

unpopular with the younger guard – Pierre Trudeau and Donald Macdonald among them – but he had a point: – the job is not for amateurs. As power comes to be ever more concentrated in the office of the Prime Minister – a process accelerated in foreign affairs by the growth of summit diplomacy – we may need to be reminded of it again. There was a time, in fact, when summit diplomacy itself was thought to be a menace – best left to ceremonial occasions in the wake of work already done by the professionals. It might not hurt to think again about that, too.)

Exhortation 8: In whatever overseas social engineering we do decide to undertake, we should remember to tailor the effort to the value of our real objectives. Enjoying some credibility around the tables in NATO, for example, is an invaluable diplomatic asset, and certainly rewarding for our military and foreign service professionals. But it is a very limited objective and should not be pursued at too high a price. This is not a new thought. Classical analysts of world affairs have always understood the proportionality rule. We temporarily lost sight of it when warfare went 'total' in the two great cataclysms of the 20th century, and again when the challenge appeared to be civilizational during our contest with the Soviet world. But we were reminded again during the engagement in Korea that most wars are limited, and are fought with finite means for finite purposes. The reminder – repeated for the Americans in Vietnam – was discomfiting to the citizens of democratic societies, who are somewhat more at ease with the horrors of battle when they are certain their country's cause is not merely just, but also absolute. But if we are going to minimize the killing and the casualties, our calculations have to be very hard-headed. It may turn out in the end that on matters of this kind the traditional realists were right, and that a higher morality is more often served better by pragmatism than by principle. It is useful to recall here the practical calculus implied in the ancient words of Sun Tzu:

"If it is not advantageous, do not act.

If it is not attainable, do not employ troops.

If it is not in danger, do not do battle."

Exhortation 9: Avoid falling victim to the over-generalizations of social science. The latter can often be illuminating, and they perform what the