
Capabilities
Requirements

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The onset of an entirely new era of international affairs raises profound issues about future U.S. military strategy and forces. Clearly, the old Cold War strategy is defunct, but far less clear is the strategy that should replace it. With so many changes unfolding so rapidly, the act of designing a coherent strategy for the years immediately ahead alone is difficult. The difficulties are compounded when the distant future, and its far greater uncertainties, is addressed. What kind of world will we be dealing with ten or twenty years from now, and what level of defense preparedness will be needed?

The years ahead cannot be ignored simply because they are uncertain. The United States will need a coherent military strategy for the coming era, and defense policymaking, by its nature, is an exercise in long-range planning. Tomorrow's forces are being decided upon today, and, equally important, U.S. policy actions in the near term will influence the course of international affairs for the long term. For these reasons, strategy analysts must peer into the future and ask: "What will be required some years from now, and how can we best act today to help bring about the kind of world that we seek tomorrow?"

To help answer this thorny question, this report addresses U.S. military strategy for the coming two decades. Written primarily during 1992, a year of tumultuous change at home and abroad, the report endeavors to identify the factors that will shape U.S. strategy. It does not prescribe a strategy blueprint for the future, but rather establishes an analytical framework for weighing the issues, requirements, and options ahead. Its purpose is to inform, illuminate, and educate.
Final writing was completed in spring 1993: as a result, this study includes the early strategic thinking imparted by President Clinton, but does not include the results of initial interagency studies and the Pentagon's "Bottom-Up" review, which were not completed at this time. This study was made available in draft form to the Department of Defense when the Bottom-Up review was in preparation. It anticipates most of the issues and options raised in the Bottom-Up review, and by dealing with alternative future international systems, it goes beyond this review's assessment. It also analyzes the determinants and components of U.S. military strategy, a force-sizing technique, and force posture options. For these reasons, this study provides an enduring analytical framework that can be used to appraise not only the Bottom-Up review but also follow-on studies.

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The material presented here should be helpful to U.S. government officials who deal with defense policy, military strategy, and forces. It will also will be of interest to other analysts who deal with these issues.
## CONTENTS

Preface ........................................ iii
Figures .......................................... ix
Tables .......................................... xi
Summary ........................................ xiii
Acknowledgments .............................. xxxix

### Chapter One
- INTRODUCTION .................................. 1
- Dimensions of the Problem .................. 2
- Research Objectives and Methodology ...... 10
- Organization ................................... 13

### Chapter Two
- THE REGIONAL STRATEGY: CONTENTS AND CRITICISM .................................. 15
- A General Model of Military Strategy and Forces .................. 15
- Cold War Strategy of Flexible Response and Global Defense .................. 19
- Emergence of the Regional Strategy and Base Force ............ 26
- The Public Debate ................................ 32

### Chapter Three
- DOMESTIC DETERMINANTS OF FUTURE U.S. STRATEGY ................................. 41
- Toward a Clinton Defense Strategy: Campaign Speeches ........ 41
- The Road Ahead .................................. 47
Prospects for Future Defense Spending ....................... 49
Military Strategy Amidst Domestic Economic Renewal .... 51

Chapter Four
U.S. INTERESTS IN THE COMING ERA ..................... 57
The Nature of U.S. Interests .................................... 59
Declining Threats to Vital Interests ......................... 62
Growing Importance of Major Interests ..................... 64

Chapter Five
THE FUTURE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM ...................... 75
A World of Regional Tensions? ................................. 76
Revolutionary Changes Now Under Way ...................... 79
Changing Role of the Nation-State ............................ 81
Toward a More Multipolar System ............................. 87
The Role of Ideology ............................................ 94
The World Economy ............................................. 100
The Proliferation of Military Technology ................... 104
Implications ...................................................... 109

Chapter Six
TOWARD A SPECTRUM OF ALTERNATIVE FUTURES ........ 111
Current Regional Military Challenges and Threats .......... 114
Very Different Worlds ......................................... 120
Need for Vision and Concerted Action ....................... 122

Chapter Seven
REFINING U.S. STRATEGY FOR THE CURRENT WORLD ... 127
Toward a Broadened Strategic Concept ....................... 127
Toward Altered Security Principles .......................... 135
Security Functions of U.S. Military Forces .................. 141
Employment of Conventional Forces ......................... 144
Multilateralism and Alliance Planning ....................... 154
Impact of Lower Force Levels ................................. 156

