What’s the force that moves the hand that pushes the button?

Edward H Campbell
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By E. H. Campbell

Richard M. Nixon

I want to apologize for my January 27, 2016 remark: “America hasn’t won a war since World War II.” Victory in the Cold War was indeed a victory for America and was, as Richard Nixon said, a victory in a forty-five year war and one of the “greatest triumphs for freedom in history.” In a book that should be read by every high school senior, or entering college freshman, if not every American, Beyond Peace, written in 1994, America’s 37th President Richard M. Nixon, said: “For forty-five years, America and its allies fought one of the longest struggles in human history. The Cold War touched every region of the world and made most of it hostage to a vast conflict of political ideas and economic systems. For the United States, Korea and Vietnam were battles in that war…”

“In the past five years, we have witnessed four of the greatest events of the twentieth century: the liberation of one hundred million people in Eastern Europe from Soviet-imposed communism in 1989; the defeat of Iraqi aggression in the Persian Gulf War in the spring of 1991; the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union in December 1991; and the failure of socialism and a mass movement toward capitalism in nations as different as Sweden, India, and even communist China…

“These spectacular developments represent some of the greatest triumphs for freedom in history. Yet at a time when we should be celebrating victory, many observers are wallowing in pessimism, as if we had suffered defeat. Instead of pressing toward the mountaintop and beholding a new vision of peace and freedom for the future, they are wandering in a valley of self-doubt about the past…

“The United States and the other members of the G-7 have the richest economies on Earth. Economic power, however, is not the same as strength of national character. Our country may be rich in goods, but we are poor in spirit…

“This phenomenon results from the way the Cold War ended, and also from the kind of struggle it was. In generations to come Americans will not celebrate V-USSR Day to mark the anniversary of the day the red flag over the Kremlin came down, or even V-B Day to celebrate the day the Berlin Wall fell.”

It goes to show you how the brainwash that ‘the Cold War was not even a real war’ has been completely absorbed into American culture. It was in fact a war, a war of grand strategy, a war where national interest was

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at stake, but as Americans we don’t recognize it as such. After the efforts of nine presidents America won it. Upon rereading that book, I felt guilt and embarrassment for not recollecting Nixon’s wise remarks. Richard Nixon was an honest, practical, idealistic, enlightened realist, optimistic, situationally aware, peace loving man. I would suggest that he will be vindicated by history, but his own works have already done that. Bob Woodward should be forced to eat every word of his treasonous and evil lies about Richard Nixon. He should spend eternity in Tartarus chained to a chair with that ratfink Mark Felt whispering lies incessantly into his ears. Richard Nixon was a good President, but he was also a great man.

About the Cold War Richard Nixon furthermore wrote: “The end of the Cold War produced only a sense of exhaustion and anticlimax. In its final stages, the communist regimes of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, having been pushed to the brink by the leadership of nine successive American Presidents and a mighty Western alliance, finally imploded. Since our victory gave the impression of being a victory by default, the West was deprived of the sense of satisfaction it deserved over a job well done.”

After the fall of the Soviet Union, having gone directly from the violent war of World War II directly into the Cold War, America was all the sudden at peace. In a practical sense Richard Nixon optimistically urged America to go beyond peace. “In times of war a premium is placed on the morality of duty, the absolute necessity of doing what is required, of doing right in the limited sense of not doing what is wrong. The morality of duty, while indispensable, is not an adequate standard for a great people in the era beyond peace. The morality of aspiration calls for us to strive to accomplish not just the things we are required to do but all that we are capable of doing. It is this higher challenge we must embrace now that we have fulfilled our duty as a free people in helping bring about the defeat of communism. Every individual, every community, every nation, must dedicate itself to the fullest realization of its potential. We must make peace more than simply the absence of war. We must make it the means to a greater end.”

