military officers and personnel from interagency departments to facilitate

the planning and execution of a national grand strategy. The structural mismatch

between the current national security system structure and the demands imposed by an

ever-increasing complex security environment requires an organizational change in

order to regain the capacity and capability to develop a grand strategic vision for the

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established organization will assist to alleviate an inconsistent approach to strategy

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strategy formulation, a historical review to achieving grand strategy under the

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the national security system.

Weathering the Storm: Organizational Change to Facilitate Grand Strategic Coherence

The United States (U.S.) possesses overwhelming superiority comparatively speaking in regards to the elements of the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic elements of national power, yet, as Nathan Freier contends, that the failure of the United States to "establish priorities for action…only bring[s] political and grand strategic disappointment" in his article "Primacy without a Plan?"[1] Considering the growing complexity and risks associated with national security, the urgency to examine obstacles and offer solutions to integrating resources towards a coherent grand strategy remains paramount.[2] Dealing with national security challenges as isolated incidents, remains a recurring critique of the U.S. employment of power.[3] To maximize America's strengths in the execution of a grand strategic vision requires a national security apparatus possessing the structural integrity capable of weathering the storm of tensions between ideal strategic formulation and reality. The U.S. national security decision-making process currently lacks an organizational structure which can firmly grasp the elements of national power and employ it in a coordinated manner within the context of a grand strategic approach making America unacceptably vulnerable to other powers contesting our current geopolitical primacy.

The Environment

Several issues require necessary changes in order to regain the ability to craft a coherent long term grand strategic vision. First, when discussing strategy, the United States continually talks around the real problems of strategy formulation electing instead to produce a list of strategic goals.[4] Second, resulting from a misdiagnosis of strategic formation the United States remains singularly focused on compensating for the

symptoms caused by not crafting a grand strategy.[5] Third, the fact that the United

States has accurately identified what approaches our adversaries have developed only

clarifies the immediacy of the U.S. dilemma of not possessing a unifying grand strategic

vision.[6]

Talking around these problems result in an overreliance on military power to

secure the U.S. long term primacy; historical evidence offers that military power alone

does not serve as the decisive element in a long-term competition, as pointed out by

Roger Trinquier in his book *Modern Warfare*.[7] Victory must go beyond military

operations alone and expand to encompass all elements of national power in order to

match the scope of competition.[8] Failure to fully appreciate how to expand the ability to

use the breadth of U.S. national power violates the logic expressed by Clausewitz that,

"Pleasant as it sounds, it is a fallacy that must be exposed: war [great power

competition] is such a dangerous business that the mistakes which come from kindness

are the very worst."[9] The kindness displayed by the United States emanates from the

resistance to take action to address the very real problem of harnessing the elements of

national power. Failing to commit to make the necessary changes preventing grand

strategic development results in a moderation which Clausewitz warned only leads to

logical absurdity.[10] In his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee,

Aaron L. Freidberg articulated it best when he said, "We are running on fumes of a

strategy put in place over 25 years ago."[11]

Ignoring the necessity of a solution to these problems distorts the activity of

developing strategy within a process of rational study.[12] Dedicated professionals commit

themselves in the crafting of strategic documents as evident in reviewing the *National*

Security Strategy (NSS) and the *National Defense Strategy* (NDS). The NSS clearly

articulates the conditions within the environment stating that, "The contests over

influence are timeless," and, "The United States must consider what is enduring about

the problems we face, and what is new," given that "[s]ome conditions are new, and

have changed how these competitions are unfolding," requiring that "[t]he United States

must develop new concepts and capabilities to protect our homeland, advance our

prosperity, and preserve peace."[13] However, these documents fall victim to elements of

bad strategy.[14]

Further examining the NSS, the NDS, and the *Capstone Concept for Joint

Operations 2030 Draft* (CCJO), the documents provide ample explanations and

examples of the current environment. The documents capture the maneuvering of

adversaries to restructure the "international order" challenging U.S. primacy.[15] U.S.

adversaries have adapted to exploit identified weakness all while working under a

perceived "threshold of open military conflict."[16] The NSS accurately assesses that U.S.

adversaries are using an innovative approach combining any and all resources

available "to accrue strategic gains over time-making it harder for the United States and

our allies to respond" while also acknowledging, "Our diplomatic, intelligence, military,

and economic agencies have not kept pace with the changes in the character of

competition."[17]

The documents themselves articulate what needs to be done but actions within

the national security system stop at identification of the symptoms of the problem failing

to adopt corrective actions.[18] The NDS identifies that, "A long-term strategic competition

requires the seamless integration of multiple elements of national power—diplomacy,

information, economics, finance, intelligence, law enforcement, and military."[19] Currently the burden to resolve the gap in our inability to employ concerted power falls heavily on the shoulders of the military.[20]