Chapter Eight
NEW MILITARY STRATEGIES FOR VERY DIFFERENT
WORLDS ...................................................... 163
A World of Global Harmony .................................... 163
A World of Reduced Regional Tensions ...................... 167
A World of Enhanced Regional Tensions .................... 169
A World of Renewed Rivalry with Russia ................... 172
A World of Multipolar Instability ................................................. 174
Implications for Affordability and Deliberate Rearmament ................ 177

Chapter Nine
FORCE CAPABILITIES FOR EXECUTING CONTEMPORARY U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY ........................................... 181
Future Nuclear Forces .......................................................... 181
Methodology for Sizing U.S. Conventional Forces ......................... 185
Adequacy of the Base Force ................................................... 202

Chapter Ten
MAXIMIZING EFFECTIVENESS IF FORCES ARE MODESTLY REDUCED ......................................................... 209
Illustrative Options for Force Posturing .................................... 211
Costs and Benefits .................................................................. 220

Chapter Eleven
CONCLUSIONS ...................................................................... 223

Appendix: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ................................. 227
9.5. Base Force: Assets Versus Requirements .......................... 203
10.1. Base Force Versus Alternative Postures .......................... 212
10.2. New Combat Roles and Missions: Should Duplication Be Eliminated? .......................... 217
S.1. U.S. Conventional Force Requirements for Generic Wartime Missions ........................................ xxxvi
2.1. The Base Force ........................................ 30
2.2. Force Divisions ........................................ 31
2.3. Debate Over the Base Force ......................... 34
3.1. U.S. Economic Trends ................................ 54
4.1. U.S. Exports, 1992 .................................... 68
7.1. Future MRC Threats .................................. 145
7.2. Changing Distribution Between Forward Presence and Power Projection ................. 157
8.1. Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a Harmonious World ............................... 166
8.2. Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a World of Reduced Regional Tensions .......... 168
8.3. Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a World of Enhanced Regional Tensions ....... 172
8.4. Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a World of Renewed Rivalry with Russia ........ 174
8.5. U.S. Conventional Force Posture for an Unstable Multipolar World ....................... 178
9.1. U.S. Conventional Force Requirements for Generic Wartime Missions ..................... 197
10.1. Alternative Conventional Combat Force Postures ........................................ 212
Although the task of crafting a new U.S. military strategy for the coming era is well under way, it is far from complete, and it seems destined to be an issue worthy of public debate for some time. The process began with issuance of the Regional Strategy by the Bush Administration in 1990-1991, but although this strategy laid down sensible foundations, it has been criticized in ways suggesting that it is far from an enduring solution. President Bill Clinton set the stage for strategy departures during his 1992 campaign. Like its predecessor, however, the new Administration must grapple with strategy and force posture problems that are made genuinely difficult by the profound uncertainties ahead.

Designing a new strategy is especially difficult because major domestic and international changes are simultaneously at work, thereby denying planners the luxury of fixed assumptions about the future. The United States is not returning to isolationism, but now that the Cold War is over, it is turning to address serious domestic economic troubles. In all likelihood, its future defense plans will have to be forged in an environment of constraints on military spending. Exactly how constrained, however, is an imponderable. Meanwhile, the tectonic changes under way in world affairs suggest that tomorrow's international system might be radically different from today's. Precisely what lies ahead is unknown. The United States could find itself confronted with a system more stable than today or one more unstable. The United States can exert a degree of influence over what transpires, but in the final analysis, only time will tell. Domestic and international changes can interact at any time to create powerful incentives for a different strategy from the
ones currently in place or being contemplated. For all these reasons, continued planning, evaluation, and soul-searching are in order.

Simply stated, the United States needs to relearn the lost art of strategy analysis, which investigates how complex military means can best be used to achieve complicated political ends. This art was mastered during the Cold War's early stages, but it was neglected in later years because the static bipolar international system encouraged not only strategy continuity but also a lowering of our intellectual horizons. Perhaps the international system will resume to a new stasis, thereby allowing for a single strategy to take hold, but equally possible, major changes will continue to occur, thereby compelling the United States to periodically replace the old with something new. The United States changed its military strategy four times between 1947 and 1967. Because the pace of change today and tomorrow may well match the experience then, the past could well be prologue.

Regardless of what the future holds, the United States will need a coherent military strategy backed up by adequate defenses. The nettlesome questions are: If we want not only to react to events but also to shape them, what should our strategy be? Under what conditions should one strategy be cast out in favor of something quite different? These questions cannot be answered and reanswered until the ability to critically examine underlying precepts is recaptured. Above all, penetrating thinking and fresh perspectives will be needed for an era that may lack an obvious enemy but compensates by producing fundamental changes and dangers whose future consequences are no less important for all their ambiguity. This report endeavors to contribute to the goal of recovering the lost art of strategy analysis. This summary outlines major conclusions, and the text provides the details.

