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Newsletter

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The regular program of Lectures is now in place. Please note the dates in your diaries to avoid disappointment. There are no further Luncheon discussions planned until later in the year. Please note the date of the AGM in August.

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JUNE	
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14 Aug	Annual General meeting (Luncheon)
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Blamey Oration Transcript Update

The RUSI is awaiting the formal Departmental release of the paper so that it can be made available to members.

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Special Paper

An address by **Gregory R. Copley, Editor, GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs**, to the National Security course of The Canadian Forces College, Toronto.

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Strategic Policy in an Age of Global Realignment

A Three-Part Presentation on

*Grand Strategy, the Global Condition and Outlook, and
a Context for 21st Century Strategic Policy*

An address by

Gregory R. Copleyⁱ

to the National Security course of

The Canadian Forces College,

Toronto: June 18, 2012

Everything we have taken for granted as the basis of our modern social organisational structure over the past couple of centuries is in the process of change. The world of your children, and grandchildren, will be dramatically different from your own life. How do we prepare for that?

This is not a question with simple answers, and today we will only begin to scratch the surface of the challenge.

To begin with, we have to look at something which is rarely discussed, but forms a momentous reality moving into the mid-21st Century. It is that all strategic planning over the coming decades will be affected by the fact that global human population numbers are beginning a process of peaking before

entering a vortex of decline. This process, already underway, will see a concurrent new surge in migration patterns. In many areas, population levels will fall precipitously. Some societies, however, will see a population rise as immigrants flee from economic disaster zones, many of which are being transformed by population decline. Some of this will trigger a further surge in rural-to-urban movement; some of it will be from continent to continent, state to state. In all of this, we will see more changes of borders, more creation and collapse of states — in short, more transformation — than the entirety of the 20th Century, a period in which we saw perhaps a hundred countries appear on the lists of new sovereign states,

Perhaps this seems like an overstatement. To counter that, we must remember that we saw the global population explode from 2.5-billion in 1950 to seven-billion today. This has been accompanied by — and, indeed, caused by — a massive increase in global wealth and wellbeing and an equal growth in the benefits of science and technology. We were able to comfortably absorb and accept this growth. Indeed, we thought, as a result, that growth in all things — from populations to wealth — was inevitable and desirable.

Desirable it may be; inevitable it is not. As I said, we are about to see population levels reach a peak in the near future. Growth rates are already slowing, for reasons I would be happy to discuss. But after the population level reaches its apogee, we can expect population levels to decline fairly rapidly, with a substantial interaction with economic and national management issues.

In all of this, those states with balance, stability, and wealth will face the ruin of these attributes through — if left unchecked — that transformative migration which, locust-like, cares not about the society into which it moves, but only for the food and shelter which can be had, even for a short period.

As global population decline hits in a decade or two — and distorts societies — social restructuring and poverty will increasingly drive economic refugees, who are already a factor in population unrest. As with weather patterns, high pressure areas of population despair will move into low pressure areas of calm. These great societies on the move are not people with long-term vision. Their action is driven by despair, envy, and dreams. History shows us numerous examples of this phenomenon: the great family-group migrations of Celtic peoples from their original homes East of the Caspian Sea to the lands of

Western Europe and the British Isles in pre-Christian times; the subsequent Celtic Irish migration to the Americas and Australasia in the face of the potato famine; the similar Celtic Scottish migration in the face of the enclosure movement; the movement of Continental Europeans to Australia and Canada after World War II; and so on. Those migratory patterns have had an enduring strategic impact, as did the travels of the Roma peoples out of India over the past couple of millennia, and all of mankind, originally, out of Africa, and so on.

So the key to strategic success will be to see how the shapes of population surge, decline, and movement will occur. Strategic power has always been built around factors *other* than population numbers. It is always built around population *viability*. This — the nature of the world and the people in it — is the critical element and contextual soup of our global architecture. This is the grand strategic framework. And we cannot manage the components of our framework if we do not comprehend the whole. Population *viability* is the key.

This brings us to the topics we address today: firstly, *the nature and meaning of grand strategy*; secondly, *the global condition at present*; and thirdly, *a look at the strategic framework into the mid-21st Century*. Essentially, then, we will start from the abstract — the philosophical framework — and move to the current reality, and then to the possible future.

The Nature and Meaning of Grand Strategy

Grand strategy is not easily defined, and there are no guidebooks to assist in mastering even the identification of the shape of it. To equate it to four-dimensional chess would be to criminally over-simplify its complexity and dynamism.

But, you are the chosen, and it is the morass into which you must plunge. You are to enter a realm of service to your society which requires that you lead, or that you create the understanding to make leadership effective at a national level. It means, ultimately, that there will be no-one to guide you but yourself; no-one whose authority can protect you. This is a status — a position of ultimate responsibility — which falls to few in public life. A career in the Armed Forces or in civil service is scant preparation for such work, however motivated those in such callings may be. You are moving, as you study national security policy, *outside* the protection of the narrowly-defined disciplines of military or

government service. You must be able to comprehend, appreciate, and be comfortable in a world which appears random, chaotic, beyond control, and moving rapidly into the unknown.

Whether or not the laurels of leadership are ultimately given to you by your society, you have chosen to understand and accept the responsibility of national security. This, *writ large*, is indeed responsibility for the national destiny. By this very choice you are already in command, even if, for the moment, only of yourself. This means that, henceforth, you will – as a result of this course and your own accumulated experience – be conducting your own enquiry, and thinking for yourself. And this is where you enter the not unpleasant realm known as “the loneliness of command”.

This is, perhaps, one of the most interesting times to become involved in national policy, because — as I said — all human society is undergoing a period of seismic, underlying structural change. So, then, before discussing the specifics of this paper — the global condition, the global outlook, and a context for 21st Century strategic policy — it is critical that we first discuss the *architecture* in which we will function. This “architecture” is understood and managed through the *discipline* we call grand strategy. The very phrase, “grand strategy”, is one which has been loosely used, probably in your present course of study, with very little to define it, or to give it the serious intellectual foundation it warrants, and which you will require.