Again we are at war, again we are returned to the morality of duty. In order to prevent cultural and spiritual stagnation, America, according to him, needed more than mere peace. America needed to go beyond peace. America needed a peaceful struggle. America need a quest, something inspiring like JFK’s mission to put a man on the Moon. “Unless we accomplish the renewal of America, the defeat of communism will be followed not by the victory of freedom but by a slow, steady decline into chaos in the world and an irrelevant role for our country.”

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3 Ibid., 7.
4 Ibid., 12.
5 Ibid., 19.
migration to the planet Mars will evoke the kind of inspiration Richard Nixon had hoped for.

“It means moving to a new plane of national mission. It is a call to a new glory—not the glory of war but the glory of peace. It is a call to take up not the arms of war but the tools of peace…

“The United States must lead. We must lead to open the eyes of those still blinded by despotism, to embolden those who remain oppressed, and bring out from the dungeons of tyranny those who still live in darkness. The question remains whether the United States will meet its responsibilities of leadership beyond peace as it did to defeat the communists in the Cold War. History thrusts certain powers at certain times onto center stage. In this era, the spotlight shines on the United States. How long it stays on us—and how brightly it shines—will be determined by us alone.

“We cannot lead solely by example or solely by power but must combine the best elements of both. Today we must find the moral equivalent of war to unify and inspire us. We do not seek war at home or abroad, but we do need a mission that will evoke the same selfless response in individuals. When the people of the world look to us, they should see not just our money and our arsenal but also our vast capacity as a force for good.

“Peace demands more, not less, from a people. Peace lacks the clarity of purpose and the cadence of war. War is scripted; peace is improvisation.”

I might call this idealistic to the point of naivety, but I do think he was sincere. Looking backward on the times when the Wall fell and communism collapsed and following the timeline forward to the time when Nixon wrote Beyond Peace, and forward again from there to now, I think he was also right not only in an idealistic sense but in a practical sense as well. Unfortunately America did not heed his call. In Beyond Peace, Richard Nixon moreover said: “We no longer face the threat of aggression by a powerful foe. The fear of nuclear annihilation has been drastically reduced. No nation currently has the power to threaten us, our allies, or our friends without risking a devastating response by our forces.”

Unfortunately again that is no longer true. It’s a real shame that America did not take Richard Nixon’s advice and find a mission beyond itself, a mission beyond peace. For we are once again faced with a very dangerous and aggressive power—an ingenious and determined foe—the Islamic State. Although a less powerful foe than the USSR, the Islamic State is an evil one—no less evil than Nazism. And could even be called Hitler’s recent off-spring. America now is indeed in a world beyond peace, but

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6 Ibid., 24-25.  
7 Ibid., 14.
it is not the beyond peace Richard Nixon had hoped for. It is the beyond peace that is really a return to war.

**Islamic State of War**

On October, 1959 Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev published an article in the American journal *Foreign Affairs* entitled *On Peaceful Coexistence* in this document Khrushchev among other things said:

> “From its very inception the Soviet state proclaimed peaceful coexistence as the basic principle of its foreign policy. It was no accident that the very first state act of the Soviet power was the decree on peace, the decree on the cessation of the bloody war.

> “What, then, is the policy of peaceful coexistence?

> “In its simplest expression it signifies the repudiation of war as a means of solving controversial issues. However, this does not cover the entire concept of peaceful coexistence. Apart from the commitment to non-aggression, it also presupposes an obligation on the part of all states to desist from violating each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty in any form and under any pretext whatsoever. The principle of peaceful coexistence signifies a renunciation of interference in the internal affairs of other countries with the object of altering their system of government or mode of life or for any other motives. The doctrine of peaceful coexistence also presupposes that political and economic relations between countries are to be based upon complete equality of the parties concerned, and on mutual benefit.”

Khrushchev could only say this under the political conditions produced by the policy of deterrence, but he was also speaking from a position of genuine power. One ought to be wary of that which is declared to be law which at the same time could never be practicably guaranteed. Whether or not Khrushchev spoke sincerely, history has proven him wrong. In the Soviet Union, man was not free “to create in a truly free manner in the interests of the people,” as Khrushchev in this article maintained. Although there are many obstacles for a man like me even in America ‘to create in a truly free manner in the interests of the people,’ the fact remains that I am still doing it.