THE REGIONAL STRATEGY AND ITS CRITICS

The Regional Strategy was crafted during the tumultuous months in which the Soviet Union was collapsing and the Persian Gulf War was being fought. Reflecting these events, the Regional Strategy postulated a future international system of broadly cooperative relations among the major powers but continued local tensions in key regions around the world. Rejecting isolationism, the strategy called for
continuing international engagement and activism, but it abandoned the global defense planning of the Cold War. As a replacement, it called upon the United States to maintain alliance commitments and a balance of power through a forward presence, and to refocus its defense plans on future regional wars akin to Desert Storm. To carry out this approach, the Regional Strategy called for a Base Force: a posture offering reduced reliance on nuclear forces and continued conventional strength at a level about 25 percent less than the Cold War posture. The new conventional posture was intended to meet peacetime requirements, and to provide the wherewithal to fight two roughly concurrent major regional contingencies (MRCs) in wartime.

The Regional Strategy and Base Force met with approval in some quarters but with criticism in others. Notably, few critics called for disengagement and isolationism, but the internationalism of most critics was manifested in a broadside of differing arguments levied against administration policy. Whereas some critics charged that the Regional Strategy was too pessimistic and mired in threat-anchored Cold War thinking, others charged that it was too optimistic about the prospects for a stable international order. Still others accused it of cynically plotting to perpetuate American superpower dominance of world affairs, and yet others charged that it was too focused on regional conflicts in ways leaving it insufficiently attentive to global politics. If these accusations about the Regional Strategy's faults were inconsistent, the charges levied at the Base Force reflected common themes. With virtually nobody demanding greater preparedness, critics banded together in calling for smaller forces. But they offered differing interpretations of how far military drawdowns could go, and of the exact force posture that should be left behind.

The Bush Administration responded by offering a refashioned strategic concept that paid greater attention to the big picture by advocating defense policies aimed at shaping the future international system. But the Bush Administration otherwise continued to embrace the Regional Strategy's key precepts, and it remained firm in its endorsement of the Base Force. It argued that the Base Force was needed not only to fight specific regional contingencies, but also to provide a flexible and diverse stable of military assets capable of meeting the uncertain challenges ahead. On these arguments it
rested its case as the Congress began reviewing the FY93 defense budget and the 1992 presidential election campaign got under way.

During his campaign, Clinton focused primarily on domestic issues, but he agreed that the United States must remain internationally active and adequately armed. Further, he agreed that existing alliances should be maintained and that attention should be drawn to regional conflicts. Yet he also laid down important strategy departures. Criticizing the Bush Administration for allegedly linear and unvisionary thinking, he called for a new military strategy anchored on power projection with mobile, agile, ready, and technologically sophisticated forces. This strategy, he maintained, could be carried out with a modestly reduced defense budget and a somewhat smaller conventional posture than that proposed by Bush. Clinton left unclear precisely what forces and programs would be funded, but his election in November 1992 indicated that, even if other things remain equal, the winds of change will be blowing over American military strategy in the years ahead.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CHANGES AHEAD

Whether other things will remain equal is at best uncertain. On the domestic scene, it is evident that economic recovery will become a focal point of public policy in the years ahead, and that enhanced productivity and competitiveness will be important parts of the solutions to be pursued. To be sure, this stance is not at war with an internationalist outlook. Just as the United States requires a healthy economy to conduct a strong foreign policy, it needs a stable international security system, a healthy and cooperative world economy, and access to foreign markets to achieve domestic recovery. An emphasis on domestic recovery, however, could translate into growing pressures for a smaller defense budget. If so, this trend will rub up against the need to increase expenditures from 1997 onward to fund a host of procurement programs aimed at modernizing the force posture.

Questions about defense resources will need to be addressed in the context of how the international system is evolving. In the years ahead, the United States will still have vital overseas interests to safeguard, and present trends suggest that a new category of "major" interests is being acquired. These interests are less than vital, but they
may require the use of military force in their defense. Examples include the defense of nations that are not members of U.S.-backed alliances but whose security is important, or the protection of economic interests whose criticality has grown.

