Beyond Just War: Military Strategy for the Common Good

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ABSTRACT The objective of this paper is to move ethical discourse on military strategy beyond the confines of the established War Convention. This is achieved by utilizing the Common Good, a concept found in political philosophy and theology. The common good acts as a positive organizing concept for socio-political activity. With its focus on peace, development and the flourishing of the individual and community, the common good poses a significant challenge to strategy. This paper constructs an approach to strategy that is compatible with the common good. Importantly, it does so whilst respecting the pursuit of victory as an indispensable component of strategy's true nature. The theory presented in this paper is then tested in relation to four different modes of strategy: regular war; irregular war; deterrence; and cyberwar.

KEY WORDS: military strategy, common good, just war, political philosophy, idealism, catholic

Introduction

Ethical discourse on the practice of strategy is dominated by the war convention; which itself owes much to the Just War tradition. The problem with this approach is that the war convention is largely prohibitive in nature; it has "acquired the status of [a] damage-minimizing convention" (Dipert 2010, 394). It is the contention of this paper that the common good, although challenging for the strategist, presents a superior ethical framework for the practice of strategy: "The global common good bridges ethical obligation and policy practice" (Fuchs and Buckley 2007, 6). Conceptions of the common good have a long history in political thought, stretching back to Aristotle and ancient Rome, and finding expression in the works of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. In the modern period, notable contributions are made by the British Idealists (especially T. H. Green), Kant, and the contractual approach (found in Rawls and Rousseau). In the twentieth-century the common good received further development in Catholic social doctrine. In particular, the latter applied the common good more readily to the international community. As a guiding theory for social action (including strategy), the common good has a positive objective: the creation of a socio-political environment that enables the individual and the community to flourish and reach their full potential. This sounds wonderful, but somewhat idealistic. Such idealism is

potentially problematic for those interested in strategy, which is based in the Realist tradition (Baylis and Wirtz 2007, 7), is instrumentalist, and has a necessary focus on theories of victory: "we are led to believe that morals must be left at our borders in order to defend national security" (Fuchs and Buckley 2007, 5).

It is the objective of this paper to bring strategy and the common good together. Is it possible to construct an approach that whilst fulfilling the basic needs of strategy (using force to achieve policy objectives), can also serve the common good? It should be noted that the intention of this paper is not to entirely redefine the military ethics landscape. Rather, it is to provide a different, more viable socio-ethics framework for the strategic practitioner. The common good has never been applied directly to the process of strategy. This paper rectifies that gap in the literature.

In order to achieve the stated objective the work is divided into three sections. The first section provides an understanding of the common good; taking its lead from British Idealism and Catholic social doctrine. These two schools of thought provide fleshed-out conceptions of the common good, with the latter invoking "the idea of a global common good" (Hehir 2007, 17). The following section constructs a theory of strategy to serve the common good. Finally, the work takes this conceptual model and explores its practical application in four different modes of strategy: regular war, irregular war, deterrence and cyberwar. Each of these four different forms of strategy poses particular challenges and opportunities for promoting the common good. At the same time, these different expressions of strategy enable us to draw-out general points about the implications of strategic practice for the common good.

It will be shown that effective military strategy is essential for pursuing the common good. This suggests that these two traditions can find common ground. However, the analysis also determines that although in theory an approach to strategy can be formed that serves the common good; the nature of strategy is such that the use of military power has the potential to undermine the common good. Thus, the work concludes that in order to safeguard the coherence of these two traditions the common good should be regarded as a meta-concept that subsumes all other considerations in strategy. Taking such a position benefits strategic practice by enhancing the cohesiveness of the political-military relationship.

The Common Good and Strategy – Different Traditions

The common good is best considered as an organizing concept for social activity. As the political philosopher T. H. Green noted, the common good is not an object to be achieved. Rather, it is an ideal that provides a criterion against which socio-political actions can be judged. In this sense, the common good must be applied through actions and behavior. For Green, the common good finds content through various good objects that enable the person to achieve perfection; it must be actualised through material goods and activities (Nicholson 1990, 58 & 81-2). This can include material well-being and security (Tyler 2006, 59). In Church social doctrine, which has the intention to direct praxis (Whitmore 2000, 5), the common good is defined as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994, 1905-1912). The common good is central to Catholic social doctrine because it stipulates that every aspect of social life must stem from the dignity, unity and equality of all people. Furthermore, "a society that wishes and intends to remain at the service of the human being at every level is a society that has the common good" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 164-165).

Born out of academic discourse on the role of nuclear weapons, as a distinct discipline Strategic Studies was formed during the Cold War. The focus of the academic study of strategy is to understand how military power can best be used to serve the interests of policy. Indeed, many of the leading academics in Strategic Studies argue that the theoretical outpourings of the discipline only possess validity if they have utility for the practitioner (Gray 2012). Bernard Brodie (1949), one of the leading theorists during the Cold War, goes as far as to say that strategic theory must be theory for action. This focus on praxis creates difficulties and opportunities for those interested in the common good. On the one hand, strategic theory should be able to add necessary detail for those challenged with enacting policy to promote the common good. On the other hand, Strategic Studies' obsession with best practice tends to emphasise victory (achieving the policy objective) over moral concerns.

Strategic theory is often absent of ethical discourse. This is problematic, because victory is not the only criteria by which we should judge strategy. Indeed, Green argues that because politics is a moral activity, political actions (including strategy) can only be considered a moral good in and of themselves. In other words, an action cannot be considered a moral good if it is predominately motivated by external considerations, such as realism's notion of

interest. A moral good aims at achieving a good and also is motivated by good intention. The conscientious man seeks to transform and perfect everyday activities and institutions. He seeks to "extract the higher meaning out of the recognised social code" (Nicholson 1990, 75-78). As a socio-political activity, strategy is just as in need of such an approach as any other. Thus, a strategy that serves the common good should be positive in outlook. It should aid peace and development, whilst not hindering the cause of solidarity and the conditions for human fulfillment. More challengingly, strategy for the common good should question the precepts of realism and seek to be good in and of itself. An action cannot be described as good if it merely produces good effect whilst primarily serving self-interest (Tyler 2006, 43).

