Editor's Corner

by Mackubin T. Owens

In These Pages

President Obama faces not only a domestic economic crisis but also continuing challenges in the international arena. This issue of *Orbis* addresses aspects of both sets of challenges. The focus of this volume is "China and the World." The articles in this cluster are based on papers delivered recently at FPRI's Inter-University Study Group on the U.S. and Asia. Jacques deLisle sets the stage for this focus, examining how the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games have illuminated many paradoxes concerning China's engagement with the international order. On the one hand, Beijing achieved its principal political aims, displaying China as a prosperous, internationalized and powerful country, generally supportive of a largely Western-created international order. But on the other, the Olympics also revealed a less appealing and reassuring face of the People's Republic of China, one that can be stridently nationalistic, repressive, and whose commitments to global norms and processes remain in question.

Next, Jacqueline Newmyer examines China's strategy, arguing that, contrary to the conventional wisdom, China's strategic approach is not designed primarily to fight a war over Taiwan or any other matter of critical interest to China, but to create a disposition of forces so favorable to Beijing that it will not need to fight a war. Interestingly, her assessment of Beijing's strategy bears a striking resemblance to the ancient Chinese board game *weiqi* (the Japanese game of *Go*), the goal of which is to encircle one's adversary, in contrast to chess, in which a player achieves victory by concentrating the power of his pieces against particular squares on the board.

Peter Gries demonstrates how mutual misperceptions on the part of both China and the West contribute to tensions between them. While the West perceives China as a rising power, the Chinese view Western protests against the Chinese crackdown in Tibet as only the latest example of a "victimization" by the outside world, the goal of which is to humiliate the PRC and prevent its rise. Andrew Mertha examines the concept of property rights in China.

According to Harsh Pant, China's neighbor India faces not only the normal challenges a rising power encounters within the inter-

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national political system but also an internal one: its discomfort with the very notion of power, in particular its wariness of the use of "hard power." He contends that India's failure to accept a more sophisticated understanding of power in general and military power in particular will undermine its foreign and security policy.

The Israeli incursion into Gaza that began at the end of 2008 reminds us of how volatile the greater Middle East remains. Efraim Inbar examines the history of the "two-state" paradigm for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. He shows that attempts to create Arab and Jewish states that will live in peace and harmony have failed in the past and are not likely to succeed in the future. He concludes that a regional approach involving Egyptian and Jordanian participation is more likely to stabilize the situation in the region than the two-state option.

Samuel Helfont addresses the implications of U.S. support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Arab states such as Egypt. Some scholars argue that since the domestic policy of the Brotherhood in Egypt is nonviolent and to some extent prodemocratic, the United States should work with the organization. But Helfont contends that it is dangerous to focus only on the Brotherhood's domestic politics. In fact, he argues, when it comes to foreign policy issues the Muslim Brotherhood, a Sunni organization, is now actually more closely aligned with Iran and Hezbollah than with Sunni Arab regimes friendly to the United States, e.g. Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. The Brotherhood's rise to power in places like Egypt would significantly shift the regional balance of power away from Sunni regimes and further empower Iran in its bid for regional hegemony. The resulting regional order would limit U.S. influence, make peace and stability between Israel and its neighbors increasingly difficult, and threaten the U.S. mission in Iraq.

As president, Mr. Obama possesses a number of tools to address the foreign policy challenges he faces. Of course, one of them is the military instrument. Michael Horowitz and Dan Shalmon describe the ongoing debate concerning future American military strategy. They argue that the outcome of this debate will play a critical role in shaping U.S. foreign and military policies over the next decade.

An important aspect of the U.S. debate is the role of counterinsurgency in the future. David Betz and Anthony Cormack discuss the evolving status of counterinsurgency within the British Army. They conclude that unfortunately, the counterinsurgency performance of the British Army, once considered to be the exemplar of counterinsurgency practice, seems to have either declined or remained relatively static. This decline, they argue, involves a combination of insufficient resources, the failure to apply their own principles of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan, and because those principles, based upon countering a monolithic

national insurgent are inadequate for countering the more recent, complex, and multilayered global insurgency.

In our book review essays, Theodore Friend writes on "Faith, Dread and Dialogue" and Nikolas Gvosdev explores "The Future of Russia."