Challenge

The current formal process originated out of the *National Security Act of 1947* specifically to address deficiencies experienced throughout World War II in order to create a structure to enable greater integration and coordination related to the affairs of national security.[21] Unfortunately, the national security system has not progressed to meet the unrelenting stresses of today's environment remaining in an extremely sorted structure that increases the difficulty to achieve an aligned vision.[22] In light of the NSS, NDS, and CCJO the adaptation to the changing strategic realities has not manifested itself in an overhaul of the national security apparatus but in the creation of "Globally Integrated Operations."[23] The overreliance on the military dynamic of power compels the Joint Force to contend with, "A future security environment characterized by trans-regional crises, increasingly capable enemies, broad demand for constrained resources, informational challenges, and complex socio-political problems that require whole of government efforts to solve," with one hand tied behind its back while wearing a blind fold.[24]

Generally, processes evolve to meet the demands exacted by circumstances through interaction within a given environment, and the formal security process is no exception.[25] However, changes made in the Kennedy administration distorted the evolution of the national security process from an upward curving trajectory to a seismic break in the continuity of change.[26] A long standing adverse effect erupting from the changes made in 1961 concerns the role of the National Security Advisor. The National

Security Advisor must balance between two competing tensions in attempting to manage the attainment of long term strategic objectives while contending with the daily crises impacting national security.[27] The consequences of both tensions adversely affect the national security apparatus' ability to remain focused on developing and monitoring long term strategic plans to drive consistent coherent action.[28] The lack of an organizational mechanism able to produce a long term vision to facilitate multiple unities of effort causes a breakdown in the ability to create a foundational strategic path.[29]

Confronted by the immense challenges associated with the events in the attacks on September 11, 2001 the United States altered its assessment but failed to adjust its methodology in confronting those challenges.[30] Recognition that the system in place fails to deliver the desired results is not new nor are the obstacles in place which sabotage our efforts to craft a grand strategic design. As identified in the book *American National Security*, the obstacles manifest themselves in failing to account for the tensions within the formal process itself relying instead on an overreliance on the president to orchestrate coordination and ignoring the impediments of interagency cooperation in execution.[31] Shortcomings of the formal process as listed in *American National Security* include foremost, "A lack of strategic coherence, inability to keep pace, lack of creativity…accountability, and a lack of presidential control of the bureaucracy."[32]

Each of the identified deficiencies compound one another overwhelming the capabilities of the current organizational construct. Arguably, the expectations of the National Security Council (NSC) to fulfill its role as an advisory board while dealing with the two demands of advising and implementing policy and strategy suffers from a lack

of an operationally functional capability.[33] Failing to make accommodations to remedy this deficiency, creates a structural mismatch compared to the demands of the current security environment as explained by William Olson in *Affairs of the State: Interagency and National Security*.[34]

With the constant churn and immediate demands of both domestic and foreign policy issues and the blazing speed in which information is communicated, the NSC simply cannot concurrently keep up.[35] The pace of the here and now reduces the capacity to manage all the requirements and consequentially makes "American Policy" more reactive than proactive in its approach.[36] Overall, the tensions between the two limit the NSC's ability to advise on and implement long term strategic planning.[37]

The lack of creativity stems from the need to generate consensus before elevating issues.[38] Consensus seeking often squashes creative, out of the box thinking or the proposal of risky recommendations.[39] An illuminating example concerns the NSC's recommendation not to back German Unification as it did not serve a vital U.S. interest, an event that ultimately transitioned into an immense strategic success only because President George H. W. Bush ignored the advice and forged ahead.[40] Over stressing the need for coordination at the expense of responsibility diminishes accountability within the national security system in developing and enacting strategic policies.[41]

The fact that the president legally and structurally possesses the definitive authority to mediate conflicting viewpoints throughout the national security decision-making process actually confines his overall control over the system. As national security issues work their way up the chain from interagency Policy Coordination

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Committees, to the Deputy Committees, to the Principal Committees, any issues which cannot be resolved at the lower and intermediate levels are brought up to the president for final adjudication. At this point the president really has three available options: (1) personally direct the coordination, (2) push the issue back down, or (3) delegate the coordination.[42] Each option contains its own consequences and exacerbates many of the shortcomings previously identified within the formal process.

If the president decides to personally direct the coordination, it only adds increasing pressure on an already strained apparatus. Managing the intersection points between the political requirements required for both domestic and foreign policy only restricts the amount of time and focus the president's staff can devote to a particular issue.[43] The relentless rhythm of events overwhelms the system presenting almost insurmountable difficulties in attempting to craft the issue into a larger, broader coherent strategic design.[44] Another consequence of Option 1 manifests itself in the creation of an ever-increasing staff exacerbating an already swelling system.[45]

Given the constant multiple competing priorities confronting the national security system there is a limit to what the NSC can manage. At first glance, pushing an issue down looks like a logical decision by limiting the issues which warrant presidential attention. However, the net result of pushing issues back down, not due to importance but as a management system for competing issues, elevates risk by preventing the ability to seize opportunities or recognizing the long-term significance of a particular issue.[46]

Delegation exacerbates the existing issues within interagency coordination resulting in an increased work load imposed upon the national security system.[47] As

issues rise to the president's attention and are ultimately delegated down, the issue enters into a circular repetitive pattern further straining the workload of the president's staff. Additionally, this only exacerbates the limited control over the bureaucratic process.[48] The fact that organizations exist outside of the White House also limits the extent of presidential direct influence creating gaps where active and passive resistance may occur.[49] For routine matters, the president must predominantly rely on urging vice orders, further limiting his control.[50]