Khrushchev went on to say: “In our day there are only two ways: peaceful coexistence or the most destructive war in history. There is no third choice.” Depending how this is read, that statement could be understood to be a threat. The kind of threat Nikita Khrushchev was a master at insinuating as Richard Nixon masterfully illustrated in his book *Six Crises*. It is more interesting to see how Khrushchev was even more masterful at rhetorical reversals than he was at outright bullying.

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http://www.jstor.org/stable/20029395

9 Ibid., 5.

10 Ibid., 7.
First, according to him, you can say whatever you like “in the interests of the people.” And then, two pages later, you can be jailed for “war propaganda,” which in practice generally meant contradicting anyone in power on the grounds that it was considered a “breach of the peace,” which was “the gravest crime against humanity.”

Khrushchev’s article continues: “As far back as March 12, 1951, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a ‘Law on the Defense of Peace,’ stating:

(1) Propaganda for war, in whatever form it may be conducted, undermines the cause of peace, creates the menace of a new war and therefore constitutes the gravest crime against humanity.

(2) Persons guilty of war propaganda should be brought to court and tried as heinous criminals.”

Khrushchev’s rhetorical trope here is very subtle. But for what it’s worth, advocating a war is exactly what I am doing right here. Can I, here in America, go to jail for writing this? Don’t answer that question too quickly.

Islamic State propaganda has by the U.S. Department of State, presumably on behalf of the White House, been ordered off the internet, and anyone caught “furthering their aims” by possessing or disseminating such propaganda “in whatever form it may be conducted” could be subject to penalties of law.

Somebody doesn’t want you to know something. What is that thing they do not want you to know? They don’t want you to know the seriousness of the threat posed by the Islamic State to the United States of America, and to the American people. If the American people became aware of it, aware of that threat, and aware of the seriousness of that threat, they would be very, very, concerned.

Secretary of State John Kerry is going to shut them up on the internet. Is he going to shut me up too?

President Barak Obama in his annual State of the Union address January 12, 2016 said: “[They are] masses of fighters on the back of pickup trucks and twisted souls plotting in apartments or garages.”

But the Islamic State is really very much more than that. But what is it? Are we allowed to know? Maybe it would take too much time, or maybe it would be just too much effort for the American people to learn what type of enemy they face; to learn how dangerous the threat is. When we live in an age of peril, isn’t far easier to hide the information than to study it? To return to the central thread of this argument, the reaction against enemy propaganda on the internet stems from the Administrations confusion at coming to the stark conclusion that the

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11 Ibid., 9.

12 President Obama’s 2016 State of the Union Address, https://medium.com/@WhiteHouse/president-obama-s-2016-state-of-the-union-address-7c06300f9726#.j47v2j8wy
enemy cannot be deterred in the manner the USSR was deterred during the Cold War.

Thus Secretary of State John Kerry at National Defense University January 13, 2016 said: “What we are seeing today are non-state actors who have a very different sense of the stakes, who don’t react the same way to the concept of deterrence, many of whom have decided, by the way, that they’d just as soon die as live, which is not the norm for most people’s judgment.”13

The Administration does not know how to deal with an out-side-the-box enemy that cannot be deterred. So it resorts to censorship to obviate the possibility that the knowing of the gruesome totalitarian madness perpetrated by the Islamic State might attract even more followers than it has already. Men and women from nearly every nation on Earth have already flocked to their side and have demonstrated their loyalty to the Islamic State by burning their passports on camera. This phenomenon has been demonstrated on many occasions, and there is much proof of it.