Grand Strategy: Grand strategy is the over-arching framework matrix for the successful creation, maintenance, growth, and defense of a society. It begins with the discipline of defining, on the basis of a deep introspective and contextual understanding, *the nature and goals* of a sovereign entity — a nation-state, in most cases — into the indefinite future. It then must define and understand all the factors which impinge upon the nature and goals which have been defined. This discipline then requires that the *processes* also be defined and implemented which actually enable the achievement of the sovereign *goals* and the achievement or preservation of the *nature* of the sovereign entity.

Grand strategy, then, is the defining of aspirations; and the comprehension, and management of threats and opportunities, at the largest realistic scale. It creates and manages capabilities to achieve what has been defined. It then implements and defends that process within the fluid context of global change.

And that context is, to the greatest degree, outside the control of the single sovereign entity.

It is a multi-dimensional process which must be long-term in its perspective, and broad in its contextual understanding of its own self and society, and of other societies, and of nature, and all of history. But *the process can never take precedence over the goals*. It is process — in other words, policy, and policy implementation — which must be flexible to enable the achievement of goals. Let me stress here a maxim from my forthcoming book, *UnCivilization: Urban Geopolitics in the Coming Chaos*¹. It is this: *Preoccupation with process and means is tactical; preoccupation with outcomes and future context is strategic*.

What is critical to comprehend in the grand strategic framework is that *everything* is interconnected. So this move into the grand strategic realm marks the end of your career of narrow-discipline specialisation. Henceforth, you must become a “specialist *generalist*”, as my old mentor and the pre-eminent grand strategist, Dr Stefan Possony, told me.

But with the very acquisition of broad strategic understanding comes responsibility; responsibility to act, and to see the actions required to formulate and implement policies which respond to the evolving mosaic of the global strategic architecture, including the architecture of one’s own society.

If the context changes, why then should policies not also evolve commensurately? In the military we comment that “no plan of campaign survives the first shot”, because the very act of *doing* shatters the perfect, or idealised, concepts of the mind. Similarly, no strategy even remains *valid* if contextual reality changes. Despite that statement of the obvious, however, national policies often remain in existence until they are destroyed by events.

Put more succinctly: ***policies remain unchanged until destroyed by realities generated by external forces***. Even victory cannot of its own accord bring policy changes in the victorious societies; indeed, victorious societies are the ones *most* reluctant to change their policies, even though their victory may have rendered the old policies null by virtue of having achieved their purpose. The

¹ Copley, Gregory R.: *UnCivilization: Urban Geopolitics in the Coming Chaos*. Washington, DC, 2012: the International Strategic Studies Association.

continuation of anti-Russian policies by the West after the Cold War is a case in point. The geography in geopolitics remains constant, but politics remains fluid.

You will be unable to perform the functions of broader leadership (that is, leadership on a national level, or advising national and international leaders) without a clear concept of grand strategy. One of my earlier books, *The Art of Victory*², defines, in many respects, the goals of grand strategy, but in that next book of mine, *UnCivilization*, I noted: “Grand strategy takes, as its basis, a comprehensive view of *that which is*, as well as *that which was*, and *that which may be possible*. It is a view which must be based on a knowledge of which paths through nature and through humanity have been determined over time. We need a *perspective* of the terrain — the mosaic — of the universe and the behaviour of all of nature, including human history.”

It goes on: “Pattern recognition ... is the key to Grand Strategy; the basis of assessing the strategic terrain, if we define ‘strategic terrain’ as the entirety of context which bears upon our lives and fortunes. It is the detailed vision and acceptance of *that which is*. A grand strategic perspective minimizes the necessity for us to be shaped merely by faith and belief, and embraces the great architecture of earth’s, and life’s, timeless interconnections based on observable phenomena. It comprehends the behavioural necessities of the microbes which make up the soil, to the life forces of those things which we think of as living organisms and beings.”

For the grand strategist, it is insufficient to know merely ourselves and any potential adversary; it is vital to comprehend the entire warp and weft of history and nature. The more that comprehension is possible, the more that it is then possible for an individual, a leader, or a society to create goals, and determine the means of achieving them, in the full understanding of context.

Clearly, this is like saying that a verifiable unified field theory — a theory which explains the interlinking of everything — would enable us to understand how each aspect of the universe works. So to expect to have the kind of all-embracing grand strategic vision of the way mankind functions within the natural world is itself a utopian dream. But the fact that complete knowledge or

² Copley, Gregory R.: *The Art of Victory*. New York, 2006: Simon & Schuster’s Threshold Editions.

wisdom is elusive does not mean that we should restrict our thinking to the prosaic, or to short-term, narrowly-defined intellectual specialisations.

To summarise:

1. Grand strategy identifies the terrain: that is, long- and short-term context, the historical dimensions, and the global context and trends, including the nature of one's own society. This provides the *framework of understanding*; the situational context in the largest sense.
2. With a knowledge of the strategic terrain, grand strategy then defines *the national goals* in detail, in the short-, medium-, and long-terms (including the indefinite future), including defining the enduring nature and values — including language — of one's society.
3. Grand strategy defines milestones and interim steps to achieve the goals all the way into that indefinite future, and assigns responsibility for achieving those stages. Further, it then manages and coordinates the “whole-of-society” process of achieving those goals. In all of this, the art of psychological strategy is the most important discipline to master, and prosecute with utmost discretion. Napoleon Bonaparte said that on the battlefield “the moral is to the physical as two is to one”. In other words, even in battle, intangibles and psychological factors are twice as important as physical factors. In grand strategy, psychological factors are *10 times* — perhaps a hundred times — as important as the physical.

