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¹ For elegant simplicity it would be hard to improve on the words of Harold Lasswell in 1936. He began his great, though physically modest book in the following way: 'The study of politics is the study of influence and the influential.' Stated thus simply, Lasswell saved other scholars hours, possibly years, of effort struggling to understand what politics is all about. The most plausible answer is just influence, for whatever policy end one is advancing at a particular time. Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1936), 3.

² Contemporary readers of modern history may feel inclined to join this author in his surprise at learning in awfully grim detail just how badly led the Allies were in the overlong Italian campaign of 1943–4. Allied performance deteriorated as the levels of relevant effort ascended from the tactical, through the operational, eventually reaching the dizzying heights of the strategic, concluding with the political. For a superb and detailed account, see Rick Atkinson's book, *The Day of Battle: The War in Italy, 1943–1944* (New York: Henry Holt, 2007), volume two of *The Liberation Trilogy*. Whereas Allied combat tactics improved of daily necessity, the directing generalship showed little evidence of improvement.