To what extent will these interests be threatened? Undeniably, the demise of the Warsaw Pact has greatly eased the security dilemmas confronting the United States, and the superiority shown by American forces in Desert Storm suggests a capacity to handle adversary military threats for some years to come. As a result of global changes over the past two decades, moreover, democracy has been adopted by a growing number of countries, and now offers its benefits to about 40 percent of the world’s population. The effect is to enhance prospects for global stability. The act of gauging future international stability nonetheless requires close examination of trends at work in underlying structural features that are accompanying the spread of democracy. The collapse of the bipolar Cold War structure has created a system of stable relations among the major powers amidst still-turbulent regional tensions, but the new system is far from frozen in concrete. Indeed, tectonic changes are under way as a result of five separate revolutionary transformations that are altering the face of contemporary international politics, but with an ambiguous destiny. These revolutions are:

1. The nation-state system, while remaining fundamentally anarchical, is changing. Despite the spread of democracy, nondemocratic governments still rule in many places, including major parts of Eurasia and the Middle East. Moreover, nations in many regions, embedded in a host of internal and external constraints, find themselves capable of pursuing assertive national agendas while worrying about their capacity to shape their own destinies and fearful of mounting chaos. Owing to fragmentation of the Soviet empire, a number of new nations are appearing in East/Central Europe and the Commonwealth. Whether these nations will be led by stable and peaceful governments is unclear, but at a minimum, their emergence is creating radically altered security conditions. Accompanying their emergence is the reappearance of a host of instability-causing problems: ethnic clashes, border disputes, economic turmoil, and historical antagonisms. Chaos in Europe, in turn, threatens to spread outward to already unstable
regions, and to have global consequences in ways that damage prospects for harmony.

2. Not only in Europe but elsewhere, bipolarity is giving way to multipolarity. With old constraints breaking down, many nations have greater freedom of action and fewer reassurances than before. The propensity to free-wheeling maneuver is increased further by an absence of credible collective security institutions. The United Nations is growing more influential but still lacks firm leadership abilities, the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is too large and cumbersome to handle Europe's stresses, and NATO's charter stops at alliance borders, thereby leaving an unstable power vacuum to the east. In Asia, where Japan and China are growing stronger, multilateral security institutions of any sort are lacking, and the same applies to the Middle East, Persian Gulf, and South Asia. The current international system is far from purely multipolar, but enough multipolar features are present to raise questions about prospects for future harmony.

3. An ideological transformation is taking place. Western-style democracy has triumphed over communism, but new ideologies are emerging worldwide to rival democracy: ethno-nationalism, conservative authoritarianism, and Islamic fundamentalism. The effect is to dampen hopes for a global consensus on political values, and to reintroduce new forms of ideological strife and cultural antagonisms as an axis for international conflict in the coming era.

4. The world economy is undergoing upheaval. Owing to the diverse changes taking place, new economic powers are appearing, thereby complicating the task of achieving cooperative policies. Equally important, growing competitiveness and uncertain prosperity are threatening to erode the principles of free trade and open markets. Whereas economic collapse in the former Soviet Union and poverty in the Middle East are special sources of instability, the steady emergence of Asia as an economic power is altering the global order. Moreover, mounting economic stress is eroding the cohesion of the Western alliance system at the same time that declining security threats give this alliance system less incentive to remain firmly intact.
5. Although the Warsaw Pact military threat has collapsed, modern military technology is spreading. Widespread nuclear proliferation might become a fact of life over the coming years, but even short of that development, many nations are acquiring powerful conventional arsenals. The effect is not only to increase regional instability, but also to threaten U.S. conventional superiority in future conflicts.

The question is whether these five revolutions will work together to create stability, instability, or something in between. As suggested by the lack of consensus among experts and the intense debates taking place, the answer unfortunately is unknowable. What can be said is that the heady optimism of early 1992 is now giving way to a more sober appraisal. Perhaps enduring global tranquility will be the result, but this state of affairs remains a goal to be achieved rather than a newly minted condition of nature. Indeed, the five revolutions all have destabilizing dimensions that could work together, if the worst transpires, to create a witches' brew of dangerous turmoil. Multipolarity has a long track record of instability, and especially so in the face of economic turmoil. Problems could be magnified if reform in Russia fails and local tensions continue to fester, and if the world becomes populated with nations with aggressive ideologies and powerful military arsenals. These are hardly the structural conditions that inspire confidence about future harmony.

To be sure, the worst might not transpire, especially if the United States and other nations cooperate in an effort to achieve a favorable outcome. The essential point, nonetheless, is that U.S. defense planning should not be anchored on the assumption that the current international system will remain in place for the coming two decades. Perhaps fundamental changes will not occur in the near term (although even this is not guaranteed), but the farther analysis peers into the future, the greater becomes the range of possibilities. As Figure S.1 suggests, a spectrum of alternatives is possible, ranging from far better to far worse. Conceivably, the current system will give way to a world of lessened regional tensions and even global harmony. Equally likely, however, is a drift toward a less stable system: a world of enhanced regional tensions with better armed enemies, or renewed rivalry with Russia, or a world of multipolar rivalries in which powerful adversaries are faced without the benefit of existing
alliances. Without losing awareness of the need to focus on the international system that exists today, strategy analysis should begin taking into account the very different worlds that might evolve tomorrow.