So what we are saying is that all aspects of life and policy form interlocking parts of the grand strategy matrix. Nothing is remote from it, from politics and the social sciences, as well as science and technology, medicine and healthcare, religion and beliefs, agriculture and water supply, economics, military security, education, linguistics, and everything else you can think of.

We can see in all of this that the true dynamic element is human. Geography, climate, nature in general: all are important. But what shapes our destiny is human competition and human capability. And yet, what we see least discussed is the area of population strategy — perhaps the most critical element within the grand strategic matrix — so sensitive are we to any suggestion that the

human shape of society should be managed. And yet that is *exactly* what social organisation is all about.

Enough talk of the endless vistas of the grand strategic perspective. If you have not welcomed the escape from the narrow canyons and jungles of close-quarter — essentially tactical — discipline, then you may not be ready for grand strategy or, indeed, national policy. But if we need a half-way house as we move to the sweeping horizons of grand strategy, let us look at the global condition now, and over the coming year or so, before we move on to look at the human condition into the middle of the 21st Century.

The Current Global Condition

We have plunged unready into an epoch of great change, and there will be *massive* change in 2012 and 2013 and beyond. We need not categorise this as good or bad change, only that the terrain is shifting rapidly, and we need to understand it if we are to cope. Change is inevitable, and mostly — as is now the case — it is *disguised change*. As a result, we must very consciously learn to recognise that change and be prepared to modify our approaches accordingly. Sudden change is easy: to be faced with *à fait accompli* leaves us with no choice but to adapt; gradual change allows us to rationalise our responses and this causes us to delay, often fatally, our adaptation.

The major factors in the second half of 2012 and into 2013 include the abandonment of Atlanticism by the US and much of Europe. The US has turned Westward, toward China and East Asia generally. Much of Continental Europe has turned Eastward, toward China, Russia, and East Asia generally³. Ironically, the People's Republic of China — toward which North America and Europe and Africa, and Latin America and the Indian Ocean states all look — is itself facing growing traumas, and will not remain the stable market on which the US and Europe (not to mention Australia) is counting.

³ Copley, Gregory R.: "The Lights are Looking East, all Over Europe", in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 4-2012.

Meanwhile, this dramatic re-orientation by the US and much of Continental Europe spells the end for the North Atlantic Alliance — NATO — except for the fact that the US is unwilling to surrender its last remaining political-industrial grip over its old alliance structures, including NATO and ANZUS. The US is continuing to promote the alliances as a means of retaining influence, mostly utilising the massive F-35 fighter programme as a cornerstone. I wrote recently a piece entitled *Logistics Strategy*⁴, which highlights the reality that the global supply chain, developed by the military but broadened into globalised trade since the end of World War II, actually forms the backbone of ongoing alliance continuity. But even that structure may now be coming to an end. Within this, we need to recognise that major military equipment decisions lock a society into supply chains — and often, therefore, alliances — for periods up to half a century. But the core of strategic policy goes even deeper, with military and policy doctrine often driving agendas for more than a century, long after the causes and origins of those doctrines evolved. Often surviving long beyond their necessity or desirability.

What else should concern us in the short-term global strategic condition?⁵

1. **Global Economic and Financial Trends:** Economic fragility is everywhere, even in fairly robust and growing economies. Some of the so-called new engines of economic and financial growth — Brazil, India, and the People's Republic of China (PRC) — face significant hurdles in 2012. We saw India's problems begin to become more obvious with the slower GDP growth in the first quarter of 2012, for example. Indeed, it is likely that we may see *economic growth couple with instability*, and with an inability of even substantial growth to meet social (and therefore political) expectations. Absent major surprises, watch for India to fall still further behind the PRC in terms of economic, and

⁴ Copley, Gregory R.: "Logistics Strategy", in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 4-2012.

⁵ Many of these points were highlighted in a report drafted by this writer in December 2011, and remain valid in mid-2012. See *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 1-2012.

therefore strategic, competitiveness. Australia, too, will show signs of economic slowdown. But the delicacy of the global situation, as well as the PRC's leadership transition in 2012, means that the PRC is unlikely, during this year, to see its *yuan* transform into a major global reserve currency.

Three of the major global economic lynchpins — the United States of America, the European Union, and Japan — remain in economic and financial difficulties, and this will constrain their strategic capabilities significantly. The rising debt-to-GDP ratio in both the US and the EU will hollow economic recovery efforts. This situation also means that the US dollar and the *euro* will retain their status as global trading currencies *only by default*, and will help reinforce a continuation of a fundamentally inflationary situation in the global marketplace. National statistics, which are biased politically, will continue to obscure real, underlying inflation, and this will continue to be pervasive and exported from the US and eurozone.

2. **Global Energy Supply and Demand:** 2012 and 2013 will see the start of a transformation in fossil fuel supply and demand patterns, driven to an increasing extent by technological capabilities (such as the increasing possibility of delivering fuels derived from shale deposits in Europe, North America, and elsewhere). Changing strategic power reach (such as the decline in US influence in the Middle East, Central Asia, and, increasingly, Africa; and the rise in the PRC's and India's acquisitiveness) will also change control and logistical patterns for oil and gas distribution.

The US has the ability to move much of its fossil fuel dependence away from the Middle East and Africa through transforming political approaches to the exploitation of domestic oil and gas fields and through cooperation with Canada in the exploitation of Alberta's shale deposits, but is unlikely to make headway in this arena in the short term, due to political inertia. Based on present evidence, the US energy dependence pattern will remain slow to change in 2012, and significant change is only likely to occur with a change in US political

leadership, which could occur at the beginning of 2013. As a result, the US will continue to face high costs, and high security vulnerability, because of its ongoing dependence on the maritime delivery of its oil and gas imports. This dependence comes at a time of declining US ability to project power to protect or — through strategic influence — ensure security of supply from, say, the Gulf of Guinea or the Middle East. Declining US strategic reach has already ensured the loss of control over, for example, Central Asian/Caspian oil and gas supplies.