One who cannot comprehend the undeterred cannot understand its allure because America’s defense policy has been based on the policy deterrence since 1946 when Winston Churchill gave his famous ‘iron curtain’ speech The Sinews of Peace at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, March 5. In that speech Winston Churchill inter alia said: “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow…

“Twice in our own lifetime we have seen the United States, against their wishes and their traditions, against arguments, the force of which it is impossible not to comprehend, drawn by irresistible forces, into these wars in time to secure the victory of the good cause, but only after frightful slaughter and devastation had occurred. Twice the United States has had to send several millions of its

young men across the Atlantic to find the
war; but now war can find any nation,
wherever it may dwell between dusk and
dawn. Surely we should work with
conscious purpose for a grand pacification of
Europe, within the structure of the United
Nations and in accordance with its Charter.
That I feel is an open
cause of policy of very
great importance.”

Censorship is not only
an assault on
journalism and
scholarship, it is an
assault on historical
memory. A century
down the road, if
America lives that
long, with respect to
this matter, someone
might be able to say
anything about
anyone and who
could prove them
wrong? There’s no
proof, you got no
proof, where’s the
proof? There would be no proof because the
government has destroyed or hidden the
proof? Censorship is for cowards, but it is
also for Presidents who don’t have a plan.
Censorship is for a leader who hopes to
disfigure the historical memory to the point
that history will persist as hopelessly flawed.
America must renounce censorship as a
weapon of war for is reveals America’s
weaknesses. It shows America’s distinct lack
of faith in American academia, in American
scholarship, in American journalism, and in
the end it shows a lack of faith in the
American people themselves. It shows that
America’s leadership doubts the appeal of
American ideals, and it strengthens the
enemy’s hand. If their propaganda had no
appeal, the Administration would not feel
the need to put an end to our knowing of it.
If the Administration believes that the
enemy’s propaganda is so
repulsive, then the
Administration would
urge its wider
distribution. It to me then
appears that we must
believe our propaganda to
be not as good as their
propaganda, and that the
enemy appeal is greater
than our own.

It’s beginning to dawn on
the Administration that
the stakes are very high
and they don’t have a
plan. They don’t have the
creativity, they don’t have
the education, they don’t
have the foresight to win
people away from the
enemy organization, and they don’t have the
will to win the war.

They themselves are products of America’s
failed higher education system. And as such,
no longer even know what the foundations
of this culture are, or where our political
principles come from. They don’t even
know where democracy comes from.

They don’t know America was founded as a
republic, and that the Republic, and
therefore democracy, comes from Rome, not
Greece. They don’t know why or what Latin

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College, March 5, 1946.

http://www.winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/235-
1946-1963-elder-statesman/120-the-sinews-of-peace
is on our money. They don’t know that the only reason America has a Constitution is because of the Freemasons. They don’t know that there would be no democracy in the world anywhere if it we not for the existence and persistent efforts of the United States of America. They don’t know that immigrants come to America to become us, not we them. That immigrants come to America to absorb our culture, not we theirs. They do not know that when the Founding Fathers pronounced the annuit coeptis\textsuperscript{15} initiating the novus ordo seclorum\textsuperscript{16} they founded new Rome, not new Athens! And they, the Islamic State, having declared to conquer ‘Rome’ have vowed to conquer us!

They don’t understand the foundations of this republic, and they don’t understand that what is flawed at its base is flawed in its superstructure. Their basic understanding of the foundations of Western civilization, and therefore the foundations of America, is flawed. American education lacks foundation and we are paying a very heavy price for it now. They don’t understand that in the current state of affairs, the war with the Islamic State, is very likely going to get a lot worse.

The American people no longer know what it means to be an American aside from being a fat, lazy, stupid, cowardly slob with no vision, no mission, and no drive. They don’t know that enemy is the opposite: lean, and tough, and brave, and smart, and fearless, and undeterred. The Administration does not want you to know that. They don’t want you to know the enemy is more right about us than we are willing to acknowledge. They don’t want you to know that the enemy knows more about us than we know about them. And they are above all afraid that they are being beaten on the battlefield. And they don’t want you to know that either.

