

Review of “The Long-View: The Multifaceted War Between the United States and China—A New Strategy”

By Ken Robinson

Wayne Michael Hall’s essay, “The Long-View: The Multifaceted War Between the United States and China—A New Strategy,” is one of the most serious and unsettling strategic documents circulating today. It is not unsettling because it is alarmist. It is unsettling because it is internally coherent, historically grounded, and increasingly consistent with observable reality.

Hall argues that the United States is already engaged in a long-duration conflict with the People’s Republic of China, but that this conflict does not resemble the wars Americans are trained to recognize. There is no declaration, no single battlefield, and no clear transition from peace to war. Instead, Hall describes a continuous, multifaceted campaign prosecuted across economics, technology, information, cognition, diplomacy, and military power. This is not metaphorical war. It is strategic competition conducted deliberately below the threshold of open conflict.

The intellectual foundation of Hall’s argument rests on a simple but critical insight: the United States continues to think about conflict in linear, Western terms, while China operates using a fundamentally different strategic logic. That logic is best understood through the game of Go.

Go is not an analogy in Hall’s work. It is a description of how power is accumulated and exercised. Unlike chess, which emphasizes decisive engagements and hierarchical destruction, Go emphasizes space, influence, patience, and the gradual reduction of an opponent’s options. Victory is cumulative and often invisible until reversal is no longer possible. Hall’s description of China’s strategy aligns precisely with this logic.

Throughout the essay, Hall shows how China avoids direct confrontation with American military strength and instead decomposes U.S. power into its constituent elements. These elements include supply chains, technology standards, information flows, monetary systems, education, infrastructure, and alliance cohesion. Each element is pressured incrementally. No single move appears decisive. Collectively, they shape strategic inevitability.

Hall’s treatment of information and cognition as warfighting domains is particularly important. He argues persuasively that modern conflict is decided less by firepower than by perception, narrative control, and decision-making advantage. Elections, financial markets, public confidence, and alliance trust are no longer adjacent to war. They are contested terrain. China’s emphasis on information dominance, deception, and long-term narrative shaping reflects classical strategic thought refined for the Information Age.

Time is treated by Hall not as a backdrop, but as a weapon. China's strategic horizon extends across decades, even centuries. Short-term losses are accepted as investments in long-term position. By contrast, American strategy is constrained by election cycles, quarterly earnings pressures, and media-driven urgency. Hall makes clear that a society incapable of sustained long-term thinking cannot prevail in a long-form strategic contest.

Central to the essay is Hall's focus on will. He treats will not as rhetoric, but as an operational variable shaped by purpose, confidence, coherence, and endurance. In a struggle of wills, victory does not require battlefield defeat. It requires erosion of confidence and fragmentation of resolve. Hall shows how China targets these vulnerabilities indirectly, aiming to induce strategic paralysis rather than provoke open war.

Hall also places heavy emphasis on leadership and institutional cognition. He argues that success in this environment requires leaders capable of seeing the entire strategic board, understanding second- and third-order effects, and resisting the impulse to chase every local crisis. This is not a call for passivity. It is a call for disciplined restraint guided by long-horizon strategy.

The essay is demanding. It requires the reader to abandon comforting assumptions about peace, war, and competition. Hall does not offer easy solutions or tactical checklists. What he offers instead is a framework for thinking clearly about a conflict that is already underway but rarely named.

For scholars, this work provides a rigorous integration of culture, cognition, strategy, and power. For practitioners, it explains why activity without strategy produces exhaustion rather than advantage. For serious readers, it provides language for understanding why American responses to China, Russia, and Iran often feel reactive and incoherent.

"The Long-View" is not frightening because it is extreme. It is frightening because it is plausible. It deserves careful study by anyone concerned with the future of American power and the preservation of a democratic way of life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ken Robinson is a former special operations mission commander, U.S. Army Ranger, and Green Beret with deep experience in clandestine special operations, intelligence, irregular warfare, crisis response, and hostage recovery. He was inducted into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 2004. He later applied his lifetime of experience, knowledge, and rigor to national media and Track II diplomacy.