Part of the changing fossil fuel logistical framework which will affect the strategic balance — apart from the exploitation of shale deposits in Europe, North America, and elsewhere — will be the clarity which will begin to emerge during 2012 in the future importance of oil and gas fields being developed in the Eastern Mediterranean. This will be a major driver in determining the economic creditworthiness (and therefore eurozone reliability) of the South-Eastern European countries such as Cyprus and Greece and, potentially, Italy. This will be a significant factor in the strategic behaviour of Turkey, which is now seen as being outside the European Union *bloc*, and which is struggling to retain a major rôle in the energy marketplace. It lacks control over viable energy fields, and its influence over Central Asian/Caspian energy transportation to European markets (or even to the Mediterranean transshipment market) is, in relative terms, declining. Turkish economic fragility is, as a result, beginning to show, and this has generated an “equal and opposite” rise in Turkish strategic adventurism, designed to ensure a re-growth of neo-Ottoman influence over the Levant (particularly Syria and parts of the Palestinian Authority) and even Egypt. This adventurism seems likely to come to a head in 2012, even though the current Turkish Islamist political leadership is unsure how to effectively realise its adventurism given its concern over the reliability and loyalty of the Turkish Armed Forces to support an approach which goes so strongly against the secularist Kemalism of the Armed Forces.

The growing uncertainty of hydrocarbon supplies from the Persian Gulf, North Africa, and the Gulf of Guinea has sent the EU into an even greater reliance on

Russia-origin and Russia-dominated energy supplies. What started as an economics-driven default option will keep evolving in 2012 into a grand-strategic transformation. Brussels' ambivalence about continued reliance on the NATO-based Euro-Atlanticism *versus* a shift to the Mackinderist "Common Eurasian Home" doctrine advocated by Berlin and Moscow will be decided in favor of Russia and Germany, primarily on energy supply grounds, and irrespective of any political instability in Russia. My colleague, Yossef Bodansky, rightly argues that the Kremlin will increasingly trade artificial lowering of energy prices for Europe's political-strategic pliability. This realignment will have a major impact on the EU's policies.

The strategic impact during 2012 of new energy-related technologies, apart from shale cracking, which will be worth watching are those related to energy transmission and storage. On the one hand, fixed, terrestrial electricity grids will become more efficient through interactive energy management computing, but at the same time they will become strategically more vulnerable. On the other hand, 2012 is seeing a growth in the development to strategic scale of viable storage devices — batteries — which can act as stand-alone support for increasingly efficient local communications, computing networks, and potable water supply. These can be sustained by the newly-strategic-scale solar power technologies. This is a significant change. It is the growth of these self-sustaining local networks which will serve as the guarantor of stability in the event of widespread interference with conventional terrestrial grids by natural disasters or human-sponsored disruptions.

3. Strategic Recovery by the US. The US will not, in 2012 or 2013, show signs of any recovery of its global strategic credibility or real strength. Its manufacturing and science and technology sectors will continue to suffer from low (even declining) productivity and difficulty in capital formation (for political reasons, primarily). A significant US recovery is not feasible in the timeframe given the present political and economic policies and impasse evident. US allies will increasingly look to their own needs while attempting to

sustain their alliance relationship with the US to the extent feasible. Those outside the US alliance network, or peripheral to it, will increasingly disregard US political/diplomatic pressures, and will seek to accommodate the PRC or regional actors. The continued economic malaise of the US during 2012, even if disguised by modest nominal GDP growth, will make economic (and therefore strategic) recovery more difficult and ensure that it will take longer.

In any event, the fact that the US national debt exceeds the GDP hollows the dollar and thus makes meaningful recovery impossible in the short-term. The attractiveness of a low dollar value in comparison to other currencies in making US manufacturing investment more feasible than in recent years is offset by declining US workforce productivity and political constraints which penalize investment in manufacturing, or even in achieving appealing conditions for capital formation. Banks are as afraid of such investment as are manufacturing investors themselves.

4. **EU/Eurozone Prospects.** The May 2012 French Presidential elections meant that, more than ever, Germany — to all intents — *is* Europe, strategically speaking. France no longer has the capacity to challenge, or balance, Germany in the eurozone. However, the unwillingness of eurozone leaders Germany and France to decouple economic and financial issues within the currency zone will continue to extract a growing cost on the Continental European economies. This, potentially coupled with a plateauing of demand from the PRC and India (among others) for German manufactured goods, could bring the eurozone to a further period of stagnation.

The option of a break-up of the eurozone, and the reversion to national currencies by some euro states (such as Greece, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Portugal [the PIIGS states], etc.) may be dampened by the fact that such a move may not address the underlying fiscal structures. But tempers are clearly fraying within the EU, and moves toward the creation of Europe as a nation-state have slowed commensurately, even as Germany calls for greater integration as the antidote.

Indeed, the desire for EU unity seems mainly driven by German fears of a return to 19th and 20th century nationalism and its potential to generate military competitiveness on the Continent. Claims that this fear is no longer a factor in German and French desires to sustain the eurozone miss the visceral underpinning of Franco-German policy in this regard.

In the meantime, EU strategic projection has also come, in relative terms, to a standstill, and those EU and other European states active in the Coalition war in Afghanistan are anxious to withdraw from that engagement and to reduce military costs as rapidly as possible. All that this will do will be to further reduce the EU's diplomatic influence on Turkey, the Middle East, Africa, and on global issues. Italy, which no longer has a democratically-elected government, is the bellweather of how European economies are being driven into decline.

