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LEADOFF

Liebe Mitglieder,

der Spiegel nennt die Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz ein „Gipfel-treffen der Ratlosen“. Umso bemerkenswerter die klaren Positionen von deutschen Amtsträgern, allen voran Bundespräsident Joachim Gauck in seiner Eröffnungsrede. Seine Bekundung *"Ich meine: Die Bundesrepublik sollte sich als guter Partner früher, entschiedener und substantieller einbringen."* fand großen Widerhall und verdient noch viel mehr. Sein Vertrauen in Deutschland und die Deutschen und das Gestaltungspotenzial Vernetzter Sicherheit wird noch lange nicht von den deutschen Medien und vielen Repräsentanten deutscher Politik geteilt. Bemerkenswert auch, dass ihn Außenminister Frank-Walter Steinmeier und Verteidigungsministerin Ursula von der Leyen nicht allein gelassen haben, wie deren Vorgänger seinerzeit Alt-Bundespräsident Köhler. Ursula von der Leyen bekräftigt: *"Daher ist Abwarten keine Option. Wenn wir über die Mittel und Fähigkeiten verfügen, dann haben wir auch eine Verantwortung, uns zu engagieren."* Sie wird sich eines Tages daran messen lassen müssen, ob sie wie viele ihrer Vorgänger den Aufbau von Mitteln und Fähigkeiten meidet, um sich vor der Verantwortung zu drücken.

Ralph Thiele, Vorstandsvorsitzender

IMPRESSUM

Denkwürdigkeiten

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THEMEN

The evolving battle space of the twenty-first century

Policy, ethics and warfare

Prince Frederick of Saxony told us the following proposition: If you decide to go to war you have to decide to win. But the question after Iraq and Afghanistan is, what does it mean to win a war? In my view, as a Clausewitzian scholar, by paraphrasing Prince Frederick of Saxony, I think the following is true: if you decide to go to war you have to decide to win the political narrative.

In the twenty-first century the rise of the Global South, the newly industrialized nations is inevitable. The overarching task of policy in a globalized, multipolar world therefore is to manage this development by avoiding great wars and the mass violence that has the

same effect on society as a deadly cancer has on the body.

Where a technical understanding of the military concept of “battle space” would focus solely on the application of necessary military means – which the US Department of Defense characterizes as “*The environment, factors, and conditions which must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission*” – a wider view of the concept is necessary. It must be based on a strategic narrative, which “*explains policy in the context of the proposed set of actions*” in war (Emile Simpson).

Dan Moran, Professor at the US-Naval post-graduate school in Monterrey says all his students are discussing how to win the narrative – they understand winning the narrative as winning the war. He cautions, however, against making such an equation. Winning the war narrative is not necessarily the same as winning the war, but the story surrounding the war, whether it was won or lost.

Germany could not pretend to have won World War II, but for a long time was able to portray ordinary Germans as people with nothing in common with Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. In this narrative, Germans were overthrown by a dictatorship of a few hundred national socialists. Things are different with World War I. Here too, the Germans could not pretend to have won the war. But from that experience a narrative emerged which was based on the assumption that the German Reichswehr was not defeated on the battlefield but betrayed by the Social Democrats and the communists within Germany.

This understanding of the German defeat in World War I resulted in a most influential narrative to wage a new war in an attempt to make up for defeat and the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles. The characterization of the causes of the German defeat in World War I might have contributed to the terrible inner oppression in Germany in the Nazi area. If the war was lost through the betrayal of the

opponents of the Reichswehr within Germany it was reasonable for the Nazis to eliminate all kind of opposition before and during the war.

The German historical experience in two world wars supports the conclusion that winning the narrative should not automatically be understood as winning the war, even in retrospect. In both cases winning the narrative was not about winning the war, but about integration of the defeat into a cultural, political and social framework – which enabled the German nation to keep its presupposed identity alive and to be recognized as equal part of the international community again. Narratives therefore are really powerful concepts in shaping the political and social realm in retrospect. But they are not necessarily about winning the war; reasoning about the causes and circumstances of losing a war might have an even more powerful force. For instance, one could say that the Taliban lost the military campaign in 2001 in Afghanistan but won the narrative afterwards.

Let's look to the future, but again through the prism of German history. Could there be any narrative with which the Germans would have won both world wars? In fact, a narrative could be observed in Germany after World War I that the Reichswehr could have won this war if the generals had read and understood Clausewitz rightly.

Although as a Clausewitz-scholar I'm a little tempted by this notion as he himself might have been. But Germany just could not win both world wars even by constructing any thinkable narrative. Of course winning the war seems to be at the heart of waging a war. In the 16th century, Prince Frederick of Saxony laid down the following proposition: If you decide to go to war you have to decide to win. But the question after Iraq and Afghanistan is, what does it mean to win a war?

In my view, to paraphrase Prince Frederick, the following is true: if you decide to go to war you have to decide to win the political narra-

tive. I'm not totally sure to agree with the proposition that winning the war is really about winning the narrative, because winning the narrative is more than about winning the war. Winning the narrative, for example, is also about the legitimacy of the threat of force. Winning the narrative in relation to the armed forces is something more than winning a war.

According to Emile Simpson, the key point is that winning the war in a military manner means winning it in relation to the enemy, but increasingly now, audiences other than the enemy matter, so the narrative is about covering what they think, as well as what the enemy and one's own side thinks. If the strategic narrative of the battle space in the twenty-first century is not only about winning the war in a mere military manner about what it could be?

I would like to propose three different, although interconnected topics: the legitimacy of using force, the performance of the conduct of war, and the mutual recognition of the fighting communities after the war.

Before explaining this conceptualization in more detail, for purposes of clarity I would like to mention its basic ideas. This proposition stems firstly from my interpretation of Clausewitz's trinity, which is quite different from so called trinitarian war, which is not directly a concept of Clausewitz, but an argument made by Harry Summers, Martin van Creveld and Mary Kaldor.

In my view, each war is differently composed of three aspects of applying force, the struggle or fight of the armed forces, and the fighting community the fighting forces belong to. You may easily relate the legitimacy of using force, the performance of the conduct of war and the mutual recognition of the fighting forces after the war to these three aspects of my interpretation of Clausewitz.

The second basic idea of my approach is related to the “just war” tradition, but in a different way than it was integrated into the

“R2P” (Responsibility to Protect) concept for example. Traditionally we make a differentiation in the “just war” tradition between *ius ad bellum*, *ius in bello* and *ius post bellum*. This three terms in Latin could be characterized respectively as the right to wage a just war, the maintenance of rights and justice within war, and the orientation of warfare toward a just peace after the war. My thesis is that in a globalized world these three narratives are closely intertwined.

The two most important European traditions of grasping the meaning of war contributed to a tremendous limitation of violence at their beginning; namely, the notion of a “just war” as well as the notion of the “right in war” in the case of “state to state wars”. In the latter tradition, the acknowledgement of the foe as an equal with the same rights was the precondition for limiting the war after the disaster of the Thirty Years War, according to Carl Schmitt. Both conceptions succeeded in limiting warlike violence between European opponents at the beginning. Yet at times the irregular forms of using force were simply pushed to the margins of the European world. During the crusades of the Middle Ages and in the course of colonial conquest from the 16th to the 18th centuries, non-European opponents were not merely fought, but often downright annihilated. In both cases, the regular and bounded intra-European ways of employing force, which were practiced in the beginning of their eras, ended finally in disaster. The idea of a “just war”, which contributed to a limitation of war and violence for long periods of the middle ages, resulted finally in the religious battles of the 16th Century and the Thirty Years War. The European kind of “state to state war” in the “Westphalian Area”, which was based upon a right to war between equal opponents and which in the 18th and 19th Centuries led to a significant limitation of violence within war, resulted in the catastrophe of two world wars.

One cannot idealize the model of a limited European “state to state war” in reference to the forms they

took at their origin in the 17th and 18th Centuries, because this same model (together with the industrialization of war and new nationalistic and totalitarian ideologies) ultimately resulted in the two world wars. Similarly, there are no grounds for dismissing the idea of the notion of the just war tradition simply in view of the religious wars and the Thirty Year War. Rather, the curbing and protecting effects of war during long periods of the Middle Ages should be borne in mind. The teaching of just war should not “promote” military violence, but rather hinder it or at least help to limit it. It is appropriately understood only against the background of fundamental reservations against war for the purpose of peace. That means: The threat and employment of military violence can only be justified conditionally – as instruments for preventing, limiting, and moderating violence.

Despite this ideal definition of just war, three fundamental problems of this conception appear in the course of history: the unleashing of violence through the notion that the war is just, the stigmatization of the opponent as a criminal, and also the reduction of the possibilities of one’s own actions to violent measures, because of the immediate connection between morality and politics.