These characterizations are no doubt not altogether fair, since the American people can be a lot of good things too but we all have to admit that the prevailing image of an American is that of someone eating. American’s are generous because they can be, food is simply far too easy to get in the United States. Nations that are fat, and lazy, and complacent are considered opulent fruits ripe for the pickings, because the lean and wasted nobody wants.

They failed Richard Nixon’s vision. They failed to rise to his challenge. They squandered the so-called ‘peace dividend.’ They failed to find something beyond peace. Now they have this war. Maybe there’s nothing beyond war. Maybe history is just an endless alternation back and forth

\textsuperscript{15} ‘The undertakings have been approved.’

\textsuperscript{16} ‘New order of the ages.’
between peace and war. Maybe war really is a force that gives us meaning. America did put a man on the Moon. But that was during the Vietnam War in the middle of the Cold War. It was a Cold War, but it was still a war, but this is not that kind of war—not yet. Richard Nixon suggested both the Korean War and the Vietnam War were ‘battles’ in a much greater war.

The Islamic State War is not yet a war of such grand proportions. They have not as yet touched every region of the world, but they have impacted a very large part of it and the conflict is growing very rapidly. The Islamic State has already impacted North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australasia, and the Middle East. Constantly expanding, they ever strive for more. According to a New York Times report January 14, 2016, the Islamic State has attacked 17 countries since 2014.

In his January 12 speech President Obama said: “If this Congress is serious about winning this war, and wants to send a message to our troops and the world, you should finally authorize the use of military force against ISIL. Take a vote. But the American people should know that with or without Congressional action, ISIL will learn the same lessons as terrorists before them.”17

Is the President seeking peaceful co-existence with the Islamic State? Does that mean they are going to be permitted to grow, to become more powerful, and to further extend their reach? But this is a war that has nothing to do with Congress taking a vote. This war is coming to us whether America wants it or not. Whether Congress votes on it or not. This war is an imposed war. The enemy has the initiative.

The Strategy of Deterrence

All contemporary nuclear warfare strategies are strategies based on deterrence. They are formulated to oppose a state actor which also possesses nuclear weapons. The principle foundation document for nuclear deterrence is The Anatomy of Deterrence and was published by RAND Corporation, July 23, 1958. Deterrence strategy is counterpoised to the “win-the-war” strategy since modern nuclear deterrence rests upon the presupposition that “favorable results of a total war can never be sufficient to justify its costs”18 and therefore, if deterrence strategy is properly articulated, that total war will never be fought.

“We thus have the anomaly that deterrence is meaningful as a strategic policy only when we are fairly confident that the retaliatory instrument upon which it relies will not be called upon to function at all…We are, in other words, expecting the system to be constantly perfected while going

17 2016 State of the Union, supra. Emphasis added.

permanently unused. Surely we must concede that there is something almost unreal about it.”

Deterrence strategy was initially designed to fight the USSR during the Cold War. The ultimate corollaries to its fundamental presupposition, which proved true, was that nuclear weapons systems on both sides of the conflict would need to be perpetually upgraded in order to maintain a needed balance of power ultimately causing the belligerents to either peacefully co-exist or lose the war through bankruptcy.

The United States of America won the Cold War against the USSR precisely in that manner. When the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned, declared his office extinct, and handed over his powers, along with the nuclear missile launch codes, to Boris Yeltsin on December 25, 1991. The following day, Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union signed Declaration no. 142-N granting independence to the Soviet Republics and created the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). America had won the war. The Soviet Union had gone bankrupt on account of its arms race with the United States, America had succeeded in its grand strategy of “victory without war.”

The Strategy of Win-the-War

There is only one alternative to the deterrence policy and that policy is called the “win-the-war” policy. About military strategists who adhere to the win-the-war policy RAND Corporation, in the same report mentioned above says: “The capacity to deter is usually wrongly identified with the capacity to win a war.”

According to the argument presented in that report winning a war requires either “decisive and effective superiority” or “success in initiative,” but deterrence does not strictly depend on military superiority.

