

AMERICAN STRATEGY:
ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES
FOR THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW

Steven Metz

September 2000

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FOREWORD

The latter half of 2000 and the first 6 months of 2001 are likely to represent a seminal time in the evolution of U.S. military strategy. The combination of a congressionally-mandated Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a change of presidents, and shifts in the global security environment will force or allow American strategists to rethink some of the basic elements of U.S. strategy and decide if any changes need to be made. It is vital that the defense transformation process be strategy driven rather than dictated by budgets or technology alone. In other words, the first step in assessing the status and the future of American strategy is to examine the concepts and broad alternatives on which it is built.

The Strategic Studies Institute has undertaken several projects to help Army leaders and defense policymakers identify key strategic issues and alternatives. One is a major conference organized in collaboration with the Georgetown University National Security Studies Program in September 2000. The present study by Steven Metz represents another. In it, Dr. Metz begins with a survey of the evolution of American defense strategy since the end of the Cold War. He then describes some of the key issues which will shape the upcoming QDR and assesses a number of strategic alternatives ranging from the existing strategy to some new and innovative ones. For each alternative, he describes the key assumptions and the risks involved. He ends with a slate of recommendations including a controlled shift away from the focus on large-scale regional war with "rogue states."

Decisions made in the next year will affect U.S. security for decades to come. The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this study as part of the debate and analysis which will feed the process of defense transformation.

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Director
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SUMMARY

Because of the confluence of the congressionally mandated Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and a presidential election, the years 2000 and 2001 are likely to be important in the evolution of American military strategy. Basic strategic concepts and alternatives will be debated and analyzed. The results will shape U.S. strategy for several decades. This study provides a brief history of the evolution of American military strategy since the end of the Cold War, delineates the key issues which are likely to shape the upcoming QDR process, and assesses a range of strategic alternatives.

Core Issues. Four broad strategic issues are likely to be particularly important during the QDR and as the new president frames his defense policy:

Transformation. Beginning with the National Defense Panel of 1997, a number of influential thinkers have called for a full transformation of the American military to seize the potential of the information technology driven revolution in military affairs. While the specific trajectory of transformation is open to debate, the Pentagon and the military Services have established a number of programs designed to energize change. But some advocates of transformation contend that the Department of Defense is less committed to transformation than it might be. Others argue that the current security environment does not justify the cost and risk which transformation would entail.

Force Shaping. During the early 1990s, American strategists made two crucial force shaping decisions. One was to use “major regional conflicts” like the Gulf War as a yardstick. The second was to move from a predominantly threat-based force shaping methodology to capabilities-based ones. For a number of reasons, the current approach to force shaping may not survive QDR 2001. However

inadequate the two MTW yardstick, it is not clear what should replace it. In an even broader sense, some defense analysts are beginning to question the use of capabilities as a force shaping criterion rather than existing threats. Even though the Department of Defense is not likely to abandon the capabilities approach in the near term, it will face pressure from Congress, the media, and the public to assure a better match between the capabilities of the U.S. military and the threats it might face. DOD and the Services are unlikely to find a sympathetic ear for acquisition and force development programs based on a hypothetical “near peer competitor” so long as there are few signs of one emerging.

Strategic Focus. The appropriate focus for the U.S. military should depend on trends in the global security environment. The key question is whether major, state-on-state war will remain common enough and threatening enough to warrant building a military force designed primarily to deal with it. There is no agreement on this among strategic thinkers and defense leaders. Given this, QDR 2001 is likely to see several major questions concerning the post-MTW focus of the U.S. military:

- Should the U.S. military continue to focus on warfighting or treat warfighting and non-warfighting functions like peace operations, shaping, and military-to-military engagement as co-equals?
- If U.S. national security strategy continues to stress participation in multinational peace support operations, should the military seek greater efficiency and effectiveness by developing specialized units to focus on these sorts of activities, including long-term nation building?
- Can large-scale, cross-border, conventional war be deterred or defeated by some means other than by combined arms operations by a U.S. dominated coalition?

- Should the U.S. military give greater emphasis to nontraditional adversaries or emerging enemies rather than state militaries?

The Strategy-Budget Mismatch. Today nearly every analyst agrees that the budget predictions which served as the basis for the 1997 QDR are unrealistic. But as is always true with economic and budgetary predictions, various writers disagree on the extent of the shortfall. In the broadest sense, there are three solutions. One would be for Congress to authorize dramatically larger defense budgets, perhaps linking defense spending to a specific percentage of gross domestic product. Another is to attempt to close the gap through greater efficiency. The third approach is to adjust strategy to budgetary realities by redefining national interests and scaling back on security commitments. In all probability, QDR 2001 will not solve the problem and may not even address it. Eventually, though, budgets, commitments, and force levels must be synchronized.

The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review. A range of strategic alternatives has been developed and debated within the defense community as part of the preparation for QDR 2001. Consensus is emerging that this QDR should be strategy driven rather than budget driven like QDR 1997. This places extra importance on the strategic concepts that will be incorporated into the review process. The strategic alternatives under scrutiny differ in their assumptions, focus, and risk. Five alternatives merit serious consideration.

Alternative 1: Shape, Prepare, Respond. Because the United States currently uses the shape/respond/prepare approach, it forms the baseline for the analysis of all alternatives. In fact, many of what are being called strategic alternatives during the QDR preparations are actually variants of the shape/respond/prepare approach rather than discrete strategies.

Variant A: The Respond Approach (Current Strategy). The current variant of the shape/respond/prepare approach gives responding priority in terms of money, time, effort, and talent. Responding, which includes the American reaction to both MTWs and SSCs, is “first among equals” of the three functions. The Respond Approach does entail some strategic risks and costs. For instance, it demands a large and highly skilled force, and a large defense budget. It can lead the United States to over-extension and may discourage partners from adequately developing their own military capabilities. Engagement can cause partners and the American public to overestimate the extent of Washington’s commitment to a nation or a region and also risk “guilt by association” if a military that has undergone American training or education, or which had held combined exercises with the U.S. military commits human rights violations, undertakes aggression, becomes corrupt, or intervenes in the political system of its state. Finally, preparing now for an uncertain future can risk “early lock in” if predictions about the future prove incorrect.

Variant B: The Transformation Approach. The “Transformation Approach” is based on the belief that the United States should accept greater short-term risk by limiting global engagement, canceling procurement of current or next-generation weapons systems, selectively lowering current readiness and operational tempo, cutting some force structure, and shrinking the defense infrastructure in order to accelerate the development and adoption of advanced systems, concepts, and organizations. If this succeeds, it could solidify American military preponderance for decades to come, thus helping assure a more stable global security system and protecting U.S. national interests.

The Transformation Approach is based on several assumptions. First, while the United States is unlikely to face a peer or near-peer competitor for several decades—hence the “strategic pause”—this approach assumes that one will eventually emerge or, at least, try to emerge. The

Transformation Approach also assumes that the United States has an accurate roadmap for the current revolution in military affairs so that any changes made bring strategic advantages. And, it is based on the assumption that the U.S. military, in conjunction with coalition partners and allies, can overcome immediate or short-term challenges with existing technology and forces.

Ultimately, the Transformation Approach entails accepting greater short-term risk in expectation of a long-term payoff. If one assumes that the United States has an accurate roadmap for transformation, that the current strategy is economically unsustainable, that a substantial American military preponderance over any conceivable opponent should be sustained, that a decline in current U.S. influence in some regions is acceptable or can be rectified at a later date, and that the current “strategic pause” will persist for several decades, the Transformation Approach makes sense. If any of these assumptions do not hold, the soundness of the Transformation Approach is questionable.

Variant C: The Shaping Approach. The “Shaping Approach” grows from the conclusion that MTWs are increasingly unlikely. This gives the United States a chance to place greater emphasis on the use of the military for shaping and engagement to preempt conflict, increase regional stability, augment the capabilities of American partners, and deter the “states of concern.” It would also allow significantly smaller defense budgets since shaping activities are less costly than warfighting, and since greater regional stability would allow force reductions.

While a Shaping Approach would help save defense dollars and potentially augment regional stability in some parts of the world, it would be a risky venture if predictions about the demise of large-scale war prove wrong. Moreover, a Shaping Approach assumes that the recent democratic reforms and economic growth will continue. Clearly the U.S. military would not undertake engagement with oppressive, nondemocratic partners. It is possible that the first decade

of the 21st century will prove to be the high water mark of political reform and democratization, with regression toward authoritarianism or fragmentation taking place as the political and economic expectations of the citizens of transitional states are frustrated. A Shaping Approach also risks guilt by association, creeping commitment, and over extension.

Variant D: The Warfighting Approach. The “Warfighting Approach” is based on the belief that shaping, engagement, and preparing should be secondary functions for the U.S. military. What distinguishes the Warfighting Approach from the Respond Approach is the separation of major war from smaller scale contingencies. The warfighting approach is based on the belief that the focus of the American military should be MTWs or, at least, large-scale war, with SSCs accorded lower priority. Like the Transformation Approach, the Warfighting Approach advocates diminishing American engagement in shaping and SSCs. But, rather than doing this as a means of shifting resources to transformation efforts, the warfighting approach advocates diminished engagement strictly on the basis of strategic prudence: by expending so much time, effort, and money in regions of the world less important to the United States, Washington is increasing the risk to U.S. interests in the core regions.

While the Warfighting Approach to U.S. military strategy would be a more focused and cheaper one than the current strategy, it would entail an increase in both short-term and long-term risk. By abandoning shaping and engagement activities, conflicts that might have been deterred or avoided may break out. The U.S. military would play only a limited role in smaller conflicts in noncore regions. This would erode the position of leadership currently held by the United States and could leave the U.S. military unable to perform functions demanded of it by the American people and their elected leaders.

Alternative II: A Counter-Asymmetry Strategy. The idea behind the counter-asymmetry strategy is that responding to existing or potential threats should, in fact, remain the central focus of American military strategy, but the current strategy prepares for the wrong kind of challenge. The counter-asymmetry approach to U.S. military strategy recognizes this and would adjust force structure, operational concepts, and equipment accordingly. The question then becomes: what forms of asymmetry will be most common and, more importantly, most problematic for the United States?

A counter-asymmetry approach to U.S. military strategy would de-emphasize forces and capabilities used for traditional force-on-force combat in open terrain, and focus instead on counter-terrorism, homeland defense, missile defense, urban operations, operations without large in-theater bases, dispersed nonlinear operations, military robotics, and other activities that might thwart asymmetric activities. The U.S. military would also need to develop hybrid hierarchy-network organizations to counter networked opponents.

The primary risk of a counter-asymmetry approach is guessing wrong. The United States could undertake great efforts to prepare for a type of enemy or a type of conflict that never emerges. This would not only be expensive, but could also undercut support from the American public and its elected leaders, and erode morale within the U.S. military. Ultimately preparing for the wrong kind of asymmetric threat could be just as dangerous as not preparing at all. There is also the same risk seen in several other strategic approaches under consideration, that shifting the focus of the American military away from MTW might make it more likely to occur. In all probability, the time is not yet right for the United States to shift to a counter-asymmetry strategy.

Alternative III: Preventive Defense. All variants of the shape/respond/prepare strategy reflect the belief that the United States has three levels of national interest—vital,

important, and humanitarian—and that U.S. military power should be used to promote or protect all three so long as the expected costs and risks are in accordance with the significance of the interest at stake. It is, in other words, a military strategy appropriate for a superpower that has the ability and the will to become involved in many kinds of issues and in many places. There is a growing movement, though, that contends that such an unlimited national security strategy will ultimately prove insolvent. Thus the United States needs to resist the temptation to use military force on problems and issues that are ultimately peripheral or secondary and focus on truly important national interests. The United States needs, in other words, a national security strategy of constraint and focus rather than one of unconstrained enlargement and engagement.

Former Clinton officials William Perry and Ashton Carter advocate a strategy that focuses on “A” list threats that might challenge the survival, way of life, and position in the world of the United States. These include the danger that Russia might descend into chaos, isolation, and aggression; the danger that Russia and other Soviet successor states might lose control of their weapons of mass destruction; the danger that China could become increasingly hostile; the danger that weapons of mass destruction will proliferate and present a direct military threat to U.S. forces and territory; and the danger that catastrophic terrorism might occur on U.S. territory. Such issues do not capture the headlines like humanitarian disasters but, according to Perry and Carter, will determine the future security of the United States.

The preventive defense strategy is based on several key assumptions. The most important is that shaping activities on the part of the U.S. military can have a positive effect on developments in China and Russia, and can lower the danger from terrorism. The preventive defense strategy also assumes that the threat from rogue states will, at worst, remain steady and may actually decrease, so a modest improvement in U.S. forces will preserve an

adequate military advantage. Finally, preventive defense assumes that “C” list problems will not expand or escalate into more serious threats. They can, in other words, be handled with a very modest effort or even ignored, with no long-term repercussions. Risks arise if any of these assumptions prove false.

Alternative IV: Supporting Regional Structures. Current strategy notes that the U.S. military usually operates with partners, but in every type of coalition operation except peacekeeping in peripheral areas, the United States plans to be the dominant member. A strategy of supporting regional structures would reverse this so that the normal state of affairs would be for the U.S. military to be the supporting coalition partner rather than the supported one. This could diminish the chances that U.S. actions will provoke opposition or intimidate other states. It could also be a more affordable and sustainable strategy than one in which enemies are always defeated by American-led coalitions.

A U.S. strategy of supporting regional security structures would reflect the fact that local states are more interested in and better able to understand their region’s security than are Americans. It would also take advantage of the fact that regional and subregional security organs are taking form in nearly all parts of the world. At the political level, such a strategy would help with the formation of multinational security structures where none exist, and assist with the development of those that do. During peacetime, the U.S. military would augment the effectiveness of regional structures, primarily through support to regional exercises, combined training, and professional military education. During crises or conflict, the United States would provide support to regional structures according to specific needs. This might be improved command and control, missile defense, intelligence support, transportation, medical or other types of combat support, and combat service support. In some

instances, the United States might bolster a regional structure with long-range fire support or even landpower.

To perform this support function, the U.S. military, both the CINCs and the services, would need some reorganization. The U.S. Army, for instance, would form dedicated support divisions specifically designed to augment allies in areas where they are weak. At the same time, the United States would retain effective combat units for those instances where regional structures are inadequate or where conditions dictate unilateral American military actions. It would also continue a robust process of experimentation to explore and integrate emerging capabilities.

A strategy of supporting regional structures entails two important types of risk. The first is the risk that allied or partner states may not be able to defeat aggression on their own. Another risk is that a strategy of supporting regional structures might lead to a decline in the ability of the United States to dictate or control the outcome of crises and conflicts around the world. This is undeniable, but may not be undesirable.

Alternative V: Strategic Reconfiguration. In this alternative, the vital tasks of American strategy would remain the same: responding to MTWs, responding to SSCs, shaping/engagement, and preparing for the future. All components of the armed forces and the Department of Defense would stress preparation, particularly experimentation and concept development. But, responsibility for the immediate tasks—MTWs, SSC, and shaping/engagement—would be reassigned. Strategic reconfiguration would entail: (1) refocusing American strategy so that SSCs are equal to or have a higher priority than MTWs; and, (2) refocusing U.S. land forces on SSCs.

Strategic reconfiguration is based on several assumptions: MTWs instigated by cross border aggression by rogue states is becoming less likely; should it occur, it could be defeated and reversed by a combination of regional

forces, standoff American fires, and other methods of American support; SSCs, shaping, and engagement will be the primary tasks of the U.S. military; and SSCs, shaping, and engagement usually are not amenable to standoff solutions. If all of these assumptions hold, strategic reconfiguration entails acceptable risk. If any of them do not hold, strategic reconfiguration could increase the chances that aggressor states will instigate MTW, make ultimate defeat of MTWs impossible or more costly, and, as a result, diminish U.S. influence in those regions where MTWs are possible.

The Evolution of American Strategy. Three types of relationships form the building blocks of American national security strategy: relationships of affinity, necessity or humanity. Much of strategy can be distilled into decisions concerning the priority and forms of these relationships. Even as U.S. strategy approaches the point of great decisions that will shape the future, the Army tends to think operationally rather than strategically. To assure its long-term relevance, the Army needs to place greater emphasis on strategic level analysis. The confluence of the 2001 QDR, a presidential transition, and the Army's transformation process provides an excellent opportunity to do this. This begins with basic concepts—what should be done and what could be done.

The Army makes three defining contributions to the joint team. The first is versatility. The Army covers a larger part of the spectrum of military tasks than any of the other Services. The second is ability to attain strategically decisive results in war. The third is the potential to provide broad-spectrum support to allies and friends. Given these characteristics of the Army's contribution to the joint team, Army leaders should do two things during the 2001 QDR. The first is to design force and concept development programs that augment these defining characteristics—versatility, full spectrum decisiveness, and broad-spectrum support. The second is to assure that these defining characteristics become central components of American

military strategy. While versatility has moved in this direction as the array of tasks given the U.S. military expanded, greater effort is needed to amplify the role of full-spectrum decisiveness and broad-spectrum support.

The contours of the 21st century security environment, which were unclear in 1997, are moving into view. There is not only the opportunity for more substantial strategic change, but also a growing need for it. Given this, the soundest military strategy for the United States in coming years is one that blends components of all five of the strategic alternatives that have been discussed here. It should integrate the following characteristics:

- Increased emphasis on joint, combined, and inter-agency experimentation, research, and development, but avoidance of lock-in to one particular type of future force. Phrased differently, the U.S. military should prepare for transformation but not yet undertake it ;
- Abandonment of the two MTW force shaping yardstick;
- Greater emphasis on asymmetric and nontraditional challenges (to include cancellation of procurement applicable only or primarily to MTWs);
- Movement toward a national security strategy that stresses collaboration and partnership rather than dominance and unilateralism. Development of concepts and organizations designed specifically to support regional partners and allies during peacetime, crisis, and war (including a national security strategy that concentrates on aiding with the formation and development of regional structures);
- A broadened approach to the issue of decisiveness to include a strategic meaning as well as an operational one;

- A strategic focus on potential peer competitors, specifically Russia and China. Modest engagement with these nations while retaining the capability to shift to containment if they prove unwilling to cooperate on the construction of global and regional security systems.

INTRODUCTION

Stiff and unbending is the principle of death.
Gentle and yielding is the principle of life.

Thus an Army without flexibility never wins a battle.
A tree that is unbending is easily broken.

— *Tao Te Ching*

The United States is as safe as any nation in recent memory yet remains obsessed with its security. Just as the *nouveau riche* are more aware than “old money” that wealth can dissipate as easily as it comes, America, as a late entrant to the cast of great powers, worries that the nation’s influence will crumble and some yet-unnamed opponent will steal a march. Psychologically the United States is an insecure superpower. Rather than savoring predominance, American defense analysts and political leaders increasingly contend that the United States is approaching a point of danger or crisis for its military. Senator Bill Frist (R-Tenn), for instance, has argued that “the hollow state of readiness so many have warned about has already arrived.”¹ Daniel Goure and his colleagues at the influential Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) talk of an imminent defense “train wreck” that may lead to failed military operations, an unwillingness on the part of American political leaders to use the U.S. military, and a lack of confidence on the part of America’s allies.² And analysts like John Hillen predict a defense “death spiral” if fundamental strategic changes aren’t forthcoming.³

Whether the state of American defense is really so dire can be debated, but tough decisions regarding American military strategy have been avoided or postponed since the downfall of the Soviet Union. Throughout the strategic community, support grows for a serious and far-reaching reevaluation of U.S. military strategy. The most basic questions—*why*, *when*, and *how* armed force should be used—are being asked. While it is very difficult to prevent

strategic discourse from devolving into debates about what expensive new system should or should not be bought, or whether the military should or should not shrink, such questions cannot be answered without clarity on strategic concepts. Thinking about them is thus a process of immense importance with repercussions not only for Americans, but for the global security system as a whole.

While debate over American military strategy has simmered since the end of the Cold War, it is reaching new levels of intensity. Ironically, this is not the result of an event in the global security environment—a great success or startling defeat—but rather the confluence of a congressionally mandated Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and a presidential election. The coming year may see a real revision of American military strategy or simply a few cosmetic alterations. But whether because of what was decided or what was *not* decided, the years 2000 and 2001 are likely to be important ones in the evolution of American military strategy.

This study is designed to support QDR-related analysis by identifying major issues and strategic concepts. Part I provides context and background. George Santayana's aphorism that "those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it," although a cliché, remains true, so this study will begin by tracing the documents, studies, debates, and concepts which shaped the evolution of U.S. defense strategy during the past decade. (A chronology of key strategic documents and reports is included in the appendix.) Part II focuses on issues and alternatives under consideration as part of the QDR process. It will deal primarily with *strategic concepts* rather than with acquisition or force structure issues. Whether to buy systems like the Crusader or Joint Strike Fighter are very important questions but they only can be answered *following* debate and consensus on key strategic concepts. Acquisition and force structure are dependent variables, not independent ones; to decide what to buy and *then* decide what to do with it is not the most effective means of

promoting American security. Part III will offer conclusions and recommendations.

Finally, the analysis throughout this study will be landpower in orientation. Today the role of American landpower and its strategic significance is being questioned. Decisions that are made concerning key strategic concepts will have immense implications for the size and role of U.S. land forces. By understanding the concepts and issues that constitute U.S. military strategy, decisions about the role and relevance of landpower as well as the setting of strategic priorities will become easier.

PART I: THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN MILITARY STRATEGY

The Base Force.

Containment, of course, was the bedrock strategic concept during the Cold War. This reflected the defensive perspective on military force that dominated strategic American thinking. Except for occasional spasms of aggression, military power was not used for territorial expansion outside what Americans considered their “natural” boundaries. During the Cold War, the primary task of the U.S. military was to prevent the expansion of communism by force. The main threats were conventional, armor-heavy Warsaw Pact forces in Europe, communist insurgents in other areas, Soviet nuclear forces, the Soviet Navy, and—ironically—the lingering isolationist tendency of the American people and their elected leaders. To counter these, U.S. defense leaders developed an array of supporting strategic concepts. These included:

- Formation and sustainment of a web of alliances and security commitments;
- Forward deployed, heavy forces to serve as a guarantee of American commitment to the defense of allies and to minimize the chance that invaders would have to be expelled from allied territory;
- The ability to augment forward deployed forces through rapid, long-distance reinforcement and the mobilization of large reserve component forces;
- Air and naval superiority;
- Interoperability with allied forces;
- Extended nuclear deterrence;

- Reliance on qualitative superiority in equipment, technology, training and doctrine to compensate for quantitative inferiority;
- Cultivation of clients or proxies in areas of less-than-vital concern, especially through security assistance;
- Counterinsurgency support to friendly regimes (eventually support to insurgents attempting to overthrow unfriendly regimes); and
- Limited use of the active component of the U.S. military in non-warfighting missions.

These strategic concepts were adapted and revised after the demise of the Soviet Union. This task fell first on the defense and national security team of the Bush administration. The initial reaction was a modest shift, at least in terms of strategic concepts. Even had the Bush administration been more inclined to undertake radical change in military strategy, Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait suggested that many elements of the strategy were as germane in the post-Cold War world as they previously were. To change from planning to defeat the Soviet military to planning the defeat of an enemy trained and equipped by the Soviets was not difficult. In addition, most of the equipment, training, and doctrine that had been developed by the U.S. military during the latter stages of the Cold War remained relevant.