I’m not totally sure of the following proposition, it’s more like a trial balloon, but even the notion of a just peace after the war is by no means free of problems. For example, the Nazis sought a perfect harmony within the German society and therefore excluded all those who seemed for them to disturb this perfect harmony of a unified German nation through the creation of a homogenous race. Perhaps this criticism of the notion of a just peace might be not really convincing at first sight, but it is embedded in the problem of every kind of strategy whether the ends in war are sanctifying the applied means?

In order to avoid these problems by pursuing only one of these three concepts, it is necessary to conceive the containing of war

and violence as overarching political aim embedded in various actions of national and international communities. Containing war and violent conflict is based on the maintenance of a floating balance of all three tendencies.

In the last twenty years we witnessed the promises of the revolution in military affairs (RMA), fourths, fifths and whatever generations of warfare as well as the appearance of seemingly new kinds of warfare, the so called new wars. Obviously the RMA promised to present to a serious amount technological solutions for violent conflicts. Warfare and “military operations other than war” seemed to be legitimate if they were easily won, the costs would remain limited and the adversary could be presented as an outlaw of the international community, in a classical view, as a dictator or warlord which would have no support by the majority or at least of greater parts of the populace. All three propositions proved deadly wrong in Afghanistan and Iraq. For a short moment this understanding of the current battle space was revived in the campaign against Libya and the interpretation of the Arab Spring through western eyes, which are used to view communities as being composed of individuals whereas in most parts of the world society is composed as a community of communities. The conflict in Syria is again burying this technical world view.

Containing war, violent conflict and mass violence does not necessarily mean to conduct only limited warfare, but to set limits for the escalation of violence in actual conflicts. This is the more important the more technical opportunities are to be expected in warfare of the twenty-first century. To put it bluntly: The evolving battle space of the twenty first century is about ethics and the morality of using force, its legitimacy. The more technical opportunities in warfare we are developing the more the morality of its use comes to the fore. Let’s give just an example: The US-Army puts a great emphasis on developing robotic warfare and warfare which could be conducted by artificial intelligence.

Of course at first sight this development seems to be ingenious by saving humans from the outcomes of warfare. And in fact it is ingenious in the defense against criminals and barbarians. But what if the opponent is no criminal and no barbarian, but himself a human being? The moral problem is obvious, isn't it? What does it mean, if a robot equipped with artificial intelligence would kill human beings?

This problem leads us to the second topic, the performance of warfare. We can witness the importance of *ius in bello* in the current Syrian crisis. What makes weapons of mass destruction so particular in the view of combatants and non-combatants? I think with regard to Syria we can learn that it is not the number of the fatalities as such, which makes them so special, but the fact, that their use is so terrible unfair, so terrible unjust. This sentiment against unjust performance of the conduct of war is deeply embedded in the history of warfare as well as in human consciousness. In the last twenty years the concept of asymmetrical warfare has gained momentum. It was used to describe the apparently new wars, which could be characterized according to Herfried Münkler as asymmetry of weakness. The weaker side turns to asymmetrical forms of warfare just because of its weakness in fighting a regular form of warfare. Terrorism, partisan warfare, fighting the populace of the adversary are typical examples of such asymmetrical warfare. But there is another kind of asymmetrical warfare, in which the superior side is trying to conduct warfare in such a way, that the opponent stood no chance anymore. This attempt to get an asymmetrical advantage is the core of the RMA-debate.

I am still astonished that the inherent connection between these two kinds of asymmetrical warfare to the best of my knowledge are not discussed as openly as they deserve it. The prevalent view seems to be to give your opponent no chance in warfare in order to force him to wage not a war at all or to give up the fighting. But there is another possibility for the weaker adversary, to turn to

asymmetric warfare. The problem than arises that the more you get an asymmetrical advantage over your opponent out of your technical strength, which is perceived as unjust and unfair by your opponent, the more your opponent will turn to asymmetrical warfare which is typical for the weaker side, like terrorism, partisan war. I think for example that it was essential for the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) in the second Lebanon war to make a ground incursion not with respect to win the war. They didn't. But by departing from the mere air raids and relying on the ground incursion the IDF recognized Hezbollah as an equal adversary. This indirect recognition of Hezbollah made the cease fire possible in the end.

This brings us to the last of my three propositions, the recognition of the warring parties after the war in order to bring about a just peace. Of course it is hard if not impossible to recognize criminals, terrorist, warlords, drug dealers, religious hard-liners, war criminals or gangsters and mobsters as equal and legitimized combatants. But these actors were prevalent only in the 90ths of last century. We can still witness such privatized conflicts in most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and at the fringes of the former empires. But most conflicts in today's world are political in essence, so that the above made characterization of the involved actors does not apply to overall tendency of which we are a part of. Here I'm a Clausewitz's scholar, and adhere to his proposition totally, when he writes: The escalation in war would be endless if the calculation in the meaning of strategy would be "*uninfluenced by any previous estimate of the political situation it would bring about*". My final hypothesis is the following one: In the twenty-first century we will witness conflicts caused by power politics, by the attempt to gain access to natural resources, we will see conflicts caused by climate change, cyber- and robotic-warfare as well as privatized wars. I won't deny those developments. But the overall tendency will be the struggle for regaining the lost recognition at least as equal of the former colo-

nies, empires, great powers and civilizations, which lost their ranking and status in the process of the Europeans becoming the masters of the world.

I think with the one hundreds anniversary of the beginning of world war one in mind the European catastrophe should be a crucial warning for the fast developing world in their struggle for regaining their former imperial status or at least great power status before the European colonization in order not to make the same faults which resulted in two world wars.

The overall political perspective on which the concept of the containing of war and violence in world society rests consists of the following elements, the "*pentagon of containing war and violence*"

- the ability to deter and discourage any opponent to fight a large scale war and to conduct pin-point military action as last resort,
 - the possibility of using and threatening military force in order to limit and contain particularly excessive, large-scale violence which has the potential to destroy societies;
 - the willingness to counter phenomena which help to cause violence such as poverty and oppression, especially in the economic sphere, and also the recognition of a pluralism of cultures and styles of life in world society;
 - the motivation to develop a culture of civil conflict management (concepts which can be summed up with the "civilizational hexagon", global governance, and democratic peace), based on the observation, that the reduction of our action to military means have proved counterproductive and would finally overstretch the military capabilities
- and
- restricting the possession and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, as well as of small arms, because the proliferation of both of them is inherently destructive to social order.

The position I have put forward is oriented towards a basically peaceful global policy, and treats the progressive limitation of war

and violence as both an indefinite, on-going process and as an end in itself. The lasting and progressive containment of war and violence in world society is therefore necessary for the self-preservation of states, even their survival and of the civility of individual societies and world society.

Legitimacy, the performance in warfare and the mutual recognition of the fighting forces are at the heart of the evolving battle space of the twenty-first. Perhaps I'm an old fashioned Clausewitzian, but as such I want to conclude with a Clausewitzian-like thesis: The technological development does not save us from policy, ethics and morality, just to the reverse, it puts them at the center of the narrative of the twenty first century.

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Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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THEMEN

Die Macht der Währungen

Auf diesen Sammelband haben wir gewartet, seit er im letzten Jahr vom **Internationalen Institut für Strategische Studien**, London, angekündigt worden war: „The Power of Currencies and the Currencies of Power“ (Herausgeber Alan **Wheatley**, Global Economics Correspondent, **Reuters**). Wir widmen den Überlegungen der verschiedenen Autoren ausreichend Raum, da das Thema der **strategischen Bedeutung von Währungen im Spannungsverhältnis zum klassisch Militärischen** entscheidend zum gerade stattfindenden Paradigmenwechsel in den internationalen Beziehungen beiträgt.

Money buys power and influence, especially for a country that issues a currency every-

body covets. Today, the currency in greatest demand, by far, is the dollar. Few international currencies grow into reserve currencies, meaning they are kept in reserve by central banks (as well as by other official and private investment institutions) as a store of value. Demand for dollars is so great that it offers the United States an unrivalled range of overlapping financial and political powers to influence the behaviour of others.

Changing times

*It is impossible to know exactly when the dollar's attraction may fade and, with it, the geo-economic power it bestows. As early as the 1960s, the chairman of the Federal Reserve issued a warning that the dollar's stability would be more important, in the end, to waging and winning the Cold War than the precise number of US-troops deployed in Germany. [The] chair-man of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, [Admiral] Mike **Mullen** repeatedly said that the US debt was the greatest threat to the country's national security. Only two currencies have any chance of approaching the stature of the dollar. The euro, the second reserve currency, will have an important role to play in a multipolar currency order if the euro area draws the right lessons from its almost fatal sovereign debt crisis. The other potential rival to the dollar is the renminbi, which China has begun to promote as an international currency. Because the euro is a currency without a state, the challenge that the renminbi could pose is much more significant from a geopolitical perspective. The sheer size of China's economy certainly helps the renminbi's internationalisation. Still, the consensus is that it is only a matter of time before the renminbi becomes an international reserve currency, if not an important reserve currency. The renaissance of a great power is unavoidably a source of concern for the current hegemon. As China rises, increased friction with the United States seems*

preordained in many areas, from the military to the monetary.