The Common Good as Manifest in Security Terms

The common good, along with the supporting principles of participation, subsidiarity and solidarity, can be understood as the social and community dimension of the moral good (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 164) War, it will be remembered, is a social activity. Thus, it is appropriate that we should seek to understand the conduct of strategy through the prism of the common good. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the common good consists of three elements: respect for the person, social well-being and development, and peace (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994, 1906-1909) The first of these elements is centred on the notion of the human person being at the centre of social life. More especially, it is based upon the idea that each individual person has inalienable rights and freedoms. The most fundamental of these rights are the right to life and the right to flourish; to fulfill their potential. Although each individual is unique and endowed with fundamental rights, an individualistic approach to society is rejected: "Do not live entirely isolated, having retreated into yourselves, as if you were already justified, but gather instead to seek the common good together" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994, 1905) Green concurs that the individual can only really know himself in relation to others (Tyler 2012, 273). Thus, as well as protecting the rights of the individual, the common good is served by the development of the social group.

For the purposes of this analysis, the third element of the common good, peace, is of particular interest. Rather obviously, the conditions required for the advancement of the individual and the group must be protected. The conditions for social justice can be undone by violence.. In recent years this has been most evident during the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. In these cases attempts by the political community to maintain and/or

develop socio-political structures and services are undermined by insurgent campaigns. Education is a striking example of this problem. In Afghanistan, efforts to provide education for all (including females) are undermined by insurgent attacks on schools and teachers.

When we attempt to define peace from a theological and political philosophical perspective it appears to be even more encompassing:

> *Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies*. *Rather it is founded on a correct understanding of the human person and requires the establishment of an order based on justice and charity.* (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 494)

This more expansive understanding of peace cannot be ensured solely by the strategic application of military power. In its demands for justice and charity, this expanded expression of peace incorporates the quest for social justice understood on the basis of the dignity of the human person: "peace is the fruit of justice [and] also of love" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 494). In this sense, peace cannot be understood solely as a tangible manifestation of traditional security. Rather, it has to be constructed on a foundation of well-being and fulfillment of the person. Indeed, Rousseau (2008, 13) notes that security and order (the means to facilitate peace, as understood in a limited sense) are not sufficient; political rule must be legitimate and must serve the people in justice. Thus, we are left with a fuller understanding of peace in its tangible and intangible forms. On the one hand, activities and structures that promote the rights of the individual and the development of the group (social justice) enable the construction of a society that can work towards the common good and peace. However, these activities and structures must be secured in the physical realm by military power (either in use or threat). This is reflected in the republican movement in political philosophy, where it has been argued that civic virtue is not a free-standing quality; it must be upheld by institutions, laws and norms (Tyler 2006, 275) However, military power can be exercised in ways that undermine the construction and maintenance of social justice. This is to be avoided if the common good is sought.

Participation

Participation in social life is an essential requirement for the common good to be realised. Indeed, participation may be regarded as a moral obligation. Each individual is duty bound to engage in activities for the correct functioning of society and for the benefit of the community. Green argues that true freedom for the individual can only be realised by working for the benefit of others (Tyler 2006, 270). It is also incumbent upon political authorities to ensure that full participation in social life is possible. Amongst other things, this includes the ability to engage in public life and the political process.

Through the principle of participation military service gains legitimacy: "The requirements of legitimate defence justify the existence in States of armed forces, the activity of which should be at the service of peace. Those who defend the security and freedom of a country, in such a spirit, make an authentic contribution to peace" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 502). This point is central to the validity of the argument presented in this work, because for peace to be effectively defended strategy must be exercised in a successful manner. However, this proposition is compromised by the argument that "peace and violence cannot dwell together…" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 488). This paradox implies that those seeking the common good have a complex relationship with violence. Political violence has a role to play in the promotion of the common good, but also clearly has negative consequences for those directly involved (both victim and perpetrator) and for society at large. Most obviously, the violent death of an individual breaches his fundamental right to life and may prevent him reaching fulfillment. Whilst the latter statement is true in most cases, it is modified somewhat when death occurs in the service of others. There can be few greater examples of loving the other as self than to sacrifice one's life for the defence of others; for the greater (common) good: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13) With this important exception, however, generally speaking it is true to state that violence has negative consequences. Even for those left physically unharmed by conflict, violence can have a serious effect on their temporal and spiritual well-being. Similarly, solidarity within the political community (domestic or international) can be undermined by violence.

We can conclude the following for the exercise of military power in relation to the common good. Political violence, or its threat, is sometimes required to attain or maintain peace, which in turn serves the common good. Hence, participation in war can be an entirely valid activity

for an individual in the pursuit of fulfillment. However, said violence should be carefully controlled and minimized so as to abate the negative effect upon an individual's rights and well-being or the solidarity and well-being of the community.

Subsidiarity

Related to the concept of participation is "subsidiarity". In the development of civil society there exists an important relationship between greater and lesser social entities. Although the common good requires that the greater entity is beholden to help (subsidium) lesser entities in performing their task, "it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 186) The concept of subsidiarity is designed to ensure that lesser entities (including individuals) are able to develop effectively in their social well-being through participation.

Subsidiarity has important implications for the conduct of strategy. Generally speaking, responsibility for the conduct of strategy cannot be delegated below the state level. There are three reasons for this: cost, democratic responsibility and legal accountability. War is an expensive business. In December 2012 the UK government reported that the cost of British involvement in Afghanistan had reached £17.4 billion (Morris and Sengupta 2012). Clearly, there are few entities other than the state that can afford such expenditure. In reference to democratic responsibility, the state is beholden to provide defence and security for the political community. This is regarded as the primary function of the state, and within a democracy political authority can rightly be held accountable for its performance in matters of security. Finally, strategy is best left to the nation-state because the international laws of war are governed by state-backed institutions. If the laws of war are regarded as the most currently effective means of mitigating suffering in war, then it is appropriate that the political entity (states) most likely to be held accountable have responsibility for military power.

