



Structuring the Force: Finding and Funding the Right Mix



A Center for Technology and National Security Policy Summary Report

Updated October 9, 2008

Prepared By:
Mr. Christopher Mann, M.A.
Research Associate

On Thursday, September 18th 2008, the National Defense University hosted a high level conference entitled, “Structuring the Force: Finding and Funding the Right Mix.” This event was held at Fort Lesley J. McNair and attended by more than 150 registrants.

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 09 OCT 2008		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2008 to 00-00-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Structuring the Force: Finding and Funding the Right Mix				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National Defense University, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, Washington, DC, 20319				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 18	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

B.	THE CASE FOR A HIGH INTENSITY FORCE STRUCTURE	4
	COMMONALITIES FAVOR THE HIGH END	4
	SCHOOL 1: COMPENSATE FOR SHORTFALLS WITH INDIGENIZATION	4
	SCHOOL 2: COMPENSATE FOR SHORTFALLS WITH HIGH END FORCES.....	5
C.	THE CASE FOR A LOW INTENSITY FORCE STRUCTURE	7
	IRREGULAR WARFARE- A FUTURE CERTAINTY	7
	TIME CONSTRAINTS	7
	UNREADY AND UNCERTAIN AT THE LOW END	8
	PRESCRIPTION FOR CHANGE: SPECIALIZED, TOTAL, OR FLEXIBLE FORCES.....	8
D.	BUDGET REALITIES	10
E.	FOUR PRINCIPLES FOR A BALANCED HIGH END FORCE STRUCTURE	14
F.	APPENDIX	16
	ABOUT THE CONFERENCE.....	16
	KEY TERMS AND PHRASES	16
	FIGURES	18

A. Introduction

From roughly 1975 to 2005, the U.S. focused on achieving high intensity, decisive victory in a major theater war. Shifting force structure and culture to address the requirements of irregular warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan has been a costly, difficult, and necessary task. But the effort has revived timely questions about how American forces must prepare for the broad range of missions future contingencies will require.

Analysts should perhaps be wary of taking an exclusive approach. The hybrid nature of modern combat, in which conventional and irregular tactics often merge, may favor a mixed strategy. Common technologies also blur the line between the two ends of the intensity spectrum. Nevertheless, the distinction between “high intensity” (artillery, missile, tank, air) and “low intensity” (counterinsurgency, stability, peacekeeping, occupation) has often been a valuable tool for conceptualizing future force planning options.

Participants of NDU’s recent conference tended to draw upon identical assumptions about the state of the DoD and its challenges ahead, finding far more room for agreement than for disagreement. Military experts differed primarily on the degree of acceptable high end risk American forces should bear.

Agreed				Disagreed
Capabilities Assessment	Skills Assessment	Resource Assessment	Threat Assessment	Acceptable Risks
U.S. forces have a substantial but shrinking conventional lead over global competitors. Risks at the high end are on the rise due to an increasingly multi-polar world and American commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan	The DoD has inadequately institutionalized low end lessons	A budget crunch is on the way which threatens to curtail current force levels and future plans	Low Intensity conflicts remain the most likely future scenario for U.S. forces, though invasion /occupation operations are extremely improbable. (Regions of Concern: Southwest Asia, Middle East, and parts of Africa.)	Disagreement focused on whether U.S. risks at the high end are sustainable, manageable, and acceptable.

As we consider these common assessments and study the future of the domestic economy, it seems likely U.S. grand strategy will need to be recalibrated to accommodate the demands of a constricting defense budget and an increasingly multi-polar world.

B. The Case for a High Intensity Force Structure

Summary

Main Strength: Reduces risks in a sudden, high risk conflict

Benefits: Deters reasonable rivals

Weakness: Limited manpower; risk at the low end

Participants making the case for a predominately high end force structure believed American military dominance has been dangerously diluted by U.S. commitments to the Global War on Terror and the rise of other great power states. They argued rising risks associated with conventional conflict made re-establishing the American lead a strategic priority, and urged their view as a cautious approach for safeguarding U.S. forces.