As mentioned in the NDS, expanding the competitive space requires close coordination; however, the interagency system suffers from major obstacles to achieving integration.[51] In their article "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley identify that the overreliance on cooperation as a result of not having a lead organization possessing directive authority complicates the process of strategy formulation with respect to identifying threats, resources, and presenting choices to senior leaders.[52] Overreliance on cooperation as a mechanism invariable negatively affects the value and methodology of strategic development as it loses coherence among various organizations within the national security system.[53] Immense existing friction prevents coherent action even when a commitment toward greater teamwork and strengthening of relationships exists.[54] These issues significantly jeopardize our ability to develop a long term vision.[55]

Relying on a national security system where cooperation is the primary means in which to concentrate the elements of national power exposes the entire system to the inherent weaknesses within interagency coordination. In his testimony before the House Committee on Armed Services, Andrew Krepinevich stated that the underlying

resistance to change among organizations within the national security apparatus exposes the limitations of what cooperation alone can achieve.[56] Compounding this dilemma, Olson references the bipolar mentality within interagency departments between wanting greater coordination coupled with the lack of an appetite to digest being coordinated.[57]

Olson identifies two foundational challenges making cooperation among the interagency departments exceedingly difficult as "Coordination Paranoia" and the dynamic between "Routine vs. Complex Coordination."[58] Paranoia arises from the notion that cooperation and coordination requires a specific agency to give up something or lose a sense of prestige as incapable of standing alone.[59] Either one translates into lost funding or threat to an organization's very existence.[60] In an environment of competitive budgets and resource allocation the overall heft and size of the Department of Defense (DoD) enterprise only exacerbates this paranoia.[61]

The challenges within routine and complex coordination derives from the pressures imposed by internal and external factors.[62] Because few problems involve only one specific agency, the inability of distinct agencies to grasp how various policies and programs intersect without elevating adjudication of differences to the highest levels tends to increase the burden on the president in the current centralized national security apparatus.[63] Moreover, the blending of domestic and international security issues increases the complexity.[64] The effort to achieve coherence and the recognition of the growing interdependence of issues has resulted in the increased creation of highly specific roles aggravating attempts towards better coordination.[65] William Olson highlights the absence of complex coordination in the lack of involvement between the

individual departments and agencies achieved during foundational planning in support of exigencies.[66]

Flournoy and Brimley propose that the lack of a collective interagency process overwhelms what little capacity exists for such matters with the additional consequence of decreasing any incentives for encompassing interagency coordination.[67] For the most part only a crisis provides enough incentive to collate the majority of executive departments that make up the interagency into a sufficient cooperating model, but once the crisis passes, so does the enduring incentive for coordination.[68] The lack of an incentive to enable persistent interagency coordination on day to day routine matters opens the national security system up to a sort of strategic blindness.[69] Expanding the competitive space requires integration of the departmental interagency, yet the current structure and process limits the ability to successfully integrate the interagency long enough to maintain a lasting feasible approach.[70]

Recognizing the importance of interagency coordination but failing to change the current national security system creates a greater diverging disconnect between means and ways. The inability of the interagency system to collectively come together in a determined manner to close the gap between resources available and an executable approach, has resulted in a national security system capable of only stating the objectives hoped to be achieved.[71] The resulting outcome severely hinders the ability to study strategic options because we assume away risks toward obtaining the objectives critically hampering the ability to find comparative advantages over adversaries.[72] The current insufficient coordination within an interagency approach fails to meet the demands of the national security environment.[73] Examining the limitations that the

current structure exhibits, invites a revaluation of different organizational models that provide insight in ways to address identified deficiencies.[74]

Historical Approach

One could argue that the United States did at one time possess the capacity and capability to not only generate a long term grand strategic approach but also the adaptability to adjust to the demands of changing circumstances.[75] The U.S. use of national power throughout the Cold War serves as the most pointed example.[76] Disturbing though it is, somewhere along the way we lost this capability. Examining the foundational formulation of the U.S. Cold War strategy shines a light where strategic leaders must look to regain the capacity and capability to generate a grand strategy.[77]

The creation of the *National Security Act of 1947*, following World War II, stipulated reorganization to assist the United States in carrying out its new-found role on the global stage.[78] The magnitude of the sweeping changes within the act attempted to dissolve the irregular and inconsistent approach during the war with the creation of multiple agencies with specific roles and responsibilities.[79] Even at this early stage, the identification of the need to go beyond independent agencies acting alone materialized.[80] In 1949, Congress created the DoD to prove much needed unification to better enable the abilities of the secretary of defense.[81] With the national security system apparatus established under the Truman administration, President Eisenhower came into office in possession of a framework which enabled the opportunity to look at the long term with relatively few modifications.[82]

Eisenhower is credited with perhaps creating the best organizational structure to use as a guide in examining not only the apparatus to generate good strategies, but it also serves as a window to visualize a process capable of ensuring the execution of a

grand strategy across today's robust interagency departmental structure.[83] Under