Alles hängt mit allem zusammen

The projection of military, economic and monetary power is a defining characteristic of leading states. Each facet of power reinforces the other. Today, that country is the United States. By issuing dollars, the US has tangibly lower borrowing costs, which bolster its economy, already the world's largest, and make it easier to pay for the world's strongest armed forces. Underpinning its financial attractions, the US offers the ultimate guarantee for risk-averse managers: military protection. For the oil-producing countries of the Gulf, this security-currency nexus is particularly strong. All members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, with the exception of Kuwait since 2007, peg their currencies to the dollar. All host US bases. Security considerations also drive reserve management in parts of Asia, where Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are under the US diplomatic and military wing.

China's grand strategy

The People's Republic of China is gradually becoming a great power and the renminbi is an important part of a grand strategy to accomplish this rise. On systematically important matters such as its currency, China's policies are not a function of short-term, purely economic interests; they are the result of a series of long-term political and strategic considerations. The idea of making the renminbi a global currency was first raised in the late 1990s, when the Chinese authorities realised the high cost of dependence on the US dollar, and gained significant momentum after the 2007-08 global financial crisis. China will no longer be willing to play the role of junior partner. China-US ties are likely to become more equal, balanced and competitive – a far cry from today, when, arguably, China in effect pays tribute to the US in the

form of a cheap yuan in exchange for stability and prosperity in a US-dominated political and economic system.

Three scenarios

At least three scenarios can be envisaged. The first is a bipolar economic order in which China and the US compete for supremacy and the currency becomes a means to a strategic end. The second – preferred by Beijing – is a multipolar system in which the global economy is much more balanced and no country can run up endless deficits without fear of the consequences. The third is that China fails to build a strong economy and a strong currency and retreats back to being poor and dependent. In this case US hegemony will last for at least another 50 years. In the currency arena, China's traditional dependence on the dollar-based system will gradually give way to more balanced relations as use of the renminbi spreads. Consequently, competition between the great powers will rise and may lead to a bipolar – or tripolar along with the euro area – global political-economic system in coming decades.

Conclusions

It will be impossible for the euro and the renminbi to challenge the dollar's supremacy without far-reaching political changes to permit the partial mutualisation of debt in the euro area and financial-market liberalisation in China. It would be rash to rule out either in the long run. What would be the geo-economic implications if a multipolar reserve-currency system were indeed to emerge? In the best of all worlds, coordination among a G3, made up of the US, the euro area and a renminbi-led bloc in Asia, would reduce global imbalances and associated volatility in exchange rates and capital flows. The US does not want to surrender currency power. An expanding euro area will be in a stronger position to resist US demands and press for policy concessions of its own should the US need help one day.

Sollte das oben Geschriebene nicht vollständig sinnentleert sein, ergeben sich Einsichten und Konsequenzen:

- Wenn überhaupt, spielt der Euro eine geopolitische Rolle in einem internationalen Dreiecks-Verhältnis neben Dollar und Renminbi. Es geht darum, den Renminbi in die Gruppe der international verantwortlichen Reservewährungen aufzunehmen. Und hier ist der Euro Partner des Dollar: **Das Euro-Projekt ist geostrategisch!**
- Da der Euro von geostrategischer Natur ist, hat er auch eine sicherheitspolitische und damit militärische Dimension. Diese Dimension kann – wie der Euro selbst – nicht national getragen werden. **Das Militärische im europäischen Narrativ** bleibt vielschichtig, da London auch künftig außerhalb der Euro-Zone bleiben will.
- Die Bundeswehr in der jetzigen Gliederung ist für das Militärische im neuen europäischen Narrativ nicht optimal aufgestellt. Es bedarf einer grundsätzlichen Neubewertung.

All dies wirft ein erschreckendes Licht auf die geostrategische Analysefähigkeit des letzten Verteidigungsministers und seiner ministeriellen Einbläser: Angesichts der oben beschriebenen Fliehkräfte ist der Satz „Es wird keine Reform der Reform geben!“ lediglich eine Umschreibung für konzeptionelle Schlichtheit.

Heinz Schulte

Heinz Schulte, Vorstandsmitglied der pmg.
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THEMEN

China's Growing Spy Threat

The Sheer Size of the Problem

Determining the size and strength of China's intelligence services is no easy task. The byzantine nature of the Chinese government and the penchant for secrecy in the intelligence community in general virtually assure that news about Chinese intelligence services are frequently inspired as much by fiction as by fact. Still, it is widely accepted that the Ministry of State Security (MSS), the main agency tasked with foreign and counter-espionage, employs around one million people. Additionally, the Domestic Security Department (DSD), a branch of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), has developed a network of informal agents throughout China that *the Telegraph* estimates to be 39 million strong. Finally, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has considerable intelligence capabilities in its four service branches, seven military regions as well as in some of its general departments.

Admittedly, opinions differ about how well the size of China's intelligence services translates into strength. A lack of central coordination and parallel structures in civilian and the military intelligence are one source of inefficiency. Another is the fact that lean management structures are still an anathema to much of the Chinese bureaucracy. Finally, extracting actionable intelligence from raw data has to be complicated by the amount of data generated by these extensive intelligence networks. However, these inefficiencies and challenges pale in comparison to the sheer vastness of the abundance of resources that are available to the Chinese intelligence services. As General Michael Hayden, the former head of the CIA and the NSA, stated in a recent interview *'As an intelligence professional, I stand in awe at the breadth, depth, sophistication and persistence of the Chinese espionage campaign against the West'*. Moreover, China's intelligence capability is arguably augmented by

the greater freedom it enjoys in its use. Aside from the lack of democratic accountability, one important factor is that international terrorism, which has dominated the agenda of intelligence services in the USA, Russia, the UK and France and tied up their resources, has yet to have a significant impact on China.

This has one important implication for European companies operating in China: While corporate espionage ranks fairly low on the list of priorities for most other intelligence services, Chinese intelligence service can devote much greater resources to spying in the private sector.

The Chinese Rationale for Corporate Espionage

Three reasons make the proposed allocation of resource within the Chinese intelligence services likely. First, there is a tradition of lax intellectual property rights (IPRs) in China. While economists disagree about the current net-effect of China's treatment of IPRs, the important role corporate espionage in particular has played in the economy's success in recent decades makes it unlikely that the Chinese government and, by extension, its intelligence services will abandon their activities in this field. Secondly, while it is true that China is currently shifting from copying innovation to becoming truly innovative, the slowing economic growth in China makes leapfrogging expensive development steps by "acquiring" the necessary technology all the more tempting. Here, the availability of a wide and sophisticated network of agents within and beyond the borders of China is an important asset. Finally, as Chinese economic growth is slowing, government austerity becomes a looming prospect. One way for the intelligence services to fend off unwanted budgetary scrutiny is to make a genuine contribution to economic prosperity – through the use of corporate espionage.

Thus, General Hayden's conclusion that *'[in China] industrial espionage by the state against relatively vulnerable private enterprise is a commonly accepted state*

practice' seems valid. The coincidence of means and motive for corporate espionage in China is particularly problematic for European companies, as they generally tend to produce highly sophisticated products. Not only does the resulting reliance on innovation make them a target for corporate espionage. The successful production of said products also requires a greater transfer of knowledge to the producing country, i.e. China, which greatly facilitates corporate espionage.

The Chinese Aviation Industry – A Case Study

While the aforementioned arguments apply to most innovation-led businesses, the aviation industry is arguably most at risk when it comes to corporate espionage. The main reason for this is the Chinese government's plans for its domestic aviation industry.

According to the *China Daily*, the government has set itself the goal of breaking the duopoly of *Airbus* and *Boeing* by securing at least 5% of the domestic market by 2020. The two aircraft that are meant to meet this target, the *Comac* ARJ21 and *Comac* C919, have both been plagued by set-backs. To start with, a host of design flaws have delayed approval by the *Civil Aviation Administration* (CAA) for the ARJ21, caused mainly by flaws in the wing design. Recent reports by *Aviation Week* also suggest that *Comac* has largely abandoned the use of composite structures in the C919, which would make the C919 airframe little more advanced than that of the *Airbus* A320 or *Boeing* 737. Similar delays and difficulties are expected with *Comac's* larger ambition: to start delivering a 160-seat narrow-body aircraft by 2016. From a Chinese perspective, there is thus a very real risk that, by the time the aforementioned aircraft enter service, *Airbus* and *Boeing* will offer products that make them look obsolete.