Proponents argued for strengthening “high end” capabilities as a core American strength which both protects and deters rivals from challenging U.S. military dominance. “The essence of strategy is to respond to the demands of the external environment in a way that best exploits core strengths,” commented one distinguished speaker. By capitalizing on its greatest comparative advantage, advocates believed the U.S. would continue to discourage potential adversaries from embarking on an arms competition while preparing for the most destructive kinds of engagement.

Attendees generally agreed that American high end capabilities reflect and safeguard the country’s international standing as the world’s only remaining superpower. The audience was supportive of the responsibilities this unique status entailed- policing the ‘commons’ and assuring ‘global access.’ However, high and low end proponents disagreed on the proper level of risk U.S. conventional forces should assume while executing their global responsibilities.

Commonalities Favor the High End

A regular theme among conference attendees was the search for “commonalities;” high end capabilities which might be shared with low end forces. Examples of “commonalities” included the use of biometrics, cyber disruption, advanced navigation and communications, space-based platforms, and advanced UAVs. On the whole, the expense of developing and deploying such systems appeared to favor an investment strategy at the “high end” of the spectrum.

Attendees who preferred this construct grappled with the requirement of fielding low end forces for use in irregular warfare. Several schools of thought emerged to bridge the need for manpower versus the high cost and long procurement cycles required for obtaining high end equipment.

School 1: Compensate for Shortfalls with Indigenization

Some participants believed U.S.-trained indigenous forces could compensate for shortfalls in American low end manpower. They called for an expansion of programs for training and equipping local security units.

Many participants agreed the “indigenization” of American low end missions would give the separate services the latitude to develop their comparative strength at the high end, while providing native forces an ability to exploit their own core advantages; political legitimacy, local intelligence, and sustainability.

As a principle applied to the Navy, for example, “indigenization” would discourage the construction of separate “blue” and “brown water” fleets. Instead, U.S. forces would empower native coast guards to police their own territorial waters under American coordination. Training and equipping indigenous units for local responsibilities is a model proponents believed could be applied to other U.S. service branches. While NDU’s audience welcomed this view and incorporated its guiding principle in nearly all subsequent discussions, several problems arose.

Problems with Indigenization

Participants critical of the indigenization model questioned the reliability of local forces for use as American surrogates. They doubted whether the governments of weak states would make reliable partners during a U.S. exigency, and expressed a deep skepticism over the ability of those states to provide dependable security services over the long-term.

In general, critics believed support from allied governments should have a negligible impact on U.S. force planning. This view was underscored during an exchange in which an audience member asked a panel, “Is there any thought given to shifting investment based on what a coalition is able to provide?” One speaker’s answer reflected a popular view, “The investment other nations are willing to contribute (to U.S. missions) is so small, it’s not a factor...even members of NATO, an alliance built on deterrence, have such a low investment and give such small payoff, it doesn’t affect our (force structure) plans.” The exchange appeared to undermine the case for using indigenous forces as a means of compensating for significant American low end shortfalls.

A second criticism suggested the indigenization model relied too heavily on the responsible actions of fragile governments. “I would much rather train indigenous forces,” objected one speaker, “But one of the reasons countries have problems is because they (fragile states) have crappy governments.”¹ A more lengthy debate would likely have revealed the audience’s underlying frustration with a future scenario in which American forces routinely perform constabulary functions on behalf of weak and failing states. Their remarks nevertheless reflected a strategic reluctance to depend on lasting military partnerships with fragile governments and their leaders.

School 2: Compensate for Shortfalls with High End Forces

An alternative school of thought emerged during NDU’s event which championed high end forces as possible low end substitutes during exigencies. Proponents argued

¹ This well-received criticism implicitly posed a number of political questions which lay outside the scope of NDU’s event. For instance: Would the American public continue to support GWOT as a decades-long military campaign fought aggressively on multiple battlefronts by predominately low end American forces? Should the U.S. retain a surge capacity explicitly for Phase IV operations? “I assume,” noted one speaker, “that it is unlikely that we will single-handedly invade and occupy a country again anytime soon.” This comment perhaps cut to the heart of the political debate about the likely use of American military power abroad, but was after all a speculative remark.

conventional forces were inherently more flexible instruments of national power than conceivable alternatives. Personnel trained in high intensity warfare could be substituted as a stop-gap measure while more specialized forces were trained, equipped, and deployed. “You don’t *necessarily* need low end forces for low end conflicts. Recognizing that as an alternative has great strategic importance for us,” explained one contributor.