5. Iran-US-Israeli Military Engagement. 2011 drew to a close with Iran, the US, and Israel posturing themselves confrontationally over the question of Iran's pursuit of an indigenous nuclear weapons production capability. All parties to the disagreement have postured themselves badly, through diplomatic bluster, and find the search for face-saving difficult. Equally, there is a distinct lack of understanding of each of the players by each other. The reality, however, is that military solutions to the crisis are not feasible given the lack of sufficient military and economic resources available to any of the parties, including the US. By withdrawing unconditionally from Iraq and turning against Bahrain at the height of the Iran-sponsored turmoil, the US effectively demonstrated to friends and foes alike that, rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding, that Washington was no longer committed to — or understood — the Greater Middle East as a zone of vital interests.

This may mean that any "military confrontation" between any of the players would — ideally for all parties — be limited to a short, sharp jab or series of jabs, without getting into major strikes against significant land targets. Symbolism in engagement would be the order of the day, allowing honor to be

satisfied on all sides. Indeed, a US naval confrontation with an Iranian naval element in or near the Straits of Hormuz might even obviate any need for an Iranian-Israeli spat. Iran has been careful to ensure that any provocation of Israel in direct terms up to this point has been via *HizbAllah* elements in Lebanon, and even this option is less secure for Iran in 2012 given the instability of Iran's major conduit to *HizbAllah*, Syria.

Any engagement of forces between any of these players is high-risk, however, given the prospect of a misstep, or over-reach, by a politician for whatever reason.

The matter is further dampened by the knowledge in US policy circles — tangentially confirmed by the US Director of National Intelligence (DNI) at the beginning of 2011 — that Iran already had a number of nuclear weapons acquired since about 1991 from a number of international sources. Given that the US and Israel have “pledged” never to allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, any open acknowledgement of the reality of Iranian nuclear weapons possession either invites the US or Israeli governments to take decisive military action against Iran, or look foolish. The answer has been — as it was with the US denial of North Korean nuclear weapons possession for so many years — to pretend the evidence does not exist, but to act cautiously nonetheless.

6. **The Arab “Spring Break”.** Concerns over the positive or negative prospects for “democracy” in the Middle East as a result of the rash of examples of popular unrest (Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria) should be seen in the light of the removal of a firm superpower authority figure in the region following the collapse of the Cold War and subsequent decline of the US. They should also be seen in light of the reality of the maturing and stagnation of some of the political systems which did not have the flexibility and legitimacy of traditional systems. The very peaceful and stable transformation of Morocco in 2011 — with a new Constitution and subsequent parliamentary elections — showed the value of a respected, historical leadership and governance process

which was inherently rooted in local values. But how the governance systems evolve in Egypt and Syria, in particular, and also elsewhere in the region, is of strategic importance, but the process is natural and inevitable, and the US and Europe have demonstrated in the past few years that they are unwilling and incapable to influence events.

The PRC and Russia lack the capability to enforce any outcomes in the region, and Iran has an influence by virtue of being such an overwhelming presence in the Persian Gulf. Indeed, what happens in Syria is also of profound concern for Iran and its rise or fall as a major regional power. This, and some of the other disputes, highlights the competition which runs parallel to the cooperation between Iran and Turkey.

Not unrelated to this is the tenuous nature of the attempt by the Turkish political leadership's bid to rebuild the neo-Ottoman status of Turkey in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean, the Greater Black Sea Basin and Balkans, and Eastward into the Caspian Basin and Central Asia. Turkey has also strongly promoted itself as a patron of the Arab states, on the Arabian Peninsula, as well as of Egypt. But memories of the Ottoman domination of the region are not merely repositied in Turkish minds; they are also, with negative connotations, embedded in the minds of their former subject peoples. So Turkey's bid for major regional power status seems likely to come to a head in 2012, possibly through forced attempts to change the leadership of Syria on Turkey's terms, or through confrontations with Israel and Cyprus (and possibly Greece) over Eastern Mediterranean energy deposits and maritime boundary claims.

2012 finds Iran desperately fighting the formation of a Sunni *bloc* comprised of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, which, if successful, would reverse and contain the historic ascent of Shi'ite Iran and its consolidation of hold over Iraq, Lebanon and parts of Syria. In other words, they aim to stop Iran consolidating a Shi'ite land-bridge to the shores of the Mediterranean. In recent months, as the tectonic shifts in the Greater Middle East were becoming more pronounced,

Tehran repeatedly used the prospect of US-Iranian *rapprochement* and Iranian tacit facilitation of the safe withdrawal of US troops from neighboring Iraq, the Persian Gulf, and Afghanistan as inducement for the US to *not* side with the Sunni *bloc* led by Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Because of these higher priorities, Tehran elected to lick its wounds and refrained from escalating the Shi'ite insurrection in Bahrain even though Tehran definitely has the capacity to do so at will.

In 2012, a US Presidential election year, Tehran will remain confounded by the contradictory US policy toward Iran and the Middle East.

On the one hand, the Obama White House continues to project great interest in *rapprochement* with Tehran over Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf, as well as willingness to compromise over Iranian influence in post-Mubarak Egypt and post-Qadhafi Libya. The Obama White House is also the primary supporter of tiny Qatar's ascent as a regional interventionist Islamist power which seeks to enshrine regional stability by assisting the formation of *jihadist* types of government with which Iran can co-exist, first in Libya and now in Syria.

On the other hand, the Obama White House remains committed to the political ascent of the Muslim Brothers (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) and the Turkish Islamists, who are anti-Shi'ite. Moreover, the US supports the Syrian opposition and urges Turkey to topple the Assad Government in the name of demography-based-democracy: that is, the ascent of a Sunni-Islamist government in Damascus.

Hence, while it seems to be too late to reverse the US encouragement of, and commitment to, the Turkish-Saudi-Qatari Sunni *bloc*, the zealous unleashing of an all-out "anti-Iranian" campaign in this context is filled with great danger. Any military attack on Iran would result in a region-wide conflagration which would include Israel. This would play into the Mahdivists' hands. Irrespective of the extent of the Arab military defeat, the real winners would be the Islamists-*jihadists* who would rise to power in the name of redeeming Arab-Islamic honour from the failed and now defeated Arab nationalism and statehood. The

US penchant to encourage and exploit the ascent of Sunni-Islamist *blocs* in the Middle East (Turkey-Saudi Arabia-Egypt) and South Asia (Pakistan-Afghanistan) in order to stifle Iran might pressure Tehran but would also result in the radicalization of Central Asia and the soft underbelly of Russia to the detriment of vital Western interests such as what remains of its access to the region's energy resources.