Eisenhower, the NSC served as the lead while augmented by two other mechanisms in

the formulation of national security policy.[84] The NSC Planning Board (PB) and the

Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) complimented each other in their respective roles

as additional components of the NSC in planning strategy as well as ensuring the

coordinated execution of strategy.[85] The complimentary nature of these two components

and their respective interrelated process provided President Eisenhower with a powerful

organization possessing the capabilities and capacity necessary to deal with the internal

tensions within the system but also the external tensions of the security environment.[86]

The specific roles of the NSC, the NSC PB, and the OCB provided the necessary

capacity under the leadership of President Eisenhower to undertake what is now called

Project Solarium. In May of 1953 in a room named the White House Solarium, President

Eisenhower oversaw a national strategic debate concerning the threats posed by the

Soviet Union.[87] Throughout Project Solarium, the analysis and opportunity to offer

dissenting views in an open and free environment without the usual bureaucratic

restraints provided the environment to develop a long term national strategy.[88]

In his article "Primacy without a Plan?" Nathan Freier credits documents such as

NSC 68 and the Solarium Project as a pivotal event for U.S. national security for

enabling the forecasting of a grand strategic foundation adaptable enough to maintain

relevance for nearly fifty years.[89] The remarkable aspect accomplished by Eisenhower's

national security system underwrote the nation's long-term strategic interests, thus

enabling consistency across multiple administrations.[90] The historical significance and

organization of the national security system under Eisenhower provides solid reasoning

to incorporate organizational change to regain the capacity and capability to develop a long term grand strategic vision to meet the demands of the 21st Century.[91]

Implementation

Andrew Krepinevich in his testimony regarding the *Project of National Security Reform*, reinforced the consensus that the U.S. government lacks the aptitude related to generating a grand strategy.[92] A report from the organization Center for the Study of the Presidency maintains that to enable a viable strategic approach a national security system must possess agility, adaptability, and proactive adherence in the concentrated use of all elements of national power as critical characteristics.[93] Roger Martin's and A. G. Lafley's book, *Playing to Win: How Strategy Works,* stipulates that a strategy must answer the following questions:

1. What is your winning aspirations? (Purpose of your enterprise.)
2. Where you will play? (A playing field where you can achieve your aspirations.)
3. How you will win? (The way you will win on your chosen playing field.)
4. What capabilities must be in place? (The set and configurations of capabilities required to win in the chosen way.)
5. What management systems are required? (The systems and measures that enable the capabilities and support the choices.)[94]

Any design for implementation of an organizational change to the national security system must focus on determining what type of management system enables answering the five questions posed by Lafley and Martin. The management system provides the foundational machinery to enable a deliberate and methodical approach to gain coherent action against challenges to national security, which Richard Rumelt explains as essential to strategy.[95] Failing to understand the internal process of formation and challenging assumptions within strategy formulation ignores the deficiencies inherent in the current system and subsequently dooms any attempt at organizational change to fall into the pitfalls of crafting bad strategy.[96]

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Any organizational change must take into account the conflicting tensions between the specialization of certain departments and the need for coordination.[97] Organizing simply to promote better coordination comes at a high cost because it opposes optimization gained from specialization.[98] Reinforcing what Rumelt describes in his writing, "As is clear with anyone who has belonged to a coordinating committee, coordination interrupts and de-specializes people," wherein, "Good strategy and good organization lie in specializing on the right activities and imposing only the essential amount of coordination."[99] The organizational structure desired must possess the authority and ability to articulate what Rumelt calls "the kernel of strategy" an overarching designed reasoning that facilitates clear achievement.[100] A grand strategic vision gives importance to actions that require coordination.[101]

In a chapter within the book *Perspectives on Strategic Management,* Henry Mintzberg uses the poem "The Blind Men and the Elephant" as an analogy to discuss the disparate schools of thought to describe the strategy formation process. The analogy demonstrates that too narrow of a focus will cause a misdiagnosis of the complete picture.[102] The same goes with any attempt to enact organizational change to bring coherence in developing a grand strategic design for the United States. The organizational change must account for the many components that interplay in crafting U.S. strategy or risk mimicking the three-blind man in their feeble attempt at identifying the elephant (or in this case strategy) as it truly exists.[103]

Mintzberg, describes ten different schools concerning the study of strategic formation.[104] The perspectives involved within each school assists in comprehending the competitive dynamic tensions between the ideal and what actually occurs during

strategic formulation within the current national security system. The tenth description

labeled the configurational school serves as the most beneficial model in grasping the

tensions since it encompasses all aspects of the various descriptions into one model.[105]

For clarification the following contexts of the configurational school provide insights into

the interrelated tensions within strategy formulation which include:

1. The behaviors of organizations are best described in tiers of configurations-distinct, integrated clusters of dimensions concerning state and time.
2. Strategic formation is an episodic process in which a particular type and form of organization, matched to a particular environment, engages in a particular form of the process for a distinguishable amount of time.
3. Accordingly, the process can be one of conceptual design or formal planning, systematic analysis or intuitive vision; it can only be one of individual cognition and/or collective learning or politics; it can be driven by personalized leadership, organizational culture, or the external environment; and the resulting strategies can take the form of plans or patterns, ploys, positions, or perspective; but each must be found at its own time and in its own context.
4. These periods of the clustered dimensions tend to sequence themselves over time in patterned ways that define common life cycles of strategy formulation.[106]