According to this view, high spectrum forces with advanced training would be needed quickly in a high end, short term conflict, bringing to bear technical capabilities for which there would be no immediate substitute. By contrast, irregular warfare- which typically lasted a dozen years or more - allowed for lower risk over the short term.

C. The Case for a Low Intensity Force Structure

Summary

Main Strength: Meets needs of most likely conflicts

Benefits: May deter asymmetric warfare

Weakness: Increased risk during high intensity combat

Proponents of a predominately low end force structure believed the risk associated with “low” intensity engagements was immediate and serious. “The consequences for losing a low end war are the same as losing a high end conflict,” commented one senior panelist. Like many participants of NDU’s event, they believed U.S. forces were most likely to engage in low end conflicts over the next decade, and believed force structure considerations should be driven by the need to address anticipated requirements.

Advocates argued for further increasing the size of U.S. ground forces and expanding the low end technical skills associated with irregular conflict. “The idea that high end conflicts are still preferred is a great mistake,” noted one senior official grimly. “Compared to future conflicts, Iraq is at the low end of ‘hard.’”

In summarizing possible low intensity scenarios for the future, there was a general agreement the region of enduring concern would be the “Muslim world” in Africa, Southwest and Central Asia, and the Middle East. Combat there would be characterized by ambiguity and was likely to be entangled with existing conflicts.

Irregular Warfare- A Future Certainty

Low end advocates argued America is weakest at the low end of the spectrum, where future challenges are most likely. They suggested this widely held assessment strengthened their case for taking a “strategic pause;” skipping a generation of high end equipment in order to invest in a well rounded military at the low end of the spectrum.

Some participants developed this perspective even further by arguing American low end weakness was likely to increase the frequency and severity of irregular challenges. “We have to assume that when we become dominant in one arena of combat, our enemies will change the battle space, said one panelist. “If we’re prepared to fight only in a boxing ring, the enemy will start shooting arrows.”

Time Constraints

Proponents rejected the notion that low end engagements afforded a wider margin for error and long ‘lead time,’ arguing instead that irregular operations were typically constrained by the limited patience of the American public. “Our forces learned their lessons in Iraq fast,” noted one speaker, “but the ‘clock was ticking’ back here at home, and the patience of public opinion quickly got strained.”

Several participants also recalled historical examples in which the U.S. had failed to secure a conventional victory with low end forces. “Vietnam and Iraq both started as high

end efforts, but we adjusted too slowly, and lost public opinion,” reflected one speaker. Another participant provocatively wondered aloud whether a weak low end force structure was undermining America’s high end deterrence. “We have the capability to invade a country, but we can’t hold it. Where’s the deterrent?”

Unready and Uncertain at the Low End

The audience expressed concern that the U.S. remains insufficiently prepared for low intensity operations. Iraq and Afghanistan were generally seen as templates for future wars, and participants worried the lessons learned there had not been institutionalized in a durable way. “The (DoD) corporate culture is clearly biased towards high end operations,” one panelist noted. “In Iraq, as in the case of Vietnam, our forces had to re-learn how to fight (irregular warfare)...Following Vietnam, we threw away all those lessons. We’ve got to retain them, this time.”

Though such remarks were relatively common, agreement appeared to fade over the purpose and function of low end forces. High End proponents appeared to view low end forces as primarily defensive in nature. Low end proponents fell into several camps.

Prescription for Change: Specialized, Total, or Flexible Forces²

Low end “Specialized Force” advocates argued for an aggressive, “steady state campaign” aimed at winning the 20-30 year long Global War on Terror. They argued force requirements should be driven by the needs of the global war on terrorism, and outlined a force structure defined by the need to locate and destroy scattered extremists using a network of allied intelligence, special operations forces, and interagency partners. Proponents called for five additional SOF battalions, expanded civil affairs corps, psychological operations troops, clandestine forces, and a host of “long duration forces with lots of capacities in lots of countries.”