There is an important caveat to the above discussion of the state and subsidiarity with regards to strategy. There are many occasions when the state loses its legitimacy or monopoly on the use of violence. This can occur for many reasons. As is evident in the current international system, a state may come under attack from within its own territory from terrorists or insurgents. In addition, a state may abrogate its legitimacy if it perpetrates severe human

rights abuses against its citizens. In such cases, the international community may intervene in the domestic affairs of the target state. At times, it may be appropriate to delegate legitimate responsibility for military actions to non-state actors; perhaps to a rebel force within the state. This is the case in those instances when the rebel force has greater support both within and outside the country. In such instances, the sub-state actor will find it easier to engender legitimacy.

Solidarity

Solidarity is central to understanding both the conduct and consequences of strategy in relation to the common good. The significance of solidarity is evident by the fact that the Church considers it to be both a social principle and a moral virtue:

> Solidarity must be seen above all in its value as a moral virtue that determines the order of institutions. On the basis of this principle the 'structures of sin' that dominate relationships between individuals and peoples must be overcome. They must be purified and transformed into structures of solidarity…. (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 193)

Solidarity underpins all efforts to realise the common good; it is a unifying concept. For solidarity to flourish one must forgo the disordered love of self, and work for the good of one's neighbour. Acts of charity should be motivated by a genuine love of the other, rather than as an act to serve one's own self-interest. It is a genuine sense of solidarity that leads the way to peace. The use of military power can both serve and undermine solidarity. As noted above, fighting for justice and the defence of others can enhance solidarity both within and across borders. Humanitarian intervention, assuming it is genuinely motivated by charity, would appear to fit within this framework as an act of solidarity. Likewise, working together in the face of external aggression can enhance the solidarity of a society or a group of societies (NATO). However, it is clear from history that violence can have serious negative consequences for political communities. One only has to look at the history of Northern Ireland to see the damage that can be caused to the solidarity of a people when political violence is introduced. Similarly, war can have a severe disruptive effect on the international community. Of particular interest to this study is the long-term impact that certain military activities can have on solidarity. The more brutal and merciless a military campaign, the

greater the negative consequences often are. From this, we can conclude that how strategy is practiced can have a significant impact on the common good via the principle of solidarity.

Conclusion

The exercise of military power clearly has an important role to play in aiding the development of a society characterised by the common good. The various societal developments identified in the search for the common good require protection. Indeed, as noted, military service, as with other public duties, is an honorable act when it serves the community, whether domestic or international. However, the manner in which military power is exercised is critical in deciding whether the common good will be served or damaged as a result. This is where strategy comes into play. It is the task of this work to construct an approach to strategy that best serves the common good. This involves not just ensuring that violence is measured and limited in its negative effects. For strategy to serve the common good, it must also be effective. If strategy fails, then the peace and security of the political community is threatened.

Military strategy for the common good – a conceptual framework

Strategy is the process that converts military power into policy effect. When considering promotion of the common good, the two most challenging features of strategy are its complex nature (which includes violence) and focus on a theory of victory (Kane & Lonsdale 2012). The complexity of strategy is of concern because it reduces the controllability and predictability of this important socio-political activity. Those striving to construct a strategy that serves the common good may be frustrated by the unpredictability of strategy. The need for a theory of victory is troublesome because it gives the practice of strategy a very practical nature. Practitioners of strategy tend to emphasise victory over other considerations, including ethical concerns.

For military strategy to be considered a moral good it should support the different elements of the common good (respect for the person, individual and social development, and peace) and its attendant principles (solidarity, participation, and subsidiarity). In order to achieve this, a certain intellectual position has to be taken. We should regard military strategy as a positive force, rather than approaching the subject in a prohibitive manner. Rather than simply seeking to limit the damage and suffering associated with military action (although important), strategy should be conducted in a way that promotes the universal good. In this

sense, the common good can be perceived as a positive force guiding the process of strategy. There are at least seven different elements that contribute to the construction of military strategy for the common good: coherence with common good policy; minimal violence; control; efficacious use of force; legitimacy; intelligence; and integration with grand strategy. It will be noted that most of these elements describe good strategy. Hence, optimism is born from the natural overlap between strategy as traditionally understood and strategy designed to serve the common good.

Coherence with Common Good Policy

For those with a Clausewitzian outlook it is axiomatic that the process of strategy should harmonise policy and military power. Clausewitz (1976, 87) is insistent that policy must inform activity at all levels of strategy. Thus, in the first instance strategy requires an appropriate policy to serve. Clearly, certain policy objectives rule out the possibility of constructing strategy for the common good. A policy of genocide, for example, demands a strategic approach that would clearly breach the principles underpinning the common good. This, however, is an extreme example. In most cases, policy objectives are open to strategic interpretation. It is thus incumbent on those responsible for strategy to construct an approach that is compatible with the common good. This is a moral responsibility, but also can lead to better strategy.

If policy is compatible with the common good, the latter can act as a unifying concept to aid the process of strategy. An unequal dialogue between the political and military worlds facilitates that process. (Cohen 2002) If both military and political leaderships share a commitment to the common good, and thereby the dialogue is conducted within a shared normative framework, the process of strategy should function more smoothly. Such an approach should help to alleviate some of the tensions within the policy-military nexus that complicate the functioning of strategy. With the common good acting as a shared rationale, both policy and strategy will emphasise development, the promotion of security through solidarity, and concern for the other. With these concerns paramount, it follows that post-bellum considerations will guide the formation and enactment (strategy) of policy. Rather than the military merely having to serve a particular policy, a second order consideration, it will be conscious of serving the first order objective: the common good. The latter serves as a meta-discourse that both the military and political classes are beholden to. In this sense, the

common good should be regarded as an all-encompassing culture that subsumes the subcultures of all sectors of public life.

Minimal Violence

Violence plays a central role in strategy. Indeed, history reveals that significant levels of violence are sometimes required when a dire threat is extant. Michael Walzer describes such instances as supreme emergencies. (Walzer 1980, 251-255) The Second World War is a notable example of this claim. Nonetheless, even though the defeat of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan can be described as a moral good, the Second World War provides a sobering example of the damage violence can do to the common good: lives are lost, social infrastructure is destroyed, solidarity is undermined as animosities are created or enhanced, and resources are shifted away from social progress in order to maintain the military industrial complex. The Catholic Church is adamant on the ruinous consequences of violence: "Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 496).

