



German Kahn and Global Strategy

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ABSTRACT: The article analyzes the political ideas of German Kahn, one of the major modern representatives of strategic thinking, and their role and significance in the states (especially in the US experience) and international political relations. In particular, aspects of strategic knowledge that work in the area of expanding our goals and opportunities, its habitual thinking is related to limited goals and opportunities, and the fact that strategic thinking arising from one of the two allows one to consider not only one's own decisions, but also those of one's opponent, were analyzed. Also, the possibilities of strategic thinking and analysis today are highlighted.

KEYWORDS: German Kahn, Richard Nixon, strategy, American military strategy, Strategic thinking, strategic thinking, global strategies, strategic plan, analytics, scenarios, think tank, future development and change.

INTRODUCTION

G. Kahn (1922–1983) is best known for his writings on American military strategy and nuclear strategy. In addition, he was a famous futurologist, but in his opinion, if certain methods do not have a practical result, then they are not useful at all. For example, he studied post–World War II aviation using a scenario approach. One of his books is called “Thinking the Unthinkable”, which makes areas that few people think about into objects of thought. Worked at REND on the Strategic Objectives Committee on Nuclear Strategy. In 1961, he left REND and founded Hudson University. He started in the field of physics and mathematics, and later he was engaged in nuclear strategy. It was known as the father of futurists. G. Kahn studied more abstract things, but he studied them as much as he studied material things.

In general G. Kahn was able to see two uncertainties characteristic of the future (Kahn H. Choosing a perspective on the future // American Outlook. – 1998, – Summer). On the one hand, uncertainty arising from the specificity and uniqueness of the event is considered, for example, in the case of horse racing. On the other hand, the future is viewed as “terra incognita”, that is, a completely unknown continent.

G. Kahn had the mind of his contemporaries, as can be seen from his role in Stanley Kubrick's Doctor Strangelove (1964). G. Kahn has come across as a very strange character, claiming that he will play a significant role in nuclear deterrence by building a “doomsday machine”. He was supposed to represent a computer consisting of a set of hydrogen bombs. If the Soviet Union attacked the United States, the entire planet would be blown up. That is, the first blow would destroy itself. G. Kahn became the propagandist of a radical new logic, which was concerned with a new type of warfare in which humanity would participate. Everyone accused him of creating a model of death, but he claimed to have created a model of survival.

The new nuclear technology has given birth to a new strategy, simultaneously displacing the old strategists and “technologists” who were celebrating their popularity after the Second World War. That is, a new philosophy was created, which certainly started to annoy the military, who thought that it was interfering with their work.

Strategic thinking. German Kahn and global strategies. We can see this anger in Summers's words that the advent of atomic theory has single-handedly eclipsed the decline of the importance of conventional armed forces. They were contemptuously called the magicians of Armageddon. (Summers H.G., Jr. Military strategy. Conversations // <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu>). But at the same time, it is clear that if they had not been heard, there would have been no anger. So, they listened to their opinion.

Even in 1973 efforts were made to bring Kahn into Richard Nixon's inner circle of advisers. Before that, Kahn sent Nixon a set of his key points in the form of a book, typed in all the special capital letters. Kahn explains to Nixon the idea of the Counter-Reformation, which opposes the counterculture promoted by student radicals.

Kahn was supposed to be an intellectually connected adviser to Nixon. In fact, it was not a chain that connected everyone, but it was supposed to connect competent people with famous conservative thinkers. This was important and complicated because



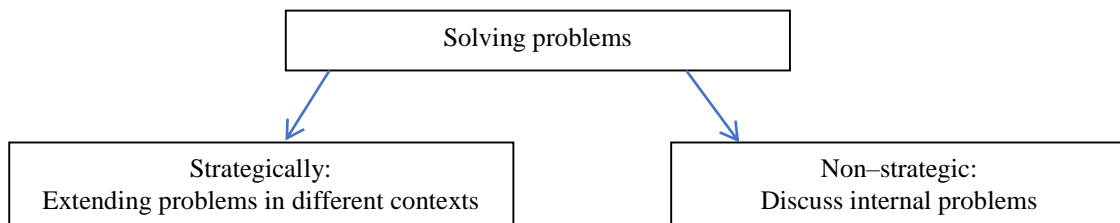
Nixon did not like intellectuals. Intellectuals had to create a special defense base for the administration. Nixon also did not treat journalists well. Of course, journalists also gave him the same answer. Kahn revealed what knowledge means in his opinion: “A scientist forms his knowledge mainly on the basis of direct experience, besides, he works with words and ideas, not with actions and objects”. (Troy T. Nixon and intellectuals // www.hudson.org). As a result, Nixon could not find this type of adviser.