How will China react to this set back? Li Xiaojin, professor at the Civil Aviation University of China, provides a revealing answer: 'Chinese manufacturers have no experience of building such commercial aircraft and they have to

look for new solutions to every problem they meet'. In other industries, the Chinese learned firsthand from the actual OEMs: *Volkswagen* for automobiles, *Cisco* for telecommunications, *Bombardier* for high-speed trains. Through joint ventures they trained, learned and copied their way to innovation. Since *Comac* is not receiving the same "help" from *Airbus* or *Boeing*, Li Xiaojin seem to suggest that they should rely on corporate espionage instead.

The Chinese Way of Corporate Espionage

The Chinese intelligence services rely on a mixture of signal and human intelligence (SigInt/HumInt) – much like their counterparts in the western world. What makes them unique, however, is their approach to intelligence gathering: Chinese intelligence services complement their cadre of professional agents with a vast network of informal contacts. Abroad, sources are recruited among the often sizable Chinese expat community. Also, the students, workers, businessmen and academics that live temporarily outside of China are frequently contacted during their stay or interviewed upon their return to China. Domestically, the DSD and the MSS maintain extensive networks that reach down to virtually every hamlet and, more importantly, into every aspect of a foreign company's presence in China.

Another important difference, at least with respect to its western counterparts, are the vast powers granted to the security services and the poor protections of individual freedoms in China. These powers allow the Chinese intelligence service to use aspects of tradecraft more freely that would be heavily curtailed elsewhere: bribes, blackmail, venus traps, etc. Yet, the most important distinguishing feature of the Chinese way of corporate espionage is the way in which means of gathering HumInt is combined with cyber-attacks – a technique generally called Social Engineering.

Social Engineering in China

Social engineering, in essence, involves tricking people to subvert a network's security, for example

by clicking on to a link, opening an infected document or plugging a USB stick into their computer. The social engineer will spend a great deal of time and effort in designing said link, document or USB stick to appear perfectly genuine. Moreover, he or she will use all available information to create a pretext to allay any suspicions the victim may have. For example, he or she may engage in dumpster diving, going through a person's garbage to collect information, or create false profiles and befriending the victim on social media sites like Facebook.

Of course, social engineering is not unique to China. Yet, the resources available to the country's intelligence service and their extensive networks at home and abroad allow them to make much greater use of the technique – with considerable success. What makes social engineering so appealing for the Chinese intelligence service and so dangerous for its targets is the fact that, compared to SigInt, it is relatively cheap and does not require great technological sophistication. More importantly, targets often do not realize that they have been the victim of an attack. Sources generated through social engineering, therefore, tend to be very valuable for the intelligence services, but all the more devastating for the affected companies: The sustained loss of information crucial to a company's competitiveness eventually endangers its survival. Thus, social engineering not only helps Chinese companies by providing them with vital information on their competitors, in the long term, it also eliminates said competition.

What Can Companies Do Against the Threat of Social Engineering?

Before addressing any specific countermeasures, it is important to acknowledge two "truths" about corporate espionage in China:

It is very important to be judicial in determining what information needs to be kept secret.

The resources used to protect information are scarce and, when spread too thinly, their overall effect is negligible. Most people ac-

cept this argument with respect to financial resources but tend to overlook that it also applies elsewhere. For example, employees are less likely to follow strenuous data protection regimes if the information in question does not seem to merit such measures. A measured approach to the classification of information also seems to be warranted due to the resources and reach of the Chinese intelligence services.

Social engineering is not a problem that can be addressed by technological means.

Most of the time, agents do not target IT systems but rather their users to gain access to a company's information. Indeed, many companies are so focused on their IT systems and processes that they overlook the human factor involved in information protection. Faced with overly complex and over-reaching IT regulations, employees are more receptive to outsiders offering them "solutions". Thus, it is unfortunately true that computers do not reveal secrets, their users do and no technical solution can protect an employee from being duped by a professional social engineer.

So, what can a company do to meet the challenges posed by social engineering?

1. Training

Any successful approach has to start with its employees, specifically their training! Workshops teaching how to recognize and avert social engineering attacks are an excellent first step. These workshops should take place regularly and should not be limited to managerial staff and employees sent to China should receive intensive training prior to their deployment.

2. Information

Those responsible for information security or tasked with handling such information need to be up-to-date on new developments and emerging risks.

3. Policies

Another essential step is a thorough review on the existing policies aimed at protecting in-

formation. Here, it is more important to cut unnecessary, overly burdensome and over-reaching processes than to add new ones. Without employees "embracing" and "living" the processes codified in it, a company's information protection policy is not worth the paper it is written on.

4. Structure

An important tool in defending companies against social engineering attacks is the use of a whistle-blower system. Employees have to be able to voice concerns about information security – anonymous if necessary – outside of the usual chain of command.

5. Technology

While technology alone cannot meet the challenges posed by social engineering attacks, it has a role to play in making a company more resilient against them. Vital information, for example, should always be kept on stand-alone systems, encryption software should be readily available and easy to use and defense mechanisms like firewalls need to be kept up to date.

6. Countermeasures

At times, employing countermeasures can be a very effective way of detecting ongoing and preventing future social engineering attacks. Such countermeasures can include the use of disinformation which is leaked in order to confuse the attacker and sow doubt as to the reliability of intelligence and agents.

Maxim Worcester

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THEMEN

Das Zündnadelgewehr & die Militärische Gesellschaft

Zum fortdauernden Diskurs über die wehrtechnische Entwicklung

Die Politisch-Militärische Gesellschaft sieht sich in der Tradition der **Militärischen Gesellschaft** zu Berlin, die vom preußischen Heeresreform Gerhard von Scharnhorst 1801 ins Leben gerufen worden war. Und so kann es nicht überraschen, dass wir bei einer Internet-Recherche aufmerksam wurden bei der Nennung folgender Publikation*:

Des Zündnadelgewehrs Geschichte und Konkurrenten. Vortrag, gehalten in der Versammlung der militärischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin am 30. November 1866 von H. von Löbell, Oberst von der Artillerie

Zum Hintergrund des Themas greifen wir auf die Einleitung eines Beitrags von Dr. Frank Wernitz (siehe Anmerkungen) zurück:

Die schnellen preußischen Erfolge während des [preußisch-österreichischen] Krieges 1866 zeigten europaweit in beeindruckender Weise die Vorzüge des Zündnadelgewehres, der ersten feldverwendungsfähigen Handfeuerwaffe mit Hinterladung. Das bis zum Herbst des Jahres 1841 von Nicolaus Dreyse entwickelte und zur Serienreife verbesserte Gewehr, aus Geheimhaltungsgründen noch weit über ein Jahrzehnt unter der Tarnbezeichnung „leichtes Perkussionsgewehr“ geführt, konnte sich aber erst nach zähem Ringen und durch die Initiativen vorausschauender Offiziere im preußischen Kriegsministerium sowie des nachmaligen Kaiser Wilhelm I. als etatmäßige Waffe der preußischen Armee durchsetzen.

Wir schreiben den 30. November 1866, nach dem preußischen Sieg über Österreich bei Königgrätz. Der Oberst von der Artillerie, H. von Löbell, leitete sein Vortrag für

heutige Gepflogenheiten weit-schweifig und umständlich ein:

Wunsch und Absicht des Vorstandes der Militärischen Gesellschaft war es, den heutigen Abend wie die folgenden Abende mit einem Vortrag zu füllen, der sich an die gewaltigen Ereignisse des diesjährigen Sommers kettet... Aber die Bemühungen des zeitigen Geschäftsführers der Gesellschaft sind von einem Erfolge nicht gekrönt worden. Die Ereignisse durchzittern noch zu gewaltig die Herzen, Köpfe und Sinne...

Nach vielfachen vergeblichen Anfragen in Bezug auf die Uebernahme des heutigen Vortrages wandte sich das geschäftsführende Mitglied des Vorstandes auch an mich mit dem dringenden Ersuchen, ihm keinen vollständigen Refus zu geben. Ich mußte mit mir zu Rathe gehen, ob ich unter den obwaltenden Umständen es wagen könnte, heute vor die Militärische Gesellschaft zu treten. Nach mehrfachen Erwägungen glaubte ich in dem Zündnadelgewehr, das in dem Munde von ganz Europa als ein wesentliches Element zu den preußischen Siegen betrachtet wird, den Stoff zu einem Vortrage zu finden, der des Interesses auch für die Militärische Gesellschaft im gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkte nicht entbehrt.

Mein Vorschlag, einen derartigen Vortrag zu halten, wurde acceptirt, aber ich betone nach wie vor, dass ich jeden Augenblick und selbst im letzten Momente sehr gern bereit sein würde, den Platz des Vortragenden hier im Englischen Hause einem Anderen zu überlassen und bat demzufolge, die Bemühungen zur Gewinnung eines anderweitigen Vortrages fortzusetzen. Aber auch diese Bemühungen scheinen von einem Erfolge nicht begleitet gewesen zu sein. So trete ich denn vor die Militärische Gesellschaft mit der Bitte, diese einleitenden

Worte als eine captatio benevolentiae betrachten und den guten Willen für die That nehmen zu wollen.

