

THE OBAMA STRATEGY

Does he have one or is it couched in the paraphrase of Churchill....an enigma wrapped in a puzzle hard to explain or clarify? Perhaps a doctrine is more suitable for his 'way of war' as well as his attempt to initiate economic recovery. Neither seem too promising and beggar the imagination and fears. I remember Presidential hopeful, Dukakis, in an armored personnel carrier, with tanker-like helmet on and recently Obama in Bradley fighting vehicle in similar garb, as leader in the turret, and in mock flight on a drone, courtesy Weekly Standard. A parody of leadership, perhaps.

Strategies are geared towards the potential of war applying all resources towards an imagined enemy and their deception and surprise attacks: famous war scholars (Clausewitz and Sun Tzu) cautioned respectively about 'surprise lies at the foundation of all undertaking to gain superiority'; all warfare is based on deception'. Strategic (and tactical) surprise recall the Pearl Harbor attack; Germans smarting from Versailles, a lost generation in WWI, conceived a mobile strategy based on massing armor and overwhelmed static infantry and linear lines of infantry; 9/11 personified surprise with their use of captive commercial airliners.

The Carter Doctrine warned specifically the Russians in late 1970s, and others: "any outside force attempt to control the Persian Gulf will be regarded an assault on the vital interests of the United States and repelled by any means to include military force." Nixon reminded US will aid, economically and militarily, treaty allies, but would require nation threatened to provide manpower.

Strategic plans have surfaced that seem to indicate a pull-back scenario in the Pacific, and a reduced military presence disallowing the age-old concept of fighting wars on two fronts, i.e., Germany and Japan in WWII, pivoting as it were closer to home, positioning Marines in Australia. Both Pacific and Atlantic postures would pose a mobile 'island' of ships on which Marines, and possibly Special Forces, Rangers and Seals could be launched on raids along with a drone methodology. China may see this as an opportunity to 'occupy' Pacific waters as their modern Navy includes: over the horizon radars,

unmanned aerial vehicles and space reconnaissance satellites, a veritable modern Naval thing.

Latest thinking includes reducing the nuclear weapon composite (about 5000 projectiles) to 300 in keeping with Obama's desire to rid the world of nuclear arms. Is Captain Queeg back at the helm?

Many scenarios argue against the Obama 'Way of War' despite arguments reducing the military industrial complex and force profiles, perhaps more political and economic. But what of the threat of Iran's nuclear program, and animosity towards the west and its neighbors, and couple this with the prospects of collapse of Pakistan, as militant Islam erodes the structure.

Planners remember the successful attack by US carriers against battle ships at Pearl – a training exercise-long before the Japan attack. Iran's threat to close the Strait of Hormuz is reminiscent of a US exercise where fast moving target ships, suicide bombers, radar and cyber blocking, radio silence, all neutralized larger ships maneuver and firepower in the Gulf.

From the possible implosion of Pakistan to a world-wide cyberattack, from the consequences of a timed withdrawal from Iraq and later Afghanistan, to the likelihood of China on the march, perfidy of rogue states, and impact of a revitalized Islamic Egypt and Syria spin-off the world remains a contested complex arena.