Any implementation of an organizational change must do away with the false

premise that strategy formation precedes structure, and accept the fact that a better

path is to figure out how to adapt the existing structure in order to craft a better

strategy.[107] Strategic formulation in the real world resembles that of a "dynamic cluster"

made up of clusters of relationships each exhibiting their own internal tensions as well

as simultaneously having to contend with external tensions with respect to time making

the capability to adapt an essential requirement.[108] Prior to the commencement of any

exploration in search of an organizational construct that enables greater focus on

developing strategy, one must gain an explicit appreciation of the internal tensions and

factors involved in strategic formulation within the national security system.[109]

An organizational change capable of performing the overarching function of delineating and establishing boundaries, within which the internal and external tensions of strategic formulation operates, promotes the ultimate purpose of unifying efforts by way of delivering a grand strategic narrative. A grand narrative provides the architecture to contend with the external environment in a manner that imposes asymmetric costs while exploiting a comparative advantage over an adversary to frustrate their attempts to contest United States interests.[110] Revisiting former Commandant of the Marine Corps General Wallace Greene's proposal to create a "National Staff" to reinvigorate the creation of an organization modeled after the Eisenhower administration's OCB and National Security PB provides a reasonably attainable solution to alleviate the deficiencies plaguing the current national security system's ability to craft a grand strategy.[111] Two revisions to General Greene's original proposal to integrate within the current structure include foregoing the creation of a "National Command Center" as an integral part of the national staff and refraining from directly combining any one agency such as the Central Intelligence Agency which General Greene suggested.[112] Building off of General Greene's idea of a "National Staff" and combining it with aspects of the national security system within the Eisenhower administration, as a National Staff 2.0, provides the optimal model without causing too much disruptive turbulence in the existing structure.

Taking an excerpt from the draft CCJO that, "The strategic environment twenty years from now will likely grow more complex and volatile as adversaries become more capable and conflicts become increasingly transregional, multi-domain, and multi-functional," signals a sense of urgency to build a strategic organizational construct in

order to galvanize the entire national security enterprise to capitalize off the current structure's foundation.[113] The National Staff 2.0 by its very composition which would include representatives from all agencies and departments much like a Joint Interagency Coordination Group, but at a national level, enhances the ability for the United States to direct and supervise an integrated whole of government approach based off a risk versus cost assessment providing greater fidelity for the individual agencies and departments to fulfill their responsibilities.[114] The National Staff 2.0 provides a mechanism to embrace the tensions of the current system while managing to articulate a suitable and feasible approach to confront long term active resistance to U.S. interests by U.S. adversaries, not only to senior governmental decision makers but the American people as well.[115]

The National Staff 2.0 establishes a permanent apex organization to alleviate deficiencies in an inconsistent approach to strategy development while enabling continuity throughout multiple administrations and leadership transitions amongst various executive departments and agencies.[116] As an augmentation to the NSC the National Staff 2.0 alleviates the competing demands of managing daily security related issues and by focusing on long term strategic development.[117] The long term appraisal of policy decisions' effects on a national grand strategy and development of recommendations based off current and future threats serves as the other crucial function performed by the National Staff 2.0.[118] The National Staff 2.0 organization embeds strategic formation, planning and implementation into a singular organization at the national level creating an optimal balance between coordination and specialization maximizing the positive attributes of the national security system.[119]

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Risks to Implementation

Four major challenges exist regarding the implementation of a National Staff 2.0.

One risk concerns adding another layer of bureaucracy, in an already extremely dense

overly compartmentalized bureaucratic structure.[120] Second is that establishing an

integrated National Staff 2.0 may advance fears of creating an overly domineering

authoritarian body that will grow in size to the point of usurping authorities previously

perceived to reside within the various national security interagency institutions. The

susceptibility of falling into turf wars within the interagency system generates the added

consequence of watering down its role in devising and supervising the execution of

grand national strategy.[121] Third, in creating a reorganization specifically designed to

focus on long-term strategy there exists the risk of generating conditions which

eventually drag the organization into the daily roil of the immediate crisis.[122] A fourth

challenge confronting the proposal involves the devolution of the staff's primary

function. Instead of focusing on crafting a grand strategic vision in concert with the

executive departments and agencies, the staff could be relegated to simply providing

numerous reports or position papers for numerous organizations requesting information.