“Total Force” proponents appeared more wary of defining future missions, and instead defined their objective as building “well-balanced, full spectrum, expeditionary forces...with ground forces fully capable for all kinds of warfare.” Like most participants, proponents of this view believed the strategic focus had permanently shifted from Europe to the Middle East, Indonesia, and parts of Africa. They called for a force structure tailored to the region; with a revised basing strategy, large-scale cultural education programs, and equipment specialized for the rugged environments. They rejected on principle the use of American reserves as a routine operational component of the active military, and instead proposed a radical expansion of U.S. ground forces. One senior participant embracing this view suggested, “The size I’m talking about is a 750,000 active USARMY and a 225,000 large USMC. We need 25 army Brigade Combat Teams and the ability to sustain them on a rotational basis.³ If we do, we can fight a protracted war and still maintain a portion of the force for (other missions).”

² These “camps” were not explicitly defined during the conference, and should be considered part of NDU’s summary analysis of the event

³ This translates to roughly 65-75 BCT, total

Low end 'Flexible Force' advocates were skeptical of the military's ability to control its overall size and emphasized organizational flexibility as a means of rapidly shifting high and low end forces according to need. They conservatively avoided forecasting specific missions. Seeking compromise between advocates on either extreme, Flexible Force proponents argued for a 'middle way.' "We need a high end force *and* a low end force, but top commanders are evenly split as to which is most important," said one senior participant. "So the responsible thing to do would be to plan for a Flexible Force that meets the requirements of either contingency." This 'middle way' would build flexibility by enacting a series of DoD reforms intended to reward institutional innovation and 'hybridization." The most important of these proposals would create service dependent mission development centers tasked with debating future force structure priorities and designing concrete recommendations for shifting the force. These centers would also create push-button plans for rapidly equipping, training, and deploying specialized units to areas of concern.

D. Budget Realities

“Structuring the Force: Finding and Funding the Right Mix” presumed a budget constrained environment would limit the planning options of DoD policy makers. Organizers kept the nature and extent of these restrictions intentionally vague throughout much of the event as a means of unraveling the strategic implications of opposing views. With these firmly established, participants focused on the internal and external pressures likely to drive DoD decision-makers over next several decades.

Budget Pressures Internal to the DoD

Equipment	“The majority of our force was built during the Reagan build-up, or earlier...We’ll be flying KC-135s when they’re 80 years old.”	• <u>Obsolescing Force</u>: Aging equipment entail high maintenance costs and undependable mission availability
Operations & Maintenance	“We’re moving MRAPS by air!”	• <u>Basing</u>: The configuration of bases abroad is badly suited to ongoing operations, forcing the DoD to employ expensive logistical expedients • <u>Oil</u>: The rising price fuel is an uncertain, but significant burden • <u>Health Care</u>: Rising medical costs, expanding access to care, and the cumulative effect of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on military personnel are expected to be a significant expense • <u>Peacetime Costs</u>: Increasing peacetime O&M expenses are part of a 50 year trend. Since 1990, costs (measured against active duty personnel) have doubled.⁴ • <u>Wartime Operational Costs</u>: These substantial stresses have primarily been borne by the Army and Marine Corps, as measured by OPTEMPO⁵
Personnel	“Personnel Costs are rising and will continue to do so.”	• <u>Recruiting/Retention</u>: Across the board increases in pay and housing account for rising costs • <u>Contractors (Hypothetical)</u>: Several panelists called for an end to the use of expensive military contractors. Replacing them would require 300,000-400,000 personnel, with all the attendant costs.
Acquisition & Procurement	“We were invited to a briefing about acquisition reform. The first exhibit showed Coca-Cola’s efforts to buy a (plane)- it was 12 pages long. The other exhibit showed the DoD’s attempt to buy the exact same airplane. The supporting documentation weighed 1.5 tons.”	• <u>Weapons</u>: Each generation is roughly twice as expensive as the equipment it is meant to replace • <u>Procurement</u>: The DoD’s contracting and oversight regime is over-burdened by excessive documentation requirements and suffers from a dearth of qualified personnel

⁴ Drawn from “Analysis of the FY 2009 Defense Budget Request,” by Steven M. Kosiak, CSBA.

⁵ Ibid

Pressures Internal to the DoD – Rising Costs

Budget analysts predicted mounting internal pressures and fiscal indiscipline would make the current force structure unsustainable, and predicted the Defense Department would drift into a state of crisis within the next 5-10 years. Several panelists forecast a ‘perfect storm’ caused by a wide range of mounting, endemic problems.