Still, the Bush administration was not overly quick to pronounce the Soviet threat dead. The President remained wary of Moscow's intentions and capabilities, particularly its strategic nuclear weapons and the 3 million men remaining in the Soviet armed forces.⁴ But the realization was growing among key policymakers that, "in the aftermath of the Cold War, we will likely discover that the enemy we face is less an expansionistic communism than it is instability itself."⁵ To deal with this, Bush proposed a

defense strategy built on four “fundamental demands”: nuclear deterrence, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution. These ideas were fleshed out when General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, published an unclassified *National Military Strategy* in 1992. The complexity of the security environment was a pervasive theme of this document. “[T]he old international order,” it stated, “was familiar, tangible, and it provided a focal point for Free World policies. Now that focus has been blurred by a whirlwind of historic change.”⁶ The strategic concepts that would allow the United States to create what President Bush described as a “new world order,” though, were identical to earlier ones: readiness, collective security, arms control, maritime and aerospace superiority, strategic agility, power projection, technological superiority, and decisive force. Powell did note that the threats the United States would face were more regional than global, thus allowing the United States to exercise restraint in the use of force. The “new world order,” in other words, was less a zero-sum system than the old one. In the post-Cold War world, Powell contended, American forces would be committed to combat only when vital U.S. interests were at stake and all non-military solutions had been exhausted.⁷

President Bush and his top advisers knew that convincing Congress and the American people of the need to sustain a robust military would not be easy. The American tradition was quick and extensive demobilization at the end of a war. Administration officials thought this might apply as much to the Cold War as to the nation’s various hot wars. The restrictive conditions on the use of force advocated by the influential General Powell might have added fuel to demands for demobilization. After all, the *National Military Strategy* said that U.S. military forces should only be used when vital American interests were at stake and other means had been exhausted. Such situations were rare. To forestall or counter demands for radical demobilization and a slashing of the defense budget, General Powell, relying primarily on the Strategy Division of the Strategic Plans

and Policy Directorate and the Budget Analysis Division of the Joint Staff, developed what he called the “base force.”⁸ This was what the Pentagon considered the minimum necessary to do the things that had to be done in the post-Cold War security environment, including deterring aggression, providing overseas presence, responding to regional crises, and, if strategic conditions changed, serving as a foundation to rebuild a global warfighting capability. The base force would include the nuclear triad, 18 Army divisions (12 active, 6 reserve), 12 carrier battlegroups, 3 Marine Expeditionary Forces, and 26 Air Force fighter wing equivalents (15 active, 11 reserve).⁹ To go below this, the Pentagon held, would create unacceptable risks for the United States.

By the end of the Bush administration, the *National Security Strategy* admitted that the demise of the Soviet Union—unlike that of Mark Twain—had not been greatly exaggerated. But administration officials felt that this made it even more difficult to convince the American public and its elected leaders of the enduring need for global engagement. The final *National Security Strategy* of the Bush administration stated:

While we no longer face the possibility of a Soviet-led Warsaw Pact attack on Europe, regional instabilities continue to threaten our interests and our security. The world remains unpredictable and over-armed, and nations have not eliminated the age-old temptation to use force or intimidation to achieve their ends. The end of the Cold War has coincided with a virtual explosion of long-dormant ethnic and aggressive nationalistic tensions around the world, many of which have degenerated into international crises. Proliferation, terrorism, and the international drug trade still threaten stability.¹⁰

This shift in the language of American strategy was subtle but significant. During the Cold War, the perceived military threat to U.S. interests was *direct*. The danger was outright conquest of friendly states. In the post-Cold War world, the military threats were more *indirect*. Violence,

particularly intra-state conflict, could lead to collapse of friends and thwart efforts at reform. While Iraq's invasion of Kuwait demonstrated that cross-border military aggression was still possible, American defense experts searched for a strategy that could deal with both direct, cross-border aggression and indirect, intra-state conflict. They knew how to deal with the former; the challenge was finding a way to use the extremely professional and effective American military to deal with the latter.

President Bush's *National Security Strategy* also stated that, "The most desirable and efficient security strategy is to address the root causes of instability and to ease tensions before they result in conflict."¹¹ The question was how to do this. The Bush administration seized on multinational peacekeeping as a solution. While peacekeeping under the aegis of the United Nations had existed since the 1950s, its effectiveness had long been limited by the Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Most internal wars became proxy conflicts for the superpowers, paralyzing the United Nations where both held vetoes in the Security Council. When the Cold War ended, the United Nations, under the vigorous leadership of Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, undertook a massive increase in its peacekeeping commitments.¹² The Bush administration saw this as a positive trend. In an address to the United Nations, President Bush stated, "I welcome the Secretary General's call for a new agenda to strengthen the United Nations' ability to prevent, contain, and resolve conflicts across the globe."¹³ For the first time in decades, the interests of the United States and the United Nations were at least parallel if not identical—an idea reinforced by the U.N.'s authorization of the U.S.-led efforts to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait. To commit the U.S. military to greater participation in multinational peacekeeping thus seemed a logical way to address the root causes of instability and contain conflicts that did emerge.

In 1992 President Bush decided that the obscure African nation of Somalia was an appropriate testbed for this idea

and the right place to begin establishing the rules and patterns which, he hoped, would define the post-Cold War world order. As he committed U.S. forces to a humanitarian relief action known as Operation *Restore Hope*, President Bush stated:

...I understand the United States alone cannot right the world's wrongs. But we also know that some of the crises in the world cannot be resolved without American involvement; that American action is often necessary as a catalyst for broader involvement of the community of nations. Only the United States has the global reach to place a large security force on the ground in such distant places quickly and efficiently and thus save thousands of innocents from death.¹⁴

In some ways, the catastrophe in Somalia was an inevitable by-product of the end of the Cold War. Under its former dictator Sid Barre, Somalia had actively played the Cold War game, switching from a Soviet to an American client as the winds of geostrategy shifted. When Sid Barre was overthrown in 1991, Somalia, which was always a precarious and conflict-prone place, collapsed into violent chaos, becoming what eventually would be known as a "failed state."¹⁵ Famine ensued. As horrific pictures of the Somali humanitarian disaster were broadcast around the world, demands grew in the United States and elsewhere for intervention. Despite the absence of anything other than symbolic U.S. national interests in Somalia, the Bush administration, facing mounting criticism of its failure to act, became convinced that it could serve as a model for a new assertive style of multinational peacekeeping or peacemaking.¹⁶ In April 1992 the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution authorizing multinational force to provide security for the humanitarian organizations distributing famine relief in Somalia.¹⁷ From 1992 to 1994 the United States participated in the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and United Task Force (UNITAF).¹⁸ But while these operations did help protect relief organizations and save Somali lives, they did little to

alleviate the root causes of the conflict, particularly the total absence of effective government or administration.

The message that the Bush administration intended to send by involvement in Somalia was that the United States would act in partnership with the United Nations to engineer stability and prevent humanitarian disasters wherever they occurred. Instead, Somalia showed the complexity and cost of rejuvenating “failed states” and the danger that such efforts could pose to American public support for global engagement. By the time George Bush left office in January 1993, the idea of using the U.S. military to address the root causes of conflict and the notion that the United Nations would serve as a co-equal partner were being questioned. The message was clear: the great victory over Iraq showed that conventional war could be relatively quick and low-cost, and thus gain the enthusiastic support of the American people. Intervention in failed states and other forms of low-intensity conflict could be difficult, bloody, protracted and confusing. Public support for it was weak. It thus should be avoided whenever possible. The U.S. military took these lessons to heart.

The Bottom Up Review.

The beginning of the Clinton administration gave hints of broad change in American strategy. When the Base Force was first developed, influential members of Congress like Senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga) and Congressman Les Aspin (D-Wisc) were convinced that it was too large, contained the wrong kinds of capabilities, and was too expensive.¹⁹ President Clinton and his top advisers subscribed to this idea. The United States, they felt, could remain a global power with substantially lower levels of defense by working with partners, allies and the United Nations.²⁰ The foundation for Clinton strategy was “engagement and enlargement.” The stress on “engagement” was intended to both reassure friends and enemies that the United States would remain active, and to counter sentiment for

withdrawal among the American people. “American leadership in the world,” the Clinton strategy held, “has never been more important.”²¹ “Enlargement”—a concept advocated most persistently by National Security Advisor Anthony Lake—committed the United States to expand the community of market democracies as a means of augmenting American security and prosperity. This is an important idea. Since the beginning of U.S. history, debate has raged between those who favored a passive foreign and national security policy in which the United States only protected itself and served as a “beacon” for others, and those who wanted to use American power to spread democracy and free market policies. This schism is nearly as old as the United States, pitting Thomas Jefferson’s credo of “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none” and his ideas of strategic independence and nonintervention, against the greater activism associated with presidents like Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.²²

The schism between the limited and activist versions of American foreign policy erupted again during the early years of the Cold War. As Washington struggled to adjust to its new role as leader of the Free World, some policymakers and analysts advocated a purely defensive strategy which sought only to contain communism until its inherent weaknesses caused it to collapse. This perspective grew from the thinking of George Kennan, the “father” of containment.²³ Other policymakers and analysts, particularly those who saw greater danger from Soviet military power than from the ideological appeal of communism, proposed a more active American strategy in which the U.S. military blocked Soviet advances while attempts were made to “roll back” communism.²⁴ This debate between the passive and active versions of containment ebbed and flowed, exploding again during the 1980s and leading to the “Reagan Doctrine” of providing support to insurgents attempting the overthrow of

pro-Moscow regimes in places like Nicaragua, Angola, and Afghanistan.

Bush's "new world order" and Clinton's strategy of "enlargement" represented the ascendance of activism in American foreign policy.²⁵ To do this, Clinton realized that the United States needed "robust and flexible military forces" able to deal with a wide range of tasks, including the defeat of enemies like Iraq or North Korea, countering weapons of mass destruction, contributing to multinational peace operations, and supporting counterterrorism.²⁶ Clinton accepted Bush's insistence that the decision to use force should be based on American national interests, the degree of commitment from allies (although the United States would retain the capability to act unilaterally if necessary), whether nonmilitary means had been tried, and whether the American public supported the action.²⁷ But what characterized the Clinton strategy until the final years of the administration was a steady expansion in the roles and functions of the U.S. military at the same time that it became smaller and the defense budget shrunk.

To design a military strategy to reflect President Clinton's wider national security strategy, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin instigated what became known as the "Bottom Up Review" (BUR) immediately upon assuming leadership of the Pentagon. The name was based on the belief that the changes in the global security environment were so profound that American defense needed to be reconsidered from the "bottom up." Clearly, Aspin felt a sense of urgency: the study was instigated in March 1993 and the final report was dated October 1993. The BUR, like the Bush strategy that preceded it, stressed the complexity of the new security environment. It identified four main dangers faced by the United States:

- Dangers posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

- Regional dangers, primarily by the threat of large-scale aggression by major regional powers with interests antithetical to those of the United States, but also from smaller, often internal conflicts based on ethnic or religious animosities, state-sponsored terrorism, or subversion of friendly governments;
- Dangers to democracy and reform in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere; and
- Economic dangers to the United States in the absence of a competitive and growing economy.²⁸

The new strategy committed the U.S. military to two sorts of activities: prevention and partnership. Prevention was the use of the military and other elements of the Department of Defense to attempt to forestall armed conflict by promoting democracy, economic growth, economic reform, human dignity, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. Partnership linked the U.S. military to those of other countries, particularly ones undergoing the transition to democracy. The BUR, however, did not abandon the stress on major regional war which undergirded the Base Force. Even the number of such wars used for planning and force development remained the same. The BUR stated:

It is prudent for the United States to maintain military power to be able to win two major regional conflicts that occur nearly simultaneously. With this capability, we will be confident, and our allies as well as potential enemies will know, that a single regional conflict will not leave our interest and allies in other regions at risk.²⁹

The BUR did define major regional conflicts (MRCs) more specifically than the Base Force strategy had.³⁰ Since the BUR considered Iraq and North Korea the primary aggressors who might cause an MRC, it used their geography and military capabilities as a yardstick to develop planning scenarios.³¹ Aggression took the form of

an armor-heavy, combined arms offensive against the outnumbered forces of a neighboring state friendly to the United States with only limited U.S. military forces in the region before hostilities and the United States serving as the leader of a coalition. The American response involved four phases: (1) halt the invasion; (2) build up U.S. combat power in the theater while reducing the enemy's; (3) decisively defeat the enemy; and (4) provide for post-war stability. To successfully counter an MRC, the U.S. military would need a force package composed of 4-5 Army divisions, 4-5 Marine Expeditionary Brigades, 10 Air Force fighter wings, 100 Air Force heavy bombers, 4-5 Navy aircraft carrier battlegroups, and various special operations forces. In other words, *Desert Storm* served as the planning template for major wars and these major wars, in turn, formed the centerpiece of U.S. military strategy. The logic behind this was that such wars would be the most dangerous kind that the U.S. military would face, and if the U.S. military prepared for them, it would by default be prepared to handle other kinds of wars.

Although the BUR laid a strategic foundation for the use of the U.S. military in peacekeeping and peace enforcement, it relied on MRCs as the main force shaping yardstick. The Clinton administration assumed office committed to greater American involvement in multinational peace operations, but this position was soon overcome by events. By the time the BUR was completed, the debacle in Somalia had undercut American enthusiasm for multinational peacekeeping. An October 1993 battle in Mogadishu which led to the deaths of eighteen American soldiers and hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Somalis was particularly traumatic for an administration sensitive to public opinion on foreign and national security policy.³² Most Americans saw the ensuing withdrawal of U.N. forces and American diplomats as failures of U.S. policy.

In response, the Clinton administration undertook a broad reassessment of its entire approach to peacekeeping and peace enforcement. This reflected a substantial shift in

thinking from “assertive multilateralism” under which the U.S. leads efforts to engineer regional stability to a more limited and indirect American role.³³ On May 3, 1994, President Clinton replaced Bush’s NSD 7464 by signing Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25 which outlined his new policy on peacekeeping and peace enforcement.³⁴ This document stressed that warfighting remained the primary mission of the American military but, under certain conditions, multilateral peacekeeping or peace enforcement under the aegis of the United Nations can serve U.S. national interests. But the process by which the United Nations formed and managed peace operations needed substantial improvement and reform. PDD 25 outlined a number of these including exercising greater selectivity when choosing where to intervene, involving regional organizations where appropriate, reducing costs (specifically, decreasing the U.S. assessment for U.N. peacekeeping operations from 31.7% to 25%), expanding the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations to include a Plans Division and an Information and Research Division, establishing a professional Peace Operations Training Program, and reforming the process by which the U.N. manages the financial aspects of peacekeeping operations.

Bowing to pressure from the Pentagon and Congress, PDD 25 stated that the president would never relinquish command authority over U.S. forces but would consider placing U.S. forces under operational control of a competent U.N. commander for specific U.N. operations authorized by the Security Council.³⁵ PDD 25 also stressed that peace operations should be well-defined and linked to a concrete political solution. They should provide a finite window of opportunity for combatants to resolve their differences and failed societies to begin to reconstitute themselves rather than imposing peace on belligerents.³⁶ When considering whether to support a proposed new U.N. peace operation, the Clinton administration stated that it would consider whether involvement advanced U.S. interests, whether there was an international community of interest for

dealing with the problem, and whether there was a clear threat to international peace and security.

The BUR was the most comprehensive attempt to form a coherent post-Cold War military strategy to that point. However, it drew immediate criticism from across the political spectrum. Carl J. Conetta, Co-director of the Project on Defense Alternatives, testified before the House Armed Services Committee that the BUR, by failing to set clear priorities among goals and interests, prescribed an active force structure that was substantially larger than needed. Mr. Conetta contended that there were only two regions outside Western Europe where the interests of the United States and the needs of its allies might require large-scale U.S. intervention: the Arabian and Korean peninsulas. He advocated a strategy that focused on these regions rather than building the capability to intervene around the world. Conetta also questioned the need for retaining high levels of military readiness in the post-Cold War world. “The BUR,” he stated, “transposes a European *central front logic* onto regional contingencies, suggesting that short delays in deployment or reliance on defensive operations risk catastrophe.”³⁷ Analysts from the Heritage Foundation were equally critical, arguing that the BUR force would be unaffordable and its capabilities were overstated.³⁸ In particular, they attacked the BUR’s emphasis on nonwarfighting missions for the U.S. military. Finally, the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment warned that maintaining the near-term U.S. military capabilities outlined in the BUR would come at the expense of long-term development.³⁹ The contours of the debate on post-Cold War U.S. security policy were thus clarifying: whether arguing that the strategy placed too much stress on large scale war, not enough stress, too much stress on the near-term, or too much stress on the long-term, almost no one outside the Pentagon seemed satisfied.

Congress quickly weighed in with its own criticism of the BUR. Many members considered the proposed strategic changes too modest, reflecting the Pentagon’s fear that

altering strategy might lead to further cuts in force structure and budget. The charge was made that the Pentagon clung to excess capabilities and redundancies, largely because it was more concerned with preserving its size and budget than with adapting to new security threats. To attempt a remedy for this, Congress used the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1994 to establish an independent Commission on Roles and Missions (CORM). Chaired by John P. White, Director of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, the CORM included a number of prestigious defense experts and senior retired military officers.⁴⁰ But anyone who expected the CORM to recommend radical change in the roles and missions of the military Services was disappointed. When the CORM report was released in May 1995 it offered some suggestions on improving jointness, but did not provide the sort of objective blueprint for fundamental restructuring of the American military that its creators had hoped.⁴¹ Two CORM recommendations, however, did have an impact: the suggestion that the Department of Defense undertake a major quadrennial strategy review, and that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff develop a vision of future joint operations.⁴²

Even while the CORM was completing its work, the Clinton administration continued to refine its basic strategic concepts. While the Clinton strategy had always linked U.S. defense strategy to national interests, it was vague on the priority assigned to various interests. In the 1995 edition of the National Security Strategy, President Clinton distinguished *vital* interests (those for which the United States would be willing to use force unilaterally), *important* interests (those for which the United States would use force in conjunction with partners); and *humanitarian* interests (those for which the large scale use of force was not appropriate).⁴³ In 1996, Secretary of Defense William Perry began to describe U.S. military strategy as one of "prevent, deter, defeat." While this language certainly did not reflect any radical transition in

strategic thinking, it did have serious implications. As Secretary Perry phrased it, the Clinton strategy placed “renewed” emphasis on prevention by using the U.S. military in ways that might limit the chances of future conflict.⁴⁴ Preventive defense was to include four “core activities”: (1) working with the successor states to the Soviet Union to reduce the nuclear threat; (2) limiting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; (3) encouraging newly independent and newly democratic states to restructure their defenses; and (4) establishing cooperative military-to-military ties with states which were not traditional American allies or coalition partners. Preventive defense represented the beginning of what would become known as “shaping” activities for the armed forces.

But all of the changes that had taken place in U.S. military strategy during this time did not originate from the White House, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, or the Joint Chiefs and Joint Staff. Since the end of the Cold War, the military Services too had been actively reconsidering the organizational structure, equipment, and operational concepts they would need in the 21st century security environment. All concluded that the rapid pace of change demanded that planning and thinking be based on a long time frame. The Army, for instance, began its futures program in 1992 with a series of battlelab simulations and exercises called Louisiana Maneuvers.⁴⁵ This quickly grew into the elaborate “Force XXI” process that used battle laboratories, warfighting experiments, and advanced technology demonstrations to generate and test ideas.⁴⁶ In the mid-1990s, Army Chief of Staff General Dennis Reimer decided that his service needed to look even deeper into the future. Since the main weapon platforms of the Army such as the Abrams main battle tank, the Bradley fighting vehicle, and the Apache attack helicopter were expected to approach obsolescence around 2015, General Reimer thought it necessary to craft a rigorous method to decide whether the Army should seek a new generation of tanks,

fighting vehicles, and helicopters or pursue “leap ahead” technology. To do this, he created the Army After Next Project—a series of wargames, workshops, studies, and conferences to explore the future strategic environment and speculate on the sort of technology, force structure, and operational concepts that the U.S. Army might need.⁴⁷

The other Services also developed futures-oriented cells or organizations. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force commissioned the Air Force 2025 study to provide new operational and strategic ideas. Often using teams with a senior researcher of colonel or lieutenant colonel rank and a number of majors, Air Force 2025 explored topics such as information warfare, unmanned aerial combat platforms, organizations to deal with the gray area between peace and war, and ways to most efficiently erode an enemy’s unity and will.⁴⁸ In a similar vein, the Marine Corps After Next (MCAN) Branch of the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory began exploring what it calls a “biological systems inspiration” for future warfighting intended to explore the use of technology like biomimetic engineered materials; small, “bug like” robotics; neural or neuronal nets capable of complex, adaptive responses; parallel computers; and, nanotechnology.⁴⁹ The Marines also developed futures programs like Sea Dragon and Urban Warrior.⁵⁰ Not to be left out, the Navy created a Strategic Studies Group to explore revolutionary naval concepts.⁵¹

By the mid 1990s there was a clear need to synchronize the various Service visions of future warfighting. One of the most important steps in this process was the publication of *Joint Vision 2010* by General John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff. JV 2010—to use the document’s popular name—was to serve as “the conceptual template for how America’s Armed Forces will channel the vitality and innovation of our people and leverage technological opportunities to achieve new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting.”⁵² The focus was purely operational: JV 2010 did not analyze the changing political, social, economic, and normative framework of armed conflict at the end of the 20th

century. There were, however, some important implied beliefs about the use of military force, specifically the challenges to its political usability and legitimacy that resulted from the information revolution and global interconnectedness.⁵³ According to JV 2010, the solutions to these challenges were greater speed and precision. A U.S. military able to defeat any opponent quickly with minimum collateral damage and American casualties would be politically usable. To operate on a lethal battlefield where precision weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and various types of missiles were common, the U.S. military would need increased stealth, mobility, dispersion, and higher operational tempo. Four key technologies—low observable/masking technologies, “smarter” weapons, long-range precision capabilities, and information technology—were central. “Superior technology,” the Joint Staff contended, “has been a cornerstone of US *NMS* [National Military Strategy] since the dawn of the Cold War and will remain so through the year 2010.”⁵⁴

The central concept of JV 2010 was “full spectrum dominance”—superiority over any opponent in any type of military operation. While stressing that this was only possible by retaining the high quality levels of people, leadership, and training, the focus of JV 2010 was using information superiority to gain full spectrum dominance via four operational concepts:

- *Dominant maneuver*: the multidimensional application of information, engagement, and mobility to position and employ widely dispersed joint air, land, sea, and space forces.
- *Precision engagement*: a system of systems that enables U.S. forces to locate objectives or targets, generate the desired effect, assess the level of success, and reengage.
- *Full-dimensional protection*: control of the battlespace to maintain freedom of action during

deployment, maneuver and engagement, while providing multi-layered defenses.

- *Focused logistics*: the fusion of information, logistics, and transportation technologies to provide rapid crisis response, track and shift assets even while enroute, and directly deliver tailored logistics packages and sustainment.