“We can easily see how truistic this point is when we recall that neither Mexico nor Canada needs military power to defend itself from the United States; but truistic or not, the point is implicitly denied by those who equate ‘deterrence’ with ‘capacity to win.’”

The report continues:

“Now that we are in a nuclear age, the potential deterrence value of an admittedly inferior force may be sharply greater than it has ever been before. Let us assume that a menaced small nation could threaten the Soviet Union with only a single thermonuclear bomb, which, however, it could certainly deliver on Moscow if attacked. This retaliatory capability would be sufficient to give the Soviet government much pause. Certainly they would not

19 Ibid., 5.
20 The Anatomy of Deterrence, 7.
invoke the destruction of Moscow wantonly, that is, for trivial gains.”

The report goes on to explain that if the smaller and weaker nation had more nuclear bombs the deterrence effect would be greater, but when plotted on a curve “the curve begins at a rather high level of deterrence for the first such bomb, and that while it moves significantly higher as the number of bombs increases beyond one, it does so at a decreasing rate.”

That would mean that if the Islamic State could get one such bomb, the Islamic State could effectively deter the United States and not the other way around. Now whomsoever might suppose that acquiring one such bomb would be next to impossibly difficult should made to recall that peace activists repetitively infiltrated a nuclear base in Belgium in 2010, took video of themselves so doing, and even photographed nuclear weapons stored there.

“At least three times since January, peace activists have slipped onto a Belgian military base and on one occasion, they contend, made it inside an aircraft shelter where nuclear weapons are stored.

“The Belgian organization Peace Action in February produced an initial video documenting how five of its members on Jan. 31 wandered unimpeded for roughly an hour at the Kleine Brogel Air Base, northeast of Brussels, before being apprehended by an unarmed guard.

“This month the Belgian group revealed that over the past nine months, its members have repeatedly penetrated base security. The Antwerp-based outfit is unaffiliated with Peace Action headquartered in Washington.

“‘We visited 15 other bunkers, some of which still contain nuclear weapons,’ an unidentified Peace Action narrator states in a new video posted Oct. 10 to YouTube. ‘We took pictures in one of them.’

“The nine-minute release includes video and still footage from three or more incidents this year in which several individuals jumped the Kleine Brogel perimeter fence and identified what they believe are storage locations for U.S. nuclear-armed B-61 gravity bombs.”

The United States shares nuclear weapons with five of its NATO allies: Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey. There are eight sovereign nations which are considered Nuclear Weapons States: United

21 Ibid, 8.
22 Ibid., 8-9.

States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea. Israel is suspected of having nuclear weapons. It is believed that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a nuclear sharing agreement. The rest of the matter is about as clear as mud.

If the Islamic State were to acquire one of these weapons, either through theft, or through the conquest of a nation possessing these weapons, in whole, or in part, they would be confronted with a choice between using the weapon immediately or holding on to the weapon, and entering the nuclear club, so to speak, and thereafter to engage in nuclear blackmail. They would then probably seek, and gain, at least moderate ‘recognition’ as a viable state, since it only takes one of these weapons to deter an even a much more powerful nation. Which suggests the possibility of the Islamic State taking a seat at the United Nations at some time in the future presupposing that they were successful in acquiring at least one such weapon.

But we could make this simpler and suggest that the Islamic State may acquire another kind of Weapon of Mass Destruction such as a chemical or biological agent. It is believed by some regional watchers that the Islamic State affiliate in Libya acquired chemical agents when the Libyan tyrant Muammar Gaddafi was toppled October 20, 2011. But it is also believed that the Islamic State is perusing a biological warfare program on its own which could prove far deadlier than any form of a chemical attack.

Thus it would appear that even if a nuclear weapon were to be placed permanently beyond the reach of the Islamic State, the Islamic State will very likely in the near future be able to produce a biological agent which will without question be used in order to prove the deadliness of the weapon, the intentions of their organization, and the seriousness of their cause. Thus, strictly speaking, the acquisition of a nuclear weapon would not be necessary for the Islamic State to achieve at least a marginal level of recognition as a viable state through a marginal level of deterrence. This raises the question of “first strike initiative.”