Impromptus and Asides
The Ongoing U.S. Defense Debate

Recently, my FPRI colleague, Michael Noonan, also addressed the ongoing U.S. defense debate described by Horowitz and Shalmon in this issue of *Orbis*. In his thoughtful piece, he contrasted what he called "next-war-itis" and "this-war-itis." Noonan, Horowitz, and Shalmon are raising questions about "force planning": making decisions today about the composition, size, and mix of *future* military forces.

Of course, there is nothing new about this. Planners always have to make guesses about what the future security environment will look like to avoid strategic surprise. During the 1990s, the U.S. defense debate was dominated by those who argued that advances in technology, particularly information technology, constituted a "revolution in military affairs" (RMA), which had "changed the very nature of war." Under former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld, this view, now called "transformation," became a major component of planning future military forces.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan served as a reality check that discredited the extreme claims of transformation advocates. But the debate within the U.S. military about future military doctrine and force structure has become even more heated, although the players are different than a decade ago. One side, the "Long War" School, argues that Iraq and Afghanistan are most characteristic of the protracted and ambiguous wars America will fight in the future. Accordingly, they say, the U.S. military should be developing a force designed to fight the so-called Long War on terrorism, which envisions the necessity of preparing for "small wars" or insurgencies.

Critics of the Long War approach—who have been labeled "traditionalists" or "conservatives"—concede that irregular warfare will occur more frequently in the future than interstate war and that fighting small wars is difficult. But they conclude that such conflicts do not threaten U.S. strategic interests while large scale conflicts, which they believe are still a real possibility, will. They fear that the Long War School's focus on small wars and insurgencies will transform the Army into a constabulary force, whose enhanced capability for conducting stability operations and "nation-building" would be purchased at a high cost: the inability to conduct large-scale conventional war.

This is far from a strictly parochial debate of interest only to the uniformed military. Its outcome has implications for both national security policy and civil-military relations. It raises two related questions: given its global role, can the United States afford to choose one

path and not the other? And to what extent should military decisions constrain policy and strategy questions that lie within the purview of civilian authorities? In other words, can military doctrine and force structure be left strictly to the military?

The danger of choosing one path to the exclusion of the other is illustrated by the Eisenhower administration's "New Look" defense policy of the 1950s. Seeking "more bang for the buck," the New Look made long-range nuclear air power the centerpiece of its strategy and force structure. This focus on strategic bombing to the exclusion of other capabilities resulted in strategic inflexibility: the United States largely lacked the ability to respond to threats at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict. As a result, adversaries developed "asymmetric" responses to the dominant U.S. nuclear capability, e.g. "peoples' wars" and "wars of national liberation." These deficiencies led to the replacement of the "New Look" by the strategy of "flexible response" in the 1960s.

The shortcomings of the New Look can be laid at the feet of elected officials, who were responsible for developing a national policy that constrained the choices of U.S. policy makers. But when a military service makes force structure decisions that constrain the national leadership, this becomes an issue of civil-military relations. This is what the Army did after Vietnam.

The U.S. Army was badly hurt by that conflict. Accordingly, the service concluded that it should avoid irregular conflict in the future, and focus on "real" wars: large-scale conventional combat of the sort that would occur on the NATO Central Front in the event of a war with the USSR-led Warsaw Pact. Thus, in the 1970s, the Army discarded the doctrine for small wars and counterinsurgency that it had reluctantly developed for Vietnam. Class time devoted to counterinsurgency at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth was reduced substantially. The Army's focus on large-scale war led its leadership to resist committing Army units to "military operations other than war" (MOOTW) during the post-Cold War era.

More significantly, Gen. Creighton Abrams, Army chief of staff from 1972 until his death in 1974, made a far-reaching force structure change during his tenure that constituted a constraint on executive power: concerned about the lack of public support for the Vietnam war, he shifted most of the Army's combat service support function to the reserve component, something that would directly affect the American public. The upshot has been that even the smallest commitment of Army units during a contingency requires a call-up of reserves.

