This study has addressed several questions that are central to the future of defense planning for the United States and its NATO allies: What are the most serious threats to Persian Gulf security and other Western energy resources over the next ten to fifteen years? Under what conditions can the United States rely on allied military contributions to defend these resources? What types of military contributions does the United States need from its European allies? If the United States needs allied military contributions to protect oil supplies, what force improvements should Washington press allies to make to upgrade their capabilities for power projection? What changes, if any, should the USAF make in its doctrine, training, organization, plans, operations, and procurement to capitalize fully on allied contributions?

THREATS TO WESTERN ENERGY SECURITY

This study has reaffirmed the fact that, given its geopolitical significance and its dominant role in the global energy market, only the Persian Gulf warrants planning for U.S.-led coalition operations to ensure Western access to critical energy supplies.

It is highly unlikely that the United States would commit combat forces to maintain the flow of Caspian or North African energy supplies. These regions make only a paltry contribution to global energy security, and, in the case of the Caspian, Western military interven-
tion is unlikely because of the danger of a Russian military response. A prolonged cutoff of North African natural gas exports would have more serious political and economic consequences for southern NATO members (e.g., Spain, Italy, France); if this were to happen, these countries might assemble a European-led force to restore access. In this context, the United States might agree to requests for assistance (e.g., logistics and intelligence support), but a U.S. commitment of combat forces would be unlikely. Likewise, although the United States might provide assistance to Turkish forces if Ankara chose to defend Turkish access to Caspian oil and gas resources, the United States would be unlikely to provide combat forces. In short, when it comes to the use of U.S. combat forces to protect energy supplies, only the Persian Gulf merits the attention of U.S. force planning.

Planning for an MTW in the Persian Gulf will therefore remain a focus of U.S. defense planning for the foreseeable future even if the U.S. two-MTW strategy is modified. Both Iran and Iraq harbor aspirations for regional hegemony, while the United States seeks to preserve its predominant position in the Gulf. Moreover, the United States and these countries have fundamentally different visions of a security structure for the Gulf. U.S. policy is aimed at containing Iraq’s and Iran’s expansionist ambitions through a combination of sanctions, security arrangements, and military presence. The current regimes in Baghdad and Tehran, on the other hand, seek to eliminate U.S. influence and military presence in the Gulf as well as to establish their domination not only over the Gulf states but also, more specifically, over oil production and pricing decisions. And in the future they may well brandish WMD and terrorist threats to further their aims.

Thus, until Iraq and Iran become responsible members of the international community, U.S. preparations to defeat large-scale aggression will be essential to sustaining deterrence, demonstrating U.S. security commitment to the Gulf states, and maintaining American predominance in a region that is vital to Western security. Moreover, it is highly likely that the United States would use force to fulfill its security commitments in the Gulf if such preparations failed to deter aggression.
At the same time, however, the prospect of large-scale Iraqi or Iranian military attacks against the Gulf Arab states is remote for at least the next five to ten years. Iraqi and Iranian conventional capabilities have been decimated by war, sanctions, and a lack of resources to spend on defense. The long-term prospect of lower oil prices, coupled with the need to fund massive economic reconstruction, will make it difficult if not impossible to fund a sustained force modernization program. Perhaps more important, the Baghdad and Tehran regimes are likely to be increasingly preoccupied with their own survival over the coming years. They almost certainly calculate that they would suffer a major defeat in a confrontation with the United States, which would trigger widespread discontent and perhaps threaten their hold on power.

In the short to medium term, therefore, Iraq and perhaps to a lesser extent Iran are likely to use other means to challenge the geopolitical status quo in the Gulf and U.S. domination of the region. The two most likely options are (1) WMD, terrorism, and subversion, and (2) limited air and missile attacks or small-scale ground incursions aimed at seizing limited territory or assets. The aim of these “salami” tactics will be to probe for soft spots, test the limits of U.S. resolve, and intimidate the Gulf states without provoking a massive U.S. military response.

In sum, in contradistinction to the scenarios that tend to dominate U.S. force planning, Iraqi and Iranian nonconventional warfare represents the most plausible threats to Western security interests in the Gulf. Accordingly, the United States and its European allies must be prepared to deal not only with the “canonical” MTW threat but also with a broader spectrum of more plausible Iraqi and Iranian challenges. The ambiguous and indirect nature of these challenges will complicate U.S. efforts to reach a consensus with its European partners on the appropriate response to limited Iraqi and Iranian provocations.

