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Orbis

Volume 52, Issue 2, 2008, Pages 238-254

Effective Advice in Decisions for War: Beyond Objective Control

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2008.01.005>

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Abstract

For half a century the study of civil-military relations has focused on the problem of civilian control, with Huntington's objective control concept supported as the optimal solution not only for civilian control in peacetime but also for military success in war. The challenges of modern warfare suggest the need for a new probl matique founded upon the essential need for accuracy in pre-war net assessments. Inaccurate pre-war assessments, rather than a purported dearth of objective control or "derelictions of duty," explain many problems with recent war efforts. Furthermore, accurate pre-war assessments are hindered by objective control arrangements. An alternative approach of Open Debate among civilian and military leaders, would, in the pre-war period, acknowledge the need for high-level discussion of non-politicized expertise from multiple institutions. Open Debate would require altering institutional arrangements as well as the education of public servants.

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