It is clear then, that for strategy to serve the common good it should be centred on the minimal, not just proportional, use of violence. This requires a subtle, but important shift in mindset. Proportionality, it must be remembered, may permit excessive levels of violence if military circumstances require it. Interestingly, a minimal violence approach is not alien to Strategic Studies; it can be found in the forms of coercion, deterrence, counter-insurgency and cyberwar. The second great work of strategic theory, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (1971, 77-9), extols the virtues of achieving one's policy objectives without recourse to violence: "For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill". Sun Tzu's (1971: 77-9) preference for non-violence was motivated partially by realist considerations. He regarded violence as unpredictable, wasteful and potentially counterproductive. In contrast to this realist assessment, a strategy for the common good should seek minimal levels of violence not because it serves the interests of the state, but because it serves the interests of all.

Controlled use of Force

One of the main challenges faced by a strategist is the difficulty of exerting control over the nature of war and strategy. War's natural impulse to escalate creates a genuine problem for the strategist seeking to promote the common good. The fact that war is competitive and non-

linear suggests that the consequences of political violence may be hard to predict and contain. This is intensified by the play of friction (Clausewitz 1976, 119). Thus, a strategy that serves the common good must find a way to exert control. This difficult task, in theory, can be achieved through limited war, means to mitigate friction, and strategic efficacy. Limited war theory suggests that war can be limited in a number of ways: objectives; targets; and means (weapons). A strategy designed to serve the common good ideally would function in the service of limited policy objectives that do not endanger the vital interests of others. It would avoid hitting targets that cause significant casualties, social disruption or political instability in the target state. Finally, certain weapons – most obviously weapons of mass destruction – would not be used. To maximize the possibility that these provisions can be upheld, they should be built upon a foundation of agreed norms. The one glaring problem with the above theory of limited conflict is the competitive nature of war. To maintain viable limits requires the agreement of all belligerents to a conflict. As Clausewitz warns, if one side limits their operations, whilst the other does not, the latter will gain an advantage (Clausewitz 1976, 83-4).

Friction is an ever-present and troubling feature of war. However, this does not mean that friction cannot be mitigated. Clausewitz (1976, 119-21) put great emphasis on the natural attributes of the military genius to work through the difficulties associated with friction; to succeed in the face of friction. Gray (1991) expands this analysis and has identified a number of steps that can be taken to aid the strategist in his dealings with friction. These include, but are not limited to: ample and good equipment, professional forces, information, experienced forces, historical knowledge, etc… These measures should help reduce the impact friction has on the ability to control war. However, friction is so ubiquitous that it can never be entirely removed. This suggests that a strategy for the common good will never be entirely free from the influence of friction.

Effective Operations

There is an alternative, perhaps complementary, way to control the escalatory dynamic in war: military efficacy. However, since it is also a distinct element of a strategy for the common good it deserves its own sub-section. If objectives can be achieved quickly and with minimal effort, then in theory a war can be brought to a relatively quick conclusion. This appears to be a superior approach to control war since it relies not on the agreed participation of all belligerents, but rather on the superiority of just one. Indeed, since it is merely the

search for good strategy, this is another area where the common good and traditional approaches to strategy coalesce naturally. It will be remembered that the doctrine of just war includes the prospect for military success as one of its criteria. So, conceptually, strategy's natural proclivity to search for victory fits well into our new form of strategy for the common good. It is worth re-emphasizing, however, that in its new form strategy cannot prioritise victory over all other concerns. The common good must now dominate as a meta-organising concept. A final point of caution; the enemy may match or outperform your best efforts. That being the case, stalemate or escalation may still result.

Legitimacy

Since solidarity is a key feature of the common good, any chosen strategy has to be seen as legitimate. If this is not the case, division is likely to occur. The just war ethical framework provides a reasonably solid basis for maximizing the legitimacy of any strategic action: just cause (self-defence or acting in the defence of others); right intention; last resort; legitimate authority; proportional response; and a reasonable, though not guaranteed, chance of success.

If a decision to wage war ticks all of the above *jus ad bellum* boxes, then it is reasonable to suggest that legitimacy will be strengthened. However, the criteria for legitimacy do not end there. How the war is waged also plays a part; hence the significance of strategy. This strand of the Just War tradition, *jus in bello*, demands that the use of force clearly discriminates between combatants and non-combatants, and that any violence committed is proportional to the needs at hand. By its natural impulse, a strategy for the common good would seek to fulfill the *jus in bello* criteria, albeit replacing proportionality with minimal violence. Ultimately, a strategy for the common good should be driven by a clear understanding of post-bellum considerations. The growing literature (Bellamy 2008, Orend 2007, Williams and Caldwell 2006, McCready 2009, Lasiello 2004) on jus post-bellum identifies characteristics that appear to support key components of the common good. These include rights vindication, political rehabilitation, economic rehabilitation, and proportional punishment of war criminals. [1] How a war is waged, and for what policy objectives, have an important impact on the realization of these characteristics and hence on perceptions of legitimacy.

[1] I would like to thank Philip Mayne for providing a summary of the post-bellum literature.

Intelligence

Much of the above discussion, including that relating to minimal violence, efficacious strategy and post-conflict realities, is dependent upon good intelligence and reliable knowledge. Here, we turn once again to the writings of Sun Tzu. As previously stated, Sun Tzu advocated achieving one's objectives with the most efficacious use of force possible, with the absence of violence representing an ideal. For such an approach to be viable the strategist should prioritise the acquisition of intelligence and the production and use of knowledge: "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles" (Sun Tzu 1971, 129). This seems, and indeed is, daunting. Human interactions are complex and uncertain affairs. It has been established that this is intensified in a strategic environment owing to the fog of war (Clausewitz 1976, 117-8). What is clear is that the strategic profession, especially if it desires to serve the common good, must work even harder to acquire good intelligence and produce workable knowledge.