THE ALLIED CONTRIBUTION TO ENERGY SECURITY

Under what circumstances could allied military contributions make a difference in protecting Western access to vital energy supplies? Are America’s European allies capable of providing such a contribution? As suggested in this study, the perception of a good part of the
U.S. military that the United States does not “need” the help of its European allies in the Gulf requires some qualification. The results of recent RAND research highlight two major conclusions. First, if the USAF promptly deploys a large force (four AEFs or more) to a Gulf contingency, allied air contributions would be of marginal importance. Second, if the USAF is engaged in an MTW elsewhere and the Gulf is the “second MTW,” a prompt allied deployment of one to three AEFs could in fact prove critical in halting an Iraqi armored invasion.

The prospects that America’s European partners will develop the capability to deploy three AEFs is unlikely, though one or perhaps two AEFs may indeed be feasible. As John Peters, David Shlapak, and Timothy Liston note in Chapter Four, some allies—notably the U.K. and France—are making steady progress in developing the capability to transport large forces to the theater of operations. Possessing adequate strike platforms and transport-and-support aircraft for long-range deployment is not, however, enough to ensure effective combat operations. European countries face serious shortcomings in their current power projection capabilities. The most serious shortfalls are inadequate command and control, limited quantities of advanced precision munitions, and the vulnerability of Europe’s forces to attack at forward bases. Together, these limitations raise serious questions about the military utility of European AEF operations in the Gulf.

It would be a mistake, moreover, to underestimate the dimensions of the problems the European allies will confront in rectifying these deficiencies and restructuring their forces to cope with shifting security priorities. NATO countries face difficult choices in their defense planning that have been complicated by the ESDP and by the emerging threat of ballistic missile attack by hostile states.

For most of its history, the United States has fought its major wars thousands of miles from its own shores; therefore, it has long been an “expeditionary” power that has devoted substantial resources to acquiring the wherewithal for power projection. By contrast, apart from limited colonial actions and the Falklands War of 1982, European militaries—especially since the early 1960s—have concentrated on fighting wars much closer to home. As such, they lack the political, psychological, and cultural mindset of expeditionary pow-
ers as well as the critical “enablers” for power projection. Acquiring these capabilities and catching up with U.S. high-tech capabilities will not come cheaply or easily.

Since 1990, defense spending among non-U.S. NATO allies has decreased by 25 percent as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP). Procurement and research and development (R&D) budgets, in particular, have been starved for funds. The United States spends roughly $35 billion annually on military R&D, while the rest of NATO spends only $9 billion. Although the U.S. defense budget as a share of GDP declined at a higher rate (35 percent) than those of its NATO allies during the early to mid-1990s, American spending remained much higher in absolute terms. For example, whereas the United States devotes about 3.2 percent of its GNP to defense, Germany allocates only 1.5 percent of its GNP to defense and has announced that it will cut defense spending by $10 billion over the next four years. Thus, while some new U.S. programs were canceled and others were either slowed or scaled back, U.S. modernization has proceeded and new capabilities have continued to enter the U.S. force at a relatively rapid rate.

As a result, the United States and its NATO partners face serious interoperability challenges, with the Europeans lacking many of the advanced weapons, technologies, and techniques that U.S. forces possess. Whether in the area of precision munitions, advanced C\(^3\) systems, logistics support, or intelligence collection, fusion, and distribution systems, considerable gaps have opened between U.S. and European capabilities. These gaps were manifested in Operation Allied Force, in which the United States provided 80 percent of usable air power and carried out the most challenging missions, such as precision strikes in overcast or marginal weather. Yet European militaries face an uphill battle in meeting the twin challenges of adapting and equipping for long-distance power projection and closing the technological gap with the United States.

European governments are therefore in the devilish predicament of asking their publics and parliaments to spend substantial economic resources on investments in military capabilities for contingencies

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that are both controversial and, in some cases, unlikely. Some observers argue that European governments would not have to increase defense spending significantly to improve power projection capabilities; instead, they maintain that such enhancements would require only that these governments spend scarce resources differently. According to this view, the problem is not that Europe lacks sufficient forces but rather that most European forces (Britain and France excepted) are currently configured to defend borders that are no longer seriously threatened. To close the current technological gap, these observers claim, European countries need to reduce the size of their ground forces, consolidate defense industries, and use the resulting dividends to develop improved power projection capabilities.

This point is well taken but needs to be put in a broader perspective. In the first instance, many of the capabilities and systems the United States is encouraging its allies to buy are expensive and would thus lie beyond the means of countries with small defense budgets even if investment priorities were shifted. Second and more important, re-ordering European budget and defense spending priorities, as in the United States, poses painful choices that most politicians in democratic countries prefer to avoid. This will be particularly true over the long term, when defense spending will face growing downward pressure as European governments attempt to grapple with the escalating costs of entitlement burdens. Third, the introduction of doctrinal, operational, and force structure innovations into military organizations, which are inherently conservative, usually meets with stiff institutional and cultural resistance, as most such changes are seen as a threat to existing norms, habits, and procedures.