The National Staff 2.0 could inadvertently transform from a thinking organization

to an organization which simply assembles data as opposed to an organization to

synthesize data for the sole purpose of building creative and innovative strategic

approaches.[123] The risks outlined above highlight challenges but each in themselves do

not present insurmountable obstacles as outlined by Martin Gormand and Alexander

Krongard in their article "A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government:

Institutionalizing the Interagency Process" that the United States suffers from a disparity

of what the strategic challenges demand compared to what the current security

apparatus delivers.[124]

Conclusion

As Nathan Freier in his article "Primacy without a Plan?" offers, "Textbook

models for policy and strategy formulation argue that grand strategic success relies on

the effective development of a rational, consistent, meaningful, and-to some extent-

consensus grand strategic design that enforces discipline and unity over the discrete

policy choices of American government."[125] Given the many challenges confronting the

Unites States as outlined in the NSS and NDS and the historical over reliance on

military power alone, the United States must reevaluate the organizational structure

utilized in which to craft a long term strategic vision.[126] Failure to commit to making the

necessary changes that the challenges confronting national security demand moves the

United States in a direction of missed opportunities and squandered resources.[127]

Extrapolating the implications of the configurational school of thought in strategic

formation as described by Henry Mintzberg, provides insights compelling a national

security apparatus organizational change to facilitate grand strategic coherence capable

of weathering the storm of strategic formulation. The current national security apparatus

does not provide the necessary foundational approach to employ elements of national

power into a coherent grand strategic vision within the current context of great power

competition.[128] Visualizing the U.S. elements of national power as a weapon in the form

of a great broadsword, supreme utility only results from its coordinated use. For all

intents and purposes, U.S. strategic leaders lack the hand to take firm grasp of the

broadsword and manipulate it to its maximum potential.

This lack of a hand capable of guiding the broadsword creates a disconnect between what the brain commands and what actually transpires resulting in a lack of emphasis on developing a grand strategy.[129] Current U.S. national security process and structures only enable the ability for wild slashes of the broadsword against opponents with a planned long term well thought out attack. This results in massive amounts of expended energy and power while achieving limited overall effect in respect to the re-emergence of great power competition.[130] Organizing a structure with the capability and capacity to harmoniously balance the tensions existing within strategic formulation and the imposed tensions of the external environment offers a solution that invites criticism in order to incentivize additional proposals. Failure to correct the mismatch in current structure will only result in the breezes of wishful thinking propelling the sails on the *U.S.S. Grand Strategy*. The United States must replace wants with long term needs in order to frame out a sturdy enough ship to persevere through the storm on the sea of great power competition.

Endnotes

[1] Nathan Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" *Parameters Online* 36, no. 3 (Autumn 2006): 7, https://search.proquest.com/docview/198176680?accountid=4444 (accessed January 31, 2018).

[2] Amos A. Jordan et al., *American National Security*, 6th ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 212.

[3] Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" 2.

[4] A. G. Lafley and Roger L. Martin, *Playing to Win: How Strategy Works* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2013), 3-4.

[5] Richard P. Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters* (New York: Crown Business, 2011), 7.

    [6] Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 18, 2017), 28, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf (accessed January 31, 2018).

    [7] Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*, trans. Daniel Lee (New York: Praeger, 1964), 5. Trinquier discusses how warfare has evolved in the context of an insurgency using all elements of national power using the term psychological instead of information. Additionally, he describes the manner in which an adversary seeks to delegitimize authority using all the elements in a coordinated manner. Trinquier further explains that the military element plays a secondary role as the other elements play a more decisive role. Although, Trinquier writes in the context of an insurgency; similarities can be drawn within the context of great power competition as adversaries challenge the primacy or authority of the United States within the international order.

    [8] Ibid., 5.

    [9] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 75.

    [10] Ibid., 76.

    [11] Aaron L. Freidberg, Senate, Committee on the Armed Services, *Hearing on U.S. Policy and Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 115th Cong., 1st sess., April 25, 2017, 5, https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:mOLa9A9C8lwJ:https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/friedberg_04-25-17+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us (accessed December 6, 2017).

    [12] Clausewitz, *On War*, 141.

    [13] Trump, *National Security Strategy*, 26.

    [14] Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy*, 5, 20. Rumelt states that, "Bad Strategy tends to skip over pesky details such as problems," and furthermore, "[i]t ignores the power of choice and focus, trying instead to accommodate a multitude of conflicting demands and interests." (5) Upon further examination the NSS reflects what Rumelt warns that bad strategy contains as, "Having conflicting goals, dedicating resources to unconnected targets, and accommodating incompatible interests [which] are the luxuries of the rich and powerful, but they make for bad strategy"(20).

    [15] Trump, *National Security Strategy*, 27.

    [16] Ibid.

    [17] Ibid., 27-28.

    [18] U.S. Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2030 (CCJO)*, Draft Working Document, Predecisional (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, June 28, 2016), 3, https://armywarcollege.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/ institution/ REP/Course%20Files/DMSPO/Core%20Courses/WF2200_Theater_Strategy_and_Campaignin g_%28TSC%29/Downloads/Readings/Lesson%2009/Required%20Readings/4--Capstone%20Concept%20for%20Joint%20Operations.pdf (accessed March 23, 2018).

[19] Jim Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, January 19, 2018), 6, https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf (accessed January 31, 2018).

[20] U.S. Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 3.

[21] William J. Olson, "Interagency Coordination: The Normal Accident or the Essence of Indecision," in *Affairs of the State: The Interagency and National Security*, ed. Gabriel Marcella (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, December 2008), 218, http://www.globalsecuity.org/military/librbary/report/2009/ssi_marcella.pdf (accessed July 31, 2017).