Ironically, this challenge becomes even greater when the common good guides strategy. Sun Tzu is concerned with the knowledge required to defeat the enemy. Those seeking the common good require such knowledge, but must also acquire an understanding of what all sides need to increase solidarity, development in the post-conflict environment, and ultimately achieve their good. What is needed is a more encompassing form of knowledge. In this task, the common good becomes both our objective (in as much as it can be, as noted by Green), our guide to reach that goal, and provides a set of criteria to judge performance in the acquisition of viable intelligence.

Integration with Grand Strategy

All military strategy should be fully integrated into a coherent grand strategy. However, as the 2003 invasion of Iraq illustrates, this is far from guaranteed. (Ricks 2007) Since solidarity and development are central principles of the common good, it is essential that a fully formed, carefully orchestrated grand strategy is present. With the tendency to break things and kill people, military strategy is a potential wrecking instrument in grand strategy. Consequently, those responsible for military strategy must be fully conscious of the impact their actions have on the efforts of wider grand strategy. This should inform the planning and conduct of operations. In turn, the other instruments of grand strategy are required to do their best to negate the negative impact of violent force. Figuratively speaking, for every violent action there must be a positive act of development or expression of care for the other. The

different instruments of grand strategy cannot be allowed to operate at a distance from one another; they should be integrated into a coherent whole. To re-emphasise, the common good acts as a meta-concept that sits above the formation of policy and its realization through grand strategy, military strategy, operations and tactics.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is possible to construct a conceptual understanding of strategy for the common good. Such a strategy requires seven main elements: coherence with appropriate policy (guided by a focus on the post-conflict environment); minimal violence; controlled use of force; efficacious use of force; legitimacy; intelligence; and integration with grand strategy. If all of these elements can be assured, then strategy is much better placed to play a positive role in the attainment of the common good. Most importantly, strategy should emphasise the good of all affected political communities (including the international). In turn, this is promoted by an emphasis on post-conflict solidarity and development. However, since peace and security is essential for the proper functioning of a just society, military victory must also be assured. From this, we are left with a vision of strategy that, at least in theory, is compatible with both the common good and an efficacious approach to practice. To be achieved, this new vision of strategy requires a new strategic culture; one infused with the common good.

Strategy for the Common Good – Testing the Theory

From section two it has been established that conceptually strategy can serve the common good; albeit with some recognition of the difficulties involved. This concluding section of the work seeks to determine whether this is a viable proposition in the real world. This analysis will be based upon the practice of strategy in four different contexts: regular war; irregular war; deterrence; and cyberwar. It is recognised that these four forms of strategy do not exhaust all strategic possibilities. Nonetheless, they do offer coverage that is comprehensive enough to serve our current methodological needs. The following analysis will explore the prospects for strategy for the common good in each different context. This will include a discussion of how such an approach to strategy would function, and the limits practitioners would face.

Regular War

In some important respects regular war offers a promising environment for promoting the common good. Generally speaking, regular war tends to be regulated by the laws of war. This is because regular war is usually fought between state actors, using uniformed professional forces, who are held accountable for their actions. Thus, within regular war there already exists a system designed to limit suffering, protect legitimacy and control escalation. In this way, certain aspects of the common good taxonomy are already present in regular forms of war. The fact that regular war is waged between states, in theory at least, should also encourage more cohesion between appropriate policy and military efforts. In contrast to non-state actors, the policies of states are more defined, more clearly annunciated, and held up to greater scrutiny. Thus, there is a better policy basis for strategy to serve the common good.

It is also the case that, especially since the First World War, regular war has developed doctrinally in an attempt to become more efficient in the use of force. Various operational doctrines, including Blitzkrieg, Manoeuvre Warfare, AirLand Battle, and Effects-Based Operations, have sought to escape the costs of attrition by seeking victory via the destruction of the enemy's cohesion and will. In the modern period we have also witnessed a growing use of coercion as the preferred modus operandi. We should also be encouraged by the growth of accountability. State actors increasingly look for less violent, more efficient forms of warfare to reduce public unease. Large numbers of casualties (enemy, own or civilians) are increasingly difficult to justify. Hence, there is an increasing tendency towards post-heroic forms of warfare (Luttwak 1995). There is also a growing appreciation of post-conflict realities. It is no longer sufficient for a state to talk exclusively in terms of national interest. Military interventions are increasingly justified using the terminology of nation-building. Western forces and their allies have to be seen to be actively promoting the welfare of local inhabitants.

In contrast to the above positive comments, the history of regular war suggests that any strategic impulse towards the common good may be overpowered by the Clausewitzian nature of war. Attempts to limit the destructiveness of war may be undone by the potential scale of regular operations. Whilst it is true that states can be held accountable in a way that non-state actors rarely are, they also are blessed with substantial resources. The two world

wars of the twentieth-century achieved enormous levels of destruction partly because they were resourced from large industrial bases. Even the Second World War, which is often regarded as a war of manouevre, was as much about a competition in industrial output and attrition (Ellis 1990). History suggests that when powerful states go to war Clausewitz is generally correct in his evaluation that war escalates.

When states wage war against one another, not only do we witness increases in scale and the application of destructive weaponry, we also tend to see the targeting of infrastructure. The general objective of defeating the enemy can be achieved by destroying either his will and/or capability to continue the fight. This is often most readily achieved with attacks against infrastructure. Such an approach has a detrimental effect on the common good, aspects of which depend heavily upon functioning infrastructure. This comment relates especially to coercion. Although a strategy of coercion normally relies upon the limited application of violence, by definition it has to target valued assets. To refer to Schelling's phrase, the power to hurt has to inflict pain on the enemy (Schelling 1966). In addition, coercive campaigns can be prolonged and fairly intense. In Kosovo, NATO's coercive air campaign lasted 78 days and destroyed much social infrastructure (Lambeth 2001 and Daalder & O'Hanlon 2001).

In the final analysis we are left to conclude that regular war offers promise for the promotion of the common good. It is the most regulated and accountable form of war. However, war's natural tendency to escalate raises questions over whether these regulatory forces can prevail.