These concepts became the foundation for individual Service programs as each crafted specific programs and plans to implement JV 2010. In the broadest sense, though, JV 2010 represented the codification of the idea that a revolution in military affairs (RMA) was underway, and that its essence was information technology.⁵⁵

The 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review and National Defense Panel.

Following one of the CORM recommendations, Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct a “fundamental and comprehensive examination of America’s defense needs” every 4 years, with the first due in 1997. The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) report was released in May of that year. According to Secretary of Defense William Cohen, it was “intended to provide a blueprint for a strategy-based, balanced and affordable defense program” by examining threats, strategy, force structure, readiness, modernization, defense infrastructure and other elements of the defense program out to the year 2015.⁵⁶ In reality, the 1997 QDR became a budget-driven process that offered few new strategic ideas, but simply codified the strategy that existed at the time. It described the strategy of “shaping, responding, and preparing” in which the U.S. military must simultaneously shape the security environment through deterrence and engagement, remain prepared for a full spectrum of crises from smaller-scale contingencies (SSCs) to major regional contingencies (MRCs), and take steps to prepare for an uncertain future. The foremost challenge and the focus of most effort remained “the threat of coercion and

large-scale, cross-border aggression against U.S. allies and friends in key regions by hostile states with significant military power”—*Desert Storm*-style attacks from Iraq, Iran, or North Korea.⁵⁷ The QDR did, however, mention a wide array of additional threats including proliferation of advanced weapons and technologies, terrorism, the international drug trade, international organized crime, uncontrolled immigration, and threats to the U.S. homeland.

The “fundamental assumptions” of the QDR were that the United States would remain globally engaged, and that the United States would maintain military superiority over any adversary through the 2015 time period. The United States was “the only power in the world that can organize effective military responses to larger-scale regional threats” and “able to conduct large-scale, effective joint military operations far beyond its borders.”⁵⁸ The basic goals of American defense strategy were:

...fostering an international environment in which critical regions are stable, at peace, and free from domination by hostile powers; the global economy and free trade are growing; democratic norms and respect for human rights are widely accepted; the spread of nuclear, biological, and chemical and other potentially destabilizing technologies is minimized; and the international community is willing and able to prevent and, if necessary, respond to calamitous events.⁵⁹

The 1997 QDR also introduced a concept which quickly became a central part of American strategic thinking: *asymmetry*. The report stated:

U.S. dominance in the conventional military arena may encourage adversaries to use...asymmetric means to attack our forces and interests overseas and Americans at home...Strategically, an aggressor may seek to avoid direct military confrontation with the United States, using instead means such as terrorism, NBC [nuclear, biological, chemical] threats, information warfare, or environmental sabotage to achieve its goals.⁶⁰

Asymmetry could also be part of a conventional war as an enemy used it to deny U.S. forces access to a region, disrupt American operations, or deter U.S. involvement by increasing casualties. Dealing with or preparing for asymmetry thus “must be an important element of U.S. defense strategy.”⁶¹

The QDR, like the defense studies that preceded it, emphasized the wide range of demands placed on the U.S. military. For instance, the U.S. military would often be involved in SSCs. Since these could range from combat operations like limited strikes or peace enforcement to more benign activities like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, training and other requirements on U.S. forces were extensive. In fact, no military in history has been asked to do more things at a high level of proficiency than the post-Cold War U.S. military. The QDR also noted that, “the ability to transition between peacetime operations and warfighting remains a fundamental requirement for virtually every unit in the U.S. military.” This represents one dimension of a broad-based stress on *speed* that was becoming a defining characteristic of post-Cold War American military strategy. The most enduring dilemma for U.S. strategists had become finding ways to avoid a Vietnam-style loss of public and congressional support for military engagement or a specific military operation. Speed was seen as a solution. Since the public tends to initially support the use of force if the president deems it necessary—the “rally ‘round the flag” effect—political opposition was less likely to coalesce or grow during a short intervention or campaign. Similarly, strategic, operational, and tactical speed were thought to minimize U.S. casualties, thus helping preserve public support. Protracted conflict was invariably disadvantageous to the United States. For this reason, the 1997 QDR, like the strategy documents that preceded it and those that came later, emphasized the need for a speedy resolution of crises.

The 1997 QDR retained the two MRC force shaping yardstick. “If the United States were to forego its ability to

defeat aggression in more than one theater at a time,” the QDR report stated, “our standing as a global power, as the security partner of choice, and as the leader of the international community would be called into question...A one-theater war capacity would risk undermining both deterrence and the credibility of U.S. security commitments in key regions of the world.”⁶² After sometimes-intense debate over the sequencing of the two MRCs, the QDR settled on the phrase “nearly simultaneous.” Again this reflected general continuity in strategic thinking. One of the dilemmas of any public strategy document is how to simultaneously address an external audience composed of friends and potential enemies, and provide cogent guidance for one’s own planners. At times, there is tension between these two functions. The 1997 QDR certainly showed this. While it might have been realistic to modify or even drop the two “nearly simultaneous” MRC yardstick, DOD feared the message this might send to external audiences. As a result, the QDR retained a standard that probably could not be met.

The 1997 QDR also devoted quite a bit of attention to the idea of “preparing now for an uncertain future.” By 1997 most of the American defense community agreed that an historic revolution in military affairs was underway.⁶³ Led by people like Andrew Marshall, (director of the Pentagon’s Office of Net Assessment), Andrew Krepinevich (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis), and Admiral William Owens (former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), the concept of military revolutions has gone from the fringe to the foundation U.S. military thinking. This made perfect sense since the type of military revolution that the Pentagon had begun to pursue meshed with so many elements of the American strategic culture including a never-ending quest for technological solutions to problems, the desire for continuous improvement, the tendency to use qualitative superiority to keep human costs low and thus retain political support for engagement, and the perceived need for U.S. military preponderance. The QDR, along with JV 2010,

codified this version of the RMA in American military strategy. It described three “alterative paths” to the future. One was to focus on the near term, minimizing the money and effort devoted to preparing for the long term. The second path was to accept greater near-term risk by further reducing the size of the military, thus freeing money for exploiting the RMA. The third was to balance current demands and an uncertain future, combining modest force reductions with steady technological progress. Of course, this sort of analysis was “cooked.” The technique of devising three options, one calling for doing less of what is already being done, one calling for doing more, and one calling for a continuation of existing actions is common among bureaucracies not committed to substantial change. Clearly no rational decisionmaker would choose anything other than the “balanced” approach which was defined as what the Department of Defense was already doing. The QDR, while it placed slightly more emphasis than the BUR on smaller scale contingencies and the potential for a future peer competitor, thus recommended almost no change in basic strategic concepts.

As with the BUR, the 1997 QDR drew sharp criticism. Much of this dealt with the ingrained conservatism of the report, especially the lack of any recommended changes in service functions or cuts to major acquisition programs. In a sense this was preordained by the organization and structure of the QDR. Rather than beginning with an assessment of an overarching strategy and then deriving implications from it, the Office of the Secretary of Defense organized the QDR into seven “panels”—strategy, modernization, force assessment, readiness, infrastructure, human resources, and information operations/intelligence—which worked in tandem.⁶⁴ All of the panels had to make assumptions about the recommended strategy since they had to complete their work before the strategy panel itself issued its findings. Logically, they assumed general continuity. Moreover, because all of the players in the defense community, particularly the Services,

recognized the high stakes of the QDR in terms of budgets and force structure, the outcomes were often “lowest common denominator” recommendations which could garner consensus by bypassing or postponing tough decisions. Analysts have long noted that in absence of a powerful and clear vision from high-level leaders, bureaucratic decisionmaking usually devolves into a process of avoiding dissention by deifying the status quo.⁶⁵ This seemed to characterize the 1997 QDR: neither the President or the Secretary of Defense provided an alternative strategic vision or a vigorous direction of change, so the powerful organizations involved in the process invariably moved toward the sort of consensus that left everyone’s programs and forces intact.

Conservatism was not the only charge made against the 1997 QDR. Analysts at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) contended that the review leaned toward short-term expediency and did not have a robust and imaginative approach to the RMA.⁶⁶ Carl Conetta of the Project on Defense Alternatives held that the QDR made no changes to a military that is “sized, structured, equipped, and budgeted to deal primarily with contingencies and threats that grow less substantial everyday,” particularly large-scale, cross-border invasion by a “rogue state.”⁶⁷ And a number of analysts pointed to a serious mismatch between projected defense budget levels and the force called for by the QDR. For FY 2001-2005, for instance, Goure and Ranney estimate a shortfall of \$573 billion, or 29 percent.⁶⁸

Despite the criticism, the 1997 QDR provided “steady as you go” guidance that shaped the subsequent efforts of the Services and the Department of Defense. To assure that the military was in accordance with the QDR, General Shalikashvili published a new *National Military Strategy* in 1997. Heavy on glossy photos and lists of accomplishments, this document provided a less clear vision of the ways, means, and ends of U.S. strategy than its 1992 predecessor. It did sketch a joint force that must be capable of strategic

deterrence, decisive operations, special operations, forcible entry, force protection, countering weapons of mass destruction, focused logistics, and information operations. It specified the strategic concepts that had become central to American military strategy during the 1990s:

- *Strategic agility* (defined as “the timely concentration, employment, and sustainment of U.S. military power anywhere at our own initiative, at a speed and tempo that our adversaries cannot match”)
- *Overseas presence* to give substance to political commitments, ensure access to vital regions, promote joint and combined training, assist with force projection, and contribute to deterrence
- *Power projection*
- *Decisive force* (defined as “the commitment of sufficient military power to overwhelm all armed resistance in order to establish new military conditions and achieve political objectives”).⁶⁹

Expecting that the QDR would be unlikely to produce any truly new thinking, Congress had also commissioned an independent, senior-level National Defense Panel (NDP) to provide another perspective on the long-term issues facing U.S. defense and national security.⁷⁰ Where the QDR advocated continuity, the main theme of the NDP report was that the United States should undertake “a broad transformation of its military and national security structures, operational concepts and equipment.” The Panel concluded that:

Our military forces today are organized according to current threats. But today's threats are not necessarily the ones we will see in the future. Unless we are willing to pursue a new course, we are likely to have forces that are ill-suited to protect our security twenty years in the future. Our future adversaries will learn from the past and will likely confront us in very different ways.⁷¹

The Panel specified a “transformation strategy” aimed at the quickest possible development and integration of new technology, military systems, concepts of operation, and structures. It stressed that the security threats of the future will be broad ones requiring changed and integrated alliances, intelligence structures, and interagency processes. The “two MRC” yardstick, which served as the foundation of American military strategy, was appropriate for the present, but might need re-thought in coming years. In fact, the NDP’s de-emphasis on the two MRC construct was probably its most significant variance with the QDR.⁷² The NDP advocated a number of steps to institutionalize innovation, experimentation, and change in the military Services and the Department of Defense, with the emphasis on jointness rather than independent (and often disconnected) Service programs. The NDP transformation strategy also offered ideas on redesigning the Unified Command Plan to change the allocation of responsibilities, on transforming the defense industrial base, and transforming the defense infrastructure. The stress that the NDP placed on *joint* experimentation and innovation was important. The members of the Panel suggested that the Department of Defense create a Joint Forces Command which would, in turn, establish a Joint Battle Lab to undertake experimentation.⁷³

Despite extolling transformation, the NDP never clarified the rationale for it. Certainly potential adversaries will search for ways to circumvent American strength, but the NDP never made the case that one of these may actually overtake a U.S. military that continues steady modernization. The NDP report did not assess specific enemies, but dealt in generalities. It alluded to dangers but did not describe them. And, the members of the NDP did not consider the fact that undertaking an expensive transformation of the American military when no challenger was closing in would intimidate neutral nations and even traditional friends. The NDP, as an independent organization that did not have to be concerned with

“breaking rice bowls,” was much more forward-thinking than the QDR, but ultimately assumed an urgency for transformation that it could not or did not fully justify. Ultimately, the NDP reflected the Cold War logic in American defense thinking where any improvement in military capability was, by definition, good and desirable, regardless of political or monetary cost.

Military Strategy Fin-de-Siècle.

In the final years of the 1990s, several new concepts entered the strategic discourse. In 1998, the National Security Strategy integrated the “shape, respond, prepare now” idea from the QDR, first mentioned the effect that globalization was having on the security environment, and began considering homeland defense, including consequence management following a terrorist attack and critical infrastructure protection, as part of “responding.”⁷⁴ All of these things reflected a blurring of the distinction between the various components of security that had been underway for several decades. This was seen both in the realm of *missions* where the military was increasingly involved in non-warfighting tasks like counter-narcotrafficking, military-to-military engagement, information warfare, environmental security, and homeland defense, and in the realm of *functions* where there was a broad trend toward privatizing or “outsourcing” things previously done by the uniformed military. The questions of how much to expand the function of the military, how far to push the boundaries of “security,” and how much to privatize defense functions are likely to remain contentious for some time.

At the end of the 1990s, senior military and civilian defense officials also began to stress the concept of *asymmetry*. While the word was not used in U.S. military strategy documents until that time, it quickly become pervasive. According to Secretary of Defense Cohen, “U.S. dominance in the conventional military arena is

encouraging adversaries to seek asymmetric means for attacking U.S. forces and interests overseas and Americans at home.”⁷⁵ This was a recognition that the “peer competitor” mentioned in American strategy documents since the end of the Cold War was simply not feasible before the year 2015. Furthermore, American strategists knew that future enemies would probably not be as stupid as Saddam Hussein and challenge the United States in the sort of open-terrain, combined arms warfare that the American military had mastered.

The key questions were: What sorts of asymmetric methods might enemies use? and How could these be countered? So far, the Department of Defense and the military Services have focused on a fairly narrow range of potential asymmetric methods, particularly terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, information warfare, environmental sabotage, and actions designed to delay the deployment of U.S. forces, deny U.S. forces access to critical facilities, disrupt command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C⁴I), deter allies and potential coalition partners, and weaken American resolve by inflicting higher than expected casualties.⁷⁶ These are important asymmetric threats, but the list is probably not complete.

During the late 1990s strategic thinkers also began to warn that enemies using precision munitions or weapons of mass destruction to c o m p l i c a t e deployment into a theater of operations could pose a serious challenge to some of the most basic tenets of American strategy.⁷⁷ As the National Defense Panel wrote, “The days of the six-month build-up and secure, large, rear-area bases are

... The two interlinked concepts—the RMA and the need for transformation—reflect the emphasis on constant change and improvement that is part of American culture. This has reached new intensity in the digital age as the time between the introduction of new technology, software, techniques, and ideas and their obsolescence shrinks. . .

almost certainly gone forever. WMD will require us to increase dramatically the means to project lethal power from extended ranges.”⁷⁸ Some attention within official circles has been given to enemies who use “complex terrain,” whether urban environments, jungles, mountains, or coastal and estuary areas with many islands, inlets, and swamps.⁷⁹ The general conclusion is that the U.S. military is not yet fully prepared for urban combat or other operations in complex terrain.⁸⁰ There are other potential types of asymmetry that would find the United States even less prepared. Examples include *political asymmetry* in which an opponent uses information technology and political actions to hinder or prohibit technologies in which the United States has an advantage (like information warfare or robotics); and *temporal asymmetry* in which an enemy finds a way to drag a conflict out hoping that American patience will wear thin.

One of the most far-reaching changes in American strategy during the late 1990s was growing acceptance of the need for transformation. Like the idea that a revolution in military affairs is taking place, the contention that the U.S. military must undertake transformation sped from introduction to canon with little debate. The two interlinked concepts—the RMA and the need for transformation—reflect the emphasis on constant change and improvement that is part of American culture. This has reached new intensity in the digital age as the time between the introduction of new technology, software, techniques, and ideas and their obsolescence shrinks. The architects of the U.S. military have become accustomed to the idea that a future version of Windows, Powerpoint, or Excel is under development at the same time that a new version is introduced, or that a 1 GHz microprocessor will be followed in a matter of months by a 2 GHz. Extrapolating this logic, it makes sense to conclude that a future version of the U.S. military must be under development even while the current version has unmatched superiority over its opponents.

Ultimately, this reflects a centuries-long sea change in the nature of warfare, security, and government. Until the era of nationalism unleashed by the American and French revolutions, governance and warfare were about dynastic struggles. During the era of nationalism, governance and thus warfare was about politics and ideology. Today, governance is more and more about economics. This is changing attitudes toward military forces. In a system of governance centered on politics and ideology, the objectives were the creation of balance and consensus. When these were created, leaders acted to preserve them. When a military was created that could protect the state, it was preserved. But in an essentially economic and commercial system, constant “improvement” or, at least, the replacement of “last year’s model” with “this year’s model” is an inherent dynamic. This year’s model must at least look different than last year’s even if the essence is the same. The core logic of politics is the exercise of power and the building of consensus; the core logic of commerce is sustaining demand by constant change. As the historic era of politics gives way to an era of commerce, the quest for “next year’s model” among militaries becomes constant.

As transformation became canonized within the Department of Defense, each Service undertook the search for new strategic concepts and organizations. The Air Force, for instance, now advocates “effects-based warfare.” This is the ability to permanently or temporarily disable an enemy’s infrastructure by attacking critical command and control nodes.⁸¹ The key organization for this is an Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) which is “comprised of force modules tailored to meet the specific operational requirements of joint force commanders across a wide range of situations.”⁸² The Sea Services have begun similar efforts. More than any other service, the Navy saw its prime mission—protection of the sea lanes during global war with the Soviet Union and defeat of the Red Fleet—disappear with the end of the Cold War. While the Air Force and Army could shift their attention to Soviet imitators like Iraq and

North Korea, the Navy could not. None of the “rogue states” had enough naval power to take seriously. As a result, the Navy stressed its value in shaping the global security environment through forward presence operations, in precision air and missile strikes launched from sea-based platforms, and at the projection of power to the global littorals, which are the most heavily populated parts of the globe.⁸³ The major building blocks were aircraft carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups of Marines. The Marine Corps itself had developed a parallel and contributing concept called “operational maneuver from the sea.”⁸⁴ This was defined as “the extensive use of the sea as a means of gaining advantage, an avenue for friendly movement that is simultaneously a barrier to the enemy and a means of avoiding disadvantageous engagements.”⁸⁵ Some of the most creative thinking in the Navy has focused on “network-centric warfare” in which a postmodern military using networked sensors, decisionmakers and shooters collapses an enemy’s will to resist quickly and efficiently.⁸⁶ According to Vice Admiral Arthur K. Cebrowski, President of the Naval War College, network-centric warfare, “enables a shift from attrition-style warfare to a much faster and more effective warfighting style characterized by the new concepts of speed of command and the ability of a well-informed force to organize and coordinate complex warfare activities from the bottom up.”⁸⁷

While the Army was in the lead in developing formal futures programs, in some ways it was the slowest to embrace strategic transformation. Both the Force XXI process and Army After Next Project projected truly transformative change for the Army only after 2015. While committing to “digitization,” the Army continued to stress heavy, armor based formations engaged in land battles with other heavy, armor based opponents. But when General Eric Shinseki became U.S. Army Chief of Staff in 1999 he recognized that American political leaders were beginning to question the short- and mid-term strategic relevance of

the Army, in part because of its focus on the sort of large-scale, combined-arms, cross-border aggression that seemed to be becoming less likely as the global security environment evolved. The problem was not whether an Army configured for heavy battle could deal with the type smaller scale contingencies that would invariably occur—it could with enough time for re-training. The issue was whether the Army could bring decisive force to bear in time to deter or contain crises. To deal with this, General Shinseki directed a transformation to improve the Army's strategic responsiveness.⁸⁸ In part, this process was to bring the Army's structure and organization into congruence with a concept that the Training and Doctrine Command had been developing for several years: strategic preclusion through advanced, full-dimensional operations.⁸⁹ This called for Army participation in a joint force that could respond rapidly to a crisis in order to contain it or place an adversary at a decisive disadvantage.⁹⁰

General Shinseki's goal is what he calls "the Objective Force," which will be "more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable than the present force."⁹¹ Following widespread criticism of the Army's slow deployment of Task Force Hawk during operations against Serbia in 1999, Shinseki recognized that the Army had resisted the shift from a heavy, slow organization to a more strategically relevant middleweight force based on lighter, wheeled combat vehicles.⁹² The Objective Force is intended to address this problem, allowing the Army to put a combat capable brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours, a division within 120 hours, and five divisions in 30 days. As the Army moves toward the Objective Force, it will retain a Legacy Force with modernized versions of today's systems and equipment while developing an Interim Force that will bridge the gap. The Army has also begun a search for a Future Combat System (FCS) to replace heavy tanks and self-propelled artillery. While no prototype has been developed, the Army expects the FCS to be a vehicle tailorable for different

missions including direct fire, indirect fire, air defense, command and control, troop transport, combat support, and combat service support.⁹³ So far, though, the Army transformation has been driven by deployment speed and questions of appropriate vehicles. The Army has not yet developed a full range of strategic or operational concepts to explain precisely what the Objective Force will do once deployed.⁹⁴

Despite the quest for transformation within the Services, as the Clinton administration approaches its final months, the foundation of American strategy remains much as it was in the years immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Power projection, decisive force, overseas presence, and strategic agility remain the core concepts. Just as during the Cold War, American defense strategy relies on superior technology, equipment, training, leadership, and people. Admittedly, there has been refinement during the Clinton administration, particularly in terms of shifting the military away from a purely warfighting stance. Although the main “rogues” survived into the 21st century, asymmetric threats including those directed at the American homeland have taken on increased priority. Thinking about asymmetry has challenged some of the most basic precepts of U.S. strategic thinking. For instance, *Joint Vision 2020*—the successor to *Joint Vision 2010*—states that, “We will not necessarily sustain a wide technological advantage over our adversaries in all areas” given the availability of commercial technology and the widespread dispersion of new information.⁹⁵ The best that can be hoped for was a “frictional imbalance” over enemies brought about by information superiority and other qualitative advantages. Whether this line of thinking is compatible with the goal of “full spectrum dominance” remains to be seen. JV 2020 also shows other signs of maturation in American strategic thought including a broader, more holistic perspective on strategy and a sustained discussion of multinational and interagency operations. Clearly, thinking on U.S. military strategy has

changed since the end of the Cold War. The question is: What direction should this take? This is the driving issue behind the 2001 QDR.

PART II: CORE ISSUES

The 2001 QDR could easily turn into a series of debates about specific acquisition programs or force structure numbers. Hopefully it will not but will focus instead on core strategic issues. In particular, four issues should be central to the debate: the method and speed of transformation, force shaping methodologies, strategic focus, and the synchronization of defense budgets and the strategy.

Core Issue I: Transformation.