D. Seligman to the thoughts of the Pentagon in the 50s and 60s. He admits that Kahn and A. Wollstetter had a greater influence. That is why the Hudson Institute was directed to the orders of the Ministry of Defense (Seligman D. Know-it-all // www.hudson.org). Although G. Kahn was the founder of the direction of futurology, he did not like the word, among his books he published the book “2000 year” in 1967. It can be understood that only the situation of the direction between real science and fraud made him bitter.

G. Kahn considered a wide range of scenario-like similarities of pedagogical and heuristic significance. He also considered 2 possible criticisms of the scenario analogy. (Kahn H., Wiener A.J. 2000. A framework for speculation on the next thirty-three years. – New York etc., 1967).

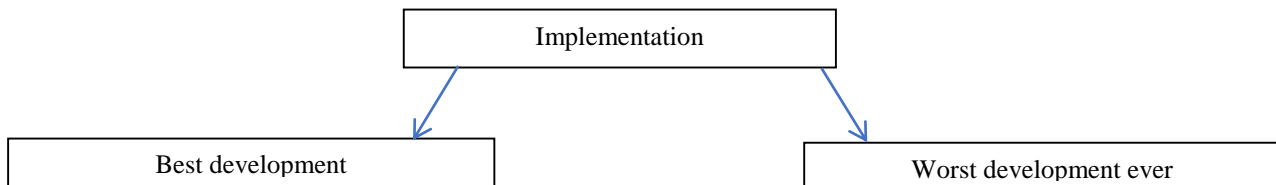
On the one hand, the scenarict considers any negatives of the development of the event, but because of this, it is seen as a clear level of paranoia. Kahn himself admits that the content of any scenario may consist of paranoid ideas, but it should be evaluated on the level of possibility of this type of scenario. Another criticism is that the scenario can drift away from reality and become unhelpful, unnecessary and dangerous. Kahn believes that the answer to this criticism is that “a scenario cannot predict the future”. If the analyst is working with an unknown future, how can he know how far his criticisms fall behind reality.

G. Kahn believes that such types of thinking can deprive journalists of the right to discuss national issues. By the way, Kahn was afraid of losing his general view of the problems, so he stopped working on exact sciences in his time. In other words, he is not interested in the discussion of problems, but in the principles of expanding problems in one or another context. We can see 2 variants of thinking separated on the basis of such differences: strategic and non-strategic.



By the way, we should not forget that the main strategy is to solve problems first.

We can see that one pole (side) of the continent depicts the development of events positively, while the other side depicts the opposite. As long as we are always psychologically inclined to the opposite side. This second pole is as important as the first.



The current president of the USA J. Bush pays particular attention to the reverse side of the coin, that is, the worst case scenario.

During Ford’s time, the Committee on Risk was formed in the USA today. It was a real social organization. Its members believed that the US was falling behind in the arms race with the USSR. With Rumsfeld’s help, the group headed by senior J. Bush at that time obtained the right to see the MQB data. Exports of this group, later named Commando B, discovered their own type of analysis, demonstrating a detached reassessment of the capabilities of the Soviet Army. Rumsfeld helped send the results based on their accuracy. Although, today they are recognized with skepticism. In any case, the US has managed to reduce the possibility of securing public opinion and the priority of military thinking in politics. In this context, a new analytical product was created



according to the intelligence and now it satisfies the interest of the military. Data obtained before the Iraq war was also carried out in this way.

Similar strategies today are also focusing on things that can be done in a systematic way, such as isolated vulnerabilities or asymmetric attacks. In general, it is in this region itself to focus on the organization of protection against any kind of risk with the return of specific risks.

This type of strategic thinking was considered important for G. Kahn, and the scenario created as a result of strategic thinking was recorded as his instrumentality. This will be a new type of thinking—a variant of scenario thinking, more or less reworked to implement these types.