Irregular War

Like its regular cousin, irregular war contains elements that promote a strategic approach suitable for the common good. As its alternative name suggests, "small wars" (Callwell 1990) generally involve more limited forms of violence. Those who partake in irregular war tend to be non-state actors or states employing small numbers of special forces and/or light infantry. Generally speaking, non-state actors simply do not have the resources to inflict casualty figures or damage to infrastructure that matches that seen in regular war. Likewise, although there are exceptions (the US air campaign in Vietnam), state actors involved in irregular war tend to limit their use of force for strategic reasons (discussed below). Indeed, although it is often not the case, irregular forces can be very discriminating in their use of violence. Terrorist campaigns, for example, may restrict their attacks to military or political targets. Similarly, insurgents, who require the active support of the population, are often very careful

to avoid unnecessary civilian casualties. Such concerns are clearly evident in the writings of Mao Tse-Tung (1966), the great theorist and practitioner of revolutionary war.

Such discriminating use of force is not restricted to terrorists or insurgents. Modern counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism doctrine emphasise the limited and careful use of force. Like insurgents, pro-government forces are similarly trying to win the support of the local population. When violence is required, modern technology facilitates increasing discrimination in the use of force. Although seen by many as controversial, targeted killing by drone strikes, assuming such attacks are made on the basis of good intelligence, can be an effective method of controlling violence in irregular conflicts (Byman 2006). An accurate drone strike is able to destroy a legitimate military target without the risk of escalation associated with deploying ground forces.

Contemporary counter-insurgency doctrine goes further in its coherence with promoting the common good. A 'hearts and minds' campaign relies not just on the judicious use of force; it is also built upon development projects. Long-term peace and stability often require social, economic and political development. Thus, we see that a rational approach to strategy in irregular war can incorporate a conjunction of limited and discriminating use of force with development projects. Indeed, assuming there is no strong ethnic dimension to the conflict, both sides in an irregular conflagration seek to promote a sense of solidarity in order to shore-up post-conflict rule.

The principle of subsidiarity is also recognised in irregular conflict. Although in general terms Catholic social doctrine teaches that political authority should be respected, it recognises that sometimes this principle does not apply. Similarly, Green argues that conditions could arise when the established political authority can be resisted with violence (Tyler 2012, 58) If political authority suffers a significant fall in legitimacy, especially if this is the result of human rights violations, then alternative political actors can be supported. In such circumstances state monopoly on violence ceases to remain valid, and the use of force to promote the common good can be delegated to sub-state actors.

From the perspective of the state it may prove profitable within a counter-insurgency campaign to delegate military operations to sub-state actors. This is especially the case for external state actors who become embroiled in an overseas civil conflict. Modern counter-

insurgency practice seeks to transfer military responsibility to the national or local level as soon as possible. Some of the later success in the Iraq counter-insurgency campaign came from the active participation of pro-government Iraqi militia groups, such as The Awakening. These groups began to organise themselves to defend their local communities against foreign al Qaeda fighters (Collyns 2010).

Thus far, this discussion of irregular war has appealed to an ideal vision of small wars. The reader will quite understandably note that historical and contemporary practice is often far removed from this ideal. More often than not terrorism deliberately targets civilians, knowingly ignores the laws of war, and as the attacks of 9/11 reveal, can cause substantial casualties. It is also the case that the strategies of terrorism and insurgency often seek to undermine state rule by destroying or disrupting infrastructure and the normal functioning of the state. These realities help to explain the Church's unequivocal condemnation of terrorism: "Terrorism is to be condemned in the most absolute terms. It shows complete contempt for human life and can never be justified, since the human person is always an end and never a means" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004, 514). Thus, as it is generally practiced terrorism is not a strategy that can serve the common good. Similarly, insurgency, which often uses the tactics of terrorism, tends to disrupt social functions rather than promote the development of society. Equally, counter-insurgency and counterterrorism often breach established norms and operate outside of the laws of war. Counter-insurgency does not, by default, demand a minimal violence approach. As Colin S. Gray (2006, 223) notes, "The winning of hearts and minds may be a superior approach to quelling irregulars, but official, or extra-official but officially condoned, military and police terror is swifter and can be effective". The uncertainty and friction inherent in war also ensure that mistakes are commonplace in counter-insurgency operations. Unintended civilian casualties are not only bad for strategy; they breach important criteria of the common good. In particular, they make solidarity more difficult to maintain. In addition, because counter-insurgency often involves external forces committing violence in a foreign land, the chances for solidarity are further strained. Locals may join a rebellion simply to resist foreign interference.

The problems associated with small wars are partly due to the fact that irregular conflicts present a permissive environment for brutal actions. Such conflict is not governed as closely by the laws of war, nor are irregular actors as easily held to account. Thus, irregular war creates a legal grey area within which violence is less regulated and controlled. Again, as

with regular war, we are left with a dichotomy between the theory and practice of irregular war. In theory, small wars can use force in a very limited, discriminating and controlled manner. In addition, the dominant strategies of insurgency and counter-insurgency put a premium on social and political development. However, the reality of irregular war is far more complex, violent and uncertain. Unsurprisingly, strategy in irregular war is subject to the Clausewitzian nature of war.

Deterrence

The final two contexts explored here appear to offer even more promise for the promotion of the common good. This extra promise emanates from the fact that both deterrence and cyberwar appear to remove violence from strategy. Since violence is one of the primary impediments to realization of the common good, its removal from strategy is worthy of serious attention.

During the Cold War nuclear deterrence appeared to offer the potential for the superpowers to pursue their main policy objectives without bringing about global Armageddon. Despite problems associated with this strategic approach (discussed below), the Catholic Church cautiously supported nuclear deterrence as an "interim ethic". This position can be seen, for example, in Pope John Paul II's statement at the 1982 United Nations (UN) Second Special Session on Disarmament: "In current conditions, 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way towards a progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable" (Roche 2006). Although nuclear deterrence is based on the threat of overwhelming destruction, it was regarded as the least worse strategic option in the context of the superpower relationship. In the post-Cold War world deterrence still has a role to play in strategy, as is evidenced by the decision to replace Trident and the Nuclear Posture Reviews of the Bush and Obama administrations.