As many observers have noted, it is for precisely these reasons that, a decade after the Cold War, the United States essentially continues to maintain a smaller version of its Cold War force structure and has failed to undertake the kind of restructuring, reorganization, and renovation that is necessary to adapt the U.S. military establishment to new security threats and challenges. European governments and

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2The U.S. General Accounting Office recently concluded that this budget environment will confront the European allies with significant challenges in sustaining defense modernization. See U.S. GAO, NATO: Implications of European Integration for Allies’ Defense Spending.
militaries are not immune to pressures to stick to “business as usual.” Those who believe that European militaries can reinvent themselves “on the cheap”—or without political and institutional pain—have ignored the American military’s difficult transition to the post–Cold War security environment.

Apart from the question of capabilities, there is also the matter of political will. In all but an MTW that posed a serious threat to vital Western security interests, the United States will face difficulties in garnering widespread allied military participation in “coalitions of the willing” to defend the security of the Persian Gulf. As Richard Sokolsky, F. Stephen Larrabee, and Ian Lesser point out in Chapter Three, most European governments (except the U.K. and France) confront serious political and economic constraints on their ability to engage in combat outside Europe and to acquire the power projection capabilities necessary for such operations. Equally important, many also have different perspectives of threats, interests, and objectives:

• Most European governments do not share the U.S. assessment of the Iraqi and Iranian threat in general and harbor far less anxiety about the Iraqi and Iranian WMD threat in particular. Such governments are, for example, far less concerned about Iraq’s and Iran’s ability to reconstitute a credible force projection capability that would threaten their neighbors. On the whole, they are also less concerned about the Iraqi and Iranian ballistic missile threat to Europe.

• There is a fissure within the Alliance over the most effective means of thwarting the Iraqi and Iranian challenge. Broadly speaking, most European countries prefer strategies of engagement rather than confrontation as well as the use of “soft” rather than “hard” power to moderate Iranian and, to a lesser extent, Iraqi behavior.

• U.S. perceptions of Alliance interests do not always coincide with those of the European allies. In a crisis, many European governments may thus continue to diverge from U.S. views or express greater reluctance to use force. This is especially likely to be the case for smaller threats, such as military operations aimed at punishing misbehavior or influencing the outcome of internal power struggles.
Allied governments face strong domestic pressure to reduce defense expenditures to free up funds for social programs while also confronting opposition to the use of force outside Europe. Kosovo underscored the difficulty of conducting such combat operations, especially for the Europeans, and the Gulf would present even greater impediments, both politically and militarily. In many allied countries, government support for military intervention in the Persian Gulf, especially in the absence of a U.N. mandate, is likely to prove divisive.

In sum, there is pervasive “Euro-skepticism” about extending the Alliance’s security umbrella to the Persian Gulf. Thus, NATO is unlikely to define the Persian Gulf as an area of direct responsibility any time soon. Similarly, the United States can rely on only a small number of allies to commit combat forces in a “coalition of the willing” to military operations in the Gulf—and then only if these countries perceive a direct threat to vital national security interests and if Western military action has been endorsed by the UNSC. In the absence of these conditions, only the U.K. is likely to fight alongside the United States.

The United States thus finds itself in a paradoxical situation with respect to allied military contributions to Persian Gulf defense. In the most serious but implausible scenario—an Iraqi or Iranian MTW—several allies are indeed likely to join a “coalition of the willing.” At the same time, however, broader allied participation is more problematic in the more likely event that the United States faces less serious contingencies such as limited military strikes, WMD attack, terrorism, and subversion.

CONCLUSIONS

Almost 25 years ago, the United States assumed a commitment to use force—unilaterally if necessary—to defend the Persian Gulf against outside attack. This security commitment has been reaffirmed by successive administrations and has been codified in U.S. operational planning. U.S. force planning for the Persian Gulf does not, however, assume allied military participation, and thus little effort has been made to develop the combined plans and capabilities that would be necessary to carry out effective coalition operations. A
central question raised by this study is whether this planning assumption remains valid today and for the future and, if this is not the case, what adjustments need to be made.

Given the foregoing analysis as well as broader strategic and political considerations, we believe that the U.S. military needs to think in fresh ways about how best to utilize the military capabilities of allied countries for military operations in the Persian Gulf. The United States has the capability, acting alone, to halt a sizable Iraqi armored invasion of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia with little loss of territory as well as to repel Iraqi ground forces from occupied territory in a devastating counteroffensive. American forces, in particular, are highly adept at killing Iraqi tanks and other armored equipment with accurate, multiple-kill, air-delivered antiarmor munitions, even at night and in marginal weather. Therefore, it is by no means clear that asking America’s European allies to duplicate these capabilities represents a cost-effective investment of limited resources unless the United States faces shortfalls that allied capabilities could redress or the allies could provide unique niche capabilities to complement U.S. forces—e.g., tactical reconnaissance and electronic warfare.3