Constraints on executive power may very well be a good and necessary thing, but it is not a decision for the Army—or any other uniformed military service—to make on its own. Statements by some of the traditionalists indicate that they see their enterprise as a similar way of limiting the use of

U.S. military power by deemphasizing the capabilities necessary for intervening in small wars.

By law, the services are responsible for organizing, training, and equipping their units and for developing doctrine, i.e. how to fight. But the services owe civilian leaders an instrument that is capable of advancing U.S. interests against threats that may occur across the entire "spectrum of conflict." This is a function of healthy civil-military relations.

But avoiding an "either-or" choice is strategically prudent as well. The reality is that both Long War and conventional capabilities are necessary. The United States cannot afford to commit the "likelihood" fallacy: preparing only for what appears now to be the most likely conflict—the Long War option—may very well make conventional war *more* likely in the future. In addition, the ability of the United States to advance its global interests requires that it maintain command of the global "commons": sea, air, and space. The Long War option is not sustainable without such control. And finally, future warfare is likely to be "hybrid" in character, possessing interlocking elements of both conventional and irregular warfare. Under such conditions, strategic flexibility must be the watchword for U.S. policy makers.

Sam Huntington and Victor Krulak, RIP

The United States lost two remarkable men at the end of 2008. Sam Huntington was a scholar and a gentleman whose academic career is unmatched. A scholar who gains renown in one area of his academic field is considered to be a success. During his brilliant academic career, Sam made major contributions to *three* areas in the field of political science: civil-military relations, democratic theory, and international relations.

But Sam produced something even more important than scholarly works. He developed brilliant students, including Eliot Cohen, James Kurth, Steve Rosen, and a host of others.

Given the war against Islamic terrorism, his 1993 essay on the "clash of civilizations" and the subsequent book on the topic are probably his best known works today. However, it is likely that his most influential book remains one that he wrote on the topic of civil-military relations a half century ago: *The Soldier and the State*

Huntington's theory is the source of what Eliot Cohen has called the "normal" theory of civil-military relations, which holds that during wartime, civilians determine the goals of the war, then stand aside to let the military run the actual war. Much of the criticism of George Bush's conduct of the Iraq War is grounded in Huntington's theory.

As Peter Feaver has argued, Huntington's theory has survived numerous challenges over the decades. His core claims: 1) that there is a meaningful difference between civilian and military roles; 2) that the key to civilian control is military professionalism; and 3) that the key

to military professionalism is military autonomy, have been contested on numerous occasions. But Huntington perseveres "while the challengers drift into obscurity."

There are a number of reasons for the longevity of Huntington's theory. First, he grounded his theory in a "deductive logic derived from democratic theory while his critics did not." Second, despite the claims of many of those who look at U.S. civil-military relations through the lens of sociology, analytically distinct military and civilian spheres do appear to exist. Even while arguing that a separation of the two spheres is theoretically and empirically flawed, advocates of a "concordance" theory of civil-military relations maintain the analytical distinction between the military and civilians. Finally, *The Soldier and the State* has had a great and lasting effect within the uniformed military of the United States. Indeed, the U.S. military has come to endorse many of Huntington's general conclusions and has made it central to its civil-military relations education.

Scholars have pointed out a number of flaws in Huntington's theory. But despite them, *The Soldier and the State* continues to provide useful insights into the nature of civil-military relations, especially American civil-military relations. Huntington's theoretical framework consists of a few, tightly-reasoned, deductive propositions. It addresses the central problem of civil-military relations: the relation of the military as an institution to civilian society. Its best empirical insights—the civilian-military distinction, the idea of military subordination conception essential to democratic theory, the importance of military professionalism—do not depend on the problematic parts of Huntington's model.

No theory, especially one in the social sciences, goes unchallenged for long. But history suggests that Sam's theory will persevere, as it has in the face of past challenges. There is no question that his extraordinary legacy will survive. But more importantly, all who knew him will miss this extraordinary scholar and gentleman.

Retired Marine Lieutenant General Victor "Brute" Krulak is one of those legendary Marines without whom the Marine Corps might not exist today, and if it did, would be a far different organization. Gen. Krulak epitomized the qualities that Marines like to believe characterize the Service: not only the "uncommon valor" that Marines have demonstrated in such places as Tarawa, Iwo Jima, Inchon, the Chosin Reservoir, Hue City, Khe Sanh, and Fallujah, but also adaptability and innovativeness in response to changing circumstances.