[22] Center for the Study of The Presidency, *The Strategic Challenge Inherited Cold War Rigidity Needed 21st Century Anticipation and Agility*, *Panel Report for the President and Congress Comprehensive Strategic Reform* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of The Presidency, September 1, 2001), 16, http://www.thepresidency.org/publications/comprehensive-strategic-reform-panel-report-president-and-congress (accessed January 10, 2018).

[23] U.S. Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 10.

[24] Ibid., 22.

[25] Center for the Study of The Presidency, *The Strategic Challenge*, 16.

[26] Michele A. Flournoy and Shawn W. Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," *Joint Force Quarterly Online,* no. 41 (Second Quarter 2006): 83, in ProQuest (accessed February 8, 2018); Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform: Challenges and Requirements: Testimony Before the U.S. House of Representatives House Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation*, 111th Cong., 1st sess., March 19, 2009, 6, http://csbaonline.org/research/publications/national-security-reform-challenges-and-requirements/publication (accessed January 10, 2018).

[27] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 83-84.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Project on National Security Reform: Forging a New Shield* (Arlington, VA: Project on National Security Reform, November 2008), 232, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a491826.pdf (accessed February 6, 2018).

[30] Freier, "Primacy without a Plan?" 5.

[31] Jordan, *American National Security*, 223-24.

[32] Ibid., 224-225.

[33] Nicholas J. Schlosser, ed., *The Greene Papers: General Wallace M. Greene and The Escalation of the Vietnam War January 1964-March 1965* (Quantico, VA: History Division,

United States Marine Corps, 2015), 100; Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 83.

[34] Olson, "Interagency Coordination," 251.

[35] Jordan, *American National Security*, 224.

[36] Ibid., 225.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 84.

[39] Jordan, *American National Security*, 224.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 212, 219-21.

[43] Ibid., 212-13.

[44] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 83-84.

[45] Jordan, *American National Security*, 212-13.

[46] Ibid., 212-13.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 224-25.

[49] Olson, "Interagency Coordination," 239; Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 84.

[50] Jordan, *American National Security*, 213.

[51] Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy*, 7.

[52] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 81.

[53] Ibid., 80.

[54] Jordan, *American National Security*, 212.

[55] Ibid., 210-14; Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Project on National Security Reform: Forging a New Shield*, 194.

[56] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 11.

[57] Olson "Interagency Coordination," 225.

[58] Ibid., 226, 231.

[59] Ibid., 226.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 231.

[63] Jordan, *American National Security*, 212; Olson "Interagency Coordination," 217.

[64] Jordan, *American National Security*, 228.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Olson, "Interagency Coordination," 234.

[67] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 81.

[68] Ibid., 83; Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 98.

[69] Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 98. Idea taken from General Greene's speech to the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA, on May 21, 1964. In the speech General Greene specifically addresses shortfalls within the National Security Council during the escalation of the Vietnam War. The remainder of the speech expands on General Greene's idea of the creation of a National General Staff. See General Wallace M. Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College," speech, Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA, May 21, 1964.

[70] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 81; Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy*, 7.

[71] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 8-9.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid., 8-13.

[74] Olson, "Interagency Coordination," 243.

[75] Freier, "Primacy without a Plan?" 1, 3, 5.

[76] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 14-15.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Olson, "Interagency Coordination," 251.

[79] Jordan, *American National Security*, 214.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 6; Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 101.

See also, Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College."

[84] Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Forging a New Shield*, 102.

[85] Ibid.; Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 6.

[86] Jordan, *American National Security*, 225; Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 91-95.

[87] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 82; Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 123-25. For a more detailed account of Project Solarium see Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 123-43.

[88] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 83.

[89] Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" 1.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., 1, 4.

[92] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform,* 7. See Aaron L. Freidberg, "Strengthening Strategic Planning," *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 2007-2008); Barry D Watts, *Why Strategy? The Case for Taking It Seriously and Doing It Well*, Unpublished Paper (Washington, DC: Center for Strategy and Budgetary Assessments, 2007).

[93] Center for the Study of The Presidency, "The Strategic Challenge," 18.

[94] Lafley and Martin, *Playing to Win*, 14-15.

[95] Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy*, 6.

[96] Ibid., 239. Rumelt explains the four characteristics of bad strategy as, "[1] Fluff-a form of gibberish masquerading as strategic concepts or arguments [2] Failure to face the challenge-bad strategy fails to recognize or define the challenge [3] Mistaking goals for strategy-many bad strategies are just statements of desire rather than plans for overcoming obstacles [4] Bad strategic objectives-a strategic objective is set by a leader as a means to an end. Strategic objectives are bad when they fail to address critical issues or when they are impactable"(32).

[97] Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Forging a New Shield*, 195.

[98] Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy*, 93-94.

[99] Ibid., 94.

[100] Ibid., 77. Rumelt defines the three elements of a kernel of strategy: "1) A diagnosis that defines or explains the nature of the challenge. A good diagnosis simplifies the often-overwhelming complexity of reality by identifying certain aspects of the situation as critical. 2) A good policy for dealing with the challenge. This is an overall approach chosen to cope with or overcome the obstacles identified in the diagnosis. 3) A set of coherent actions that are designed to carry out the guiding policy. These are the steps that are coordinated with one another to work together in accomplishing the guiding policy"(77).