The political and operational limits on European military contributions to combat operations outside Europe pose a dilemma for the United States as well as some difficult choices and tradeoffs. From a strictly war-fighting perspective, for example, the United States need not depend on allied military capabilities to achieve a decisive victory in the “canonical” Persian Gulf MTW as long as U.S. forces are not occupied with an MTW elsewhere and deploy promptly to the Gulf. To the contrary, unilateral military operations are easier to conduct than coalition operations in that they pose fewer problems with respect to C3, logistics support, and harmonization of doctrine and tactics. Thus, unless the necessary planning and preparations have been undertaken in advance, multinational participation may actually reduce the effectiveness of military operations in the Gulf.

That said, the United States would gain important political and strategic benefits from serious allied force contributions to Persian Gulf defense. The United States and Europe share common interests in Persian Gulf security even if the two may not always agree on the nature of the threats to those interests or on the most effective means of coping with such threats. Moreover, the United States is feeling the strain of meeting its security commitments in the Gulf as well as its other global military commitments. America’s European partners, meanwhile, have the wealth, resources, and interests to play a more meaningful role in advancing common Western security objectives in the Gulf. More robust U.S.-European cooperation in safeguarding these interests would therefore reinvigorate a broader partnership whose vitality is essential to addressing the most serious challenges facing the United States and Europe today. In short, a Europe that is better able to project power into the Persian Gulf not only will be a better global partner for the United States but will also, as this study suggests, produce more security than the United States could achieve if it acted alone.

In addition, there are risks to the United States’ bearing the burden of leadership in the Gulf alone. Sustaining the transatlantic relationship into the new millennium will require the support of European and American publics and legislatures that are increasingly focused inward—and that lack a shared vision of strategic purpose or a full appreciation of the benefits of a partnership that is more global, more equitable, and more ambitious. The Euro-Atlantic relationship would be severely strained if a major threat to vital Western interests emerged in the Gulf and the United States were left virtually alone to counter it. The damage to these ties could, moreover, be incalculable if America suffered major combat losses. In short, U.S. global strategy is predicated on the assumption that the allies will engage in joint military actions to protect common interests. This strategy—as well as the U.S.-European partnership—would be dealt a serious blow if the European allies were perceived as shirking their responsibilities in a wider Persian Gulf war.

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4For a fuller elaboration of this theme, see Gompert and Larrabee, *America and Europe*. 
A key challenge, therefore, lies in reconciling military requirements with broader strategic and political imperatives. The United States must be realistic about European limitations and about the scope of the military contribution it can expect from its allies. Most European allies will be unable to overcome deep-seated constraints on extending Western military commitments beyond Europe and developing the power projection capabilities to make these commitments credible. Therefore, it would be highly imprudent for the U.S. military to forgo certain military capabilities or force modernization with the expectation that its allies will make up the difference.

Likewise, it makes little sense—politically, economically, or militarily—for the United States to urge sweeping, across-the-board improvements in allied power projection capabilities for military operations in the Gulf. It would be ill conceived, for instance, to press some of our European allies to spend scarce resources to replicate core U.S. capabilities at the expense of maintaining other “niche” capabilities that could prove useful in a wide range of Gulf contingencies (e.g., MCM capabilities, electronic warfare, and tactical reconnaissance). In other words, the United States should resist the impulse to clone a smaller, allied “lite” version of its Persian Gulf MTW force and the U.S. RMA force. In general, the United States does not need a European RMA force for the Gulf—but it does need compatible and complementary European capabilities.

These considerations reinforce the need for the United States and interested, like-minded allies to develop a comprehensive and integrated plan for coordinated force development and coalition operations. Such an effort would be designed to reach agreement on a division of labor that would encourage willing allies to do what they are good at while the United States concentrates on what it does best. In so doing, it would minimize the possibility of duplication and inefficient use of resources while exploiting the comparative advantage that individual allies bring to the table.

To suggest the need for this kind of undertaking is to underscore the need for wide-ranging innovations in NATO’s defense planning process. The first step in implementing such an initiative would be to establish an appropriate planning mechanism. In this context, two options merit consideration. First, such planning could be carried out within an Alliance framework, taking advantage of NATO’s CJTF
concept and its existing headquarters and planning assets to plan and coordinate coalition operations among willing and able allies. Second, planning could be conducted outside Alliance channels, either in bilateral military-to-military discussions or in a multilateral format among key allies.5

These approaches are by no means mutually exclusive, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. Relying on NATO’s institutional strengths and habits of cooperation, for example, would constitute the most efficient and effective use of planning resources but might be more than the traffic would bear. By contrast, bilateral talks would have the advantage of ease and simplicity and would be likely to produce quicker progress but would make the coordination of national and multinational plans more difficult. A multinational venue would facilitate coordinated development of power projection capabilities and combined plans for coalition operations. However, such a format, even if kept informal, could prove unwieldy and might slow progress. On balance, our preferred choice would be to build on the CJTF concept to develop a combined planning cell for coalition operations, supplemented as necessary by bilateral discussions. If such an approach encounters resistance within the Alliance, the establishment of a multilateral planning process outside NATO channels would be a suitable fallback, particularly since the Alliance as a whole is unlikely to engage in military operations beyond Europe.