Internal cost growth “across the board” ranked among the most serious of concerns. These included the accelerating expense associated with equipment, operations and maintenance, personnel, and acquisition and procurement costs. According to one budgetary expert, “Even if current levels of program funding were sustained, we could not retain the force structure we currently have planned.”

Pressures Internal to the DoD – Emergency Supplemental Requests

Participants also expressed a serious concern the DoD had become an organization accustomed to ‘living beyond its means.’ According to subject experts, shortfalls in the defense base budget are regularly recovered with Emergency Supplemental Requests designed to fight the Global War on Terror. Shortfalls in the base budget account for \$50-70 billion annually, a figure generally predicted to double by the end of the next decade. Analysts warned the upward trend represents an unsustainable policy burden. “The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have helped justify large supplemental requests, but as things begin to change and troops overseas are brought home, emergency supplementals will start to fall off the cliff.”

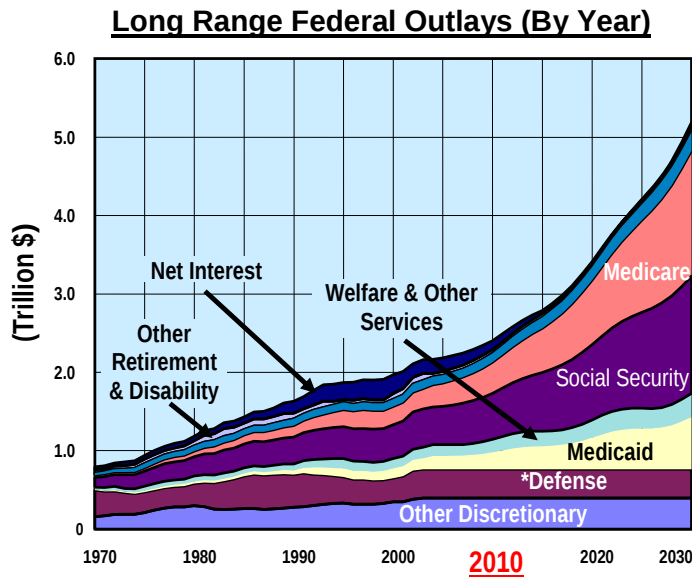
While most panelists expressed support for a procedure which rapidly supplies funds to mission critical programs, some protested casual violations of the process had blurred the line between separate revenue streams and poisoned the DoD’s relations with Congress. “Whatever can’t get through the normal budget comes in through supplementals,” commented one critical audience member. “It degrades (DoD) budget discipline. It makes the Hill suspicious, as well.” Other participants focused on recent successes. “Last year, the DoD dedicated \$168 billion for procurement. What was the single largest expense? Shipbuilding? No. F-22s? No. The answer is MRAPs (Armored trucks). Those funds were allocated in 1.5 months. The program is saving lives. A tale of success.”

In general, participants were supportive of the emergency appropriations process, but emphasized the urgent need for reform. “I’m a firm believer in emergency supplementals,” summarized one distinguished panelist. “It works. We can’t anticipate everything...(but) we simply need to come to a gentleman’s agreement about what goes into the supplemental and what stays in the base.”

External Realities

While attendees agreed rising costs and fiscal indiscipline would narrow force structure planning options, they were more deeply anxious the DoD's internal problems were on a collision path with negative

external trends in the American economy. The explosive cost of entitlement spending, chronic budget deficits, tax cuts, and more recently, the cascading effects of Wall Street's collapse, were widely seen as precursors to a shrinking defense budget.



Experts forecast federal entitlement programs would become an unmanageable concern by 2020, when they would entirely consume the federal non-defense discretionary budget. This scenario would place defense

spending in direct competition with other discretionary funds typically reserved for agencies like the Health and Human Services Department, the State Department, and the Veterans Administration, as well as funding for vital programs which support education, highways, bridges and other public infrastructures. Budget analysts agreed the Defense Department would inevitably feel fiscal pressure to limit spending and lower its ambitions for achieving an optimal force structure. Moreover, panelists pondered the grim likelihood future defense budgets would be insufficient to sustain American forces at their current levels.