Within all this, you should expect the Libyan civil war to continue — for reasons I would be happy to explain — and the spillover of unrest into sub-Saharan African, and particularly Sahelian, states will, as we have already seen in Mali, continue to be of concern.

As a final note on that area, let me stress again that the international community's failure to understand the history of the creation of Libya has meant that the removal of Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi from power has only resulted in the creation of a new form of tyranny which is vastly removed from the constitutional democracy which the Libyans sought. We can expect the Libyan civil war to reignite; we can expect that any attempt to hold elections in this period will be fraught with danger, because the entire electoral structure has been hijacked in Libya at present.

7. A Return to Chaos in Nigeria. What happens in Nigeria affects the global energy market, and the strategic stability of the EU and the US, and other states. By the beginning of 2012, Nigeria was falling rapidly toward civil war, or at least uncontrollable insurgency, and there seems little which Nigeria's major trading partners can do to prevent the slide. Indeed, for the first time since the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70, Nigeria is facing the prospect of a polarizing north-south schism. The experience of the Civil War is imprinted on the minds of older Nigerians, and so, too, is the basic framework to avoid a repetition of that war. But Pres. Goodluck Jonathan — who came to office from the "South-South", the oil-producing Niger Delta region state, Bayelsa, with the promise of an ability to heal north-south divisions — has exacerbated the security

situation in Nigeria by promoting a political culture bedeviled by two principles: corruption and indecisiveness. Increasingly, there has been talk of the military removing Pres. Jonathan as a means to prevent a new civil war, but the former Army Chief of Staff and former National Security Advisor, Lt.-Gen. (rtd.) Aliyu Mohammed, has been a voice calling for restraint and legal solutions.

As the situation now stands in Nigeria, no Western power has the capacity to intervene militarily to stave off a further security decline in the country, but the US and other allies have been attempting to help train Nigerian security forces to do the job. This, in fact, is unlikely to work, but Nigerian security and military agencies could do the job under the right leadership, and — as US and European officials know — this is Gen. Mohammed. But Gen. Mohammed, a strict democrat, will not countenance an unconstitutional military intervention in government. Hence the only solution in Nigeria would be for Pres. Jonathan to be forced into making the decision he has constantly promised to make: to put Lt.-Gen. Mohammed into a super ministerial portfolio with authority to address the crisis.

Here we see the fate of the stability of the Gulf of Guinea — emerging as perhaps the most important fossil fuel export zone in the world after Russia and the Middle East — hinging on the inability of a single man, Goodluck Jonathan, to make a decision: a corrupt and inept politician in fear of an honest and capable figure.

8. Stability on the Korean Peninsula. All indicators point to the probability that the new leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea (DPRK), under Kim Jong-Un, will pursue a cautious (albeit with strong propaganda) policy toward adventurism on the Korean Peninsula for much or all of 2012. The new DPRK Administration can be expected to make some significant image-building initiatives, such as missile launches, and possibly even a further demonstration of a nuclear weapon, to demonstrate deterrence

to the US and the Republic of Korea (RoK) and to demonstrate that Kim Jong-Un and his military team are firmly in control. However, the major cause for concern would be if the political transition and economic factors triggered popular unrest in the country. But this is not anticipated.

There are many major issues which run beneath the surface, or in parallel, with these short-term trend issues. For example, PRC Pres. Hu Jintao steps down from the Presidency in 2012, and this will trigger a new era in Chinese politics. This transfer of power, like the US Presidential and Congressional elections later in 2012, will be of enormous long-term significance, but these changes are part of the evolving continuum. The watershed changes — such as transforming energy patterns, or the changes in the way most wars are likely to be fought over the coming decades — are, however, the ones which should figure strongly when analyzing global risks and opportunities.

9. The Transformation of the Red Sea. We are now beginning to witness a strategic restructuring in the Red Sea and Horn of Africa. The overthrow of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi and the resignation of Egyptian Pres. Hosni Mubarak means that Eritrea is no longer getting major financial, military, and logistical support for its guerilla and terrorist operations against Ethiopia. The present Egyptian Government is now actively *supporting a rapprochement* with Ethiopia and other upper Nile states. This, coupled with other issues, spells the end of the era in which Red Sea and Horn of Africa politics could be effectively manipulated by Eritrean leader Isayas Afewerke. His era is coming to an end. We have yet to see, however, the impact of the new Egyptian Presidency on this situation. Will it bring a reversion to Mubarak-style confrontation with Ethiopia?

So, in summary, it is worth bearing in mind that 2012 is not expected to be a year of “big wars”, largely because most societies in the world are at a point where they lack the basic resources to sustain such activities on an inter-state scale. This will not prevent “short, sharp wars”, or clashes between sovereign

powers, and the danger always exists that these can escalate, regardless of the preparedness levels or economies of the parties. The potential for clashes between Turkey and Israel or Cyprus, or the potential for a clash between Iranian and US forces fall into this category. But, conversely, a greater likelihood exists that the depressed, or even desperate, economic and social conditions of some states will exacerbate domestic unrest to the point of civil war. Nigeria falls into this category, but so do many other states. Indeed, the domestic situation in Pakistan is itself delicate, but also (as with Nigeria) potentially ripe for stabilizing actions by the domestic players.

The strategic consequences of an implosion in such states as Nigeria or Pakistan are profound, and, as noted earlier, the “major powers”, such as they are at the moment, cannot think of intervening in their conventional heavy fashion if they hope to stabilize the situations.