The main purpose of this planning mechanism would be to formulate coordinated multinational plans for (1) the development of national power projection capabilities and (2) the conduct of coalition operations for the defense of critical energy supplies. In particular, the United States and its NATO allies would:

Advocate new force goals. The establishment of new force goals in allied defense planning is long overdue. Kosovo and the DCI highlight the need for specific capabilities, particular advanced PGMs, NBC protective capabilities, and STO systems. Thus, discussions of munitions force goals should carefully examine future requirements

5For a more detailed discussion of steps to improve European power projection capabilities and combined planning for coalition operations, see Peters and Deshong, Out of Area or Out of Reach?, pp. 126–127.
for precision munitions and pre-positioned stocks in or adjacent to critical theaters, including air-to-surface missiles, guided bombs, and antiradiation missiles. Since future operations are likely to be “coalitions of the willing,” involving some but not all allies, these munitions talks should also embrace a range of issues. For example, they might consider the advantages of specialization among countries against the feasibility of creating complete strike packages so that any member might have a full range of offensive air capabilities from radar suppression to wide-area attack. The overriding objective of munitions force-goal development talks should be to ensure that the allies can sustain a protracted campaign that requires PGMs in substantial numbers.

Force goals for NBC should concentrate on identifying requirements for NBC protection for forward-based units. Goals should be negotiated for collective NBC shelters and medical facilities; improved individual protection, including vaccinations and pretreatments; and deployable aircraft decontamination equipment. The objective of the force goal talks should be to develop NBC protective capabilities across the Alliance that will make NBC-related risks manageable.

A new force goal should also be established for STO systems. The objective in negotiating this goal should be to create fully compatible air defense, theater missile defense, and air attack warning systems so that allied forces can operate within a safe area. These air and missile systems must also be integrated with NBC sensors and warning systems. The United States should lead the discussion and help the allies chart a course toward robust STO capabilities that will mature more quickly than the threat.

**Reexamine Alliance infrastructure.** The United States should explore with its allies the prospects for expanding NATO infrastructure to provide essential capabilities for power projection operations. Just as NATO earlier acquired AWACS, it is time to reconsider the feasibility of the Alliance owning ISTAR-like aircraft and even advanced ELINT aircraft. The discussions should also consider the costs and benefits of the Alliance’s fielding of a deployable C^ISR system, battlespace management systems, and automated mission planning tools.
Develop a new allied deliberate planning model. The DCI will place new demands on NATO’s deliberate planning process. Throughout its 50 years, most of NATO’s deliberate planning has centered on requirements for collective self-defense under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The commitment inherent in Article 5 served as the mechanism for generating forces for NATO’s defense. The DCI, with its emphasis on stability support operations, power projection, and a wider variety of operational tasks, must now be factored into the deliberate planning process. Specifically, the Alliance should reevaluate and adapt the current planning model so that NATO can plan effectively and generate adequate forces for the full range of contingencies it could confront in the post–Cold War strategic environment.

Under today’s circumstances, the deliberate planning model should accomplish two important tasks. First, it should correctly anticipate the key defining characteristics of future contingencies—i.e., where they will take place and the size, modernity, and competence of the enemy. The United States and its NATO allies should conduct regular discussions to reach agreement on a typology of operations for future contingencies. Second, the deliberate planning model must include some mechanism with which to assure Alliance Commanders that member countries will provide the right size and mix of forces to execute NATO contingency plans in an actual emergency. This task is difficult in that most contingency operations will be mounted under Article 4 or 6 of the Washington Treaty, the domain of “coalitions of the willing.” Nevertheless, it is imperative that NATO create planning and consultative structures and procedures to generate appropriate forces for its contingency plans; otherwise, the capabilities resulting from the DCI will fall short.

Consider a new category of forces. The Alliance should also consider the need for a new category of forces. Most recently, NATO members have conceived of their forces in terms of reaction forces, main defense forces, and augmentation forces, all of which were oriented toward collective (territorial) defense. As the threat to NATO territory has eroded, the number and availability of forces have declined, even among reaction forces. However, the Alliance’s embrace of crisis management missions places new demands on prompt response forces that can operate far from home. Therefore, the Alliance should establish a new category of crisis management forces, under
Implications and Recommendations for the USAF and U.S. Defense Planning

which each member, while reserving the decision to commit its forces until the actual event, would nevertheless prepare some air, land, and naval forces for prompt deployment and extended operations abroad. These crisis management forces might be regionally oriented or earmarked for a specific CJTF. The concept should be developed in concert with the allies. The objective, however, should be to get the allies to identify some of their forces for crisis management and to prepare them appropriately.