Der Vorstand der Politisch-Militärischen Gesellschaft kann das Bemühen des „zeitigen Geschäftsführers der Gesellschaft“ nachvollziehen, einen Redner zu einem epochalen Thema zu finden. Diese Herausforderung ist heute so aktuell wie 1866!

Dies ist nicht die Gelegenheit, die Entwicklungs- und Erfolgsgeschichte des Zündnadelgewehrs bis einschließlich des Deutsch-Französischen Krieges 1870/71 zu beschreiben. An dieser Stelle lediglich ein Zitat aus dem Standardwerk zum Zündnadelgewehr (Rolf Wirtgen, siehe Anlage):

In der weisen Voraussicht, dass der Finanzminister wegen der um 30% höher veranschlagten Kosten für die völlig neu zu produzierenden Zündnadelgewehr – Aptierungen der Steinschloßgewehre waren nicht möglich – Widerstand gegen eine vollständige Neubewaffnung der Armee mit Hinterladern leisten werde, schlug der Kriegsminister eine teilweise Bewaffnung vor.

Am Kompromiß von 1839/40 wird deutlich, wie schwierig es für alle waffentechnischen Offiziere war, den Sprung ins Neuland zu wagen. Noch stellten die meisten die traditionellen Voraussetzungen der Feuerwaffentechnik und Taktik im Militärwesen nicht in Frage.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose! Auch nach nahezu 150 Jahren ist das Resümee des Oberst von der Artillerie, H. von Löbell, aktuell:

Preußen kann zwar mit Ruhe auf die Bestrebungen aller Orten hinblicken, denn es ist mindestens um ein Jahrzehnt voraus, da die Einführung der Waffe nicht allein genügt, sondern die gute Waffe auch eine gute, gründliche, jahredauernde Ausbildung aller Altersklassen des Heeres erfor-

dert ... Aber es wird nach dem Motto Friedrichs des Großen „Toujours en vedette“ den Bestrebungen aller Staaten mit aufmerksamen Blicke folgen und nach den Ergebnissen derselben auch seinerseits handelnd vorgehen müssen, damit man nicht später sagen könne, man studiere heute, was man gestern schon hätte thun sollen. Es liegt nun einmal in der Natur der Sache, dass eine Waffe, die vor 25 Jahren ihrem Wesen nach festgestellt wurde, bei den riesenhaften Fortschritten der Technik gerade auf diesem Gebiete und bei den vielfachen Erfahrungen, die die ausgedehnten Versuche in den meisten Staaten geliefert haben, nicht mehr vollkommen den veränderten Verhältnissen zu entsprechen vermag.

Und eben darum sollen die Themen, die sich die Politisch-Militärische Gesellschaft setzt, von aktueller sicherheitspolitischer Relevanz sein.

Heinz Schulte

Heinz Schulte, pmg-Vorstandsmitglied.

* Die Publikation der Vortrags findet sich im digitalen Archiv der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek. Im Text zitierte Literatur zum Zündnadelgewehr:

- Dr. Frank Wernitz: Das Zündnadelsystem Dreyse und Chassepot oder die Geburt der deutsch-französischen Rivalität in der Gewehrfrage

(www.militaermuseum-brandenburg-preussen.de)

- Rolf Wirtgen (Bearbeiter): Das Zündnadelgewehr. Eine militärtechnische Revolution im 19. Jahrhundert (Ausstellungskatalog, Mittler & Sohn)

THEMEN

Whither Iran

Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei decided on a major and profound change in Iran's national security policy in a series of secret meetings on February 6th and 7th.

Khamenei resolved that alluring as Obama's quest for the grand rapprochement might be, Tehran must not believe Obama and his sincerity. Therefore, Tehran must focus first and foremost on the furthering and consolidating of Iran's vital security and regional interests. Only then, Tehran should revisit the prospect of relations with Obama's Washington. Rapprochement might be possible only if it does not endanger the pursuit of Iran's vital interests. Simply put, Khamenei decreed that Iran will not compromise or moderate its ascent as a regional power in order to improve relations with the US or accommodate Obama's desires. Significantly, Khamenei delved more on Iran regional security interests than the nuclear issue (which is taken as a given).

On February 8, Khamenei articulated Tehran's new policy and doctrine in a speech to Air Force senior officers. The speech also marked the 35th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Khamenei stressed that the US remains an implacable nemesis of the Islamic Republic of Iran. "American officials, in negotiations with the country's [Iran's] officials, say 'we are not after regime change in Iran' but they are lying because if they had the ability to do this they would not hesitate one second." He explained that in all recent negotiations American diplomats attempted to interfere in Iran's domestic affairs and policies in an unacceptable manner. "Our [hostile] stance toward the United States is due to its controlling and meddling attitude," Khamenei asserted.

Khamenei gave an example. The Americans claim to be "friends of the Iranian people. They are lying. They are threatening Iran and expect that the Islamic Republic of

Iran will reduce its defensive capabilities. Isn't that ridiculous? Isn't that amusing?" Khamenei declared that Iran has no intention whatsoever to limit any of its defensive and strategic capabilities and programs. "The Iranian people and leadership, with God's help, will increase their defensive capability each day." Khamenei elaborated that "seeking independence should not be translated into hostility with the rest of the world. Independence means resistance against the interventionist powers which do not respect the dignity of other nations for their personal interests."

Khamenei then addressed Iran's new moderation and on-going negotiations over nuclear and other issues. Such negotiations and seeming moderation are permissible only as instruments of furthering the vital interests of the Islamic Republic. "One can change the tactics, but principles must remain rock solid," Khamenei asserted. He quickly added that lifting the sanctions will not have much impact on Iran's economic well-being. "The solution to our economic problems is not looking out and having the sanctions lifted," he explained. "My advice to our officials, as ever, is to rely on [Iran's] infinite indigenous potentials." He stressed that the West is dangling sanctions' relief in order to compel Iran to give-up its own vital interests and not in order to help Iran improve its economy. Hence, Iran can trust nobody. "The only solution to the country's economic problems is to employ [Iran's] infinite domestic capacities, not to pin hopes on the lifting of sanctions. No expectations from the enemy," Khamenei concluded.

Khamenei's decision is the outcome of lengthy studies and deliberations at the highest echelons of the Islamic Republic and particularly Khamenei's own innermost circle. In the last few months, Tehran has been grappling with Washington's pressure to embrace Obama's grand rapprochement and improve, even normalize, relations. The eagerness of the Obama White House was clearly manifested in the signing of the interim nuclear deal, the lifting

of some sanctions, and the ensuing revitalization of economic relations with the West, mainly the EU. However, there rang alarm bells over the US handling of bilateral secret negotiations, and particularly the US interpretations of, and expectations from, contacts over regional issues in which the US had only negligible role.

The first major test case was the Oman-mediated negotiations over the islands Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs near the Strait of Hormuz. In mid-January, UAE and Omani senior officials disclosed that Oman mediated a multi-sided agreement with Iran on the three islands and Iran posture in the Gulf. *“A deal has been reached and finalized on the Greater and Lesser Tunbs,”* the sources explained. *“For now, two of the three islands are to return to the UAE while the final agreement for Abu Musa is being ironed out.”* For both strategic and economic reasons, the officials explained, *“Iran will retain the seabed rights around the three islands while the UAE will hold sovereignty over the land.”* The negotiations over Abu Musa focus on the complex issue of the legal status of Iran’s vast strategic infrastructure under UAE sovereignty. Most important, though, is the improvement of Iran’s strategic intelligence capabilities in return for vacating facilities on the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. *“Oman will grant Iran a strategic location on Ras Musandam mountain, which is a very strategic point overlooking the whole Gulf region. In return for Ras Musandam, Oman will receive free gas and oil from Iran once a pipeline is constructed within the coming two years.”* The sources stressed that the agreements over the islands are the first step in a comprehensive agreement over the security posture in the Gulf to be mediated by Oman in the coming months. *“Oman was given the green light from Iran and the US to reach deals that would decrease the threat levels in the region and offset the Saudi Arabian influence in the future by any means,”* the sources explained.