“Some are simply unused to thinking in terms of the enemy having the initiative, preferring always to think in terms of our having it. This is an age-old addiction of official war planners. Others, more sophisticated, apparently feel that a force that lets itself take the first blow will not be strong enough to win a war, regardless of what it has done to protect itself, and they are by training, tradition and often temperament interested only in strategies
that can win—i.e., before it is hit. They are either not interested in a predominantly deterrence strategy, or they are convinced that a force not strong enough to win is not strong enough to deter.”

But since we have already conceded that the enemy cannot be deterred and will most certainly use a weapon of mass destruction if it by them is acquired. For instance if they had two nuclear weapons, one would most certainly be used to guarantee the deterrence value of the second. But since biological agents are infinitely replicable once created, it appears that a biological attack would be the simpler pathway to the recognition through marginal deterrence that they crave and will one day need.

A lengthy document National Blueprint for Biodefense published by the Hudson Institute and the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies in October of 2015 concluded: “Current and former federal officials, as well as a number of private sector experts, believe that the biological threat is real and growing, and urge increased activity to defend the nation against it...”

“Weapons that once consumed a great deal of time and resources to make now take far less, and it is reasonable to believe that what the United States could accomplish more than 40 years ago, others can accomplish now.

“The resources necessary to produce biological weapons are more easily obtained by states and terrorists than in years past. For example, regarding ISIL, former Representative Mike Rogers believes that, ‘the longer they have freedom of operation in any space that contains those kinds of elements, I think that’s dangerous to the United States and our European allies.’ Additionally, terrorist organizations, domestic militia groups, and lone wolves have expressed intent to use and shown some capacity to develop biological weapons. Advances in science have led to a convergence of biology and chemistry, and an ability (through synthetic biology) to create and combine agents. All of this has expanded the number and types of potential biological weapons and made it more difficult to fully comprehend the enormity of the threat.”

These issues place the ultimatum on the more just cause. Seeing that we, being American’s, presuppose the more just to be ours, our allies, and our friends, the idea of a first strike on enemy power structures with the intention of permanently crippling the enemy’s ability to make war and breaking its will to fight becomes more attractive and

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24 Ibid., 14-15.
http://www.biodefensestudy.org/SiteAssets/Pages/default/1425-2139_BRSP_Report_100815b%5B1%5D%5B6%5D.pdf
may in the end become absolutely necessary for the survival of our nation.

For obvious reasons the United States would not deploy a weapon of mass destruction of a biological kind. Thus such a first strike would invariably issue from America’s nuclear arsenal.

All of this suggesting that a first strike on the enemy would be ‘just, prudent, and wise.’ The only question that remains is where does the United States place the bar? How far can the Islamic State go before a first strike with an atomic weapon becomes inevitable and, in a practicable sense, automatic? What’s the force that moves the hand that pushes the button? If news reports are true, the Islamic State has killed more than one-half-million people. At what point will the Islamic State be said to have crossed the line? One million killed, two million, six million, fifty million people killed?

Journalists, like think-tankers and military planners, have a tendency to seek clarity through quantification. Maybe it’s a range of numbers of people killed, say “somewhere between x and y.” Maybe it’s not about the numbers of those killed, but a matter of what kind of attack it is? If it were a nuclear attack? If it were a biological attack?

Maybe it’s not about either the numbers killed or the type of attack, but really a question of who is attacked? For instance if they nuke American soil, there would most certainly be a nuclear retaliation upon them. But what about our NATO allies? It does seem likely that a nuclear attack on a NATO ally would precipitate a nuclear attack upon the Islamic State. But what if they attacked a nation which is not necessarily a friend or an ally?

More importantly, should we wait for an attack on us, before we make an attack upon them?

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