The discussion in Chapter Four underscores the utility of specialized European capabilities across the full spectrum of Gulf threat scenarios—in other words, in big wars as well as smaller-scale contingencies. It also suggests a sensible division of labor based on the principles of task specialization and complementarity that differentiates the specific political, military, fiscal, and geographic circumstances each country faces.

The inventory of allied “niche” capabilities sketched out below is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it is aimed at illustrating the scope of potential contributions allies could make that would generally not require large resource commitments or a politically difficult reordering of spending priorities.\(^6\)

- The U.K. and France are the most outward-looking of the European allies. They are committed to projecting their influence and protecting their interests outside Europe. Both countries, in addition, have an expeditionary tradition as well as programs that are under way to improve their power projection capabilities. Accordingly, the United States should encourage London and Paris to invest heavily in RMA forces that are postured for expeditionary operations and capable of rapid deployment. These include strategic lift and other force mobility enhancements, projectable C4ISR, improved logistics and support assets, and the capability to engage and destroy mobile ground forces (e.g., modern sensors, communications and control capabilities, and all-weather PGMs). The U.K. and France should also consider forward-based pre-positioning of essential support

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\(^6\)See Chapter Four of this study for a more comprehensive survey of allied “niche” capabilities.
items, which would improve their rapid deployment capabilities and strengthen deterrence by demonstrating broader Western commitment to Gulf security.

- The United States cannot count on the deployment of German combat forces in Gulf contingencies. Nonetheless, Germany could make significant contributions in transportation, combat support, and combat service support assets as long as the German government avoided slashing defense expenditures. Given the shortage of allied strategic lift, for example, Germany could be asked to assist in moving troops and materiel to the Gulf, perhaps by earmarking a portion of its long-range civilian air fleet. In addition, as noted in Chapter Four, Germany (and several other allies) could supply tactical reconnaissance and electronic warfare aircraft, which would help compensate for existing U.S. shortfalls in this area. Finally, Germany has substantial intratheater airlifters that could play an important role in enhancing force mobility.

- Many of the smaller members of NATO, including Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, and Denmark, lack the resources to modernize and restructure their forces rapidly or extensively for power projection. However, they could contribute to other tasks in coalition operations. Some Dutch, Danish, and Belgian F-16s, for instance, have been modified for reconnaissance roles; taken together, the NATO allies have roughly 300 intratheater airlifters in their inventory. In addition, the Dutch, Danes, Belgians, Norwegians, and Canadians (as well as the British and Germans) maintain impressive mine warfare capabilities—assets that could be particularly useful for keeping ports, shipping lanes, and the Strait of Hormuz open to permit Western force deployments.

- Primarily because of their central geographic location, southern members of the Alliance—Spain, Portugal, Italy, Turkey, and Greece—would play a critical role in facilitating the deployment and sustainment of coalition forces in Gulf contingencies. Rather than encourage these countries to make RMA-type force improvements that are both unnecessary and expensive, the U.S. priority should be to ensure their approval for basing and overflight rights. In addition, and as previously noted, Italy could contribute tactical reconnaissance aircraft and intratheater airlift.
The newest members of the Alliance should also be called on to contribute to coalition operations in the Gulf, as all are eager to demonstrate that they can produce security as well as consume it. While they face a large bill for military restructuring and tight budgets, for example, both Hungary and the Czech Republic possess credible NBC reconnaissance and decontamination capabilities—areas where both the United States and other allies are woefully underprepared.

This approach, of course, has its drawbacks. In particular, it could be seen as letting allies “off the hook” by urging them to concentrate on a narrow range of capabilities while eschewing responsibility for developing more complete power projection capabilities and air strike packages. There is some merit to this criticism. However, the benefits of task specialization clearly outweigh its drawbacks. First, it is politically sustainable, militarily feasible, and fiscally affordable. Second, it would demonstrate allied commitment to the principle of burden sharing. Third, it would inject greater realism and predictability into combined planning for coalition operations. Finally, it would produce important allied military contributions to Gulf security while averting the pitfalls associated with the more indiscriminate approach of pressing allies to build an RMA force or to participate in RMA combined operations.

NATO’s implementation of the DCI and, more generally, the development of improved allied capabilities for the full spectrum of Alliance missions will be complicated in the future by the ESDP and, possibly, by growing European interest in missile defenses. Three interrelated challenges lie ahead.