Transformation is an intrinsic element of the American national character. After all, the United States was born by transforming the English political and social order into something new. Constant tinkering and improvement are natural. Americans change jobs, houses, cars, lifestyles, and spouses with greater regularity than any people on earth. Calls for the transformation of the U.S. military, then, find a receptive audience. Its champions include influential thinkers like Andrew Krepinevich and William Owens.⁹⁶ The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century (also known as the Hart-Rudman Commission), a senior level group chartered to review the U.S. security system and recommend changes, recently joined the cast of transformation advocates as it contended the “mix and effectiveness of overall American capabilities need to be rethought and adjusted.”⁹⁷

In a sense, the call for radical change in an organization that is superior to any conceivable challenger is strange. Transformation advocates use both “push” and “pull” arguments to justify their position. New technology, particularly information technology organized into knowledge systems, is thought to provide an opportunity for transformative improvement. As a psychological legacy of

the Cold War, American military and civilian defense leaders are loath to let any opportunity slip away. During the global confrontation with the Soviet Union, there was a need to seize every strategic and technological opening. This notion persists so the idea of deliberately eschewing improvements in the U.S. military—even if doing so would entail substantial economic and political benefits—causes deep anxiety. Transformation advocates also contend that the U.S. military remains configured for Soviet style enemies using armor-heavy formations to cross international borders in relatively open terrain and seize territory to control resources, whether petroleum, industrial production, water, or something similar. To defeat asymmetric and nontraditional enemies requires a very different type of American military. Transformation advocates also argue that if the United States does not capitalize on the RMA, some other state will, thus eroding the political and strategic advantages that accrue from military superiority. Warnings are made about the “complacency” of the U.S. military and the tendency to fight the last war (many of the U.S. military’s futures-oriented wargames still involve a conventional enemy attempting to seize the territory of a neighbor with armored formations).

While the specific trajectory of transformation was left open by documents like the report of the National Defense Panel and JV 2010, the Pentagon and the military Services have established a number of programs designed to energize change. These include seminars, studies, and wargames designed to explore the RMA by the Pentagon’s Office of Net Assessment, experiments within the Services, and the Joint Concept Development and Experimentation effort of USJFCOM. All of the Services and at least some of the CINCs have strategies and roadmaps for transformation. Within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary chairs special meetings of the Defense Resource Board to oversee exploitation of the RMA and implementation of JV 2010/2020, while the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Threat

Reduction is developing a DOD-wide approach to RMA implementation⁹⁸ But despite the Pentagon's apparent acceptance of the need for transformation, actual plans, in Andrew Krepinevich's words, "leave the military on the near side of the coming transformational divide."⁹⁹ According to the Defense Science Board, there is no DOD-wide strategy for transformation and thus no sense of urgency for fundamental change.¹⁰⁰ Some members of Congress and defense analysts point out that nearly all of the Pentagon's major acquisition programs are for systems designed for large conventional battles rather than new missions and threats including the F-22 air superiority fighter, the Crusader artillery system, the Navy's new attack submarines, and the nine new antiarmor weapons under development.¹⁰¹

There are obvious reasons for the less-than-total commitment to transformation on the part of the American military. One is the intrinsic conservatism seen in all large, bureaucratic organizations. It would be extraordinarily difficult for the senior leaders of the military and the Department of Defense to totally abandon the organizations, concepts, and procedures they have spent a lifetime mastering. And, no element of the Department of Defense is certain which Service or organization will eventually gain from transformation. This sparks hesitation—even outright resistance. But there are other explanations. Transformation advocates have not fully made their case. It is hard to conceive of any state catching up with the United States, much less surpassing it for many decades. China is the only potentially hostile nation attempting a serious modernization of its military, and it is so far behind the United States that it will take a prolonged period of intense (and visible) effort to even begin to close the gap in key areas.¹⁰² A more generic version of the transformation argument does not name a specific adversary that might overtake the United States but contends that "globalization" is making advanced technology available to all and this might, in the words of

the Defense Science Board, “empower adversaries in a short time.”¹⁰³ This idea merits consideration, but remains only an assertion.

As a counter to the push for transformation, other analysts argue that the United States will experience a “strategic breathing space” with no pressing threats expected for some time.¹⁰⁴ If some state or non-state actor should make inroads into the superiority of the U.S. military, there would be plenty of time to react. Given this, the cost of transformation is not justified. Hasty transformation also runs the risk of guessing wrong about what concepts and technologies will dominate the future battlefield. Such early “lock in” could leave the U.S. military with irrelevant capabilities and systems. History suggests that to transform *first* is much less important than to transform *correctly*. Finally, some experts contend that the technology to undertake the sort of RMA-based transformation espoused by Krepinevich, Owens, the National Defense Panel, the Defense Science Board, and others is not yet available. Michael O’Hanlon, for instance, writes that “the technological basis for a radical RMA transformation of the U.S. armed forces and U.S. security policy is unsubstantiated.”¹⁰⁵ To transform now before the technology matures would at best waste a huge amount of money and, again, lead to early lock in to irrelevant methods and systems.

In any case, transformation will be a major issue during QDR 2001 and for the new President and Secretary of Defense. Transformation advocates will be pitted against those who feel that the current strategic environment does not justify its cost and risk. Based on statements made during the presidential primary campaign, a Bush administration would be more amenable to transformation arguments than a Gore administration. Either is likely to take a serious look at the specific trajectory of change. There are at least two separate definitions of military transformation in use today. The technologically-defined transformation espoused by the National Defense Panel,

the Defense Science Board, the Air Force, and the Navy is not the same as the geostrategically-defined transformation sought by General Shinseki. The former is a drive to augment operational effectiveness by integration of new technology; the later is change to make the U.S. Army more deployable and thus more strategically relevant in a security environment where strategic speed is considered vital. Debate also swirls around the extent of transformation. Should the U.S. military move away from its traditional weapons systems and operational concepts, or should it, as General Shinseki proposes, retain a robust “legacy” capability even while it develops and fields new style units? While the more conservative approach makes strategic sense, will the American people and their elected leaders fund two armies, two navies, two Marine Corps, or two air forces?

Core Issue II: Force Shaping.

During the early 1990s, American strategists made two crucial force shaping decisions. One was to use the MRC/MTW yardstick. As noted earlier, this was not based on a prediction that Baghdad and Pyongyang or any other potential aggressors would coordinate their strategies the way that Germany and Japan did in 1941, but rather to deter opportunism and provide a blueprint for a worst-case military force. The second decision was to move from a predominantly threat-based force shaping methodology to a capabilities-based one.¹⁰⁶ The complexity and fluidity of the strategic environment made this necessary. Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait showed that a state could switch from a *de facto* partner—Iraq had been seen as a bulwark against Iranian aggression—to an enemy in a short period of time. Moreover, politics dictated the use of a capabilities-based approach to force planning. While military strategists might have feared conflict with Russia, China, or even India, the fact that the United States was attempting to improve its relations with these states would have made it difficult to explicitly configure the American armed forces

against them. These three great powers as well as many other new or potential friends remained suspicious of American military power and easily intimidated. As a result, force shaping was based on concepts like the ability to win a generic MTW or defeat a generic “major regional competitor” or “near peer competitor.”

For a number of reasons, the current approach to force shaping may not survive QDR 2001. As the world changes, the number of potential adversaries who might undertake aggression using cross-border, combined arms invasion appears to be diminishing. Recent events in Korea suggest that tension there might lessen.¹⁰⁷ Iran shows little inclination to invade anyone except, perhaps, Iraq. It is hard to imagine the United States rushing to Baghdad's defense. A decade of sanctions against Iraq and extensive modernization of armed forces of the Gulf Cooperation Council states diminish the chance that there will be a reprise of *Desert Storm*. The Russian military, which was seen as a potential opponent in a major war during the early 1990s, is hard pressed to dodge defeat at the hands of Chechen armed thugs. It would take years to resuscitate the capability for sustained power projection, and Moscow gives no sign now of wanting to do so. And while China poses a threat to Taiwan, should Beijing ever invade and the United States come to Taipei's defense, the generic MTW force package would not be appropriate. The American contribution would more likely be built on airpower, naval power, and missile defense.

A number of senior defense leaders and analysts have pointed out that the United States could not undertake two nearly-simultaneous MTWs today, so retaining this concept makes little sense. This idea is not new. Soon after the Bottom Up Review, Representative Ike Skelton (D-Mo) said that “simple third-grade arithmetic” showed that the proposed force could not handle two major conflicts.¹⁰⁸ More recently General Michael Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff, has said that his service will never have enough strategic lift to support two simultaneous MTWs despite ongoing

modernization efforts.¹⁰⁹ The United States, according to General Ryan, has “a one-major theater war airlift force.” There are shortages of other low density/high demand assets as well, including U-2 RIVET Joint, E-AWACS, E-8 JSTARS, EA-6B, tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), aerial refueling aircraft, and Special Forces, particularly psychological operations and civil affairs units.¹¹⁰ Daniel Goure of CSIS has written, “Those in key DoD leadership positions have known for years that they could not support the strategy of fighting two near-simultaneous MTWs. They kept silent principally out of a fear that to admit the truth would leave the services open to a new round of force reductions.”¹¹¹

Many strategists recognized from the beginning that the “two nearly-simultaneous” MTW idea was an impossible goal. During the Bottom Up Review, for instance, Secretary of Defense Aspin advocated what was called a “win-hold-win” approach where the United States, in conjunction with allies, would hold off the second aggressor until the first was defeated and military forces had been shifted.¹¹² Fierce opposition led Aspin to drop the idea but variants of the “win-hold-win” construct periodically reemerge. In 1997, for instance, Senator Charles Robb (D-VA) suggested that the forces used to defeat a second MTW should come primarily from the reserve component, units of which would be mobilized at the beginning of the first MTW.¹¹³ Even if one rejects the idea that a *Desert Storm*-type invasion could be thwarted solely with stand-off precision strikes rather than by a combined-arms U.S. force, the strategic environment has changed to the point that it no longer makes sense to use this sort of threat as the major building block of American military strategy. The Hart-Rudman Commission contends that the two MTW yardstick is, in effect, distracting American strategists from problems that should be addressed. Rather than producing military capabilities for increasingly unlikely MTWs, the Commission advocates greater emphasis on expeditionary and stability operations.¹¹⁴

But however inadequate the two MTW yardstick, it is not clear what should replace it. Whatever its shortcomings, the concept was clear and coherent. By contrast the concept of smaller scale contingencies—which are sometimes proposed as the core force shaping concept—is much broader and more amorphous. It is impossible to list a “basic” SSC force package the way that the BUR was able to do with a MRC/MTW. Put simply, another seismic shift in the strategic environment is underway: *Desert Storm* type invasions are fading, but it is not clear what will replace them as the centerpiece of U.S. military strategy. Given this, the Pentagon may cling to something like the MTW concept (whether one, two, or one plus) until a better yardstick comes along. This will generate charges that the U.S. military is “preparing for the last war,” but no one really knows what the “next war” will be.

In an even broader sense, some defense analysts are beginning to question the use of capabilities as a force shaping criterion rather than existing threats. For instance, the Hart-Rudman Commission recommended that force structure decisions be made “on the basis of real-world intelligence assessments rather than illustrative scenarios.”¹¹⁵ While defense strategists defend the capabilities approach as a logical response to the complexity of the global security environment, the quickness with which friends can become enemies, and the rapidity with which new challenges emerge, critics contend that it is simply a way to justify a larger military than is really warranted. Even though the Department of Defense is not likely to abandon the capabilities approach in the near term, it will face pressure from Congress, the media, and the public to assure a better match between the capabilities of the U.S. military and the threats it might face. DOD and the Services are unlikely to find a sympathetic ear for acquisition and force development programs based on a hypothetical “near peer competitor” so long as there are few signs of one emerging.

Core Issue III: Strategic Focus.

Prior to World War I, the U.S. military generally focused on activities *other than* large-scale war. The Army was a frontier constabulary force, played a major role in infrastructure development, and provided assistance to civil authorities during domestic unrest. The Marines kept order on naval vessels and later became an expeditionary force in what today would be called SSCs. The Navy protected the sea lines of communication, and chased pirates and smugglers. During the rare times that the United States did become involved in major war, the U.S. military mobilized the forces necessary to deal with the problem, won the war, demobilized, and returned to its emphasis on operations other than war. It was only with involvement in the two world wars and America's emergence as a major global power that the armed forces shifted their peacetime focus to large-scale, conventional warfighting. But, in a sense, the transition was too successful. When the United States became mired in Vietnam, military and DOD leaders initially treated the conflict there like another conventional war rather than adapting organization, doctrine, and operational methods.¹¹⁶ The argument made by Army generals and others in the 1950s that a military able to fight a major war could handle any and all "lesser conflicts" proved wrong.

Eventually, the U.S. military did develop effective counterinsurgency capabilities, but these came too late to alter the course of events in Southeast Asia.¹¹⁷ Following Vietnam, the U.S. military focused on large-scale, conventional war. The Army "rediscovered" the operational level of war, undertook serious study of the World War II German military's success at it and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and developed a doctrinal framework—AirLand Battle—which reflected the central place of large-scale combined operations in the American way of war. The military's leaders were convinced that involvement in low-intensity conflict or operations other than war would erode

public support for the military, have a deleterious effect on morale, and detract from the ability to defeat Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces should war ever come to Europe. Despite calls in the 1980s for greater attention to low-intensity conflict, including counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and new activities like counternarcotrafficking, the military resisted as much as possible.

The U.S. military did develop organizations and doctrine for low-intensity conflict during the 1980s, but always accorded these secondary status. A “fast track” career was one that dealt with large scale warfighting. To concentrate on anything else was a liability for an ambitious officer with aspirations of flag rank. The goal of the Services and DOD was to *focus* on conventional warfighting while building enough low-intensity conflict capability to satisfy the political leaders pushing for greater effort at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict.¹¹⁸ A similar dynamic emerged again in the 1990s as the Bush and Clinton administrations committed the United States to an increasing number of multinational peacekeeping operations, shaping activities, and other types of SSCs but, again, the military treated these as secondary tasks. Still, the success which American forces had in the Balkans showed that units configured and trained for large-scale conventional war could succeed in peacekeeping if given moderate amounts of retraining. General Henry Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has written, “history clearly shows that the most effective peacekeeping forces are those highly trained in their warfighting skills and also prepared to conduct peace operations.”¹¹⁹ But while this might be an *effective* way to use the U.S. military, few would argue that it is the most *efficient*. In fact, an argument can be made that the use of forces trained for high intensity conflict in peacekeeping was possible precisely because of the declining likelihood of MTW. And by the end of the 1990s the extensive use of the American military in SSCs, particularly protracted peace support operations like Bosnia, created serious problems in terms of readiness for warfighting and the retention of

military personnel who were often deployed overseas.¹²⁰ The question of whether the U.S. military should be predominantly organized, equipped, and trained to fight large-scale, cross-border, conventional war is thus a persistent one that will be asked again as part of QDR 2001.

The appropriate focus for the U.S. military should depend on trends in the global security environment. The key question is whether major, state-on-state war will remain common enough and threatening enough to warrant building a military force designed primarily to deal with it. There is no agreement on this. Many analysts contend that such conflicts will become increasingly unlikely in the 21st century. Michael Mandelbaum, for instance, argues that *major* war where the most powerful members of the international system draw on all of their resources and use every weapon at their command over a period of years, leading to an outcome with revolutionary geopolitical consequences, is obsolete.¹²¹ Israeli military historian Martin Van Creveld expands the point from war among the great powers to war among the growing number of regional powers able to acquire nuclear weapons. Proliferation, he holds, will obviate traditional state-on-state war.¹²² This argument can be taken even further: the increasing economic, political, and informational interconnectedness of the modern world is likely to make costs of old-fashioned war to seize territory or resources far outweigh any expected benefits. Admittedly, there may be a few states for which a particular piece of territory has such deep emotional value that they are willing to pay the price to gain it but, in most cases, aggression is as likely to be indirect, incremental, via proxies, and below the threshold which would provoke a U.S.-led armed response rather than through traditional armed invasion.

But despite signs that the likelihood of cross-border invasion designed to seize territory or resources is declining, U.S. military strategy—and the forces, doctrine, equipment, and operational concepts to implement it—remains focused on conventional war. This is not simply

due to inertia or a lack of thinking: American strategists point out that one of the things making large-scale, cross-border, conventional war less probable is the demonstrated ability of the U.S. military to counter it. If the United States allows this capability to atrophy, large-scale cross-border invasion will again become a preferred technique of aggression. Focus on conventional war, from this perspective, is an insurance policy. Even so, the American people and their elected leaders may not continue to pay the premium for this policy if there is an extended period of time without a major cross-border invasion. Americans are impatient people with narrow historic perspective. As the perceived threat from conventional war declines, nontraditional threats will be accorded greater priority.

The focus on conventional war may survive QDR 2001 but, unless a major war occurs, will come under close scrutiny in QDR 2005. The speed of this shift depends on whether: (1) the tottering “rogue” regimes in Pyongyang, Baghdad, and Tehran moderate their behavior or collapse; (2) U.S.-China relations deteriorate or improve; (3) Russia reverts to some form of authoritarianism and external aggression; (4) the U.S. President elected in 2000 remains committed to multinational peacekeeping and military involvement in shaping the global security environment; and, (5) nontraditional enemies develop the capabilities to seriously threaten important or vital U.S. national interests. *Desert Storm* type wars—meaning large-scale, conventional conflict undertaken by a coalition in which the United States provides the bulk of the forces because others are unwilling and the threat to U.S. national interests is high—are unlikely. But *Desert Storm* remains the template for an MTW. Given this, QDR 2001 is likely to see several major questions concerning the post-MTW focus of the U.S. military:

- Should the U.S. military continue to focus on warfighting or treat warfighting and non-warfighting

functions like peace operations, shaping, and military-to-military engagement as co-equals?

- If U.S. national security strategy continues to stress participation in multinational peace support operations, should the military seek greater efficiency and effectiveness by developing specialized units to focus on these sorts of activities, including long-term nation building?
- Can large-scale, cross-border, conventional war be deterred or defeated by some means other than by combined arms operations by a U.S. dominated coalition?
- Should the U.S. military give greater emphasis to nontraditional adversaries or emerging enemies rather than state militaries?

Core Issue IV: Strategy-Budget Mismatch.

Many of the major reviews of post-Cold War U.S. military strategy, including the Bottom-Up Review and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review, were essentially attempts to develop strategies and force structures that would allow lower defense budgets. Unfortunately, synchronization between strategy and budget proved elusive. Today nearly every analyst agrees that the budget predictions which served as the basis for the 1997 QDR are unrealistic. According to General Henry Shelton, current defense budgets are adequate to meet the military's most critical requirements, but not to meet all of its identified requirements.¹²³ But as is always true with economic and budgetary predictions, various writers disagree on the extent of the shortfall. Goure and Ranney are among the most pessimistic as they anticipate budget shortfalls of \$100 billion per year to fund the 1997 QDR force.¹²⁴ Analysts at CSBA predict an annual shortfall of \$26 billion.¹²⁵ Although substantially less than the CSIS figure,

this is still potentially catastrophic. The Congressional Budget Office notes that while President Clinton's FY 2000 budget proposals would increase weapons procurement from \$49 billion in 1999 to \$75 billion by 2005, this is still far below the \$90 billion per year needed to sustain today's military force.¹²⁶ The Army's proposed transformation alone is estimated to cost about \$70 billion between 2000 and 2014.¹²⁷ The only possible source of such money would be a redistribution of part of the defense budget from one of the other services to the Army, or a hefty increase in the top line.¹²⁸ Whatever figures and predictions for economic growth and inflation one accepts, there is a substantial strategy/budget mismatch that is likely to worsen in coming decades.

In the broadest sense, there are three solutions. One would be for Congress to authorize dramatically larger defense budgets, perhaps linking defense spending to a specific percentage of gross domestic product. This is unlikely in the absence of some radical degradation of the global security environment. Another approach is to attempt to close the gap through greater efficiency. This is DOD's preferred approach. Using the blueprint outlined in the November 1997 *Defense Reform Initiative Report*, the Pentagon has attempted to adopt better business processes, commercial alternatives, consolidation of redundant functions, and organizational streamlining.¹²⁹ While these are useful reforms, they alone are unlikely to solve the strategy/budget mismatch particularly so long as additional base closings and radical shifts in service roles and missions face insurmountable political opposition. The third approach is to adjust strategy to budgetary realities by redefining national interests and scaling back on security commitments.

Because none of the solutions to the strategy/budget mismatch—or even a politically palatable combination of them—is easy, the tendency on the part of the Department of Defense, the Services, the Administration, and Congress has been to delay the day of reckoning. Procurement,

replacement, and maintenance programs have been stretched out. Some acquisitions have been cancelled. Fixes to the most pressing and immediate problems have been adopted without dealing with the long-term structural elements of the mismatch. The alternatives are higher taxes, abandoning commitments, or accepting greater strategic risk to the U.S. military as it economizes on maintenance and procurement. Because of the large number of variables involved—the health of the U.S. economy, the nature of the global security environment, and so forth—no one can predict exactly when the point of decision will be reached. It could be months or it could be decades. In all probability, QDR 2001 will not solve the problem and may not even address it. Eventually, though, budgets, commitments, and force levels must be synchronized.

The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review.

The 2001 QDR comes at a crucial time in the evolution of American military strategy, in large part because it is coterminous with the end of the Clinton administration. This opens the door for a substantial, perhaps even fundamental shift in some key elements of the strategy. George W. Bush has indicated that as president he would order a comprehensive military review to develop a new architecture for American defense; skip a generation of weapons; encourage a spirit of innovation and experimentation within the military; earmark at least 20 percent of the procurement budget for “leap ahead” military technology; and increase defense R&D spending by at least \$20 billion from FY 2002 to FY 2006.¹³⁰ While Al Gore would be likely to retain more of the Clinton approach, he could make major changes as well. QDR 2001 will not determine the military strategy adopted by the new president, but is likely to affect it.

A range of strategic alternatives has been developed and debated within the defense community as part of the

preparation for QDR 2001. The strategic alternatives under scrutiny differ in their *assumptions*, *focus*, and *risk*. The issue of risk is a particularly important one. The extent to which this was assessed in QDR 1997 did not satisfy Congress, so steps have been taken to assure that the Joint Staff does a rigorous risk assessment as part of QDR 2001. This requires greater refinement of the basic definition of strategic risk and a methodology for analyzing it.

In the broadest sense, strategic risk can be defined as the probability that an action or failure to act will have specific disadvantageous effects. These effects can be tactical, operational, or political. A partial list would include:

- Higher than expected casualties during an operation
- Mission failure
- Higher than expected loss of equipment
- An increase in enemy resolve
- An asymmetric response by an opponent (terrorism, WMD, etc.)
- Alienation of friends and neutrals
- A loss of prestige or influence
- Loss of the “moral high ground”
- Overextension leading to a decline in the ability to protect and promote some interests
- A loss of other opportunities, options and capabilities
- Higher than expected economic costs
- Erosion of morale
- Future difficulties in recruiting

- Loss of domestic political support
- Creation of a new security commitment which makes demands on resources
- Encouragement of aggression.

Risk assessment is an inherent part of strategic planning, but is both an art and a science. It is an art because it deals with probabilities, and because the concept of *acceptable risk*, which is subjective and psychological, plays such a central role. Acceptable risk varies from individual to individual, from regime to regime, and from culture to culture. Some are inherently risk adverse, others risk tolerant or even risk prone. Acceptable risk also varies across time: if an individual, regime, or nation sees trends turning against it or expects greater danger or weakness in the future, it will become more risk tolerant. Risk *management* entails balancing one sort of risk against the other, accurately assessing the degree of risk that is acceptable, and lowering the probability of adverse consequences given the cost of doing so, the interests at stake, the likelihood of success, and the chance that decreasing one sort of risk will increase another.