Meanwhile, in the secret bilateral negotiations, the US expected, and later demanded, compensations from Iran for facilitating the Omani mediation and the compromises made by the UAE. However, Tehran’s reading of the situation profoundly disagrees. Iranian senior officials stressed to their Omani counterparts that the islands agreement was not the outcome of US facilitation, or even permission to Oman to mediate. Rather, the UAE’s and Oman’s concessions to Iran reflected their recognition of the ascent of Iran and the decline of the US, as well as their growing fears of Saudi Arabia becoming “irrational and aggressive”. This has been Tehran’s position since late 2013. *“Having lost hope that the United States will carry out a military strike on Iran,”* Diaku Hoseyni, an Iranian expert, explained, *“smaller countries would prefer to control the danger posed by a powerful and dissatisfied country in their neighborhood, by expanding their friendly relations with Iran.”*

Tehran attributes the profound change in Turkey’s policy and Erdogan’s visit to Tehran on 28-31 January to the irreversible regional ascent of Iran. Erdogan went to Tehran for several reasons – starting with the urgent imperative to save Turkey from economic collapse through highly subsidized oil and gas supplies, as well as the expansion of sanctions-busting commerce and technology transfers (despite Erdogan’s purge of some of the gold traders in the recent anti-corruption campaign that was actually aimed at financiers of Erdogan’s urban opposition leaders). The Mullahs rejoice that Erdogan not only defied Obama’s Washington in coming to Tehran, but agreed to participate in direct actions against US interests in the entire region.

In Tehran, both leaders emphasized the new era in bilateral relations and strategic cooperation made possible by the new realities in the region. Both leaders agreed on the establishment of the Iran-Turkey High-level Cooperation Council that they will co-chair and that will implement their joint security strategy and development policies. Khamenei assured Er-

dogan that “the existing opportunities must be properly used in Tehran-Ankara relations.” Khamenei defined “the current brotherly and friendly relations” between Turkey and Iran as “unparalleled in recent centuries.” “The extensive capacities of both sides are a suitable ground for the expansion and deepening of relations,” Khamenei told Erdogan. Erdogan’s response was effusive. *“We consider Iran as our second home,”* he told Khamenei. Erdogan expressed his confidence that *“the relations between the two countries could expand and serve as an example for the region and the world.”* Erdogan called the Iran-Turkey High-level Cooperation Council mechanism “most important,” and assured Khamenei that *“continued bilateral meetings will be held in the near future to further expand relations.”*

Tehran’s main conclusion from Erdogan’s visit is that the new Iranian-Turkish unity will enable both countries to prevent the US-led West from implementing their policies in the Middle East, and in Syria in particular. *“The reinforcement of relations between Iran and Turkey sends a strong message to the West and will counter the US and West’s political mischief because the unity of two Muslim countries puts them back in their place,”* Deputy Chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Mansour Haqiqatpour said on February 1st. Erdogan’s *“trip was of high political and economic significance and indicated a revision of the Turkish government’s core policy with respect to Syria.”* According to Haqiqatpour, Erdogan acknowledged that *“some differences still exist between Tehran and Ankara over the Syrian crisis”* but guaranteed that *“the Turkish Foreign Ministry and intelligence agency will keep in contact with their Iranian counterparts over the issue.”* Haqiqatpour is confident that all outstanding issues will be resolved soon to Tehran’s satisfaction.

Meanwhile, Tehran’s new assertiveness is also manifested in the perception of the possibility of military clashes with the US. As the Obama White House is making

strenuous efforts to convince Tehran (via Muscat, among a few key venues) of Washington's peaceful intentions – the Iranian High Command is raising anew the possibility of war with the United States.

The first authoritative daring of the US was delivered on January 24, 2014, by the Commander in Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Mohammad Jafari. He declared publicly that a direct conflict with the US is the “strongest dream of the faithful and revolutionary men around the world.” Jaafari then responded to Kerry's warning that the US might renew the military option should Iran violate the nuclear deal. “Your threats to Revolutionary Islam are the best opportunity,” Jafari declared. “Muslim leaders for years have been preparing us for a decisive battle. ... Do you know how many thousands of Revolutionary Muslims at the heart of the Islamic revolutionary groups around the world are awaiting for you to take this [military] option from the table into action?”

Other senior commanders of the IRGC immediately began to elaborate on implementing Jaafari's threats.

Most important was a closed speech delivered by the IRGC's Deputy Commander (Jaafari's second-in-command) Brigadier General Hossein Salami on February 1st. Salami presented a detailed analysis of Iran's doctrine and capabilities. “Today, our military and defense might is much beyond the expectations of the big powers,” he stated. “America, with its strategic ignorance, does not have a full understanding of the power of the Islamic Republic.” In contrast, Iran has been preparing meticulously to face the US and its allies. “Our defense strategy has been formed against the most dangerous global power and alliance, and our structures are such that, in addition to protecting the country's interests, they can jeopardize the enemy's interests in the region on every level.” Salami stressed that the Pasdaran “have recognized America's military

strategy, and have arranged our abilities, and have identified centers in America [for attack] that will create a shock.”

Salami elaborated about the various contingencies and threats the IRGC is ready to defeat. Most likely are the different scenarios under which the US could attack Iran via a limited missile and air strikes, or even a ground attack. “All operational bases of the enemy in the region in whatever capacity and location are within our fire-power,” Salami warned. “The American military option does not make a difference for us, and they can use this option, but they will have to accept the responsibility of devastating consequences.” Salami wondered loudly whether the US could control the spread and escalation of any war with Iran. “Can they preserve their vital interest in the region in the face of endless attacks by Iran? Can they keep their naval assets and the Zionist regime secure?”

Salami reminded his audience that the US has been notorious with its strategic miscalculations. He singled out Iran's unprecedented political and cultural influence in Iraq that was made possible by the US invasion of that country and the toppling of Saddam Hussein. “The current has changed for the Americans so much so that they invested [by invading Iraq] and others [Iran] benefitted.” The same logic applies to Syria, Salami noted. Threats and rhetoric notwithstanding, the US has no capability to intervene in Syria militarily. “The Americans cannot even conduct a military operation there,” Salami gloated. Hence, it is impossible for the Americans to challenge Iran's preeminence in Syria and Iraq because “the conditions and the factors that facilitate the exercise of military power for them have for years been destroyed and today they [the Americans] are in an erosion of political, cultural and military power.”

In contrast, Salami stated, Iran can escalate the war with the US beyond the greater Middle East and West-Central Asia. He alluded to the use of HizbAllah terrorism

and special operations at the heart of America. “We will conduct such a blow in which they [America] will be destroyed from within,” Salami stated.

Therefore, Salami belittled the US threats to renew the military option should Iran violate the nuclear deal with the P5+1. “It doesn't make a difference to us that the US military option is on the table, but they should accept the consequences. Are the Americans in an economic position to manage a war with indefinite severity and unspecified length and extent?” Salami stressed that Tehran was therefore negotiating from a position of strength. “We turned to the negotiating table when we were assured of our military might, and the use of military options by the US is not a new issue to us.” Salami concluded by declaring that there are thousands of brigades ready to confront America both within the Islamic Republic and outside the country. He reminded Iran's politicians that they must therefore remain steadfast during the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program and must not give in to US demands or threats.

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan followed with stern warnings to Iran's friends and foes. He made several speeches in early February in which he warned that “the Islamic Republic will give a crushing response” to any aggression or military attack against Iran. On February 4, Dehqan addressed a meeting with religious leaders in the holy city of Qom. He dismissed recent US military threats against Iran as “very meaningless” to Iranians, and reminded that “Americans have hatched plots against Iran since the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.” Dehqan stressed that this national defense doctrine is still in effect despite ongoing negotiations. “The Iranian nation has always been resisting against Western arrogant powers, and has never compromised with Imperialism,” he said. “Iranians are always prepared to confront arrogant powers.” He warned Washington against “the catastrophe” that a US military strike against Iran would entail.

“Islamic Iran has taught all Muslims and world’s freedom-seeking people that the sole option against the caprice and the bullying of Western arrogant powers is resistance and steadfastness, and [proved that] true independence and freedom can be achieved only through this way,” Dehqan pointed out. *“The Iranian nation has always proved through history that it is fully ready to defend the principles of the sacred Islamic establishment and will severely punish aggressors.”*

On February 9, Dehqan reiterated the Iranian military’s ability to respond to an American attack at the behest of Khamenei. *“The Iranian Armed Forces are an intertwined and coherent complex that can give a decisive response to any threat at any level and any place under the command of the Commander-in-Chief,”* Dehqan declared in the national ceremony marking the 35th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. *“The enemy can never assess and think of the range of the response given by the powerful and mighty Armed Forces of the Islamic Iran.”*

On February 10, the two air power commanders of Iran further clarified Tehran’s perception of the likelihood of clash with the US. Both addressed the special gathering of Air Force senior officers in Tehran to whom Khamenei had articulated Tehran’s new policy and doctrine that stress regional ascent back on February 8.

The first speech was delivered by Brigadier General Hassan Shah-Safi, the Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF). His key point was that *“Iran’s military might has already removed the option of military action against the country from enemies’ consideration.”* The rhetoric and threats about strikes no longer represent viable threats. *“We are certain that the military might of the Iranian Armed Forces prevents them [Iran’s enemies] from even thinking of such things,”* Shah-Safi said. The primary challenge facing the IRIAF is fighting *“future wars [that] will be obviously fought in the sky with massive presence of fighter jets and rock-*

ets” and for which the IRIAF is developing both indigenous weapon systems and doctrine. *“Proper understanding of the status quo together with movement towards self-sufficiency in military hardware and personnel has evolved us to the level of preparedness that we are fully ready for any aerial confrontation,”* Shah-Safi stated.