First, the EU and NATO, as suggested in Chapter Three, will need to harmonize and coordinate their force planning so that forces developed to fulfill the EU’s “headline goal” are compatible with DCI-related capabilities. For practical purposes, this means that EU force development will need to be done in a highly transparent manner and will have to be closely tied to NATO’s force planning and review process. Likewise, it means that SHAPE will need to play a central role in coordinating EU and NATO force development and in planning for EU operations, especially with respect to EU use of NATO assets in crises that both organizations have decided should be handled by an EU-led force.
To date, speedy implementation of these so-called “Berlin Plus” arrangements has been hampered by organizational and coordination problems, leaving doubt in the minds of many EU countries as to whether the United States and NATO are serious about supporting an EU operation. This process needs to be accelerated and implemented in tandem with EU efforts to determine capabilities requirements, generate and apportion national forces to meet these requirements, and identify any shortfalls or overlaps that need to be eliminated. Unless the United States demonstrates a renewed commitment to “Berlin Plus,” EU countries will feel a stronger temptation to develop military capabilities outside NATO, thereby weakening rather than strengthening NATO.7

Second, the EU will need to develop a concept for organizing its capabilities and structuring its rapid reaction force to eliminate unnecessary duplication and inefficient use of resources. This can best be done through expanded arrangements for pooling assets and task specialization. One potentially fruitful area for cooperation, for example, would be multinational integration of logistics support to circumvent the inefficiencies that typically result from national organization of logistics structures. This type of pooling may be particularly appropriate for some of the smaller NATO allies, which are well suited to low-intensity peacekeeping operations and face more serious budgetary constraints than larger NATO countries. Similarly, the U.K. and France, which have already launched efforts to improve power projection capabilities, should be encouraged not to divert resources from such programs to fund peacekeeping capabilities that could be provided by NATO countries that are far less likely to restructure their forces for long-range force projection.

Third, European allies, as well as NATO and the United States, will need to carefully consider the implications of European missile defenses for both the ESDP and the DCI. Europe will confront a serious dilemma in the future if it decides that it needs protection from the growing threat of long-range ballistic missiles in the hands of hostile

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On the one hand, if America’s European allies remain vulnerable to ballistic missile attack, they will be less likely to participate along with the United States in the defense of pro-Western countries that are threatened by regional aggressors. If this were to happen, Europe would become decoupled from the United States. On the other hand, there are simply not enough resources available for European countries to develop national missile defenses, implement the DCI, and realize the EU’s defense ambitions.

There is no simple or single solution to resolve this problem, which can only be managed. The answer, although by no means neat, probably lies in some combination of bilateral, multilateral, and NATO-wide development of both theater and national missile defenses. Even then, European missile defense will be feasible only with improved transatlantic cooperation on defense industrial cooperation and greater U.S. sharing of sensitive technology with NATO countries. And even with the best of circumstances and intentions on both sides of the Atlantic, it is unlikely that Europe will be protected by a continent-wide missile defense system within the next decade. Instead, gaps will remain, but the goal should be to minimize these gaps and to ensure that countries that decide to remain vulnerable to ballistic missile threats contribute to the Alliance’s counterproliferation posture in other ways while pulling their weight in meeting ESDP and DCI obligations.

Finally, the gap between the United States and its European allies in power projection capabilities and military technologies raises the question of whether the USAF in particular, and the U.S. military in general, should make adjustments to accommodate allied forces. The preceding discussion suggests that the USAF does not need to make major changes in its plans, forces, or programs for air operations in a Persian Gulf MTW. That said, some modest adjustments in training, planning, exercises, and equipment procurement should be considered to maximize the effectiveness of allied contributions.9


9 See Peters and Deshong, Out of Area or Out of Reach?
The USAF should use its military contacts with NATO members to develop and enforce common operational practices, standards, concepts, and terminology related to coalition warfare. Such discussions could also facilitate solutions to affordability issues and address other barriers to improving interoperability, including differing perspectives on doctrine, objectives, and operational tradeoffs.\(^\text{10}\)

Exercises should be designed, both within and outside the NATO framework, to identify and train for commonly executed functions, especially those related to allied power projection operations. One possibility would be to conduct regular CONUS-based exercises in which the United States moves European ground forces over long distances or supports the deployment of an allied AEF. If necessary, the cost of such exercises could be funded out of additional contributions by European allies to common NATO funding that supports the Alliance exercise program.

An institutionalized planning process should be put in place to identify those allies that are prepared to contribute to air operations in a Persian Gulf MTW. Once these discussions have yielded a common understanding on the size, mix, and operational requirements of allied military contributions, the USAF should offer to assist these countries in developing appropriate plans and capabilities for deploying and supporting its forces.