Options for the Budget Crunch- Assessing the Mix of Forces

Budgetary experts attending NDU's event concluded internal and external fiscal pressures were likely to make balancing the force increasingly difficult. Participants assessed the fiscal implications of four force planning mixes:

Predominately High End Mix: This option would effectively re-establish the traditional mix of American forces designed to deter and defeat state level aggression in multiple theaters. It would aim to alleviate the rising risk of conventional combat with significant new commitments in high intensity forces. A hedging strategy would include investment in low intensity forces with long development 'lead times,' and a detailed plan for flexing the force during extended contingencies.

Predominately Low End Mix: This option would recalibrate American capabilities towards the low end in preparation for the most likely engagements of the next decade. Proponents of this view believed American conventional dominance would not be

seriously impaired by a taking a “strategic pause” in major high end investments while expanding the size of ground force dedicated to low end missions. A hedging strategy would rely primarily on naval and air power to stall an attack while conventional forces retrained and redeployed to the areas of conflict.

Hybrid Mix: This option would invest most heavily in “commonalities” - technology and tactics broadly applicable to all types of modern combat.⁶ It would generate a middleweight, institutionally agile force structure capable of quickly ‘ramping up’ high or low end forces. By investing in broader but shallower capabilities, this option raises risks at every point along the intensity spectrum.

Resizing the Force: A fourth option would ask policy makers to reconsider the global status of U.S. forces. “Let’s get out of the superpower business,” one contributor suggested. “Let’s choose the one or two things (regions, resources, allies, etc...) that are important to us, and just focus on those. Let’s try not to do everything.” Resizing the force would require fundamental changes in regional and international security arrangements, and would likely be a long term endeavor.

Some participants noted that while the demands of the Global War on Terror have driven U.S. defense spending towards the low end, countries like Russia, North Korea, Iran, and China have steadily invested in incremental improvements to their high end infrastructure, raising the level of risk to American forces. “The gap is closing,” pronounced one distinguished speaker.

In the final section of this report, policy makers may like to review a number of specific recommendations and general principles for addressing the needs of the future forces.

⁶ Examples of hybrid capabilities might include GPS enabled SOF forces designating missile strikes against remote targets; cyber attacks used in concert with an armored advance, or the use of irregular forces to harass and distract an adversary’s conventional line of attack.

E. Four Principles for a Balanced High End Force Structure

“We should get the high end right first. Then deal with the rest. The consequences are too grave at the high end of the spectrum.” - Retired Marine General

Focus on the High End

The destructive potential of conventional engagements, unstable nature of the current international system and low domestic support for additional overseas commitments are factors which favor a high end force structure.⁷ The DoD should consider capitalizing on comparative American strengths, reducing the increased risk to its conventional forces, and investing in selected low end capabilities.

Specific Recommendations:

- a. For as long as possible, seek to maintain the high end lead the U.S. now enjoys.
- b. Produce and deploy the latest generation of equipment while emphasizing long-term investments in high-tech weaponry.
- c. Use the plus-up in ground forces strength to increase the ‘dwell time’ between deployments, and use that longer dwell time to focus on joint conventional combat training.
- d. Look for high end investments that can be used for low end missions, such as network-centric technologies and UAVs.

Develop a Low End Hedging Strategy

Hedging against future uncertainties must be a critical part of any force structure scenario. Policy makers should consider mitigating risk at the low end by developing ‘commonalities,’ promoting a more responsive force structure, and preparing a modest set of select, low end forces for quick deployment.

Specific Recommendations

- a. Permanently designate a portion of the ground force (e.g. 6-10 BCTs) to be low end, irregular warfare specialists.
- b. Invest in key long-lead time capabilities (Special Operations Forces, anti-IED technologies, advanced foreign language and cultural skills, etc) that are needed for predominately low end missions.
- c. Restructure the Army National Guard to focus more on stability operations and homeland defense, maximizing the synergies between these two missions.
- d. Identify and strengthen clusters of technology, or ‘commonalities’ shared by both high and low intensity forces.