Similar	Instrumental
Strategic	The scenario

Scenarios constitute a more general set of functions according to Kahn [1]:

- they draw attention to a wider range of possibilities and dramatize and decorate with pictures (depict) these possibilities;
- they force the analyst to work with details and dynamics without abstract discussions;
- they include social, political, psychological, military factors, as well as the interaction of specific political players emphasizes (relationship);
- if only real-life examples are analyzed, they may reveal several problems that are insignificant;
- they are also some real current and previous crises to consider the alternative possibilities of the outcome can use;
- they can be used as an artificial real event for the analysis of development opportunities.

G. Kahn Guddonovsky organized the institute as the main type of think tank and divided it into 6 types according to the degree of predictability of events within the framework of the presented methodology:

- Stability (climate, language, faith, etc.);
- Gradual change (natural resources, demography, GDP, tax policy, etc.);
- Forerunner – (unique scenarios, key forces, intractable problems, etc.);
- Accidents (the result of revolutions or wars, several types of external pressure, spontaneous poverty);
- Unaccounted for (includes reasons for unknown and unanalyzed mechanisms or excessive complexity).

Analysts see the world as more or less predictive and recognize the importance of the first four categories. For Kahn, on the contrary, these factors became the main ones. He discussed them as invisible objects in the face of standard methods of analysis. He also believes that analysts prefer continuing trends rather than bursts. We also discuss history in this context.

This is very important in determining the essence of the strategic thinking method. While strategic thinking must move away from simple extrapolations and thinking by analogy, which are undoubtedly important, they do not provide the level of “slice of reality” that is characteristic of strategic thinking.

G. Kahn himself recognized the following 2 options when looking into the future:

1. Simple extrapolation of existing trends;
2. Using historical examples [2].

But for him, the moment when he began to change his “movement” under investigation was considered important.

G. Kahn explained the special “permitted” collection related to the development and change of the future (cited Aligica P. The great transition and social limits to growth. Herman Kahn on social change and global economic development // www.hudson.org):

- even if the level of modernization changes significantly, it cannot be avoided;
- change always brings with it danger, pain, doubt and disorder;
- the occurrence of changes depends on the intervention, because it does not always give the result of what is directed. But it is useful in any situation;
- nothing can turn future changes into negative and positive;
- if there is a generalization of desires and a specific direction of actions, the path forward will be easy;
- not all of the first experiments will be used, but a lot can be mastered;
- the idea that it is impossible to build a society that is attracted to humanitarian ideas based on high technologies is wrong.



Contemporaries evaluated G. Kahn's thinking methods as creative and concise. For example, he believes that anyone exaggerating the consequences of nuclear wars is actually exaggerating its existence.

In his analysis, he showed that surviving a nuclear war would be a viable option for the United States, which influenced the US military, which did not consider such survival realistic.

One of Kahn's concessions was "the hypotheticality of the first strike".

J. Stone made a strategic plan to evacuate the city's population to the United States when Europe was hit. As a result, this would allow the US to strike first [3]. His three-day courses made Kahn popular. Later, the book "About Thermal Nuclear Wars" was created from these courses. He was distinguished by his intelligence. His tongue was sharp enough to hold the attention of his listeners. The military used to order the Guzdovsky Institute for "high-level ideas" arising in the projects. For example, the benefit of such arguments to missile defense – providing employment to steel foundries after the war. G. Kahn clearly showed a picture of the world depicting a new type of weapon, that is, nuclear weapons, in the frame.

According to Kahn, according to the change in the type of aggressive behavior, he first lists a series of problems in the near future for the decision-maker [4]:

- great opportunities for terrorism, blackmail, revenge;
- a wide range of options for "local" Munich, Pearl Harbor and Bliikrig;
- pressure on the implementation of actions prevented in connection with the first 2 points;
- tendencies to neglect conventional military capabilities;
- the great danger of an aimless (intentional) war;
- internal political problem (civil war, irresponsibility, conspiracy, etc.) and external factors (arms race, fear before fear, etc.);
- transfer (proliferation) of nuclear weapons into the hands of irresponsible private organizations;
- the complexity of future proofing problems;
- intensification of provocation problems;
- anonymous and catalyzing war.