[101] Ibid., 87.

[102] James W. Fredickson, ed., *Perspectives on Strategic Management* (New York: Harper Business, 1990), 7 (in the Foreward).

[103] Henry Mintzberg, "Strategy Formation: Schools of Thought," in *Perspectives on Strategic Management*, ed. James W. Fredrickson (New York: Harper Business, 1990), 107.

[104] Ibid., 108. Mintzberg's description of each school serve as tools to exploring the various competitive dynamic tensions involved within strategic formulation within the current national security system. Comprehending the elements involved assists in creating a national security structure capable enough to reap the positive integral benefits inclusive to the tensions while concurrently providing the overhead required to facilitate coherence within a grand strategic design. Additionally, Mintzberg highlights the tensions between ideal and actual strategic development.

[105] Ibid., 109.

[106] Ibid., 182.

[107] Ibid., 127. Mintzberg writes about one of the premises within the positioning school that builds upon the notion of strategy preceding structure. In our context we already have a robust structure so to enact any organizational improvement, we must embrace the fact that structure precedes strategy formulation. Again, this highlights the conflict between ideal and real-world strategy formulation.

[108] Ibid., 129-130. Mintzberg specifically discusses the evolution of the positioning school of thought in the dynamic context of industry's interaction with competitive market forces, internal dynamics within departments or divisions within a specific industry and the external forces exerted by an everchanging environment. Extrapolating Mintzberg's description and interpreting his descriptions within the context of the forces involved within U.S. strategic formulation provides an illustrative comparison. Additionally, there is a simple graphic depiction where the phrase dynamic cluster originates which provides a good mental image in drawing these comparisons.

[109] Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Forging a New Shield*, 194-95.

[110] Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy*, 30-31.

Rumelt discusses Andrew Marshall's and James Roche's approach using strengths against an opponent's weaknesses to gain an advantage instead of attempting to match your opponent strength for strength. Andrew Marshall and James Roche served as the directors of the Office of Net Assessment in the Pentagon.

[111] Center for the Study of The Presidency, *The Strategic Challenge*, 20; Nicholas J. Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 10-11, 100-03, 181-84. General Wallace Greene discussed his ideas and efforts to transform national security planning through the creation of a National General Staff. General Greene used the term National Staff and National General Staff interchangeably throughout his writings and discussion on the matter. To gain greater clarity of General Greene's proposals see Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College Speech." Also see General Wallace M. Greene Jr., "Re-Activation of the Machinery of the National Security Council," memorandum for General LeMay, Washington, DC, August 27, 1964. General Greene wrote to General LeMay concerning his proposal for a National Staff.

[112] Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 100, 102.

[113] U.S. Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, iv.

[114] Freier, "Primacy without a Plan?" 13; Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 102. In General Greene's speech to the Armed Forces Staff College, he mentions the need for an inclusive staff composed of all executive department representatives. See Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College."

[115] Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" 13.

[116] Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 91, 101. Idea builds off General Greene's speech to the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Va., on May 21, 1964, in which he outlined a proposal for the creation of a National General Staff to cement a better process in developing national policies to increase the overall security of the United States. See Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College."

[117] Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security," 86. Idea originates from the recommendation by Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley in the creation of an NSC Senior Directorate and Office for Strategic Planning. Although distinctly different in organization, the desire is the same in creating a staff which is solely devoted to strategic planning and management while preventing the national staff from becoming involved in the crisis of the day.

[118] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform*, 15. The idea comes from Krepinevich's testimony explaining Eisenhower's National Security Planning Board and Operations Coordinating Board and referencing that it was similar to the original intent of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. See Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 214.

[119] Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 53. Bowie and Immerman discuss how his staff used elements of his campaign speeches as a reference to focus on ways to improve the running of the NSC. See Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Campaign Speech," public speech, Berkeley, CA, October 8, 1952.

[120] Jordan, *American National Security*, 213.

[121] Schlosser, *The Greene Papers*, 104-105, 147. Idea builds off General Greene's speech to the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Va., on May 21, 1964, in which he specifically discussed resistance to the creation of a National General Staff due to fears of it becoming a super-agency and out of these fears it may fall prey to bureaucratic infighting. See Greene Jr., "Armed Forces Staff College."

[122] Krepinevich, *The Project on National Security Reform,* 16. Taken from Dean Acheson's observations of two negative consequences which reduced the effectiveness of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. See Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 214.

[123] Ibid., 16.

[124] Martin J. Gorman and Alexander Krongard," A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government: Institutionalizing the Interagency Process," *Joint Force Quarterly Online,* no. 39 (2005): 3, in ProQuest (accessed January 11, 2018).

[125] Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" 1.

[126] Ibid., 12.

[127] Ibid., 8, 14.

[128] Center for the Study of the Presidency and Project on National Security Reform, *Forging a New Shield*, 23.

[129] Freier, "Primacy Without a Plan?" 4.

[130] Ibid., 7-8.