⁷ In the unlikely event of a conventional contingency, the DoD would have to rely almost entirely on naval and air power in the short run to halt the attack while retraining and redeploying U.S. ground forces. These would likely be delayed 2-3 months while preparing for the high intensity fight. The imposition of two irregular wars and a third, conventional conflict would effectively lengthen the duration and toll of all three. Attendees of NDU’s recent conference agreed the conventional dominance American forces have enjoyed for many years has begun slipping away. “The gap is closing,” pronounced one distinguished speaker.

- e. Maintain plans for “ramping up” low intensity specialists and equipment in the event of long term contingencies.

Anticipate Constricting Budgets

The DoD should brace for an increasingly difficult fiscal environment. Shrinking budgets and rising costs are likely to forestall, diminish, or eliminate important programs, and commanders may have to grow accustomed to accepting greater risk across the conflict-intensity spectrum. The DoD should lobby for a minimum percentage of GDP to guarantee public safety and contain rising risks.

Specific Recommendations:

- a. Seek to maintain defense spending at 4% of GDP until the ‘reset’ bill has been paid.
- b. Support the creation of service-based, mission development centers whose experts serve as mission advocates in the budget process. Use the research generated from these centers to develop more flexible requirements and acquisition procedures and promote the most relevant and innovative technologies.
- c. Invite greater support from the civilian sector to perform stability operations missions. Support formal and informal interagency networks with overlapping missions and professional expertise.

Adjust Grand Strategy

Policy makers should consider re-calibrating U.S. grand strategy to the diminishing resources which are likely to be available to American forces. Broadening the participation of allied states could provide valuable relief and assistance during contingencies. However, the most prudent strategy would be one which anticipates and prevents potential conflict by shaping the international environment.

Specific Recommendations:

- a. Emphasize foreign intelligence collection and “Phase 0” operations as a means of forecasting regional trouble-spots, and shaping the strategic situation.
- b. Adopt “indigenization” wherever possible, expanding programs and capabilities to organize, train, and equip local forces for basic security and state-building tasks.
- c. Consider a limited division of labor with our European partners in which they tend to specialize in irregular warfare and stability operations.
- d. Engage more selectively in overseas missions to avoid overstretching DoD resources.

F. Appendix

About the Conference

“Structuring the Force: Finding and Funding the Right Mix” afforded participants an opportunity to debate future force structure planning with subject experts, policy makers, and senior DoD leadership. Organizers divided the event’s speakers into four sections, asking them each to consider whether a future force required capabilities for predominately high or low intensity operations. Participants graciously considered the somewhat artificial dialectic in framing their remarks. A rich discussion emerged which described key elements of the DoD’s strategic perspective and laid the groundwork for understanding how the U.S. military views the cost of future conflict.

Key Terms and Phrases

“American High End Dominance”: American military dominance is characterized by the conventional and technological capabilities lead the U.S. enjoys over its closest near-peer competitors.

High End/Intensity Force: Includes space, air, and naval equipment. American high end ground forces consist of networked battleground formations of armor, artillery, and air support. High intensity combat is characterized by relatively short but highly lethal engagements.

Low End/Intensity Force: Ground forces conditioned to wage guerilla, revolutionary, occupation, stability, reconstruction, and peacekeeping operations among civilian populations. Low end forces engage in discriminating, manpower intensive engagements which tend to last a decade or more.

Hybrid Force: The term “hybrid” refers to the fluid blending of high and low end technology and tactics in modern combat. Examples of this include special operations forces designating targets for air or missile strikes; the widespread use of cell phone and GPS technologies; or the use of cyber attacks or irregular in concert with armor. “Hybrid Force” may also be used to designate a force structure which draws on both ends of the intensity spectrum.

Major Theater War (MTW) - The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review adopted a 1-4-2-1 force planning. In the years that followed, that model was criticized for being too restrictive and not accounting for the type and duration of possible conflicts. An alternative model was released in the succeeding QDR (2006) which broke with earlier formulations. The *table below* contrasts the two versions:⁸

⁸ This represents an analytical analysis and should not be regarded as an official account of current policy