Some of the strategic alternatives tabled in the QDR process have little chance of adoption in part because they entail unacceptable risk. The most important example of this is American disengagement from global security commitments. This approach does reflect the American strategic tradition. The historic norm for the United States is global *economic* engagement but relatively limited military engagement, with this limited to geographically contiguous areas like the Caribbean and Central America. There is at least some support for a return to this tradition. Perennial presidential candidate, pundit, and political entrepreneur Patrick Buchanan, for instance, contends that the United States is “stretched to the limit” and should eschew most military interventions.¹³¹ His recommendation is that the United States return to being a

“republic” rather than an “empire.”¹³² While Buchanan has no chance of attaining the presidency, his positions reflect the feelings of a significant number of Americans (even though not a majority). And, Buchanan is not the only critic of America’s global engagement. Organizations like the Cato Institution have long advocated more rigid criteria for military engagement.¹³³ Unlike earlier times when conservative Republicans pushed for global engagement (primarily to contain communism) and liberal Democrats favored a diminished American role in global security—as when George McGovern ran for president in 1972 with the slogan “come home, America”—current support for disengagement comes from both ends of the political spectrum. Ultimately, though, the strategy recommended by QDR 2001 will call for some degree of global engagement. The questions are what form of engagement and how much? Within this context, five strategic alternatives merit serious consideration.

Alternative I: Shape, Respond, Prepare.

Rich people are not forced to make the same sorts of compromises and accept the same risks as the poor. The rich do not have to choose between buying medicine or food, or take the chance that postponing expensive automobile maintenance will leave them stranded somewhere. The same principle holds for military strategy. Those rich in power and wealth may face problems, but they can avoid many of the compromises and risks that enmesh the weak. The *shape*, *respond*, and *prepare* approach to strategy adopted by the Clinton administration is appropriate for a state rich in power resources. Many nations would like to do these three things simultaneously but only the most powerful can.

Because the United States currently uses the shape/respond/prepare approach, it forms the baseline for the analysis of all alternatives. In fact, many of what are being called strategic alternatives during the QDR

preparations are actually variants of the shape/respond/prepare approach rather than discrete strategies. For this reason, it makes sense to consider them as a group. For starters, all variants share some common strategic assumptions:

- The world will remain a “loose” unipolar system with only the United States capable of leadership in all regions.
 - There is a modest chance of the rise of another superpower, but this will not occur for several decades.
 - Regional partners will continue to welcome, accept, or tolerate substantial American involvement in regional security.
 - Because most instability and conflict will occur outside of North America, the U.S. military must retain a substantial power projection capability.
- The military element of power will remain a central part of American strategy.
 - The United States has *vital*, *important*, and *humanitarian* interests.
 - Military force will always be used to protect or promote vital interests, will often be used to protect or promote important interests when they are threatened, and may be used in pursuit of humanitarian interests.
- Global engagement and leadership on the part of the United States is sustainable and should be sustained.
 - The American economy will remain strong.

- The American public and its elected leaders will continue to support U.S. leadership and global engagement.
 - U.S. defense budgets will be adequate to sustain existing power projection capability and to undertake the process of experimentation and research necessary to prepare for future challenges.
- The global security environment will remain complex and fluid.
 - There will be a wide variety of threats, both traditional state-centric ones and non-traditional ones.
 - Regional grouping will shift with at least moderate frequency (but key relationships between the United States and other free-market democracies or traditional partners will remain strong).
- The global security system will see continued economic and political progress, with occasional setbacks.
 - The degree of American engagement and leadership will affect the extent to which economic and political progress outweighs negative tendencies.
 - The earlier a conflict is addressed, the lower the cost and risk of resolving or containing it. A modest effort now will lower the chances that a major effort will be required later.¹³⁴
- The current period is one of rapid and significant change in the nature of armed conflict.

- Those who do not participate in this will suffer adverse strategic consequences.

Within the parameters set by these assumptions, “shaping” is the use of the Department of Defense and the U.S. military in non-warfighting functions to help strengthen regional defense systems and encourage partners to undertake reforms that will augment stability and security. Shaping can take a number of forms such as arms control, security assistance, involvement in peacekeeping operations, the stationing of military forces abroad, participating in combined exercises, providing training, and other military-to-military interactions such as staff talks, flag officer visits, and international military education and training (IMET). IMET is particularly important for the militaries and defense establishments of states undergoing the transition to democracy. Traditionally IMET has brought foreign students to a wide range of American military schools from those teaching basic skills to those providing upper level professional military education such as staff and war colleges. More recently, the Department of Defense has taken a “forward deployment” approach to professional military education and established several regionally-focused senior level schools specifically for international students (including both military students and civilian defense personnel). These include the George C. Marshall Center for Security Studies in Garmisch, Germany; the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu; the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies in Washington, DC; and the African Center for Strategic Studies which is headquartered in the Washington area but operates seminars and academic sessions in various African locations.¹³⁵ These schools all stress the cultivation of healthy civil-military relations, sound defense budgeting practices, and rational methods of strategy formulation (among other topics). They are widely seen as bringing a high return for the money spent. In all cases, shaping demands close cooperation between the Department of Defense and diplomatic efforts. It is also the

strategic function that is the newest from an historic perspective and the most “nontraditional” in the sense that it does not entail actual warfighting (although warfighting skills are often essential).

“Responding” occurs when shaping fails and crises or conflicts take place. The use of the word “respond” implies that the United States will not, in all or most cases, be the first to resort to force, but will react to adversaries who do. While not made explicit in U.S. strategy documents, recent practice suggests that the most common objective in responding will be to restore the *status quo ante bellum*. This represents a change from the “American way of war” that dominated strategic thinking from the Civil War through World War II and reflects altered attitudes toward the use of force both in the United States and around the world driven by the danger of escalation that arises from global interconnectedness and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.¹³⁶ Whether correct or not, the assumption made by U.S. political and military leaders is that the American people see few if any threats today that would justify the human and monetary costs of truly decisive victory, but are content with simply reversing aggression. As a result, American military strategy seeks methods of warfighting that are as quick and bloodless as possible, whether in SSCs or MTWs.

“Preparing” means taking steps today to forestall or respond to future challenges. Like the other elements of current U.S. defense strategy, this is not new. During the Cold War the United States expended tremendous effort and money on developing next-generation weapons systems and other forms of technology. Today, though, the time horizon of the U.S. military is more extensive. During the Cold War, the pace of technological and strategic change was slow enough that the Department of Defense could focus on the “next” system or type of technology. Change has escalated to the point that the U.S. military must think in terms of the system or organization “after next” at the same time that they are fielding the current force or system, and

preparing to field the “next” force, system, or type of technology.¹³⁷ Because it is not clear what threats the U.S. military may confront in a decade or two, preparing is at least partially a guessing process. Potential future adversaries include everything from a resuscitated Russia to some sort of networked, non-state enemy. In general, though, the Department of Defense and all the services have concentrated on what might be called “applique” techniques and technologies designed to improve the performance of the U.S. military at existing tasks rather than truly transformative technologies like biotechnology or autonomous fighting systems.

Variant A: The Respond Approach (Current Strategy). The current variant of the shape/respond/prepare approach gives responding priority in terms of money, time, effort, and talent. Responding, which includes the American reaction to both MTWs and SSCs, is “first among equals” of the three functions (see Figure 1).

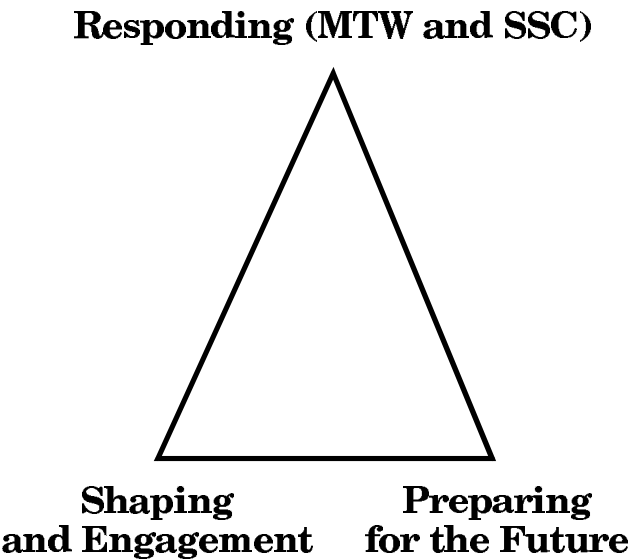


Figure 1

While shaping and preparing have increased in importance over the last decade, all the services and the Secretary of Defense have stated that the primary mission of the U.S. military is to “fight and win the nation’s wars”—i.e., to respond. The fact that the “Respond Approach” to U.S. military strategy represents continuity has some advantages. For instance, the services and the unified commands have existing programs to implement the strategy, including the futures programs, operations plans, and theater engagement plans.¹³⁸ In addition, the Respond Approach concentrates on a type of threats that has posed the greatest risk to U.S. national interests. Stressing the ability and willingness of the U.S. military to respond to a wide range of challenges has augmented deterrence and helped preserve American leadership.

In geographic terms, the Respond Approach applies to all regions of the world, but with some variations in the type of military response that the United States would consider (see Figure 2).

Spectrum of Potential Military Responses

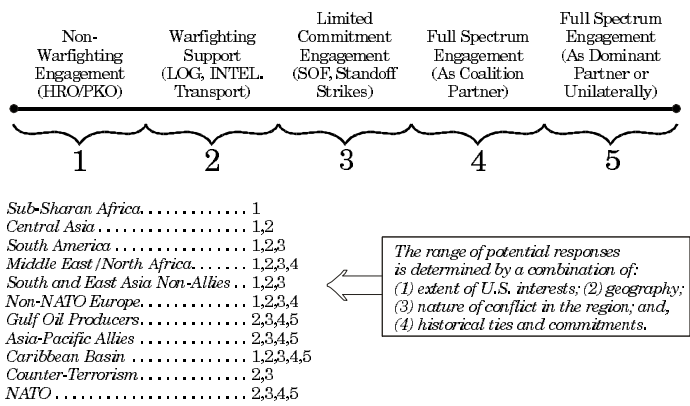


Figure 2

The Respond Approach does entail some strategic risks and costs. For instance, it demands a large and highly skilled force, and a large defense budget. The approach can

only work if the United States retains a wide range of military capabilities, from nuclear deterrence and futures-oriented battle labs to special forces. It also requires extensive strategic mobility, including airlift and sealift. Both are expensive. Since the United States has experienced the longest period of sustained economic growth in its history, these demands have been met. There is a chance that this growth can be sustained into coming decades. But if the U.S. economy experiences major problems, the response-oriented approach to military strategy may prove unbearably expensive and political support for it will erode. It is important to remember that shifts in the health of the U.S. economy, along with changes in the global security environment and technological advances, are “independent variables” that can drive changes in military strategy. The Response Approach is appropriate for a nation experiencing sustained economic expansion, but not for one undergoing economic slowdown or contraction.

The Respond Approach also risks over-extension. Being engaged in many regions of the world in many different ways can cause weaknesses in other places. Clausewitz warned “there is no higher and simpler law of strategy than of keeping one’s forces concentrated.”¹³⁹ For a superpower like the United States, this is impossible, but dispersion always brings risk. By the same token, using the U.S. military in SSCs and in shaping activities risks weakening its ability to fight major wars. Recruitment and retention become more difficult, maintenance and replacement of equipment is delayed or postponed, and training schedules constricted. However much forces trained for responding to MTW can be used in shaping (or, preparing for the future), this entails some cost in warfighting capabilities. Tradeoffs and compromises are inevitable. This is acceptable today because the probability of an MTW seems remote. If this situation changes, the current strategy may entail unacceptable risk to U.S. warfighting capabilities.

A Respond Approach may discourage partners from adequately developing their own military capabilities. This charge, of course, is often made toward Europe. Even though Western Europe has a population and economic capacity that matches or exceeds that of the United States, the combined strength of the region's armed forces is far below that of the U.S. military. It can be argued that Europe has not undertaken efforts to increase defense spending and augment its military capabilities because American strategy commits the U.S. military to the region's defense and, if necessary, to lead such efforts. The inverse is also true: by retaining a strategy based on power projection and engagement in regions far from the United States where tangible U.S. interests are limited, the current strategy runs the risk of intimidating or alienating other states. Americans invariably see U.S. military power as benign, used only to promote democracy and human rights, and to punish aggression. Other states do not necessarily share this perception. Many worry about what they see as an increasing heavy-handedness on the part of Washington made possible by U.S. military prowess. Eventually other states may attempt to lessen U.S. influence in their regions or actively contain American power. The Respond Approach increases the chances of this happening.

Engagement can cause partners and the American public to overestimate the extent of Washington's commitment to a nation or a region. For example, the United States military has been involved in a number of programs designed to shape the security environment of Sub-Saharan Africa and to improve ties with the region's militaries.¹⁴⁰ This might cause African leaders to assume that the United States is willing to play an active and integral role in the security of their region. But, in practice, the United States has refused anything other than an indirect role in African security.¹⁴¹ Shaping can also lead American policymakers to make commitments to areas of little intrinsic interest because it seems like a low-cost thing to do. When this happens, the United States begins to

develop an interest in part to justify past efforts. The tendency to reinforce failure is a military error but a difficult thing to resist since withdrawing from a state or region where U.S. forces have been involved in engagement or shaping is an admission of strategic failure.

Shaping and engagement also risk “guilt by association.” When a military that has undergone American training or education, or which had held combined exercises with the U.S. military commits human rights violations, undertakes aggression, becomes corrupt, or intervenes in the political system of its state, the United States is held partly responsible. One example of this is the protracted protests against the School of the Americas. All of the good done by the school over the years in terms of imparting valuable skills to Latin American militaries and helping shape their attitudes toward civil-military relations is forgotten when a tiny percentage of the school’s alumni commit human rights violations. This could be repeated in other areas of the world where the U.S. military undertakes shaping and engagement activities, particularly with new democracies and transitional states.

Finally, preparing now for an uncertain future also entails some risks. The most pressing is the danger of “early lock in” if predictions about the future prove incorrect. The Army After Next Project, for instance, assumed that the major challenge the United States will face in 2020 and beyond will be “near peer competitors.” The Army then set out to explore operational concepts, organizations, and technology that would be useful against a near peer competitor armed with some precision weapons, ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, and the like. The risk is that the Army (or the rest of the Department of Defense) may so commit itself to the predicted type of function or threat that it overlooks others and is unprepared for them. History has shown that it is often not the first state to attempt to undertake a military revolution that truly succeeds, but those that learn from and correct the mistakes

of the leader. By leading the current revolution in military affairs, the United States runs the chance of this.

Variant B: The Transformation Approach. The “Transformation Approach” emerged from the 1997 National Defense Panel. The basic idea is that the United States is currently experiencing a “strategic pause” with no imminent, high-risk threats. This allows accepting greater short-term risk by limiting global engagement, canceling procurement of current or next-generation weapons systems like the F-22 and Crusader, selectively lowering current readiness and operational tempo, cutting some force structure, and shrinking the defense infrastructure. The savings that derive from these actions could then be used to accelerate the development and adoption of advanced systems, concepts, and organizations. In the Transformation Approach, then, preparing for the future is the priority (see Figure 3). If this is adopted and succeeds, it could solidify American military preponderance for decades to come, thus helping assure a more stable global security

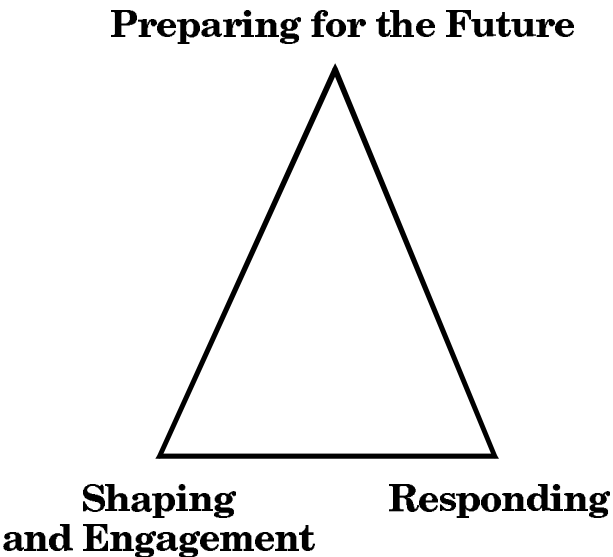


Figure 3

system and protecting U.S. national interests. This is an enticing idea: Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush, for instance, has adopted a position close to the Transformation Approach.¹⁴²

The Transformation Approach is based on several assumptions. First, while the United States is unlikely to face a peer or near-peer competitor for several decades—hence the “strategic pause”—this approach assumes that one will eventually emerge or, at least, try to emerge. If not, there would be no reason for the effort and expense of transformation; any defense savings could be put to other use. The Transformation Approach also assumes that the United States has an accurate roadmap for the current revolution in military affairs so that any changes made bring strategic advantages. And, it is based on the assumption that the U.S. military, in conjunction with coalition partners and allies, can overcome immediate or short-term challenges with existing technology and forces. Today’s “rogue states” or regional aggressors, according to this thinking, are growing weaker or, at best, standing still rather than becoming more powerful. Iraq, for instance, remains badly damaged by the Gulf War and a decade of sanctions, while the armed forces of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are markedly stronger than they were in the early 1990s.¹⁴³ The North Korean military is large, but years of economic decay, isolation, and famine have greatly weakened Pyongyang and paved the way for movement toward political reconciliation between North Korea and South Korea. While the possibility of North Korean aggression cannot be ruled out in the short term, the chances that it would succeed given the military and economic power of South Korea and the American security commitment to Seoul are very small. South Korea could almost certainly defeat North Korea in a war today, and this is unlikely to change. Iran—the third candidate enemy in a potential MTW—is undertaking moderate improvement in its armed forces but, unlike Iraq and North Korea, has not waged aggressive war in recent years or given any other

sign that it would like to invade and occupy the territory of neighboring states.

A Transformation Approach to military strategy would lead the United States to limit its involvement in regions of modest or limited national interest. In most cases, these are precisely the areas of the world where the demand for multinational peacekeeping forces is the highest. In a Transformation Approach, the United States would probably only consider peacekeeping or stability operations in high-value areas like the Caribbean or Central America. In the short-term, a Transformation Approach would stress what might be called “limited commitment” military forces like aerospace and naval units rather than “high commitment” forces like major land formations. It would certainly accord higher priority to experimental units, battle labs, concept development centers, war colleges, wargaming centers, and DOD think tanks. Geographically, a transformation approach to strategy could concentrate on the regions of high, tangible U.S. interests, whether defined by geography, economic ties, or formal commitments. The core regions of the Caribbean Basin, North America, Central America, NATO Europe, parts of the Pacific Rim, and, to a lesser extent, the oil producing regions of the Gulf would be important and warrant extensive military engagement. Others would not.

The Transformation Approach entails higher short-term and mid-term risk than the Respond Approach. Like the Respond Approach, the Transformation Approach risks intimidating other states and sparking arms races, the adoption of asymmetric counters to American strength, and the coalescence of coalitions or alliances designed to contain U.S. power. Even today when foreign audiences hear that the United States, which is more secure than any other state on earth and probably more secure than any state has been for centuries, is willing to spend billions of dollars for a radical increase in its military capabilities, they assume Washington intends to use this power to impose its will on others.¹⁴⁴ In the short term, a transformation approach to

strategy runs some risk of encouraging an aggressor state to strike out before the correlation of forces shifts even further against it. The argument is sometimes made that Germany began World War I because it was afraid that political reforms and industrialization in Imperial Russia would eventually shift the balance of power. Aggressors are most dangerous when they perceive adverse trends. Today's aggressors might view a U.S. strategy based on transformation in this light. Similarly, the diminution of immediate engagement called for by the Transformation Approach might erode America's position of global leadership. In effect, Washington would be telling states outside of the core regions, "Although we're withdrawing from your area now, we'll be back in a few decades even stronger than before." But once a position of leadership is abandoned, it is very difficult to regain. This means that a Transformation Approach might permanently end U.S. leadership outside the core areas.

Since no other state appears prepared to undertake the transformation recommended by the National Defense Panel, Office of Net Assessment, and Defense Science Board, unless the United States is prepared to retain both a "legacy" military and a transformed one, the process would erode the ability of the U.S. military to operate in a coalition.¹⁴⁵ Finally, as with the Respond Approach, to undertake transformation now risks pursuing the wrong sorts of changes if predictions about the nature of future armed conflict, the trajectory of change in the global security environment, and the evolution of technology prove wrong. If the U.S. military transforms prematurely, it may find itself like the French forces that manned the Maginot Line in 1940—unsurpassed at the sort of static defense that characterized World War I but irrelevant for the rapid, combined arms maneuver that dominated the first two years of World War II.

Ultimately, the Transformation Approach entails accepting greater short-term risk in expectation of a long-term payoff. If one assumes that the United States has

an accurate roadmap for transformation, that the current strategy is economically unsustainable, that a substantial American military preponderance over any conceivable opponent should be sustained, that a decline in current U.S. influence in some regions is acceptable or can be rectified at a later date, and that the current “strategic pause” will persist for several decades, the Transformation Approach makes sense. If any of these assumptions do not hold, the soundness of the Transformation Approach is questionable.

Variant C: The Shaping Approach. The “Shaping Approach” grows from the conclusion that MTWs are increasingly unlikely. The states that former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake labeled “rogues” have been recast by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as “states of concern,” suggesting that they are moderating, disintegrating, or contained.¹⁴⁶ This, according to advocates of the Shaping Approach to U.S. military strategy, gives the United States a chance to place greater emphasis on the use of the military for shaping and engagement (see Figure 4). The idea is that this will preempt conflict, increase regional

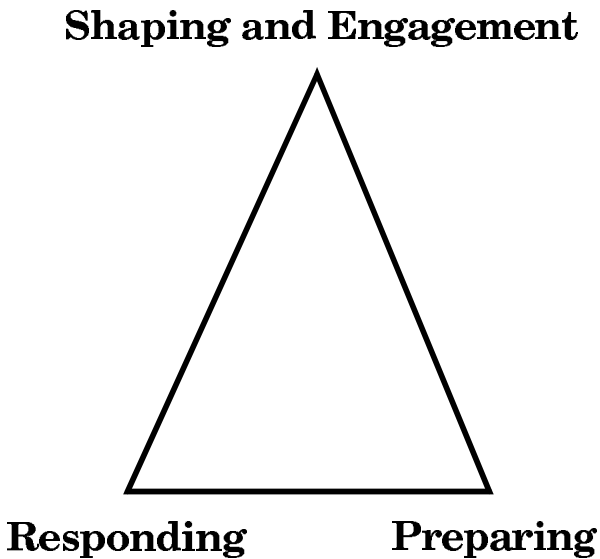


Figure 4

stability, augment the capabilities of American partners, and deter the “states of concern.” It would also allow significantly smaller defense budgets since shaping activities are less costly than warfighting, and since greater regional stability would allow force reductions.