In relation to this paper, deterrence is significant because it offers a non-violent form of strategy, which although not universal in its applicability, may enable the pursuit of policy objectives in a manner consistent with the common good. Deterrence compatibility with the common good functions in the following ways. Most obviously, the absence of violence protects the sanctity of life, leaves social infrastructure intact, and thereby provides the individual and the community with the basic requirements to develop and flourish. Perhaps

most interestingly, solidarity may be enhanced through a shared interest in avoiding mutual annihilation. This is evident in the many arms control agreements signed by the superpowers and others during the nuclear age. The threat of Mutually Assured Destruction provided a strong impetus for the superpowers to work together to enhance stability. Finally, as is perhaps most evident during the Cold War, deterrence can help shore-up peace and stability. It should be noted, with a strong sense of irony, that punishment forms of deterrence often rely upon the threat of massive amounts of destructive force. This raises an interesting thought. In the case of deterrence, the common good may be best served by the threat of extreme levels of violence.

The above analysis of the compatibility of deterrence with the common good is only valid, however, if the relationship between deterrence and the use of force is largely ignored or misunderstood. Although generally non-violent in its expression, deterrence is inescapably tied to the use of force. For deterrence to function as a form of strategy it must be credible. Credibility is built upon capability, commitment and communication. To put it into terms familiar in nuclear strategy discourse, credible deterrence is built upon a foundation of warfighting (Gray 1984). This truth of nuclear strategy produces two outcomes of concern. Firstly, a deterrent threat may have to be enacted. Indeed, in order to produce the most effective and credible form of deterrence one must be fully committed (Kahn 1960). In this sense, nuclear deterrence is compatible with the common good right up to the point that it fails. Once nuclear deterrence fails, it fails in spectacular fashion.

The second worrying outcome is that even if deterrence remains intact, and violence remains absent, the threat to commit violence is still extant. It has already been established that the threat of violence has negative consequences, both for the psychology of the individual and for the prospects for solidarity. Indeed, on the moral question of whether it is legitimate to threaten that which it is wrong to do, the Church concludes that it is not: “it is not morally acceptable to intend to kill the innocent as part of a strategy of deterring nuclear war” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1983, 137 & 178). There have been some philosophical attempts to reconcile the moral advantages of deterrence with the moral qualms associated with the threat of force. In *Moral Paradoxes and Nuclear Deterrence*, Kavka argues that it may be morally acceptable to intend to do wrong, so long as the “intention adopted [is] solely to prevent the occurrence of the circumstances in which the intention would be acted upon” (Kavka 1987, 82) Whilst the philosophical merits of this position may

be debated, the consequences of nuclear war on the common good are not up for debate. It seems then, that nuclear deterrence is hamstrung as the basis for a strategy for the common good.

Cyberwar

Thus, we arrive at our final, newest, and perhaps most promising strategic vehicle for the common good. This form of strategy refers to the use of information attack to pursue policy objectives. It is most commonly understood as the use of malware to attack critical information and infrastructure. The most obvious and significant feature of cyberwar from the perspective of the common good is the absence of violence. Restricted largely to cyberspace, and aimed exclusively at or through information, cyberwar presents the strategist with an opportunity to pursue policy in a non-violent form. This would seem to offer all of the advantages mentioned in relation to deterrence, but without being underpinned by the threat of violence. Moreover, certain forms of cyber-attack are instantly reversible, leaving no lasting damage to speak of. This is the case with Denial of Service attacks or those that use encryption to deny access to critical information. Cyberwar also fits reasonably comfortably with subsidiarity since it is accessible to almost everyone. Although significant attacks, such as Stuxnet, tend to originate from large states, significant effect can be achieved by small groups or even the individual. As a result, cyberwar strategy can be delegated to the most appropriate level. Finally, as Stuxnet reveals, cyber-attacks can be finely tailored to the point of extreme discrimination. As George Lucas notes: “Unless you happen to be running a large array of exactly 984 Siemens centrifuges simultaneously, you have nothing to fear from this worm.” (Singer and Friedman 2014, 119)

Despite its promise, from the perspective of the common good cyberwar has some issues. The methodology of cyberwar taps into coercion and terrorism. In order to function as an instrument of strategy often it must inflict pain or psychological discomfort on its target audience. In the absence of violence, coercion is to be achieved by targeting critical infrastructure, such as finance, power generation or government services. Attacks against these services are clearly unwelcome from the perspective of the common good. Indeed, negative effects may be more pronounced in cyberwar than in conventional coercive campaigns. Certain forms of malware have a tendency to spread beyond their original targets and cause wider, unforeseen disruption. In this sense, cyberwar is a less predictable, less discriminating, and less controllable form of strategy. These tendencies also complicate the

challenge of ensuring proportionality and minimal effects. Operating within complex networks, it is difficult to predict the results of a cyber-attack.

Although violence is theoretically absent from cyber forms of strategy, it does not take much imagination to construct scenarios that result in casualties. If air traffic control or hospital power sources are affected, human fatalities are likely to follow. However, even in the absence of human casualties, cyber-attack can obstruct the common good by negatively affecting core rights of the individual and reducing the prospects for individual and social development. In the cyber age, cyberharm, which impairs the functioning of a system via cyber-attack, is likely to retard personal and community development (Dipert 2010, 395). In this sense, there is an increasing realization that the physical and virtual worlds coexist and have intrinsic moral value. (Taddeo 2014, 39)

Solidarity is also put under threat by cyber forms of strategy. Relations amongst political actors may be strained by lowering the threshold for conflict. The status of cyber-attack is yet to be firmly or legally established. However, as is evident in the Tallinn Manual - which despite not being universally accepted, is still the most comprehensive treatment of the legal and moral basis for cyberwar – cyber intrusion may be regarded as a breach of sovereignty. (Schmitt 2013, 16) Moreover, due to the tactical overlap between cyber forms of attack, espionage and crime, the boundaries amongst these different activities are becoming blurred. The effects of this are evident in the increasing tension between the US and China. (Lindsay et al. 2015)

Finally, the historical record, in conjunction with comprehensive conceptual analysis, suggests that cyberwar does not seem to be an especially potent form of strategy (Lonsdale 2004). The most noteworthy attacks to date, those on Estonia, Iran and Saudi Aramco (Valeriano and Maness 2015), although notable for their tactical proficiency, did not produce substantive strategic effect. That being the case, cyberwar is unlikely to be a favoured tool of the strategist. Indeed, cyberwar campaigns are likely to be supplemented with more traditional violent forms of strategy. Indeed, one can go further and argue convincingly that in most cases cyberwar will be the supporting, not supported, arm in most conflicts, as in the Israeli air attack on the Syrian nuclear facility at Kabir. Cyberwar is unlikely to meet the requirement for strategic success. As with our three previous modes of strategy, cyberwar

offers much potential, but actually falls short both on common good (disruption to social services, cyberharm, degrading solidarity) and strategic (lack of efficacy) criteria.