The “1-4-2-1” Force Planning Construct

	QDR 2001	QDR 2006 ⁹	
1	Defend the United States	Defend the United States	
4	Deter aggression and coercion in four key regions: Europe, Northeast Asia, the East Asian littoral, and the Middle East/Southwest Asia	Selectively deter unspecified regions	
2	Maintain the ability to wage two simultaneous campaigns	Wage two simultaneous <i>conventional</i> campaigns	Wage one <i>conventional</i> and one simultaneous <i>unconventional</i> campaign
		Or	
1	Maintain the ability to force regime change and occupation in one of the two conflicts mentioned above ¹⁰	Maintain the ability to force regime change, occupy, and set conditions for transition to civil society ¹¹	

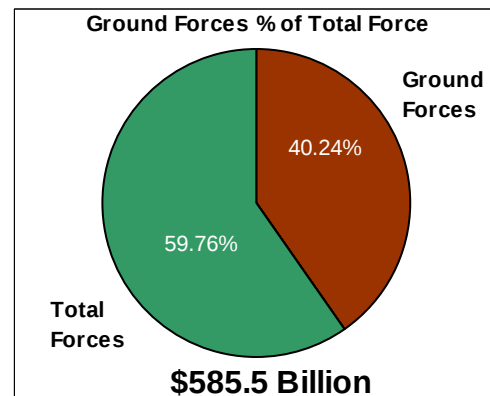
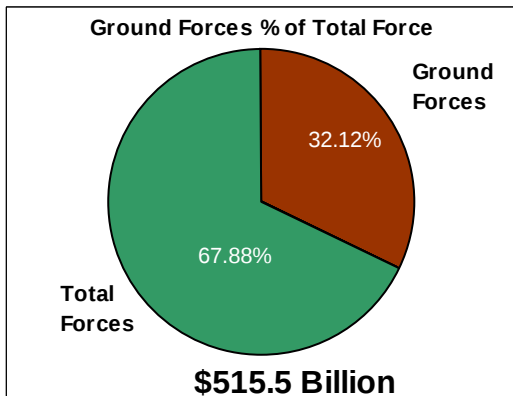
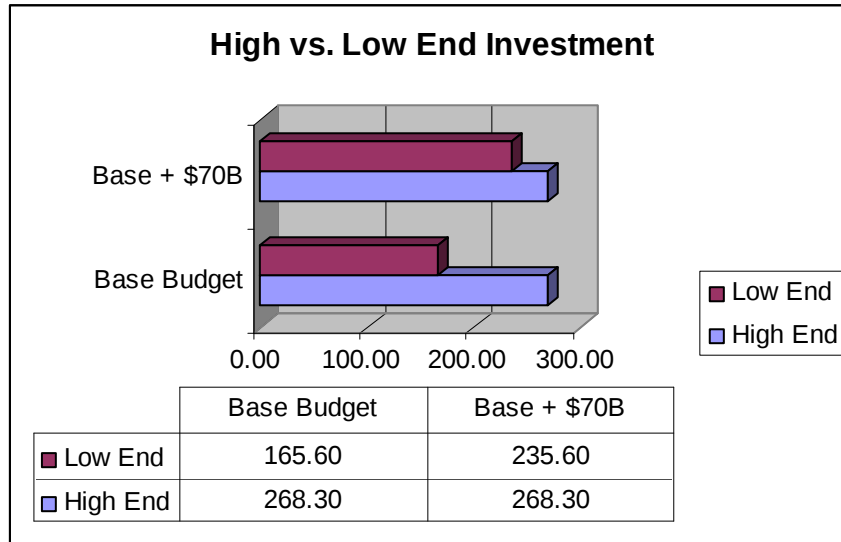
⁹ These formulations are derived from the [QDR 2006](#) chapter entitled, “Operationalizing the Strategy,” pgs 37-39.

¹⁰ [QDR 2001, pg 21](#), “At the direction of the President, U.S. forces will be capable of decisively defeating an adversary in one of the two theaters in which U.S. forces are conducting major combat operations by imposing America's will and removing any future threat it could pose. This capability will include the ability to occupy territory or set the conditions for a regime change if so directed.

¹¹ [QDR 2006, pg 38](#), “Be prepared in one fo the two campaigns to remove a hostile regime...and set conditions for the transition to, or for the restoration of, civil society.”

Figures

Based on FY09 Defense Budget Requests¹²



¹² High End (Navy, Air Force) vs. Low End (USMC, Army): The graph illustrates a service-based approach to measuring high and low end, and may be worthy of more detailed study.