Here, the kernel strategy falls into the context of functionalization options. On the other hand, specific problems (military and non-military) take on a new dimension when the threat of nuclear war begins to materialize.

G. Kahn, for example, from a moral point of view, when some real situation options were not discussed, he mainly defended the problem of nuclear strategy discussion by analogy with history. Responding to criticism of his presentation on thermonuclear war, G. Kahn saw 3 types of objections [5]:

- no one to think about these problems in detail and rationally should not act;
- what to think about on this plane it is done in a mysterious way. They can be military or government;
- even if there is a problem of discussing these questions outside the government, it is not necessary to bring them to the wider community for discussion.

This fact is so unpleasant in his eyes that the decision-maker tries to avoid it. But the existence of a thermonuclear bomb is a fact: therefore, it is necessary to discuss the risks of irresponsibility and possible events on the one hand, and the benefits on the other. He says that it is necessary to think not only about the positive aspects of the future, but also about the negative aspects.

G. Kahn paid special attention to the decision-making process, because it is they who, through a series of concrete points in making this or that decision, predetermine our movement into the future. He identifies 10 "traps" that prevent quality decision making [6]:

A very narrow criterion. The receiver is concerned with his level of responsibility. Usually a new problem has no parallels, no matter who is in the bureaucratic structure.

A decision on the inappropriate location of the structure. A decision considered reasonable for group members may have unintended consequences for the group as a whole.

Inadequate thinking. This is the simplest option related to bad analysis. Some discussions do not occur at all because of pressure or doctrinal habits.

Unknown problems. Sometimes we have a simple lack of messages. There will be situations when neither theory nor empirical facts lead the planner to stray from the desired information.



Rare events. Correct decisions, conclusions can be made based on events that could have happened, but also those that could not have taken place. Planners should consider the difference between less likely and improbable in principle.

Players turn. The difficulty of making political decisions is: one group initiates them, another describes them, a third creates a program, and a fourth implements it. As a result, we cannot reconcile what the first group was thinking.

Inconsistency of models. Mirror modeling is a typical error itself. Often, complex problems are tried to be solved using simple models.

Inconsistency of values. The values of today may not be compatible with the values of the future. Decision makers perceive many aspects of future events as inappropriate. If the medieval church knew that the revival would lead to the secularization of society, it would have resisted implicitly.

Complexity of uncertain work. Dealing with uncertainty or future challenges is difficult.

Great can be the enemy of good (and sometimes vice versa). Desire and opportunity should be far from analytics, but they are interrelated in decision-making. If the goal is desirable, enthusiasm will arise, which increases the likelihood of achievement.

Today, the admissions process has become dominant in the research facility. Because they are the most optimal point of influence. G. Kahn paid enough attention to this object for a long time, that is, he was the main person for the study. It also focuses on the timely change of strategy types and decision-making when there is a nuclear threat, due to the belief in the irreversibility and singularity of such decisions.

G. Kahn's readers note his attention to detail. He was especially attentive to the facts that did not correspond to the general picture. His favorite story would be this. When he was elaborating on a question in Australia, he got deep, and an audience member raised his hand and asked: "The German is doing well in practice, but how does it work in theory?" [7]. This is a very important characteristic of his individual style of thinking, the departure in abstraction is of course always light, but the practical meaning of all analogies is immediately out of hand. The fact is that there is always a great deal of attention to the ideas that are used or not used in the experiment.

Another of his students says that Kahn taught them to respect the ordinary opinions of ordinary people, and that Kahn was always late for his lectures.

G. London wanted to know what was the matter. They left early with G. Kahn, but on the way Lifter started telling Kahn about his life and the lecturer was late again.

G. Kahn trained a group of experts on strategic thinking, continuing the work of REND, established the Guddonovsky Institute. In the course of work, strategic analysis methods were collected. It can be said that the future has lost its secrecy and is gradually becoming an ordinary object of scientific research.

G. Kahn's weight was 106 kg. At the end of his life, he fell asleep in meetings. But his creative mind was always working. He founded many directions. In some of them, we are still where G. Kahn left off, although his main object of stopping the nucleus has been qualitatively transformed today.

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