The second speech was delivered by IRGC Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the Commander of the Aero-space Division of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps. He dismissed the *“US military threats against the Islamic Republic”* and stressed that *“the US has never had the courage to launch an attack against Iran.”* Nevertheless, should the need arise, the Iranian air forces are ready to confront and defeat any US threat. *“The Iranian nation and Armed Forces are ready to take actions against the United States and enemies that have a greedy eye on the country,”* Hajizadeh stated. The real threat, Hajizadeh explained, is that the US cannot be trusted because the US *“has displayed aggression every time Iran has relied on it.”* Hajizadeh added that *“the Iranian government and nation have no faith in the United States and its allies”* because as a rule the US *“has not honored its commitments to Iran and many world countries.”* This legacy of US-Iranian relations dominates Tehran’s current expectations from Obama’s initiative. *“The US has an aggressive nature, which it has expressed several times in its behavior towards Iran. Every time we wanted to come close to them [the Americans], they assailed us with an action,”* Hajizadeh concluded.

Iran’s Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Hassan Firouzabadi delivered an address to senior officers and defense officials gathered in Tehran on February 12 in which he summed up neatly the tenets of Iran’s regional defense doctrine. Firouzabadi made two key points. First, the regional strategic ascent of Iran has markedly reduced the likelihood of US-Israeli strike on Iran. Second, Iran would rather have the Gulf States

as friends but would not hesitate to strike should they provide the US with bases for anti-Iran aggression.

Firouzabadi stated that although the recent threats of military action against Iran made by US officials should be considered as “political bluff” – Iran is ready to meet these challenges. *“We are ready for the decisive war with the US and the Zionist regime,”* he stated. However, Firouzabadi did not see any such threat materializing anytime soon. *“Over the past decade, they [the US and its allies] brought their forces but came to the conclusion that they can’t attack us and left.”* Should the US or Israel nevertheless decide to strike Iran, Firouzabadi had a clear warning. *“I say explicitly, if some have delusions of having any threats against Iran on their tables, they need to wear new glasses. There is no military option against Iran on any table in the world.”*

Firouzabadi focused on Iran’s relations with regional states, mainly across the Persian Gulf, in this context. Iran seeks peace and friendship, he emphasized, and the only threat might come in the context of these states’ participation in US-Israeli aggression against Iran. *“We warn that if our forces come under attack from any territory, we will hit all the positions which belong to that [territory],”* Firouzabadi said. He reiterated that Iran harbors no hostility towards any of the countries in the region, but warned repeatedly against their participation in US-led anti-Iran contingencies and conspiracies. *“We do not have any hostility towards regional states, but if we are ever attacked from the American bases in the region we will strike that area back,”* Firouzabadi stated.

Iran’s new doctrine is becoming very clear. Iran is rising as the regional power. Tehran would rather have the Gulf States accept this ascent. However, Tehran would not tolerate any attempt to stand in Iran’s ascent to new power and glory.

The area where Khamenei’s new doctrine is clearly manifested is

the northern parts of al-Jazira (central-eastern Syria and western Iraq). There, Iran is spearheading the joint effort of Syria, Iraq, several Shiite militias (including the HizbAllah), and even Ayman al-Zawahiri's Jihadist High Command to defeat the Takfiri forces led by the DI'ISH (aka ISIS or ISIL in the Western media) both militarily and theologically. With the Assad administration and their allies having all but won the war in Syria – the ascent of the DI'ISH-dominated Jihadist Emirate along the Euphrates Valley from south-east of Aleppo to east of Falujjah and in adjacent desert areas is the sole impediment to the consolidation of Iranian hegemony over Iraq, Syria and Lebanon – that is, all the way to the shores of the Mediterranean.

Tehran's focus on the Takfiri challenge as part of a US-led global conspiracy reflects the regional strategic ramifications of the ascent of the Takfiris and not just in al-Jazira. The DI'ISH is indeed a huge and explosive wild card in the region. They are real Takfiris – that is, virulently anti-Shiite and not just neo-Salafi Jihadists. The DI'ISH calls for the restoration of a pious Caliphate like in the immediate post-Muhammad days. This means that their ultimate and sacred objective is not only the liberation of Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina – but also the eradication of the sinful and ensnaring regimes ruling them (a goal the House of al-Saud dreads). Because of their Takfiri ideology, the DI'ISH refuses all contacts with Iranian intelligence (via the IRGC's Quds Force) and instead fights all pro-Iranian and Iranian proxy forces (both Sunni and Shiite) in both Syria and Iraq. Hence, unlike other Jihadist entities (like Jabhat al-Nusra, Ahrar al-Sham or Zawahiri's al-Qaida) – the DI'ISH cannot be negotiated with or even pressured via Iran's Quds Force (the best back door channel to the Jihadist camp in the Arab World). Little wonder Tehran, more than anybody else in the greater Middle East, cannot tolerate the continued existence of DI'ISH.

Indeed, Khamenei's new doctrine considers the gravity of the Takfiri

threat as far greater than before. This new perception of the Takfiri threat was raised by numerous senior officials since early February. Most authoritative articulation of the Takfiri threat was delivered by Gholamali Haddad-Adel, Tehran's representative to the Majlis and a former Majlis Speaker, on February 9 in the same Qom event that Dehqan also addressed. The threat goes way beyond the *"appalling crimes committed by foreign-backed Takfiri elements in the region"* and particularly Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. Haddad-Adel explained that the *"deviant Takfiri trend"* aims to *"instigate war between Shia and Sunni"* followers of Islam in an effort *"to obstruct the Islamic awakening and to prevent unity among Muslims."* Moreover, many of the Takfiri forces operating against Iran, he stressed, are components *"of plots hatched by the US and the Israeli regime."* Other Iranian and Syrian officials concur that *"the Western powers and their regional allies – especially Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey – are supporting the militants operating inside Syria."*

Concurrently, on February 9, Khamenei personally instructed Major General Qassem Soleimani, one of his closest confidants and the Commander of the IRGC's Quds Force, that Tehran will deepen and escalate the active intervention of both Iranian and other Shiite forces in the fighting against the Takfiris in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, as well as their sponsoring states. The marked escalation in the fighting is to take place, Khamenei instructed, irrespective of the progress in the P5+1 nuclear negotiation or the Geneva II negotiations, and at the expense of the HizbAllah's ability to deploy elite forces on the Israeli-Lebanon border. As well, Soleimani is to expand the Iranian support for all the Palestinians – from the HAMAS and Islamic Jihad to the PLO and their al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades – in preparation for a direct confrontation with Israel and Jordan that might escalate as a result of the struggle with the Takfiris. Soleimani was nominated to be personally responsible for the execution and success of

Khamenei's policy of expanded and intensified regional intervention. He was promised virtually unlimited resources – both Iranian and allies' – for the pursuit of Iran's *"sacred war fronts"* throughout the greater Middle East.

Soleimani immediately started to notify the leaders of Iran's main Shiite militia allies. On the morning of February 10, the first leaders and commanders already announced mobilization against the Takfiris.

The Deputy Secretary General of the HizbAllah, Sheikh Naim Qassem, announced that the HizbAllah will escalate its struggle against *"the Takfiri plot"* until its total defeat no matter how long it takes. *"We will continue our work and remain in the field committed to our political stances. We will remain fighting where we are fighting. We are a resistance wherever we are: a resistance against Israel and its agents and a resistance fighting in Syria in defense of the resistance,"* he told a commanders rally in Beirut's suburb of Ouzai. *"Do not panic or be frightened of them or they will win,"* Sheikh Qassem told them. *"Our heads will remain high, as we combat the Takfiris and those behind them. We will be victorious in the end, wait and see."*

In Iraq, members of Asaib Ahl al-Haq and other resistance forces were ordered *"to begin to remobilize against Takfiris."* The Asaib Ahl al-Haq is one of the Shiite main resistance forces in Iraq that reduced operations as Iran-sponsored forces consolidated control over the country's Shiite heartland. Now, they were instructed to join the anti-Takfiri fight. *"We've had to be much more active,"* announced commander Abu-Sajad of the Asaib Ahl al-Haq. *"Those who are trying to incite sectarianism, we have to deal with them."*

On February 11, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated that Iran was at the forefront of fighting Takfiri terrorism. He contrasted Iran's principled policy with the US sponsor-

ship of Takfiri terrorism in Syria and elsewhere in the greater Middle East. *“The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a victim of terrorism, is a forerunner of the real fight against this ominous phenomenon,”* Abdollahian said.