Conclusion

The common good contains three core elements: respect for the person, personal and social development, and peace. To this, Catholic social doctrine adds three supporting principles that contribute to realization of the common good: subsidiarity, solidarity and participation. Should all of these elements and principles be respected and form the core of socio-political activity, then individuals and communities are in a position to flourish and fulfill their potential. The common good, however, is not an object that can be quantified. Rather, it is an organizing concept designed to guide social activity. In this sense, it is an ideal. This is not to denigrate the common good; for, as G. K. Chesterton (2000, 328) wrote, "to dismiss idealism as impossibilism is not even practical; it is like blaming an archer for aiming at the white" In fact, the common good finds expression; is realised, in good objects. As a socio-political activity, one such object is strategy: the process that converts military power in to policy effect. Strategy presents a challenge for those who wish to promote the common good. This is because strategy is difficult to control and is invariably violent in its conduct. In addition, for strategy to function properly it must be guided by a theory of victory. The great challenge we face is to give both the common good and a theory of victory (normally pursued through the use or threat of violence) their proper place in strategy. Is this achievable?

It is the contention of this paper that a strategy for the common good is achievable. Indeed, we have discovered that in many important respects strategy for the common good is just good strategy. Since the common good requires peace, efficacious strategy is essential for the political community. What is not permitted is for victory to assume absolute dominance, so that long-term considerations are damaged in the pursuit of short-term military demands. Strategy must be guided by a positive vision of the post-bellum environment. The use of military power should be seen, not as an impediment to realization of the common good, but as a contributing factor. The main challenge is to apply just enough controlled violence to get the job done. Generally speaking, this equates to attacking the enemy's forces so as to leave him defenceless. Attacks against infrastructure (in support of denuding the enemy's fighting capability) are permitted. However, such attacks must be limited, carefully targeted, and the damage quickly rectified in the post-conflict phase.

When it comes into contact with a competitive, complex and friction-laden reality, this ideal vision of strategy for the common good is almost certain to fall short; the circle cannot quite be squared. Violence is likely to be less controlled than desired; the outcomes of conflict less predictable; and solidarity and development somewhat undermined as a result. Perhaps then, strategy for the common good is best discussed in the context of Plato's theory of forms. Conceptually, it is possible to envisage a perfect form of strategy that acts as a genuinely positive social force, promoting the common good. In reality, this perfect form will be somewhat distorted and unrealised. Nonetheless, even in its less than perfect form, a strategy for the common good is still worth pursuing. Such an approach to strategy should promote greater cohesion of the policy-military relationship and have a better chance of generating lasting positive socio-political outcomes. Indeed, by enforcing peace in a manner that takes into account respect for the person, development, solidarity and participation, strategy can contribute to the conditions that enable the individual and the community to flourish and make progress on their journey of fulfillment.

When searching for a form of strategy most appropriate to pursuing the common good, difficulties were identified in each one. Cyberwar's relative impotence at achieving policy objectives makes it a poor candidate for leading strategic practice in the twenty-first century. Cyberwar and coercion also suffer because they tend to rely for strategic effect on damage to social infrastructures. Irregular forms of war are capable of producing limited outbursts of violence with the targeted use of force. However, in reality this is often not the case. Irregular war tends to be less regulated than its regular cousin. In addition, the strategies for some forms of irregular war – most obviously terrorism - are often based on the indiscriminate use of violence and the terror that results. In relation to deterrence, the common good may be undermined by the threat of violence - which has implications for solidarity and well-being of the individual. It is also the case that a deterrent threat may have to be enacted. Punishment forms of deterrence usually function on the basis of threatening overwhelming costs on the enemy.

It is then perhaps with a touch of irony that in our search for a strategy to serve the common good, we turn our attention to regular, more traditional forms of warfare. In doing so, we look to Clausewitz, a writer not known for ethical pronouncements on the use of force. The Prussian theorist wrote that the art of war was best pursued by attacking the enemy's armed

forces, thereby leaving him defenceless. Importantly, Clausewitz realised that this objective did not always require substantial outpourings of violence leading to the total destruction of the enemy force; breaking his will was often sufficient (Clausewitz 1976, 97). In this sense, we can envisage coherence between Clausewitz's focus on battle and Sun Tzu's demand for minimal violence. And yet, it was recognised in section three that regular war has the real potential to escalate and produce extreme levels of violence. This tendency, however, can be controlled via three different routes. The war convention already helps to regulate the use of political violence. In addition, the strategist should seek ever more efficacious forms of warfare. Doctrinal developments in recent decades, although not without their problems, provide some hope on this front. Finally, and most importantly, a strategic culture imbued with the common good will naturally place appropriate restraints on the use of force. In this sense, the common good can be seen as a meta-concept for strategy, and indeed for all socio-political activity.

This paper promised to take strategy beyond just war. This has been achieved in subtle, but important ways. To reiterate, this work did not seek to redefine the military ethics framework. Rather, it set out to provide a more viable socio-ethics basis upon which to build strategy. The common good takes military service beyond the confines of being a duty, and actually extols the virtues of participation. It also demands minimal, rather than just proportional violence. It further demands that military strategy be fully integrated with grand strategy; both of which must be subsumed within a dominant culture of the common good. With a focus on development and solidarity, the common good provides a positive motivation for strategy, rather than the prohibitive tone associated with the war convention. Finally, by putting the dignity of the person at the centre of strategic activity, a common good approach transforms strategy from its rather narrow Realist traditions, into an activity concerned with promoting universal good outcomes.

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