This is a year which will call for greater skills than those required in the Cold War era, or even the post-Cold War age of wealth. It is a year of Great Power Impotence.

What we have learned from the events we see laid before us now, and what has occurred in the past decade of conflicts, is that the very nature of conflict has now changed in many respects. The fundamentals you have learned from Sun-tzu, von Clausewitz, Jomini, Liddell-Hart, and others still apply. But we will see over the coming decade that unless the great, and formal, military powers begin to learn from the Western strategic losses in Iraq and Afghanistan, then they will decline further, and rapidly, in their ability to project strategic power into the mid-21st Century.

I would be happy to address the aspect of “the New Battlefield” during the wrap-up discussion period, if we have time, and look at issues such as the new information models for the battlefield going forward, as well.

*In our next session, we will move away from the immediate issues which I've just raised, most of which merely represent a snapshot of our condition, and move into the broad and distant horizons of where civilization — and therefore the global strategic framework — is going. This is where our work will lie, in preparing for the **next** generation. But for now, let's open discussion about the current global framework. I hope that the issues I've raised will provoke some questions and comments.*

A Context for 21st Century Policy

A lot of the studies by my institute, the International Strategic Studies Association, and my forthcoming book, *UnCivilization*, outline the reality that even by the early 21st Century, populations in the highly urbanised societies of Europe, North America, Japan, and Australasia began to decline in their reproduction rates. The impression of national population growth was artificially sustained and distorted for a period only by immigration. In all of this, too, has been the continuing phenomenon of rural migration to the cities: urbanisation. This not only has bloated the cities, it has changed demographic as well as reproduction patterns, and, just as importantly — or more so — it has *changed mentalities*, or psychologies. We have seen the rise of a phenomenon I've labelled "urban geopolitics". Our whole framework as societies is built around "identity security", and urbanisation has changed our self-perception, and therefore our identity and goals, not to mention our values.

This change in mentality is what is killing the Westphalian concept of the nation-state. This is a profound difference from the 20th Century approach. So the realities of the mid-21st Century will be more textured and sobering than those we see around us today. True, we have been told for decades that "the sky is falling"; that we are all doomed; that mankind will bring about the destruction of the earth. That we must pay obeisance to new gods, of "climate change", of "greenery"; that we must live lives of hand-wringing angst. That we must find scapegoats, and sacrifice them on the altar of Ra, the Sun God; that we

must obey the ideological tenets of the collected masses or be pilloried for each dissenting word. It was ever thus, but it is particularly so at times of great social upheaval. And when the end of the world does not come at the hour appointed by the almighty seers, we move on to the next form of panic. Do we never tire of this endless fear? Indeed, it is important to realise that fear is a by-product of change and uncertainty; it is about that uncertainty in identity security. It is *that* which creates wild swings in social behaviour, and therefore political and security conditions, including the stimulation of terrorism and its corollary, political correctness or militant group-think.

That is not to say that change is not already powerfully upon us. It is, but it is not necessarily to be feared. It is just a new horizon to explore.

Let us remember the US academics, Paul Ehrlich and his wife, who in their 1968 book, *The Population Bomb: Population Control or the Race to Oblivion?*, were doomsayers, forecasting mass starvation in the 1970s and 1980s due to global overpopulation, leading to other social upheavals. They created an hysteria which, though proven wrong, echoes through the world of the 21st Century. Today, other linearists forecast, with equal pomposity and unerring certainty, other disasters from the growth of human population, which they see as stretching uninterrupted through to the end of the 21st Century. The Club of Rome — a body full of its own demonstrably incorrect scientific augustness — also said in the 1960s that the world would soon run out of food. Others say that we will run out of energy; out of land; out of everything. I hope that my new book, *UnCivilization*, satisfactorily refutes such “linearists”.

That there are challenges and change ahead for humanity — and for all species — is not in doubt. Such is the pattern of nature, and of evolution. Populations rise and fall, *and move*. Patterns of weather fluctuate incessantly. But the *key* elements of change which *we* are facing — and which we must take into account in our search for security — include the unprecedented urbanization of human societies, and the changes which this brings in thought and dependency

patterns; and the reality that human population numbers are about to go into a period of substantial decline. These two factors, particularly coming at a time of change in the global strategic architecture, will affect *everything*, from the worth of currency and property to the ability to grow and distribute foodstuffs, and whether or not we will see security and progress — and even improved or declining lifespans — in human societies.

We are entering an age which many alive today will not recognize, or easily manage. But it is an age of upheaval which our ancestors of a millennium ago most certainly *would* recognize.

We cannot forestall or deny great change, but we can understand it and benefit from it. We have already found that massive population growth over the past century did not mean that the earth “ran out of food”, or energy, or space, or wealth. Humanity, indeed, grew more wealthy on a *per capita* basis; food supplies grew to meet the rising numbers; energy supplies were suddenly found; resources abounded.

Of course all societies, nations, institutions, and people — all living things — pass. *Sic transit gloria mundi*: Thus the glory of the world passes away. Change, including death, is the corollary of life. Understanding this change, however, requires that we stand distant from our life and from the society in which we live. That we stand upon some hill alone, and gaze across the haze of history, earthly horizons, and skies, and see the patterns which sweep onward to the future. Winds chill such hilltops with a loneliness which enters the marrow of the contemplative observer. But there is a clarity and intimacy, as well, which begins to unfold as the patterns emerge.

This is the beginning of the grand strategic view necessary to face the coming age of change. It is not mankind, or the earth's, first such transformational epoch.

Writers such as Karl Marx had postulated that capitalism and industrialization set the stage for the transformation of societies — their capture and taming — into “communist” societies which would then be the ultimate example of civilization. What, instead, we have seen is that the urbanization of societies into great cities — indeed a phenomenon which was enabled most successfully by the free movement of capital — has also led to a transformation of *how* we think and act, collectively. This new urban thinking — which has created “urban geopolitics” — has led us to a period of what has become *massive systemic over-control*.