While a Shaping Approach might initially demand an increase in the size of the U.S. military in order to develop relationships with a wide range of partner states, in the long term it could lead to a smaller force by preempting conflicts and increasing the ability of regional states to deal with those that do occur. When this happens, the U.S. military would stress support to allies and partners in areas where they are weak and the United States is strong such as command and control, intelligence, logistics, and transportation. Combined exercises, particularly multinational ones, would increase in number, size, and frequency. Engagement units like Army Special Forces and National Guard units with experience in state “partnership” programs would be particularly important. Geographically, a shaping approach would focus on regions with emerging democracies, including Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Europe, the Asia-Pacific Rim, the Caribbean, and Latin America. In most instances, the United States would work closely with existing regional security structures such as NATO, other European security organizations, the Southern African Development Council (SADC), the Economic Council of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the GCC.

While a Shaping Approach would help save defense dollars and potentially augment regional stability in some parts of the world, it would be a risky venture if predictions about the demise of large-scale war prove wrong. Nondemocratic states might be tempted to pursue aggression if the U.S. military no longer actively counters

them. Even the traditional “rogues” might become aggressive again. The influence of the United States might then decline. Even if no invasions occur, regional partners of the United States might be susceptible to intimidation. A revived Iraq or Iran might coerce the GCC, while ASEAN might, at some point, be intimidated by China. If shaping fails, the U.S. military might have to reverse an act of aggression that might have been deterred or thwarted, thus raising the risk and cost to U.S. and friendly forces. Moreover, a Shaping Approach assumes that the recent democratic reforms and economic growth will continue. Clearly the U.S. military would not undertake engagement with oppressive, nondemocratic partners. It is possible that the first decade of the 21st century will prove to be the high water mark of political reform and democratization, with regression toward authoritarianism or fragmentation taking place as the political and economic expectations of the citizens of transitional states are frustrated. A Shaping Approach also runs the risks mentioned earlier: guilt by association, creeping commitment, and over extension.

Variant D: The Warfighting Approach. The first three variants of the shape/respond/prepare strategy are closely related. The final variant—the “Warfighting Approach”—represents a more substantial alteration. Like the Responding Approach, the Warfighting Approach is based on the belief that shaping, engagement, and preparing should be secondary functions for the U.S. military. Advocates of this position feel strongly that the purpose of the American military is to fight and win the nation’s wars (with war defined as traditional, large-scale combat involving state militaries). Everything else is a distraction. Shaping and preparing may be necessary, but they *are* distractions. What distinguishes the Warfighting Approach from the Respond Approach is the separation of major war from smaller scale contingencies. The warfighting approach is based on the belief that the focus of the American military should be MTWs or, at least, large-scale war, with SSCs accorded lower priority (see Figure 5). Like the

Transformation Approach, the Warfighting Approach advocates diminishing American engagement in shaping and SSCs. But, rather than doing this as a means of shifting resources to transformation efforts, the warfighting approach advocates diminished engagement strictly on the basis of strategic prudence: by expending so much time, effort, and money in regions of the world less important to the United States, Washington is increasing the risk to U.S. interests in the core regions. The Warfighting Approach assumes that the qualitative gap between the U.S. military and potential adversaries will remain acceptable if strategic distractions are minimized and funding for maintenance and upgrades is adequate, so there is no need for a dramatic transformation in the short- to mid-term. What is needed is concentration on threats that pose a risk to truly vital national interests, specifically large-scale aggression in core regions of the world.

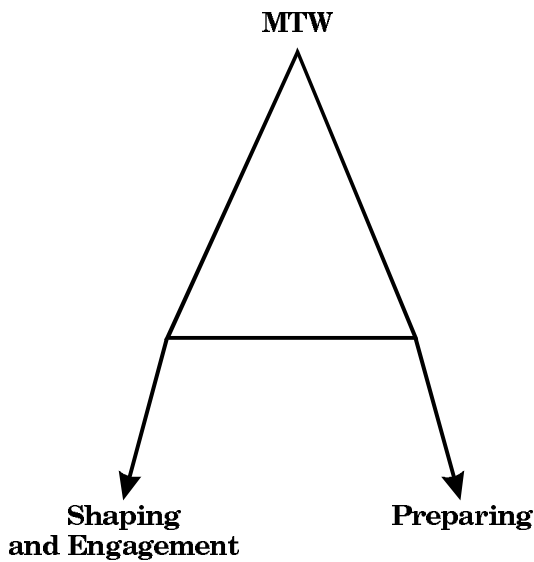


Figure 5

One advantage of the Warfighting Approach to U.S. military strategy is that it would facilitate force and concept development by focusing on specific geostrategic zones and

according clear priority to the MTW mission. The wider the range of functions performed by any organization, the more complicated planning and development become and the greater the risk of failure in one function or the other. If the U.S. military could focus solely on MTWs, force and concept development would be both easier and, possibly, more effective. Along these same lines, a Warfighting Approach to strategy would clarify the qualities desired among both enlisted personnel and officers. The “warfighter” attitude would be unambiguously prized and cultivated. In all likelihood, programs to change the institutional culture and makeup of the military would be de-emphasized. A Warfighting Approach to strategy might also augment deterrence against potential aggressors who contemplate traditional cross-border war. There would be no chance that they might consider the U.S. military so distracted and over-extended that it could not respond to aggression. A Warfighting Approach might also improve morale within the military and make recruitment and retention easier. There is concern today that extensive involvement of the armed forces in shaping, engagement, and SSCs erodes morale. Within the U.S. military, activities like participation in multinational peacekeeping are sometimes called (with intended sarcasm) “operations other than what I signed up for.” And, since major wars occur only infrequently, the deployment rate of the forces would decline. This would improve the quality of life for military personnel and extend the life of equipment. In all probability, the defense budget could be lowered or, at least, kept steady since the military could focus on a more limited range of functions and systems.

The force structure implications of the warfighting approach are clear: units and organizations designed for shaping, engagement, or transformation activities would be minimized, and those designed for MTW stressed. Any moves to “lighten” the Army would have to be designed so as to not detract from its capability for sustained combat. Light land forces like the 82d Airborne Division, 101st Airborne

Division (Air Assault) and Marine Expeditionary Forces would be accorded second priority or focused on deploying early in an MTW and delaying aggressor forces until heavy units arrived. Geographically, a Warfighting Approach to strategy would concentrate on areas where U.S. national interests are extensive and major war is possible, specifically NATO's eastern perimeter, the Persian Gulf, and Northeast Asia. There would be little or no U.S. military involvement in Africa, Central Asia, Latin America, and South Asia.

While the Warfighting Approach to U.S. military strategy would be a more focused and cheaper one than the current strategy, it would entail an increase in both short-term and long-term risk. By abandoning shaping and engagement activities, conflicts that might have been deterred or avoided may break out. The U.S. military would play only a limited role in smaller conflicts in noncore regions. This would erode the position of leadership currently held by the United States and could leave the U.S. military unable to perform functions demanded of it by the American people and their elected leaders. The American people *want* their military to be able to end or prevent egregious human suffering. The Warfighting Approach disregards this. And, since much of the American public and many of its elected leaders feel that the threat of MTW involving rogue states is declining, the Warfighting Approach to U.S. military strategy may not be politically supportable.

Alternative II: A Counter-Asymmetry Strategy.

The idea behind the counter-asymmetry strategy is that responding to existing or potential threats should, in fact, remain the central focus of American military strategy, but the current strategy prepares for the wrong kind of challenge. While a cross-border invasion by the armored columns of Iraq, Iran, or North Korea is improbable, the United States and its allies are likely to face asymmetric

threats of one kind or the other. As former Army Chief of Staff General Dennis Reimer admitted, “nobody is going to go against us, tank against tank, soldier against soldier. Instead, potential enemies will look for asymmetrical responses.”¹⁴⁷ The counter-asymmetry approach to U.S. military strategy recognizes this and would adjust force structure, operational concepts, and equipment accordingly (see Figure 6).

Countering Asymmetric Threats

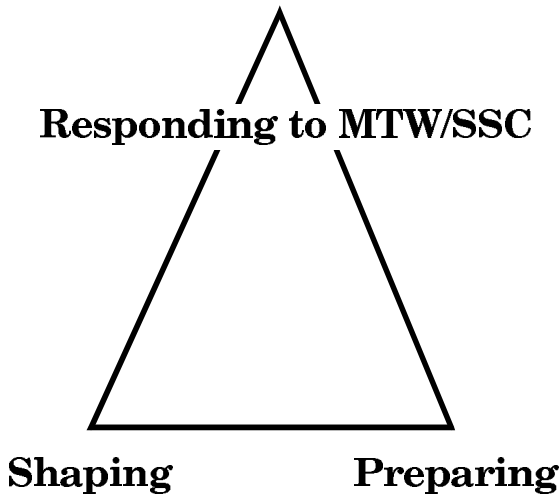


Figure 6

The question then becomes: what forms of asymmetry will be most common and, more importantly, most problematic for the United States? So far, the Department of Defense has focused on two broad categories of asymmetry: that designed to thwart the deployment of the U.S. military, and that designed to deter or defeat the United States by raising the cost of a military operation, particularly an MTW or SSC. A counter-deployment strategy would probably rely on missiles, other precision munitions, submarines, naval mines, and weapons of mass destruction to complicate the strategic and inter-theater movement of the U.S. military. This could involve strikes on

embarkation points and supporting infrastructure in the United States, on forces enroute to a theater via air or by sea, and on bases, troop formations, and support infrastructure in theater. A full spectrum counter-deployment strategy would also attempt to dissuade other nations from providing the U.S. military with overflight, transit, or basing rights. To prevent a counter-deployment strategy from working, the U.S. military would need the means to minimize its footprint in theater, protect deploying forces from their home bases to the point of employment in theater, and project power from outside the range of enemy weapons whenever possible.

An asymmetric strategy designed to deter or defeat the United States by raising the cost of a military operation would probably seek to erode American will by increasing casualties and dragging the conflict out. Sun Tzu wrote, "there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited."¹⁴⁸ This may be an overgeneralization, but it certainly holds for the United States today. Time is generally not on America's side in 21st century wars, in large part because the United States often fights in defense of important interests while its enemies fight for vital ones. An enemy could drag a conflict out and target American will in a number of ways. Terrorism could be used against Americans and American facilities in theater, within the United States, or around the world. The threat or use of WMD terrorism might be particularly effective, especially if it takes place on American soil. Cyberattacks and information terrorism could be used against critical nodes of the U.S. infrastructure, including the transportation, communication, and financial systems. Even enemies unable to project power via terrorism or cyberattacks could seek to increase the cost of a military operation to the United States by guerrilla warfare and operations in complex terrain, particularly urban areas. Urban conflict diminishes the effectiveness of U.S. sensor webs and erodes precision. It largely negates the immense American advantage in stand-off military capabilities. It

also increases the chances of civilian casualties which are often of greater concern to the United States than to its enemies.

Any enemy employing this type of asymmetric strategy would not necessarily have to take action to increase the cost of intervention for U.S. forces. A calculating enemy could combine this strategy with temporal asymmetric methods. In doing so, the enemy could assess the level of aggression that would be required to provoke a U.S. response and be sure to keep aggressive acts below that level. By developing incremental aggression of this nature over time, a determined enemy could achieve regional dominance. The more costly it is to deploy U.S. forces in both political and economic terms, the sooner the enemy could reach its goals. This argues for a more agile and versatile U.S. military.

There are other types of asymmetric challenges that are feasible, but have not yet received adequate analysis. Two are particularly troubling. One might be called *political-ethical* asymmetry. An enemy attempting this would use information technology and the interconnectedness of the 21st century world to have certain technologies or capabilities in which the U.S. military has an advantage prohibited or controlled. Based on the experience of the anti-landmine movement—which made extensive use of the Internet—a parallel movement to control or ban nonlethal weapons is already coalescing. The same may occur in other arenas, including the use of space for military purposes, the use of military robotics, and information warfare. Opponents using political-ethical asymmetry during an actual conflict would seek to manipulate opinion within the United States and among neutral states, again making extensive use of the Internet to communicate and link like-thinking organizations. The interconnectedness of the modern world, particularly the fact that information technology has given most of the world an understanding of the American psyche, will probably augment the ability of America's enemies to craft effective

psychological campaigns. In all likelihood, the leaders of future U.S. opponents will have spent time in the United States and, perhaps, have graduated from an American university, thus making them much more psychologically savvy than bumpkins like Saddam Hussein. The Zapatista movement in Mexico is a model for groups crafting a strategy based on political-ethical asymmetry. This group, in conjunction with a plethora of left-leaning Latin Americanists and human rights organizations, used the Internet to build international support with web pages housed on servers at the University of California, Swarthmore, and the University of Texas.¹⁴⁹ This electronic coalition-building was so sophisticated that a group of researchers from the RAND Corporation labeled it “social netwar.”¹⁵⁰ Undoubtedly, more organizations will follow this path, blending the expertise of traditional political movements with the cutting-edge advertising and marketing techniques that the information revolution has spawned.

A second type of asymmetry that the U.S. military may face concerns opponents organized as networks rather than as hierarchies. To avoid American strengths, such enemies might undertake strategic as well as tactical dispersion. There will be few sanctuaries in an era of global linkages, pervasive sensor webs, and standoff weapons, so networked enemies might spread their command and control apparatus around the world with their commanders exerting control from a lap top computer, satellite modem, and web cam situated anywhere in the world, with their transmissions encrypted and bounced throughout the web in order to complicate tracing. Networked enemies might connect themselves to a broader global network unified by opposition to the existing political and economic order. For instance, an insurgent network attempting to overthrow the government of a state friendly to the United States might cultivate loose ties with a range of titular allies including global criminal cartels, anti-government groups within the United States, or other political groups seeking

to constrain American power. Involvement in crime might allow networked enemies to buy the state-of-the-art talent in key areas like information security or offensive information warfare, thus making them equal or superior to the security forces confronting them. Such an opponent would pose serious challenges to a U.S. military that has retained a focus on MTWs.

Given all this, a counter-asymmetry approach to U.S. military strategy would de-emphasize forces and capabilities used for traditional force-on-force combat in open terrain, and focus instead on counter-terrorism, homeland defense, missile defense, urban operations, operations without large in-theater bases, dispersed nonlinear operations, military robotics, and other activities that might thwart asymmetric activities. The U.S. military would also need to develop hybrid hierarchy-networked organizations to counter networked opponents. The problem for American strategists is that they cannot know what sorts of asymmetric methods future enemies might use, or what might deter or counter them. Certainly the U.S. military has faced asymmetric enemies in the past such as the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, or the Somali militias. In both conflicts, the United States eventually lost (or, at least, experienced what was perceived as a defeat). But future enemies may or may not emulate the Vietnamese or Somalis. The most dangerous enemy would be one that somehow melds substantial conventional capability with asymmetric methods. It is also not clear whether asymmetric challenges can be deterred, or if they must be thwarted once they emerge. If the United States adopted a counter-asymmetry approach to strategy, certain changes could take place in the short-term, but the ultimate outcome would only be determined once the nature of the threat became clearer.

Because the nature of the asymmetric challenges the United States will face in coming decades is not clear, the primary risk of a counter-asymmetry approach is guessing wrong. The United States could undertake great efforts to

prepare for a type of enemy or a type of conflict that never emerges. This would not only be expensive, but could also undercut support from the American public and its elected leaders, and erode morale within the U.S. military. Ultimately, preparing for the wrong kind of asymmetric threat could be just as dangerous as not preparing at all. There is also the same risk seen in several other strategic approaches under consideration, that shifting the focus of the American military away from MTW might make it more likely to occur. In all probability, the time is not yet right for the United States to shift to a counter-asymmetry strategy.

Alternative III: Preventive Defense.

All variants of the shape/respond/prepare strategy reflect the belief that the United States has three levels of national interest—vital, important, and humanitarian—and that U.S. military power should be used to promote or protect all three so long as the expected costs and risks are in accordance with the significance of the interest at stake. It is, in other words, a military strategy appropriate for a superpower that has the ability and the will to become involved in many kinds of issues and in many places. There is a growing movement, though, that contends that such an unlimited national security strategy will ultimately prove insolvent. Thus the United States needs to resist the temptation to use military force on problems and issues that are ultimately peripheral or secondary and focus on truly important national interests. The United States needs a national security strategy of constraint and focus rather than one of unconstrained enlargement and engagement.

One instance of support for a more constrained and focused national security strategy is seen from what is called The Commission on America's National Interests, a blue-ribbon panel affiliated with the Harvard University Center for Science and International Affairs, the Nixon Center, and the RAND Corporation. This group includes a stellar line-up of former policymakers, current political

leaders, strategic analysts, and likely future policymakers including Robert Ellsworth, Andrew Goodpaster, Rita Hauser, Graham T. Allison, Dimitri Simes, James Thomson, Robert Blackwill, Sam Nunn, Richard Armitage, Bob Graham, John McCain, Condoleezza Rice, and Brent Scowcroft. The Commission has concluded that the United States is today a “superpower adrift” that has lost its focus.¹⁵¹ They propose a slight refinement of the categories of U.S. national interests, dividing them into “vital,” “extremely important,” “important,” and “less important or secondary.” But while this led the Commission to advocate lessened or minimal engagement in secondary issues like Africa or the Balkans and greater attention to homeland defense and proliferation, the actual recommendations for American military strategy were not radical. The Commission stated, for instance, that the U.S. military must retain the ability to conduct large-scale military operations in two parts of the world simultaneously.¹⁵² The only real change in U.S. military strategy was diminished engagement in shaping and peacekeeping.

After leaving office, former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry and former Assistant Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter offered another approach to refocusing U.S. defense strategy. They began arguing in favor of a return to the “preventive-defense strategy” that they had espoused while in the Pentagon.¹⁵³ The experience, influence, and wisdom of these two thinkers automatically gave the concept credence. Preventive defense is a blend of the transformation and shaping approaches, with some significant distinctions. Perry and Carter accept the idea that U.S. military preponderance is both desirable and sustainable. But, they contend, the Department of Defense and the Services are not adapting quickly enough to changes in the global security environment. This may eventually undercut or challenge American military preponderance.

Perry and Carter contend that the existing strategy inverts the appropriate priority of effort. They divide the

threats and tasks which U.S. defense strategy deals with into an “A,” “B,” and “C” list. The “C” list includes conflicts and humanitarian disasters which do not threaten America’s vital interests. This list is, of course, extensive, and includes Kosovo, Bosnia, East Timor, Haiti, Rwanda, and Somalia. “What is striking,” writes Joseph S. Nye, “is how the ‘C’ list has come to dominate today’s foreign policy agenda.”¹⁵⁴ This may be striking, but it is understandable. Conflicts of this type mesmerize the public. The suffering they bring is immediate and public, broadcast around the world as it occurs. While Perry and Carter do not say it, the intimation is that the current strategy has given such conflicts more attention than they warrant because President Clinton has been more prone to use public opinion as a guide for security policy than any other recent U.S. leader. This led to U.S. military involvement in places that were, by objective standards, peripheral. Perry and Carter’s “B” list includes threats to U.S. interests that are deterrable or defeatable with existing forces, particularly MTWs in Northeast and Southwest Asia. While these do pose a serious challenge, they do not threaten U.S. survival, way of life, or position in the world, especially if the U.S. military retains its qualitative advantage over the armed forces of rogue states by capitalizing on the revolution in military affairs. But despite this, Perry and Carter argue, the “B” list shapes most of the force structure of the U.S. military and consumes most of the defense budget. The military described in JV 2010 and JV 2020, for instance, concentrates almost wholly on “B” list threats. The “A” list, by contrast, includes things that might challenge the survival, way of life, and position in the world of the United States. There are no imminent “A” list threats in traditional military terms, but they might emerge if the United States does not take steps today to head them off. Specific “A” list dangers include:

- The danger that Russia might descend into chaos, isolation, and aggression;

- The danger that Russia and other Soviet successor states might lose control of their weapons of mass destruction;
- The danger that China could become increasingly hostile;
- The danger that weapons of mass destruction will proliferate and present a direct military threat to U.S. forces and territory;
- The danger that catastrophic terrorism might occur on U.S. territory.¹⁵⁵

Such issues do not capture the headlines like “C” list humanitarian disasters but, according to Perry and Carter, will determine the future security of the United States.

The appropriate response to “A” list dangers is to prevent them from developing and, if that fails, prepare to meet them. Preventive defense is thus a strategy that “seeks to forestall dangerous A-list developments before they require drastic military remedies.”¹⁵⁶ It entails engagement and shaping but, in contrast to existing shaping activities, would concentrate on “A” list issues rather than “B” and “C” list ones. Engagement with Russia and China matters; engagement with Uganda or Paraguay is less important. “A” list shaping activities might include a range of cooperative threat reduction programs, military-to-military contacts like combined exercises, training, and planning, and cooperative ventures pairing the U.S. military and U.S. allies with Russia and China. In addition, Perry and Carter advocate bringing greater coherence to the way the United States approaches terrorism, particularly on American soil. This should tightly integrate the military into the prevention of and response to terrorism. In terms of force structure and budget priorities, Perry and Carter favor devoting greater effort to countering asymmetric challenges. In particular, they mention defenses against weapons of mass destruction and missiles, information

warfare capabilities, protection of critical domestic infrastructure, and protection of forces and facilities used for power projection. They also recommend organizational reforms that would further augment jointness and provide a central systems architecture to take advantage of the information revolution.

The preventive defense strategy is based on several key assumptions. The most important is that shaping activities on the part of the U.S. military can have a positive effect on developments in China and Russia, and can lower the danger from terrorism. The preventive defense strategy also assumes that the threat from rogue states will, at worst, remain steady and may actually decrease, so a modest improvement in U.S. forces will preserve an adequate military advantage. Finally, preventive defense assumes that “C” list problems will not expand or escalate into more serious threats. They can, in other words, be handled with a very modest effort or even ignored, with no long-term repercussions.

Risks arise if any of these assumptions prove false. It is at least conceivable that both Beijing and Moscow are determined to expand or reconstitute their influence. If this is true, military-to-military engagement on the part of the United States would only strengthen them and speed up the process of defense modernization. If, in fact, either of these two powers are actually seeking greater influence and a diminution of U.S. influence, the appropriate American strategy would be to contain and weaken them, perhaps by playing on internal schisms. After all, the United States sought to shape Soviet behavior immediately after World War II through offers of assistance and by designing the United Nations in a way that gave Moscow a great degree of influence. This failed because it was based on the flawed assumption that Stalin's objectives and world view were essentially the same as Washington's. It is possible that preventive defense could repeat this strategic miscalculation. In the case of rogue states, the preventive defense strategy carries the same risk as many other

proposals: the emphasis the United States has placed on MTW may very well have deterred it. To de-emphasize it may weaken this deterrence. Finally, by ignoring “C” list crises or minimizing U.S. participation in them, the preventive defense strategy could weaken U.S. leadership in places like Africa and South Asia (assuming this is desirable) and could allow internal wars and humanitarian disasters to spread. In other words, sparks left untended can turn into bonfires. If one accepts the notion of contagion or “death by a thousand small cuts”—ideas given greater credence by ongoing processes of globalization and interconnectedness—preventive defense may be an extraordinarily risky strategy.

Alternative IV: Supporting Regional Structures.

