

THE STRATEGY
OF CONFLICT

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PREFACE TO THE 1980 EDITION

When I learned that Harvard University Press was going to issue a paperback edition of this book, I wondered what parts of it would be so embarrassingly obsolete that I would need to delete or rewrite them, or at least to apologize for them in a new preface. It's twenty years since *The Strategy of Conflict* appeared. I don't often reread it; parts of it I hadn't looked at in more than a decade. Some of the things I said must have become trite, or irrelevant, or wrong.

Some have. But on the whole I can cheerfully report that, though occasionally quaint in its examples, the book is mostly all right. Comments in Chapter 1 about the low estate of military strategy in universities and military services are now so obviously wrong that they can safely be left for their historical value. A more serious issue is whether students — and students may be the only ones nowadays who read the book for the first time — will recognize names like Quemoy, Khrushchev, and Mossadeq or will know how Miss Rheingold used to be chosen.

We can all be thankful that Appendix A is not out of date. It was written on the premise that atomic weapons had not been used since Nagasaki. May the book enjoy many new printings with that premise intact.

Some of the ideas that I thought original in Chapter 10 have since become fashionable. Some have even gone on to become unfashionable. There is now a vast literature on arms limitation, including some things I've written, but Chapter 10 still says as much in relation to the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, and says it as clearly, as any other twenty-five pages I have found. A reader who wants to pursue my thoughts on strategy and arms control can see the book by that name that I wrote with Morton H. Halperin, published by the Twentieth Century Fund in 1961, or my *Arms and Influence*, Yale University Press, 1966.

The theoretical contents, not the foreign policy, may be what most people use this book for now. In putting these essays together to make the book, I hoped to help establish an interdisciplinary field