During the World War II, Krulak commanded the 2nd Marine Parachute Battalion, and in November 1943, led the unit in a diversionary action on the island of Choiseul in support of the main landing on Bougainville. He was wounded during the week-long action but refused to relinquish command of his battalion to be evacuated.

After the diversion had had its intended effect, the Marines were

pulled off the island by PT boat, and Krulak ended up on one skippered by a young navy lieutenant named John F. Kennedy. Their wartime acquaintance would have an impact some two decades later. Krulak was awarded a Navy Cross for his actions on Choiseul. Krulak later served on the division staff of the Sixth Marine Division during the battle of Okinawa.

But he was a thinker as well as a fighter. During his storied career, Gen. Krulak made major contributions in the areas of amphibious doctrine, heliborne assault, and counterinsurgency. He played a major role in saving the Marine Corps as an independent service in the years following World War II and contributed to the service's reinvention of itself as a "force in readiness" in the 1950s and 1960s.

Given his many contributions to the country and Corps, it came as a surprise when President Lyndon Johnson did not select Gen. Krulak to be Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1968. Perhaps it had to do with his persistent criticism of the strategy the United States was pursuing in Vietnam.

Lt. Gen. Krulak became Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, in March, 1964. In this capacity, he was responsible for the readiness, training, equipping, and supplying of all the Marines in the Pacific, including Vietnam. However he had no authority over their operational employment in Vietnam. That was the purview of General William Westmoreland, Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV). Gen. Westmoreland's approach to the war differed considerably from the counterinsurgency-oriented approach favored by the Marines and as a result, the Marines soon came into conflict with Westmoreland over how to fight the war.

According to Krulak, the proper approach to Vietnam had three elements, emphasis on pacification of the coastal areas in which 80 percent of the people lived; degradation of the ability of the North Vietnamese to fight by cutting off supplies before they left Northern ports of entry; and finally engagement of Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN) and Viet Cong (VC) main force units on terms favorable to American forces.

Westmoreland believed that the Marines "should have been trying to find the enemy's main forces and bring them to battle, thereby putting them on the run and reducing the threat they posed to the population." In Krulak's view, Westmoreland committed the error of making the "third point the primary undertaking, even while deemphasizing the need for clearly favorable conditions before engaging the enemy."

Westmoreland's concept was illustrated by the battle of Ia Drang in November 1965, which convinced Westmoreland that the Army Concept was correct. In a head to head clash, an outnumbered U.S. force had spoiled an enemy operation and sent a major PAVN force reeling back in defeat. But Krulak believed that Ia Drang represented

an example of fighting the enemy's war, one that North Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap predicted would be "a protracted war of attrition." As Gen. Krulak observed, Giap was right: a "war of attrition it turned out to be . . . [by] 1972, we had managed to reduce the enemy's manpower pool by perhaps 25 percent at a cost of over 220,000 U.S. and South Vietnamese dead. Of these, 59,000 were Americans. . . ."

Interestingly, Westmoreland's successor as COMUSMACV, Gen. Creighton Abrams, abandoned the former's operational strategy, which emphasized the attrition of PAVN forces in a "war of the big battalions" and adopted an approach akin to the one that Gen. Krulak and the Marines preferred. This approach emphasized the protection of the South Vietnamese population by controlling key areas rather than the destruction of enemy forces per se. In addition, rather than ignoring the insurgency and pushing the South Vietnamese aside as Gen. Westmoreland had done, Gen. Abrams followed a policy of "one war," integrating all aspects of the struggle against the communists. This achieved the military and political conditions necessary for South Vietnam's survival as a viable political entity.

When he was not selected as Commandant, Gen. Krulak retired, but he continued to devote himself to the nation's defense, now as a journalist. In this capacity, he served as a vice president of the Copley Newspaper Corporation and president of its news service, as well as writing a regular column for many years. He was, of course, immensely pleased when his son, Charles Krulak, became the 31st CMC in July of 1995. Gen. Krulak was a true visionary. Fortunately, he inspired many who followed him. Nonetheless, like Sam Huntington, he will be missed. *Requiescant in pace.*