The USAF will need to pay much greater attention to the requirements for interoperability with allied air forces. Much of this effort should focus on reducing demands on interoperability. Such measures include avoiding mixed air squadrons; having the USAF perform time-urgent and/or data-rich tasks (e.g., suppressing pop-up SAMs/Scuds, C\textsuperscript{4}ISR integration, and air battle management); having allies attack only fixed or area targets and performing close air support only for their own ground forces; and scrubbing information exchange requirements. In parallel, the USAF will need to work the supply side of the interoperability equation. As it develops ISR systems, for

\(^{10}\)While this discussion focuses on the USAF, the underlying principles apply as well to the other services and to the Joint Staff.
example, it should use standards that are accessible to those allies with which it is likely to operate in Gulf military contingencies. The USAF should also develop compatible secure communications, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) systems, and security regimes as well as collaborate more closely with allies in ATO planning.

Since the disappearance of the Soviet threat, NATO has taken important strides in defining a new purpose that is relevant to the problems and challenges of the post–Cold War security environment. The Alliance’s new Strategic Concept has affirmed that NATO will remain a European security organization, and its fundamental purpose will therefore be to extend security and stability in and around Europe to create a continent that is free, prosperous, peaceful, and democratic. The main threats to realizing this vision are instability and conflict on the Alliance’s southeast periphery, especially the Balkans. Deterring these challenges will be NATO’s core mission over the coming years, and fulfilling this role will require improving the Alliance’s capabilities for crisis management, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations. As such, the lion’s share of the energies and resources of the Alliance, allied governments, and, to an increasing extent, the EU will be devoted to carrying out these formidable tasks. The process of NATO enlargement, which in the coming years is likely to encompass aspiring members in southeastern Europe, will also make a claim on the Alliance’s energies.

Where does that leave the new NATO and America’s European partners with respect to the defense of common interests against threats that lie beyond Europe, particularly the disruption of vital energy supplies? Clearly, this is a matter of a glass half empty or half full. Advocates of a more expansive purpose for NATO can take comfort in its perceptible shift in emphasis from the collective defense of Alliance territory to the defense of other common interests and values lying beyond Alliance territory. They should also be encouraged by the progress NATO has made in overhauling its outdated structures and forces and putting in place new arrangements and capabilities for new missions.

Still more important, stabilizing the Balkans, which are located at some distance from the main concentration of NATO’s forces and facilities, will require improvements in the Alliance’s power projec-
tion capabilities that could establish a better foundation for joint military action in high-intensity combat operations outside Europe if such a consensus were to emerge. Finally, Europe’s growing determination to develop independent defense capabilities to cope with European security problems, if translated into specific resource commitments and military capabilities and linked closely to NATO organizations, bodes well for the health of the transatlantic relationship. Europe’s excessive dependence on the United States, both politically and militarily, for dealing with crises in its own backyard is unsustainable over the long run. Together, all these developments are likely to lead to a more equitable distribution of the burdens and responsibilities for defending common interests.

Viewed from a somewhat different perspective, however, the glass remains half empty. While NATO is headed in the right direction, it has proceeded at a slow pace over the past decade, and progress over the coming years is likely to be uneven and fitful. Extending NATO’s geographic and military commitments beyond Europe will remain highly controversial. Moreover, a huge gap is likely to persist between U.S. and European policies in the Gulf, notwithstanding their shared interest in preserving the unimpeded flow of oil. American and European policies often clash because of persistent disagreements over interests, threats to those interests, and the most appropriate response to those threats. These differences are likely to fester for some time, precluding the necessary political consensus to underpin joint military actions.

To be sure, individual European allies—notably the U.K. and France—will make gradual improvements in their power projection capabilities and are likely to participate in coalition military operations in the Gulf on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis. Nonetheless, as this study has suggested, the United States will for the foreseeable future continue to shoulder most of the burden of defending common interests outside Europe against serious military threats, and thus America’s search for a full European partner in the greater Middle East is likely to prove elusive.

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Hence, if, after years of lip service, Europe is indeed serious about developing the capacity for autonomous military action in Europe while resisting military commitments and security responsibilities outside Europe, a de facto division of labor between the United States and Europe is likely to emerge in the years ahead: The ESDP will handle security threats in Europe at the low end of the threat spectrum, while the United States will do the heavy military lifting in Europe and play the role of global “security manager.” This arrangement is incompatible with the fundamental principle of shared risks and responsibilities that underpins the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance.

Therefore, the United States should reject this division of labor and continue to press its allies to shoulder a greater share of responsibility outside Europe as part of a new strategic bargain: That the United States remain engaged in European security and, in return, the Europeans do more to help the United States manage threats outside Europe. The alternative of perpetuating Europe’s near-total dependence on the United States for meeting threats to Western security interests both inside and outside Europe will undermine the transatlantic relationship and could endanger America’s continuing engagement in Europe, especially in light of broader political, economic, and demographic factors that are pulling Europe and America apart.12