Alternatives I through III are distinguished by the priority given the missions and tasks that the U.S. military currently performs. Alternatives IV and V suggest more substantial changes in how the U.S. military might perform its tasks or the nature of the tasks themselves. For instance, a strategy based on supporting regional structures would commit the U.S. military to develop concepts, doctrine, technology, and organizations designed specifically to strengthen friendly states and coalitions during peacetime, crisis, and war. Current strategy notes that the U.S. military usually operates with partners, but in every type of coalition operation except peacekeeping in peripheral areas, the United States plans to be the dominant member. A strategy of supporting regional structures would reverse this so that the normal state of affairs would be for the U.S. military to be the *supporting* coalition partner rather than the *supported* one.

There are solid geostrategic and political reasons that such a shift would make sense. Robert W. Tucker writes, “Once again Americans are in a period of increasing contention over foreign policy...The central issue in the present debate is a recurring one: whether America should

act alone or with others.”¹⁵⁷ All of the alternative strategies discussed so far share a belief in the desirability of U.S. dominance in both the peacetime maintenance of regional security and in forming and leading military responses to crises or acts of aggression. As Peter Rodman—an unabashed advocate of the preservation of American preeminence—points out, there is growing unease about Washington’s unilateralism even among friends.¹⁵⁸ This is due in large part to the sometimes clumsy and heavy-handed way that the United States has exercised global leadership. U.S. military strategy is a perfect illustration of this. Washington has sought a major role in the design and maintenance of nearly every regional security system. The United States seeks friends and allies, but always makes them junior partners. This made perfect sense during the Cold War and in its immediate aftermath when only the United States could orchestrate regional security but, as the global security system matures and regional structures form and solidify, U.S. dominance could become unsustainable and counterproductive. “The rising indictment at home as well as abroad of a dominant America,” writes Tucker, “is the result not of what this nation has done in the world, but...what it sooner or later will do. And even if this view misreads the American disposition, other nations will still be only too ready to believe that it does not.”¹⁵⁹

In addition to the risk of provoking opposition, the insistence on dominating regional security systems is expensive. As discussed earlier, American strategy and budgets are unsynchronized. U.S. dominance contributes to this. It is also politically risky, easily intimidating or alienating other states as they come to question American dominance of their part of the world. U.S. dominance also risks losing the support of the American people if blood and money continue to be expended in far away places. The intense effort by both the Bush and Clinton administrations to justify global engagement shows that American political leaders recognize the fragility of public support for it. Calls

for American withdrawal from some regions are only one disaster away. Given all this, a strategy in which the main focus is to help build and strengthen emerging regional security structures might be more affordable and sustainable than a U.S.-dominated one in which enemies are defeated by American-led coalitions. (see Figure 7).

Support to Regional Structures

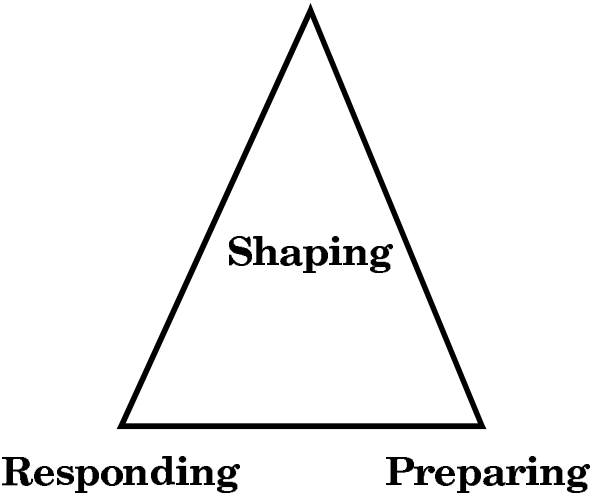


Figure 7

A U.S. strategy of supporting regional security structures would reflect the fact that local states are more interested in and better able to understand their region’s security than Americans. It would also take advantage of the fact that regional and subregional security organs are taking form in nearly all parts of the world. At the political level, such a strategy would help with the formation of multinational security structures where none exist, and assist with the development of those that do. During peacetime, the U.S. military would augment the effectiveness of regional structures, primarily through support to regional exercises, combined training, and professional military education. During crises or conflict, the United States would provide support to regional

structures according to specific needs. This might be improved command and control, missile defense, intelligence support, transportation, medical or other types of combat support, and combat service support. In some instances, the United States might bolster a regional structure with long-range fire support or even landpower. To perform this support function, the U.S. military, both the CINCs and the services, would need some reorganization. Currently, if the U.S. Army provides support to an allied military, it often has to strip units, supplies, and equipment from its own divisions. In a strategy based on support to regional structures, the U.S. Army would form dedicated support divisions specifically designed to augment allies in areas where they are weak. At the same time, the United States would retain effective combat units for those instances where regional structures are inadequate or where conditions dictate unilateral American military actions. It would also continue a robust process of experimentation to explore and integrate emerging capabilities.

An associated strategy of supporting regional structures entails two important types of risk. The first is the risk that allied or partner states may not be able to defeat aggression on their own. In the long term, though, this argument becomes circular. Allies have been able to keep their defense budgets lower than might be necessary because they could rely on the United States to preserve regional stability. If U.S. strategy made clear that it would support regional actors but not substitute for them, this might change. Ultimately, though, this is an assumption. If key regional actors are *not* willing or able to shoulder a greater burden for security, then a strategy based on supporting them could fail to protect important U.S. national interests. And even in cases where regional actors are willing to pay the price to protect their interests, the United States in its supporting role will sacrifice control over the extent to which U.S. interests are protected or promoted.

Another risk is that a strategy of supporting regional structures might lead to a decline in the ability of the United States to dictate or control the outcome of crises and conflicts around the world. This is undeniable, but may not be undesirable. There are regions like Europe that could manage their own security today if forced to. Even if the United States is not a major player in determining how this transpires, the outcome is not likely to be adverse to U.S. interests. Put simply, the cost of retaining U.S. dominance of the European security system today may not be worth the political and economic costs. In other regions with less effective existing security systems (or less potential to build them), the role of the United States would vary according to geography and the extent of American national interests. Clearly the U.S. role in Sub-Saharan Africa should be limited, while that in Pacific Rim, Central America, and the Caribbean more substantial. In all regions, though, the first choice strategic option should be to strengthen regional structures.

A third problem with a strategy of supporting regional structures has to do with the command and control of U.S. forces. While there have been some rare exceptions, the American public as well as governmental leaders have been loathe to place U.S. troops under foreign command. The current administration has been the most willing to consider this but still drew a clear line when it came to giving foreign leaders command of U.S. forces as when, for instance, PDD 25 stated that the president would never relinquish command authority over U.S. forces but would consider placing U.S. forces under operational control of a competent U.N. commander for specific U.N. operations authorized by the Security Council. A future, more conservative administration can be expected to object more strenuously. Nonetheless, it is difficult to conceive of a combined command structure in which U.S. forces are purely supporting an allied force but not under the command of a foreign military leader.

This strategy is not, then, one of *disengagement* but one built on a fundamentally different form of engagement. To adopt it would require a massive psychological adjustment on the part of Americans plus clear, committed and vigorous leadership from the highest levels. One of the most crucial yet difficult components of leadership is knowing when *not* to exercise authority or control. Great leaders—whether individuals or nations—master this skill. For states, dominance is intoxicating but, history suggests, it is also fleeting. Better to control its passing than to have it wrested from you.

Alternative V: Strategic Reconfiguration.

The 1995 Commission on Roles and Missions was intended to take a hard look at the division of labor among the services and the Department of Defense. The CORM, though, offered only the most cautious recommendations, leaving the Cold War division-of-labor intact. Now it might be appropriate to revisit that issue and consider whether the U.S. military should undergo a true strategic reconfiguration. In this alternative, the vital tasks of American strategy would remain the same: responding to MTWs, responding to SSCs, shaping/engagement, and preparing for the future. All components of the armed forces and the Department of Defense would stress preparation, particularly experimentation and concept development. But, responsibility for the immediate tasks—MTWs, SSCs, and shaping/engagement—would be reassigned.

Since the concept of MTWs entered discussions of American military strategy in the early 1990s, defense leaders agreed that the proper response was an all-service effort utilizing every element of American military power. This made sense when MTWs were likely and were dangerous enough to constitute the central focus of U.S. military strategy. Today, the rogue states which might instigate MTW have, to one degree or the other, been contained. Regional structures to defend against

MTW—whether the South Korean military or the GCC—are stronger than they were ten years ago. This means that the chances of an MTW occurring at all are small. And, if one does occur, the chances that an aggressor will succeed or an act of aggression will be reversed are miniscule. Even if a rogue state could grab a piece of territory and hold it, the political and economic costs of this action would far outweigh any benefits. Other characteristics of MTW also suggest that the U.S. military should rethink them. Only states can instigate MTW. States are inherently more “detrable” than non-state actors since they usually have some system for rational strategy-making which allows them to grasp the likely consequences of aggression. In addition, states are vulnerable to other means of pressure or coercion such as economic sanctions. It is easier to identify likely sources of MTWs and to deter them than for SSCs. Currently MTWs:

- Are diminishing in likelihood;
- Are easier to predict in terms of location and outbreak than SSCs;
- Are more deterrable than SSCs;
- Involve fewer political constraints and broader rules of engagement, since they are instigated by aggression and likely to generate international disapproval.

This suggests the United States should move away from the use of *Desert Storm*-style MTWs as the central building block of military strategy. Certainly the U.S. military must retain some capability to help thwart challenges of this type, but will find that they are unlikely to occur and, if they do, primary responsibility for stopping them will be in the hands of regional actors. If an MTW does occur, the role of the U.S. military is likely to be standoff fires to stop an invasion in its early stages, and support to regional actors who play the primary role in defeating or reversing the

invasion. Most of the close combat, in other words, could and should be handled by regional forces. The same holds for SSCs, but the U.S. military is likely to be called on for these sorts of missions, whether involving non-combat activities like humanitarian relief or protracted, low-level war. Some SSCs will be amenable to standoff strikes but many of them will require “hands on” effort for full mission accomplishment, particularly those where saving noncombatant lives is a primary goal. In these, American land forces, both Army and Marines, will play the most vital roles. This is not an issue of high-tech versus low-tech approaches. In fact, there is a great need for an effort to apply RMA-type emerging technology to SSCs rather than to purely focus on major war as is currently done. Strategic reconfiguration, then, would entail: (1) refocusing American strategy so that SSCs are equal to or have a higher priority than MTWs in terms of force shaping, doctrine development, procurement, and research; and, (2) refocusing U.S. land forces on SSCs.

Strategic reconfiguration would demand the greatest degree of change from the Army. The Air Force and Navy are already configured for standoff strikes in an MTW environment; the Marines are already focused on SSCs. The Army, though, would need to change its stress on sustained, heavy combat and continue the type of transformation directed by General Shinseki toward a more rapidly deployable, middle weight force. It would also need to make other adjustments to organization and concepts to become more effective at SSCs, engagement, and shaping. At the same time, the boundary between the functions of the Army and the Marines would need to be rethought. If the Army becomes more active in SSCs, shaping, and engagement, and the Marines continue to develop the capability to operate further from the shore than in the past, there will be increasing overlap between the two and, potentially, increasing competition.

Strategic reconfiguration, then, is based on several assumptions:

- MTWs instigated by cross border aggression by rogue states whose military is an armor-heavy Soviet-style one are becoming less likely;
- Should MTW occur, it could be defeated and reversed by a combination of regional forces, standoff American fires, and other methods of American support;
- SSCs, shaping, and engagement will be the primary tasks of the U.S. military;
- SSCs, shaping, and engagement usually are not amenable to standoff solutions.

If all of these assumptions hold, strategic reconfiguration entails acceptable risk. If any of them do not hold, strategic reconfiguration could increase the chances that aggressor states will instigate MTW, make ultimate defeat of MTWs impossible or more costly, and, as a result, diminish U.S. influence in those regions where MTWs are possible.

PART III: THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN STRATEGY

Three types of relationships form the building blocks of American national security strategy. Relationships of *affinity* bind the United States and other states and organizations that share its core values: belief in open government, rule by law, human rights, the market system, and the desirability of creating stable systems for regional security. Some relationships of affinity are long-standing such as those with Canada, Great Britain, and Australia; others are medium term like the relationships with Israel, Germany, and Japan; and some are newer, connecting the United States and states that have recently undergone democratic transitions. Relationships of *necessity* are more complex. They can be based on either some form of partnership or on containment. One type of relationship of necessity links the United States to other states that are important because of their military, economic, and political power. Clearly Russia, China, and India are the most significant states of this type. Other relationships of necessity link the United States and nations important because of geographic location or possession of vital natural resources. A third type of relationship of necessity links the United States to states important because of aggressive intent. This clearly includes the traditional “rogues” like Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. The third form of strategic relationship is one of *humanity*. This would certainly characterize the ties between Washington and most of the states of Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as others in Asia and Latin America. The key question in relationships of humanity is the salience of humanitarian intervention using force. Current U.S. strategy accepts this with conditions, especially limits on the U.S. role and the participation of partners, but this may change in the future.

A relationship between the United States and an individual state or organization may mix elements of affinity, necessity, and humanity. Some relationships are based on a one of these elements, some two, some all three. Relationships often evolve and mature. U.S.-Mexican ties, for instance, were once based purely on geographic necessity, but appear to be evolving into ones based more on affinity. And, the nature of the relationship between the United States and another state is largely determined by the actions and intent of the other state. In any case, the U.S. military is a vital component in relationships of affinity and necessity, and an important one in relationships of humanity. Much of strategy can be distilled into decisions concerning the priority and forms of these relationships.

Even as U.S. strategy approaches the point of great decisions that will shape the future, the Army tends to think operationally rather than strategically. To think in terms of the rapid deployment of force rather than conflict prevention or resolution seems to be enough. In an era of strategic transition, this is an encumbrance. To assure its long-term relevance, the Army needs to place greater emphasis on strategic level analysis. The confluence of the 2001 QDR, a presidential transition, and the Army's transformation process provide an excellent opportunity to do this. This begins with basic concepts—what *should* be done and what *could* be done.

The Army makes three defining contributions to the joint team. The first is *versatility*. The Army covers a larger part of the spectrum of military tasks than any of the other Services. It is capable of sustained conventional combat using both close engagement and precision, standoff strikes. It can seize and hold territory, and undertake the post-conflict reconstruction of a defeated enemy. It is proficient at peacekeeping, nation building, peacetime engagement, and special operations. Deployment of the Army also remains the greatest symbol of American commitment, so it carries political weight. The second defining Army contribution to the joint team is ability to

attain *strategically decisive results* in war. Decisiveness is not an “either/or” condition, but rather a spectrum of outcomes (see Figure 8). Standoff strikes, if done appropriately, can approach the upper range of decisiveness, theoretically even collapsing the enemy’s will (although this has never been accomplished). Only effective landpower, though, can attain the full spectrum of decisiveness. It is possible that the United States will not seek the upper ranges of decisiveness in the contemporary security environment. But to be denuded of the capability for full-spectrum decisiveness erodes deterrence since only the upper range of decisiveness strips an aggressor of the ability to “fight again another day.” In addition, if the U.S. military does not have the capability of attaining the upper ranges of the spectrum of decisiveness, the options available to American political leaders is more limited.

The third defining Army contribution to the joint team is the potential to provide *broad-spectrum support* to an allies and friends. The fact that the U.S. Army itself has such a wide range of capabilities gives it the ability to assist allies

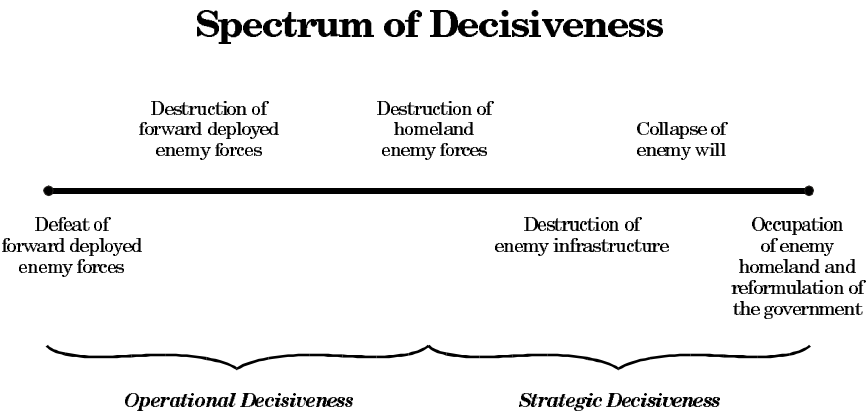


Figure 8

with everything from urban combat, to engineering and logistics, through command and control of land formations. The Army is not currently configured to provide support to allies and friends with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, but easily could be.

Given these three defining characteristics of the Army's contribution to the joint team, Army leaders should do two things during the 2001 QDR. The first is to design force and concept development programs that augment these defining characteristics—versatility, full spectrum decisiveness, and broad-spectrum support. The second is to assure that these defining characteristics become central components of American military strategy. While versatility has moved in this direction as the array of tasks given the U.S. military expanded, greater effort is needed to amplify the role of full-spectrum decisiveness and broad-spectrum support. As American military strategy is adjusted via the 2001 QDR and the beginning of a new presidential administration, the Army should integrate these three defining characteristics into the transformation process.

But what of the QDR? The 1997 QDR recommended only modest changes in the concepts on which U.S. military strategy is based. This was appropriate: the contours of the new security environment were unclear at that point. The U.S. military was in the midst of adjustment and downsizing. The risk of MTW instigated by rogue states was high enough that it had to be the centerpiece of American strategic thinking. In the broadest sense, American strategy was not “broken” and thus did not need “fixed.” But these conditions are less applicable to the 2001 QDR. The contours of the 21st century security environment, which were unclear in 1997, are moving into view. There is not only the opportunity for more substantial strategic change, but also a growing need for it. Given this, the soundest military strategy for the United States in coming years is one that blends components of all five of the strategic

alternatives that have been discussed here. It should integrate the following characteristics:

- Increased emphasis on joint, combined, and inter-agency experimentation, research, and development, but avoidance of lock-in to one particular type of future force. Phrased differently, the U.S. military should *prepare* for transformation but not yet commit to a particular technological trajectory;
- Development of an architecture to create interagency strategic concepts and operational procedures in addition to purely joint ones;
- Abandonment of the two MTW force shaping yardstick;
- Greater emphasis on asymmetric and nontraditional challenges (to include cancellation of procurement applicable only or primarily to MTWs);
- Movement toward a national security strategy that stresses collaboration and partnership rather than dominance and unilateralism. Development of concepts and organizations designed specifically to support regional partners and allies during peacetime, crisis, and war (including a national security strategy that concentrates on aiding with the formation and development of regional structures);
- A broadened approach to the issue of decisiveness to include a strategic meaning as well as an operational one;
- A strategic focus on potential peer competitors, specifically Russia and China. Modest engagement with these nations while retaining the capability to shift to containment if they prove unwilling to

cooperate on the construction of global and regional security systems.

* * * * *

“Complexity” and “uncertainty” are the words most often used to describe the current global security environment. This is true. Because the global security system is in such flux, the process of regular defense reviews and strategic adjustments which the United States undertakes is healthy. Institutionalization of it will keep Americans safe for many decades. As the Department of Defense and the Services learn how to undertake effective reviews and adjustments, they will get even better at it. It is a learning process. Given this, QDR 1997—the inaugural effort—brought little change. QDR 2001 is likely to see moderate adjustments. QDR 2005 and beyond will push even further. The wild card is the outcome of the 2000 presidential election. As president, George Bush would probably adopt something close to the Transformation Approach to U.S. military strategy.¹⁶⁰ Since the official web site of the Gore-Lieberman campaign states, “Al Gore has developed a plan for American leadership on the world stage—a policy of Forward Engagement to address new security issues before they become crises and to seize the opportunities of a Global Age,” as president Gore would probably favor a Shaping Approach.¹⁶¹ In any case, though, the years 2000 and 2001 will set the stage for all the reviews and adjustments that come later.

ENDNOTES

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3. John Hillen, "Defense's Death Spiral," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 4, July/August 1999, pp. 2-7.

4. George Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: The White House, August 1991, p. 1.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

6. Colin L. Powell, *National Military Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1992, p. 1.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

8. John F. Troxell, *Force Planning in an Era of Uncertainty: Two MRCs as a Force Sizing Framework*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1997, pp. 9-10. For detail see Lorna S. Jaffe, *The Development of the Base Force 1989-1992*, Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1993.

9. Troxell, *Force Planning in an Era of Uncertainty*, p. 19.

10. George Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: The White House, January 1993, p. 13.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

12. For his thinking on this issue, see *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, reprinted at <http://www.unog.ch/archives/agendas/agpeace.htm>.

13. President Bush, "The United Nations: Forging a Genuine Global Community," address before the U.N. General Assembly, New York City, September 21, 1992, reprinted in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, Vol. 3, No. 39, September 28, 1992, p. 722.

14. Quoted in "Fact Sheet: Somalia—Operation Restore Hope," *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, Vol. 3, No. 51, December 21, 1992, p. 898.

15. See Walter S. Clarke, *Somalia: Background For Operation Restore Hope*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1992.

16. See, for instance, President Bush, "America's Role in the World," Address at the West Point Military Academy, West Point, New York, January 5, 1993, reprinted in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, Vol. 4, No. 2, January 11, 1993, also at <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no02.html>

17. Security Council Resolution 751 (1992), April 24, 1992.

18. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *The United Nations and Somalia, 1992-1996*, New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996. For a wide range of sources, see Walter S. Clarke, *Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia: Bibliography*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Center for Strategic Leadership, 1995.

19. See John T. Correll, "The Base Force Meets Option C," *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 74, No. 6, June 1992, reprinted at <http://www.afa.org/magazine/0692watch.html>; Les Aspin, "National Security in the 1990s: Defining a New Basis for U.S. Military Forces," briefing to the Atlantic Council of the United States, Washington, DC: House Armed Services Committee, January 6, 1992; and John Lancaster, "Nunn Proposes 5-Year Defense Cut of \$85 Billion," *Washington Post*, March 25, 1992, p. A1.

20. Goure and Ranney, *Averting the Defense Train Wreck in the New Millennium*, p. 23.

21. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, Washington, DC: The White House, July 1994, p. 1. Henceforth *National Security Strategy* 1994.

22. Today, the Cato Institute of Washington DC is the most pervasive advocate of a Jeffersonian foreign policy. See their web site at <http://www.cato.org/research/for-st.html>.

23. Most famously in his article "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" which was published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1947 under the pseudonym "X" (since Kennan was a serving government official).

24. In a 1950 document usually known as NSC-68, for instance, Paul H. Nitze argued that containment must be a military strategy in addition to the political one suggested by Kennan. NSC-68 is reprinted and analyzed in S. Nelson Drew, ed., *NSC-68: Forging the Strategy of Containment*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994.

25. In 1997 the Clinton Administration dropped the word "enlargement" from its strategic lexicon. This was probably a wise move since the phrase often caused unease among other states about how the United States would use its powerful military. The author experienced this problem first hand when giving talks on U.S. national security strategy in Latin America. The Spanish word that is the closest translation of "enlargement" implies imperialism or the spread of influence by force.

26. *National Security Strategy* 1994, p. 6.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

28. Les Aspin, *Report on the Bottom-Up Review*, Section I, "National Security in the Post-Cold War Era," reprinted at <http://www.fas.org/man/docs/bur/part01.htm>.