In other words, urbanization has led us to a point at which the natural balances of a mixed urban/rural/maritime society have been replaced, with many benefits as well as many unknowns, by city-dominated thinking. The natural balances — market forces, they have often been called — are gradually replaced by regulatory processes which remove the individual from the equation. This is how organic urban social growth is channeled as it becomes more complex and abstract. The resultant “massive systemic over-control”, then, is a reaction which we have seen before in urban-dominated societies. It is not, in fact, just a phenomenon of the early 21st Century. These modern-era attempts at social containment are merely reflections of the autocracies and tyrannies of the ancient world. We have seen them in the utopianist, essentially similar and centralized dictatorships of communism, socialism, and national-socialism. *These have all been urban-driven processes* in which centralized control is deemed better than the balance of market forces.

And they all appear just before a society collapses or transforms.

Having said that, societies come and go, mostly with as little fanfare as the passing of individuals, their memory sustained only by the grandeur of their deeds or by the physical structures built during their lifetime. Mostly, however, societies — as opposed to sovereign entities, such as nation-states — transform either with their maturing processes, or through collapse or conquest. Some,

indeed, are transformed by the peoples they conquer, just as individuals are oft transformed by marriage.

For decades of speaking with those who believed that the sun would never set on the (take your pick) British, US, or Soviet empires, I have posed the question: can you name even 10 percent of the European sovereign states which existed even 300 years ago? I have yet to meet one person who could do so.

Perhaps the great historian, Prof. Norman Davies, could. His eloquent book, *Vanished Kingdoms: The Rise and Fall of States and Nations*, published in 2012, addressed the frailty of states, cultures, and languages. He noted: "The capacity of human societies both to absorb and to discard cultures is much underestimated. In reality, just as individuals can go abroad and merge into a foreign community, so a stationary population, if subject to a changed linguistic and cultural environment, can quite easily be persuaded to follow suit. Dominant cultures are closely connected to dominant power groups. As the balance of power shifts, the balance of cultures shifts as well."

The *entire* pattern of humanity is changing more rapidly and dramatically in the 21st Century even than it did in the 20th. That century saw two World Wars, great revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, Ethiopian, Chinese, and British empires; the end of much of the framework of the colonial era, and the creation of a hundred or more new sovereign states. In a world of change, then, that first requirement of grand strategy applies: know yourself and your own goals. If you wish to resist change to your own values, language, and status; if you wish to project your cultural and linguistic dominance on others; then first you must know what those values are which you cherish, and what you wish to sustain and achieve.

I asked a Greek-Cypriot friend of mine, Professor Marios Evriviades, to help devise some words for *The Art of Victory*; words which would define what will dominate the 21st Century. We came up with *cratocide*: the murder of nations;

cratogenesis: the birth of nations; and *cratometamorphosis*: the transformation of nations. All these will we see played out over the coming decades.

The Atlanticism which dominated the 20th Century has drifted away, and yet it has not been replaced by “Pacificism”. Rather, it has seen us drift back into our continents. The great heartland, which rises again, centers on the states of the total Eurasia, reaching from China’s Pacific shores, to Continental Europe’s Atlantic and Mediterranean shores, and includes the Northern Tier states of Iran, and so on. The “second heartland” is North America, and, in this, the United States has the option — which has always been close to its philosophy — of isolationism and introspection.

Equally, however, the US and Canada — and particularly Canada — could embrace their maritime nature, and join the network of maritime powers. And in this lies Britain’s chance to regain a place, not just as — by default — an Atlantic power when Continental Europe has turned inward and eastward, but as a global maritime state, part of the new maritime network. Indeed, in many respects, the new maritime network mirrors what Britain built, and which is still reflected in the Commonwealth. It is, in fact, what has come to be known as “the Anglosphere”, and could embrace those states which are being rejected or marginalised by the heartland states. The maritime coalition could include, at least: Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, South Africa, and so on. And perhaps the US.⁶

The 21st Century does see us polarising into new global *blocs*. In essence, we are in broad terms seeing the heartland, introspective powers coalescing; and the maritime powers faced with the prospect of re-acquiring their historical relationship. The US has yet to decide where it wishes to go, and in that respect finds its fate in the balance as well.

⁶ See, Copley, Gregory: “Heartlands, Rimlands, and Oceans: a New Age”, in *Energy Security 2.0: How Energy is Central to the Changing Global Balance in the New Age of Geography*, by Copley, Andrew Pickford, Yossef Bodansky, and David Archibald. Alexandria, Virginia, 2011: the International Strategic Studies Association.

But for Britain to be part of this, it must firmly grasp and reiterate its national unity, or face the break-up of a small island state into even smaller, petty communities. And it must do this quickly, stamping out Scottish secessionism within the coming year or two. Otherwise Britain will become a forgotten kingdom, a Camelot built upon an earlier Camelot, sitting in the clouds of memory.

This, then, is a century of decision. We can, as I tried to emphasise in *The Art of Victory*, grasp the future and bend it to the shape we require. To quote Omar Khayyám's 73rd quatrain in his *Rubáiyát*:

*Ah, Love! Could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mold it nearer to the Heart's Desire!*

So we need to be aware that change occurs inexorably. It is happening now. It will happen with increasing momentum in this Century. Some of this change we must embrace. Some of it we can manage.

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He has received a significant number of orders and decorations from governments, including, in 2007, being made a Member of the Order of Australia for his contributions to the international

community in the field of strategic analysis. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society in 2011.

Mr Copley also has had an extensive career as an industrialist, owning several shipyards and engineering companies in the United Kingdom, a naval architectural firm, and a chemical company in France. He is presently chairman of a company exploring remote area, mobile energy and water purification solutions. He served as Vice-Chairman of the Scottish national airline, Highland Express.

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