“This is while the US, following a double-standard policy, uses terrorism as an instrument to further its interests in the region.” Abdollahian then singled out the HizbAllah’s contribution to the struggle against Takfiri terrorism as a regional stabilizing force. *“The Lebanese HizbAllah is strongly fighting terrorism in support of the country’s security and stability,”* Abdollahian stated.

Most important, however, is the concurrent mobilization of Iran’s Shiite allies in the eastern parts of Saudi Arabia. Back on February 7, Sheikh Hassan Saffar of Qatif delivered a unique Friday Sermon in which he discussed the ramifications of Saudi Arabia’s support for the Sunni Jihadist groups in Syria. He accused the Saudi-sponsored groups of conducting “radical and terrorist acts” against innocent civilians. His harshest criticism was of the Saudi Imams and authorities who glorify these attacks and thus are deceiving Saudi youth to change their ways “toward havoc”.

Sheikh Hassan Saffar emphasized that *“Takfiri way of thinking which is clearly observed in education methods, religious orders, religious sermons and public media is providing the base for this radical and terrorist approach for Saudi youths.”* He lamented that there are many Sunni clerics in Saudi Arabia who encourage youth to go fight as a “religious duty” in Syria even though the war there is not a Jihad on account of the terrorism against civilians. *“Nobody is allowed to be violent toward someone who has different religious or political views. This is terrorism, destruction and aberration,”* Sheikh Saffar explained. Riyadh, he added, is permitting *“certain regional and international intelligence bodies”* to recruit Saudi youth to conduct a “wave of terrorist acts” on their behalf. He reiterated that *“these intelligence centers are entering our youths in de-*

structive and terroristic wars” and are using their young minds as “firewoods” to be expended once their tasks are completed.

Sheikh Hassan Saffar blamed the overall socio-political situation in Saudi Arabia for the radicalization of the youth. Fearing opposition, Riyadh has *“blocked [the] political scene,”* and consequently, *“the lack of alternative options”* caused widespread disappointment among Saudi youths. This despair makes these youth easily susceptible for recruitment by *“ill-minded people who depict a false image of religion for them.”* Sheikh Saffar urged the entire Saudi society to mobilize to stop the Takfiri radicalization and those responsible for sponsoring the Takfiris – that is, Riyadh. *“Everybody is responsible for these deceived youths; young people whose acts has brought nothing but destruction of their country, tarnishing our religion, violating security and stability and bringing fear anywhere they go,”* Sheikh Hassan Saffar concluded.

On February 10, the Friday Sermon of Sheikh Hassan Saffar was broadcasted all over the Iran-sponsored Shiite media worldwide. The House of al-Saud has been put on notice they can’t escape Khamenei’s new doctrine.

The game is over. The crux of Khamenei’s new doctrine is that the new era of consolidation and implementation of the ascending Shiite Iran has begun.

Iran is a major regional hegemonic power shielded under, and projecting power via, its de-facto nuclear umbrella. Tehran is cognizant that the international community has accepted a nuclear Iran as demonstrated in the real P5+1 negotiations and not the Western political rhetoric. Iran’s relations with the rest of the greater Middle East are based on the presumption of de-facto nuclear capabilities. This was achieved by Iran’s bellicosity and steadfast unwillingness to compromise on any core issue.

Tehran’s sophisticated, wily and ruthless Bazaar negotiations style overwhelmed an Obama White

House already committed to deal-making at all cost and at the expense of the vital interests of America’s closest allies.

The only thing more important for Tehran than Iran’s ascent is the mere survival of the Islamic Republic with the Mullahs in power. The moment the Obama White House reached out to the Mullahs and effectively removed the military option – the US became irrelevant to Iran for it no longer constitutes a viable threat to the Mullahs.

The Islamic Republic has always been dominated by the quest to assert the preeminence of Shiite Islam despite their minority status (15% of all Muslims) and reverse their victimhood by taking revenge against their Sunni Arab oppressors. The dramatic transformation of the greater Middle East as the aggregate outcome of the Intifada’s makes the attainment of these goals closer than ever. Tehran is seriously contemplating the revival of a Shiite Persian empire – and the on-land corridor to the shores of the Mediterranean via Iraq, Syria and Lebanon is but the first step. The ultimate goal of Tehran is attaining custodianship of the three holiest shrines of Islam in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem even if by the sword. Nuclear and other long-range strategic weaponry are major instruments toward this end. Hence, there will be no giving up on nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles – and there is nothing foreign powers can do other than topple the Mullahs’ regime by force.

The negotiations with the US and the West, and the talks about rapprochement and moderation, are but instruments for calming and cajoling the West. Iran would love to see the sanctions lifted and the economy improving. As well, Iran could use Western technology for overall scientific-technological modernization. But these are secondary objectives that pale by comparison to the strategic ascent. The economic plight of the Iranian downtrodden hasn’t reached the point of combustion and social eruption, and Iran can still afford the strategic-military, in-

cluding nuclear, build-up. Hence, there is no existential economic problem for Tehran – only inconveniences. Thus, Khamenei can talk about economic recovery irrespective of the state of the sanctions.

Meanwhile, Iran has begun implementing the drive on Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. The return of the historic greater Middle East – dominated by traditional grass-roots power plays and not constrained by modern states – makes it easier for Iran to pursue its objectives. The first major strategic surge that is virtually attained is the on-land corridor to the shores of the Mediterranean via Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. In the process, Iran has harnessed some of the key minorities that are the key to the region – the Ahwazi Arabs, Alawites, Druze, Maronites, and even the Kurds. The second major step is establishing cooperation with Turkey – the other Muslim non-Arab major power with imperial aspirations. With Erdogan's neo-Ottoman grand designs faltering due to military setbacks in Syria and economic near-collapse – Iran is offering economic survival in return for Erdogan pursuing his neo-Ottoman dreams in the context of the Persian preeminence.

In the east, Iran is exacerbating and radicalizing the Shiites and other non-Sunni Muslims of the Arabian Peninsula in the context of the Islamic Republic of Eastern Arabia. The Iran-sponsored Islamic Republic of Eastern Arabia was originally declared in May 2009, claims the entire eastern Arabian Peninsula and stretches all the way to Yemen's coasts of the Red Sea. To-date, the subversive, militant and terrorist operations in the Shiite Arab areas and in Yemen have been conducted under the auspices of the Islamic Republic of Eastern Arabia. Iran is now markedly increasing the flow of expert operatives, weapons and funds into the areas claimed by the Islamic Republic of Eastern Arabia in order to escalate insurrection and subversion. Significantly, all the oil and gas of Arabia is under the areas claimed by the Islamic Republic of Eastern Arabia.

Iran's rejuvenated relations with, and all-out support for, virtually all Palestinian and Jordanian Islamist-Jihadist groups, as well as Ayman al-Zawahiri's al-Qaida and other Jihadists, help Iran close in on the ultimate prize – Israel and Saudi Arabia where Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem are located.

Meanwhile, a Jihadist Sinai aflame serves a buffer between historic Egypt on the Nile Valley and the Mashriq. As well, the growing Iranian support for the Jihadist insurrection inside Egypt, as well as the militancy of Sudan and Eritrea, diverts Cairo's attention inward and southwards.

The Takfiris are the only uncontrollable wild card. They are loosely organized in D'ISH and operate mainly at the heart of Syria and Iraq. The Takfiris cannot and would not deal with the Shiites. The Takfiris are eager to "slaughter the Jews" – as manifested in their rallying cry. The Takfiris hate and despise even more the House of al-Saud which they consider a corrupt apostate entity. Hence, the D'ISH cannot be relied upon by a desperate and panicky Riyadh to counter Iran. On the contrary, the Takfiris make Tehran look the least of evils.

There is still short time till gloom and doom settles upon the greater Middle East. The Iranian march and ascent have just begun and can still be contained and reversed. This can be achieved solely by emboldening and empowering the indigenous historical foci of power and the regional strategic dynamics they pursue and facilitate. It is still possible to strengthen and empower the Fertile Crescent of Minorities with Israel as the dominant power. The traditional tapestry of Sunni Arab tribes of al-Jazira is still eager to, and capable of, saving itself from both the Shiite and Takfiri onslaughts. These tribes are the natural buffer shielding Saudi Arabia. There are numerous Turks who have not given up on Ataturk's reforms and westernization and would gladly reverse Erdogan's neo-Ottomanism.

However, all of these indigenous forces need help, or at least the ability to act. Most important, these forces must be assured that their achievements and the new regional order they seek to establish will be respected, legitimized and recognized by the international community. Alas, the only forces who can still win the greater Middle East are the very same forces the US-led West presently subjects to derision, hostility and suppression. Sacrificing them on the altar of rapprochement with Iran, as is Obama's wont, will only embolden and hasten the Iranian march westward.

Yossef Bodansky

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Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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