29. *Ibid.*, Section II, "A Defense Strategy for the New Era."

30. Before the Bottom Up Review, "MRC" meant "major regional contingency." The change in the lexicon was subtle but important.

31. Troxell, *Force Planning in an Era of Uncertainty*, pp. 11-12.

32. For a detailed narrative of the battle, see Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999.

33. William H. Lewis, "'Assertive Multilateralism': Rhetoric vs. Reality," in William H. Lewis, ed., *Peacekeeping: The Way Ahead?*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1993, pp. 13-28.

34. See Nina M. Serafino, *Peacekeeping: Issues of U.S. Military Involvement*, Congressional Research Service Issue Brief 94-040, December 3, 1996.

35. The distinction between operational *command* and operational *control* is important for the U.S. military. Operational control “normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.” Command authority does include administration, discipline, internal organization, and unit training. Source: Joint Publication 1-02, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, January 24, 2000.

36. Edmund J. Hull, “UN Peacekeeping Operations: Worthwhile Investments in Peace,” *U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda*, Vol. 3, No. 2, April 1998, p. 6.

37. Carl J. Conetta, “Mismatch: The ‘Bottom Up Review’ and America’s Security Requirements in the New Era,” written testimony for the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. House of Representatives, March 10, 1994, reprinted at <http://www.comw.org/pda/congress.htm>. Emphasis in original.

38. Lawrence T. DiRita, Baker Spring, and John Luddy, “Thumbs Down to the Bottom-Up Review,” *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder* No. 957, September 24, 1993.

39. Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis, “Bottom Up Review,” reprinted at http://www.csbaonline.org/2strategic_Studies/6DoD_Strategy_and_Policy/5Bottom_Up_Review/Bottom_Up_Review.htm.

40. The CORM members were John P. White, Chairman, Les Aspin, Antonia H. Chayes, Robert J. Murray, Franklin D. Raines, Jeffrey H. Smith, Admiral (ret) Leon A. Edney, Major General (ret) John L. Matthews, General (ret) Robert W. RisCassi, Lieutenant General (ret) Bernard E. Trainor, and General (ret) Larry D. Welch. Aspin, who had been replaced by William Perry as Secretary of Defense, died while the CORM report was being finalized. John White later served as Deputy Secretary of Defense.

41. Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis, “Commission on Roles and Missions,” reprinted at http://www.csbaonline.org/2Strategic_Studies/6DoD_Strategy_and_Policy/4Commission_Roles_Missions/.

42. The JCS already had begun preparation of what would become *Joint Vision 2010*.

43. William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, Washington, DC: The White House, February 1995, p. 12.

44. William J. Perry, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, March 1996, p. viii.

45. *Battle Labs: Maintaining the Edge*, Fort Monroe, VA: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994, pp. 6 and 32-33. The name "Louisiana Maneuvers" was an allusion to a series of massive training exercises held in the fall of 1941 as the U.S. Army began preparation for World War II. See James W. Dunn, "The 1941 Louisiana Maneuvers" at <http://www.wood.army.mil/engrmag/pb59512/review.htm>. The U.S. Army's Louisiana Maneuver Task Force was disbanded in 1996 as it gave way to the Force XXI process.

46. See *Force XXI...America's Army of the 21st Century*, Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1995.

47. For an excellent explanation of the role that wargaming plays in the Army After Next process, see Robert B. Killebrew, "Learning From Wargames: A Status Report," *Parameters*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Spring 1998, pp. 122-135.

48. See, for instance, Joseph A. Engelbrecht, Jr., *et al.*, "Alternative Futures for 2025: Security Planning to Avoid Surprise," a research paper presented to Air Force 2025, April 1996; William B. Osborne, *et al.*, "Information Operations: A New War-Fighting Capability," a research paper presented to Air Force 2025, August 1996; Jeffrey E. Theiret, *et al.*, "Hit 'em Where It Hurts: Strategic Attack in 2025," a research paper presented to Air Force 2025, August 1996; Bruce W. Carmichael, *et al.*, "Strikestar 2025," a research paper presented to Air Force 2025, August 1996; and Edward F. Murphy, "Information Operations: Wisdom Warfare For 2025," a research paper presented to Air Force 2025, August 1996. These papers are available at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/2025/>.

49. <http://208.198.29.7/mcwl-hot/home/index.html>

50. See <http://www.mcwl.quantico.usmc.mil/mcwl/home/index.html>.

51. See the organization's home page at <http://www.nwc.navy.mil/ssg/>.

52. *Joint Vision 2010*, Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, n.d., p. 1. JV 2010 was published in 1995 but, for reasons known only to General

Shalikashvili and the Joint Staff, does not indicate a publication date anywhere in the printed version. The concepts in JV 2010 were elaborated in *Concept for Future Joint Operations: Expanding Joint Vision 2010*, Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 1997.

53. This is explored in detail in Steven Metz, *Armed Conflict in the 21st Century: The Information Revolution and Post-Modern Warfare*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000, pp. 5-25.

54. *Concept for Future Joint Operations*, p. 24.

55. For assessments and explanations of the official DOD view of the RMA, see Metz, *Armed Conflict in the 21st Century*, pp. 27-40; Colin Gray, *The American Revolution in Military Affairs: An Interim Assessment*, Camberley, UK: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 1997; and Bill Owens, *Lifting the Fog of War*, New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2000.

56. William S. Cohen, *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, May 1997, Section I.

57. *Ibid.*, Section II.

58. *Ibid.*, Section III.

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*, Section, II.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*, Section III.

63. There were a few analysts who argued that the revolution had taken place in the 1980s and the current period is simply one of consolidation. See, for instance, Ralph Peters, "After the Revolution," *Parameters*, Vol. 25, No. 2, Summer 1995, pp. 7-14; and David Jablonsky, *The Owl of Minerva Flies at Twilight: Doctrinal Change and Continuity and the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1994.

64. David E. Snodgrass, "The QDR: Improve the Process to Improve the Product," *Parameters*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Spring 2000, pp. 57-60.

65. The classic study of this process is Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1974.

66. Michael Vickers and Steven Kosiak, *The Quadrennial Defense Review—An Assessment*, Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, December 1997.

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68. Goure and Ranney, *Averting the Defense Train Wreck in the New Millennium*, p. 13. In fairness, other analysts question the figures proposed by Goure and Ranney. See, for instance, Steve Kosiak, "CSIS Train Wreck Analysis is Off Track," February 7, 2000, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments website, http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/Archive/H.20000207.CSIS_Train_Wreck_A/H.20000207.CSIS_Train_Wreck_A.htm.

69. John M. Shalikashvili, *National Military Strategy*, reprinted at <http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/core/nms.html>.

70. The NDP was chaired by Philip A. Odeen and included Richard L. Armitage, General Richard D. Hearney (USMC, ret), Admiral David E. Jeremiah (USN, ret), Robert M. Kimmitt, Andrew F. Krepinevich, General James P. McCarthy (USAF, ret), Janne E. Nolan, and General Robert W. Riscassi (USA, ret).

71. *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century*, Report of the National Defense Panel, December 1997, p.1.

72. John A. Tirpak, "The NDP and the Transformation Strategy," *Air Force*, Vol. 81, No. 3, March 1998, reprinted at <http://www.afa.org/magazine/0398ndp.html>.

73. This recommendation was implemented. On May 15, 1998, the Secretary of Defense signed a charter naming the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Atlantic Command (CINCLANTCOM) the Executive Agent for joint experimentation within the Department of Defense. In October 1997 the U.S. Atlantic Command was renamed the United States Joint Forces Command or USJFCOM and designated "the primary catalyst for joint force integration, training, experimentation, doctrine development and testing."

74. While the Department of Defense is a major player in the protection of critical infrastructure, responsibility for framing an overarching strategy is assigned to the President's Commission on

Critical Infrastructure Protection. See *Critical Foundations: Protecting America's Infrastructures*, Report of the President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection, October 1997, reprinted at http://www.ciao.gov/CIAO_Document_Library/PCCIP_Report.pdf

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76. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

77. For elaboration, see Andrew Krepinevich, Executive Director of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, "Emerging Threats, Revolutionary Capabilities, and Military Transformation," testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, March 5, 1999, reprinted at <http://www.csbahome.com/Publications/ETACtestimony.htm>

78. *Transforming Defense*, p. 42.

79. Eventually, military strategists are likely to use the notion of "complex terrain" to assess cyberspace and outer space as well, particularly as military activities in these environments become interspersed among heavily concentrated commercial activities.

80. See Thomas E. Ricks, "Urban Warfare: Where Innovation Hasn't Helped," *Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 1999, p. 10; William G. Rosenau, "Every Room Is a New Battle: The Lessons of Modern Urban Warfare," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1997, p. 385; Russell W. Glenn, *Marching Under Darkening Skies: The American Military and the Impending Urban Operations Threat*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Arroyo Center, 1998, p. viii..

81. "Air Force to Push Effects-Based Warfare in Upcoming Defense Review," *Inside the Air Force*, June 2, 1000, p. 1. For detail on the thinking behind this, see Phillip S. Meilinger, "Air Strategy: Targeting For Effect," *Aerospace Power Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Winter 1999, pp. 48-61.

82. William S. Cohen, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1999, Chapter 11.

83. See ...*From the Sea*, Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1992, and *Forward...From the Sea*, Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1997.

84. See <http://usmc.sra.com/omfts/>.

85. Charles C. Krulak, *Operational Maneuver From the Sea: A Concept for the Projection of Naval Power Ashore*, Washington, DC: Headquarters Marine Corps, n.d., p. 5; and *idem.*, "Operational Maneuver From the Sea," *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 21, Spring 1999, pp. 78-86.

86. See David S. Alberts, John J. Garstka, and Frederick P. Stein, *Network Centric Warfare: Developing and Leveraging Information Superiority*, Washington, DC: Center for Advanced Concepts and Technology, 1999.

87. Arthur K. Cebrowski, "Sea, Space, Cyberspace: Borderless Domains," speech presented February 26, 1999, reprinted at <http://www.nwc.navy.mil/pres/speeches/borderless.htm> and "Network-centric Warfare: An Emerging Military Response to the Information Age," a presentation at the 1999 Command and Control Research and Technology Symposium, June 29, 1999, reprinted at http://www.nwc.navy.mil/pres/speeches/ccrp2_.htm. See also Arthur K. Cebrowski and John J. Garstka, "Network-Centric Warfare: Its Origin and Future," *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute*, Vol. 124, No. 1, January 1998, pp. 28-35.

88. General Eric K. Shinseki, Address to the Eisenhower Luncheon, 45th Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army, October 12, 1999, reprinted at <http://www.hqda.army.mil/ocsa/991012.htm>.

89. Dennis J. Reimer, "Leaping Ahead to the 21st Century," *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 17, p. 21. Like General Shinseki, General Reimer was aware of the need to make the Army more strategically mobile but sought to do this by encouraging the other Services to acquire more heavy sealift and airlift rather than by lightening Army combat units.

90. Cohen, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, 1999, Chapter 11.

91. General Eric, K. Shinseki, statement before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, March 1, 2000.

92. Andrew Krepinevich, "Whither the Army," January 18, 2000, published on the web site of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments at http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/Archive/H.20000118.Whither_the_Army/H.20000118.Whither_the_Army.htm

93. Jason Sherman, "Dream Work," *Armed Forces Journal International*, May 2000, pp. 25-30.

94. Sydney J. Freedberg, Jr., "The New-Model Army," *National Journal*, June 3, 2000. p. 1750.

95. *Joint Vision 2020*, Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, 2000, p. 4.

96. For instance, Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., "Why No Transformation?" *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 20, Autumn/Winter 1999-2000, pp. 97-101; and Owens, *Lifting the Fog of War*, pp. 3-26 and ff.

97. *New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century*, Phase I Report on the Emerging Global Security Environment for the First Quarter of the 21st Century, Washington, DC: United States Commission on National Security/21st Century, September 1999, p. 141.

98. *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on DoD Warfighting Transformation*, Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, August 1999, pp. 10-11.

99. Krepinevich, "Why No Transformation?" p. 97.

100. *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on DoD Warfighting Transformation*, p. 18.

101. Bradley Graham, "Pentagon's Wish List: Based on Bygone Battles?" *Washington Post*, August 25, 1999, p. A3.

102. Admiral Owens is an example of a transformation advocate who points to the Chinese military modernization program as a reason for embracing the revolution in military affairs (which he defines as using information technology to build a "system of systems"). See *Lifting the Fog of War*, pp. 220-224 and, *idem.*, *The Emerging U.S. System-of-Systems*, Strategic Forum No. 63, Washington, DC: National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1996. This argument is made in greater detail in Mark A. Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization: Implications for the United States*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute. For assessments more skeptical of China's ability to undertake a transformation that turns it into the equal of the United States, see Larry M. Wortzel, *China's Military Potential*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1998; Bates Gill and Lonnie Henley, *China and the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1996; and Bernard D. Cole and Paul H.B. Godwin, "Advanced Military Technology and the PLA: Priorities and Capabilities for the 21st

Century," in Larry M. Wortzel, ed., *The Chinese Armed Forces in the 21st Century*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1999, pp. 159-216.

103. *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on DoD Warfighting Transformation*, p. 7.

104. For instance, Russell E. Travers, "A New Millennium and a Strategic Breathing Space," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Spring 1997, pp. 91-114; and, Ivan Eland, "Tilting at Windmills: Post-Cold War Military Threats to U.S. Security," *Cato Institute Policy Analysis*, No. 32, February 8, 1999.

105. Michael O'Hanlon, *Technological Change and the Future of Warfare*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000, p. 192.

106. On the distinction between and use of threat-based and capabilities-based force planning, see Troxell, *Force Planning in an Era of Uncertainty*, pp. 2-9.

107. See, for instance, Doug Struck, "North Korea's Diplomatic Strides Pay Off," *Washington Post*, July 27, 2000, p. A16.

108. Quoted in John T. Correll, "The Problem With the Strategy," *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 77, No. 7, July 1994.

109. "Ryan: 'We Will Never Have Enough Lift' For Two Regional Wars," *Aerospace Daily*, June 22, 2000, p. 1.

110. Goure and Ranney, *Averting the Defense Train Wreck in the New Millennium*, p. 30.

111. Goure, "The Resource Gap," p. 38.

112. Barton Gellman and John Lancaster, "U.S. May Drop 2-War Capability," *Washington Post*, June 17, 1993, A16.

113. Charles S. Robb, "Challenging the Assumptions of U.S. Military Strategy," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Spring 1997, pp. 115-131.

114. *Seeking a National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom*, The Phase II Report on a U.S. National Security Strategy for the 21st Century, Washington, DC: The United States Commission on National Security/21st Century, April 15, 2000, pp. 14-15.

115. *Seeking a National Strategy*, p. 15.

116. Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 131-233.

117. For instance, Ambassador Robert Komer's Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) was very effective. Even the Phoenix Program that targeted the Viet Cong political underground played an important role in thwarting the insurgency. Unfortunately, by the 1970s the insurgency was of secondary importance compared to the large-scale guerrilla operations and conventional campaigns controlled by Hanoi. For detail see Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995; and, Dale Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War*, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990.

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119. General Henry H. Shelton, "Peace Operations: The Forces Required," *National Security Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3, Summer 2000, p. 110.

120. See Congressional Budget Office, *Making Peace While Staying Ready For War: The Challenges of U.S. Military Participation in Peace Operations*, December 1999, reprinted at <http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=1809&sequence=0&from=1>

121. Michael Mandelbaum, "Is Major War Obsolete?" *Survival*, Vol. 40, No. 4, Winter 1998-99, pp. 20-38.

122. Discussions between the author and Dr. Van Creveld, Bonn, Germany, September 1999. Van Creveld also makes this point in his books *The Rise and Decline of the State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 337-354; and *The Transformation of War*, New York: Free Press, 1991, pp. 194-227.

123. Statement by General Henry H. Shelton to the Senate Armed Services Committee, January 5, 1999, reprinted at <http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/chairman/sasc5jan99.html>.

124. Goure and Ranney, *Averting the Defense Train Wreck*, p. 2.

125. "Cost Of Defense Plan Could Exceed Available Funding By \$26 Billion A Year Over Long Run," CSBA Update, March 1998, reprinted at http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/Archive/U.19980402.Cost_Of_Defense_P/U.19980402.Cost_Of_Defense_P.htm

126. Congressional Budget Office, *An Analysis of the President's Budgetary Proposals for Fiscal Year 2000*, April 1999, chapter four, reprinted at <http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=1209&sequence=5>.

127. Ron Laurenzo, "Army 'Vision' to Cost \$70 Billion Through 2014," *Defense Week*, February 14, 2000, p. 1.

128. Jeffrey R. Barnett, "Funding Two Armies," *Armed Forces Journal International*, May 2000, p. 14.

129. See William S. Cohen, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2000, pp. 137-174. The *Defense Reform Initiative Report* is reprinted at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/dodreform/>.

130. "Governor Bush Promotes, Flexes Military Might in SC," reprinted at http://www.georgewbush.com/news/2000/february/pr020300_sc.asp. As of July 2000, Al Gore had not made a statement of his position on military strategy and national defense.

131. Patrick J. Buchanan, "U.S. Stretched to the Limit," February 16, 2000, reprinted at <http://www.theamericancause.org/pjb-99-0216.html>.

132. Patrick J. Buchanan, *A Republic, Not An Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny*, Washington, DC: Regnery, 1999.

133. See <http://www.cato.org/research/def-st.html> and <http://www.cato.org/research/for-st.html>.

134. Some analysts argue that in many of the world's conflicts the adversaries must fight long enough to exhaust their passion, will, and hatred before resolution is possible. Early intervention is like holding a lid on a hot pot—it will work for a while, but eventually things boil over. See, for instance, Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 4, July/August 1999, pp. 36-44.

135. For background, see the web pages of the Marshall Center at <http://www.marshallcenter.org/>, the Asia-Pacific Center at <http://www.apcss.org/>, and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies at <http://www.ndu.edu/chds/indexmain.html>. The Africa

Center for Strategic Studies is at <http://www.africacenter.org/about.html>. The Department of Defense also is developing a Near East/South Asia Center. See its web page at <http://www.nesa-center.org/>.

136. The concept of the “American way of war” was developed in Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973.

137. The U.S. military adopted the “after next” idea of simultaneous rather than sequential organizational reform from Paul Bracken, “The Military After Next,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4, Autumn 1993, pp. 157-174.

138. For a description and assessment of the theater engagement planning process, see Thomas M. Jordan, Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr., and Thomas-Durell Young, *Shaping the World Through Engagement: Assessing the Department of Defense’s Theater Engagement Planning Process*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2000.

139. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 204.

140. For detail, see Steven Metz, *Refining American Strategy in Africa*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2000.

141. See Steven Metz, “African Peacekeeping and American Strategy,” in Robert I. Rotberg, ed., *Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement in Africa: Methods of Conflict Prevention*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000.

142. See <http://www.georgewbush.com/issues.asp?FormMode=FullText&ID=9>.

143. The GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It was founded in 1981 to increase coordination, integration and interconnection between its members in a number of different fields. For more information, see <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/decdo/gcc.htm>.

144. The author has experienced this during discussions and presentations in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

145. For an assessment of some of the problems that might arise should the United States undertake a revolution in military affairs and its coalition partners not, see Steven Metz, "The Effect of Technological Asymmetry on Coalition Operations," in Thomas J. Marshall, ed., *Problems and Solutions in Future Coalition Operations*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1997.

146. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, interview on the Diane Rehm Show—WAMU-FM, Washington, DC, June 19, 2000, as released by the Office of the Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, reprinted at <http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/2000/000619.html>.

147. General Dennis J. Reimer, "Moving Force XXI Forward," remarks to the Association of the United States Army Symposium, February 18, 1998.

148. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 73.

149. See, for instance, <http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/~justin/fzln/about.html> and <http://www.utexas.edu/students/nave/>. The latter lists 44 Zapatista web sites.

150. David Ronfeldt, John Arquilla, Graham E. Fuller, and Melissa Fuller, *The Zapatista "Social Netwar" in Mexico*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1998.

151. *America's National Interests*, a report from the Commission on America's National Interests, July 2000, pp. 1-2. This report is available at <http://www.nixoncenter.org/publications/monographs/nationalinterests.pdf>.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

153. Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999. See also Ashton B. Carter, "Adapting US Defence to Future Needs," *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 4, Winter 1999-2000, pp. 101-123.

154. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Redefining the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 4, July/August 1999, p. 27. Like Perry and Carter, Nye is a former Clinton administration official, having served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs from 1994 to 1995.

155. Carter, "Adapting US Defence to Future Needs," p. 105.

156. *Ibid.*

157. Robert W. Tucker, "Alone or With Others: The Temptations of Post-Cold War Power," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 6, November/December 1999, p. 15.

158. Peter W. Rodman, *Uneasy Giant: The Challenges to American Predominance*, Washington, DC: Nixon Center, 2000, pp. 1-17.

159. Tucker, "Alone or With Others," p. 16.

160. [Http://www.georgewbush.com/Media/PDFs/defense.pdf](http://www.georgewbush.com/Media/PDFs/defense.pdf)

161. <http://www.algore.com/defense/>. Vice Presidential nominee Joseph Lieberman seems more inclined toward a "transformation" approach to the U.S. Military. See his essay "The Future Is Networked," *Defense News*, August 21, 2000, p. 15. It remains to be seen whether Lieberman will move Gore toward this position.

APPENDIX CHRONOLOGY OF KEY STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

1991

- Base Force Review
- National Security Strategy (August)

1992

- National Military Strategy (January)

1993

- Bottom Up Review Report (September)

1994

- National Security Strategy (July)

1995

- National Security Strategy (February)
- Commission on Roles and Missions (May)
- National Military Strategy
- Joint Vision 2010

1996

- National Security Strategy (February)

1997

- National Security Strategy (May)
- Quadrennial Defense Review (May)
- Concept for Future Joint Operations (May)
- Defense Reform Initiative Report (November)
- National Defense Panel Report (December)

Note: This chronology deals only with unclassified documents. Documents in italics are planned or tentative. The Secretary of Defense's Report to the President and Congress is also an important bellwether of American strategy but because it is always produced annually, it is not listed on this chronology.

1998

- National Security Strategy (October)

1999

- Defense Science Board Report on Warfighting Transformation (August)
- U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, Phase I Report (September)
- National Security Strategy (December)

2000

- U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, Phase II Report (April)
- Joint Vision 2020 (May)
- *National Security Strategy*

2001

- *U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, Phase III Report (February)*
- *Quadrennial Defense Review*
- *National Military Strategy*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

STEVEN METZ has been Research Professor of National Security Affairs in the Strategic Studies Institute since 1993. Prior to that, he served on the faculty of the Air War College, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and several universities. He has also served as an advisor to U.S. political organizations and campaigns, testified in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and spoken on military and security issues around the world. He is author of more than 70 articles, essays, and chapters on such topics as nuclear war, insurgency, U.S. policy in the Third World, military strategy, South African security policy, and United Nations peace operations. Dr. Metz's current research deals with the role of the American Army in the 21st century, the African security environment, and the effect of the information revolution on military strategy. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy and a M.A. in International Studies from the University of South Carolina, and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the Johns Hopkins University.

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