REFINING THE REGIONAL STRATEGY

A major conclusion of this study is that the current Regional Strategy, or a modified version of it that may be adopted by the Clinton Administration, will endure only if the international system remains roughly as it exists today. At a minimum, this strategy can be used as a holding pattern until the international dust settles. It should be capable of guiding U.S. defense efforts for the next few years because wholesale changes in the international climate are unlikely to occur overnight. In the mid to long term, however, a very different strategy that responds to a quite different international system might have to be adopted, and the United States needs to begin thinking about the form that its strategy and posture might have to take then. In the interim, the Regional Strategy offers a sound underlying foundation that should be retained. Even so, this report concludes that efforts should be undertaken to improve the Regional Strategy and adopt it to the changes likely to be sought by the Clinton Administration. Figure S.2 illustrates the fundamental international goals to be pur-
sued by a refined military strategy; managing the regional tensions posed by the current international system, guiding world affairs to greater harmony, and setting up security roadblocks against a drift toward greater turmoil.

To help pursue these goals, this report develops a new and refashioned strategic concept for guiding U.S. defense policy, one that posits a broader set of objectives than is embraced by the Regional Strategy. This concept is intended to interlock American military strategy not only with the international security system but also with our emerging agenda of domestic economic renewal. Its core features are displayed in Figure S.3.

Offering a positive vision for the future that transcends negative thinking, this strategic concept addresses what is to be avoided in international security affairs while identifying what is to be achieved. The concept views military strategy as a vehicle for fighting wars and dealing with adversaries, but it also regards military strategy as an instrument for building friendships. It posits that military collective security can help lay a strong foundation upon which political and economic partnership, as well as democratic institutions, can be built. Embracing the objective of forging an international commu-
nity of democratic partners, it rejects unilateralism in favor of a multilateralist approach carried out through alliances and cooperative relations with former adversaries. It employs this multilateralist approach not only as an end in itself, but also as a means to help achieve three core security objectives: deterring regional threats, discouraging the emergence of any hegemon with global power, and preventing any slide into multipolar rivalry.

Concurrently, this strategic concept calls for the United States to employ a community-building security policy as a device to help promote a cooperative and healthy world economy. From a cooperative world economy can come not only greater international harmony, but also the trade, monetary, investment, financial, and technological relationships that can contribute to American domestic economic renewal. A prosperous U.S. economy, in turn, is able to provide the resources needed to sustain an adequate defense effort, whose requirements are kept under control by virtue of achieving a stable international security system.
This strategic concept thus is anchored on the assumptions that security and economics are intertwined, and that domestic and foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. Consequently, it calls for a defense strategy and an economic policy that work together to help create a stable international system and a prosperous American economy. In doing so, it postulates that adequate defense strength is not in competition with the agenda of domestic economic renewal, but rather can help facilitate this agenda by promoting a peaceful and cooperative international environment.

Accompanying this new strategic concept is a revised set of security precepts that alter the precepts laid down by the Regional Strategy. Figure S.4 portrays the changes that would be made. It replaces the Regional Strategy's "foundations" with a larger set of "strategic foun-
dictions" that focus on ends as well as means, and that provide a more complete theory of how U.S. defense strategy is to function in political terms. It also replaces the Regional Strategy's "strategic principles" with a set of more narrowly construed "military principles" that provide a coherent approach for designing U.S. military doctrine and forces. These new security precepts are intended to cope with the current international system and to help prevent a more dangerous system from emerging in the future. The rationale is elaborated in the text.

Casting aside the Cold War focus on containment and deterrence, these precepts postulate a new set of regional security mechanisms. For all regions, a unifying theme is to maintain a stability-enhancing balance of military power that promotes community and discourages both aggression and competitive multipolar rivalries. The specific contents of these mechanisms, however, vary from region to region. In Europe, U.S. military strategy would aim to defend NATO allies, reassure nations in Eastern/Central Europe, and dissuade Russia while pursuing cooperative relations with that nation. In Asia, U.S. strategy would aim to defend Japan and South Korea, deter North Korean aggression, dissuade China and Russia from malevolent conduct, and reassure friends in Southeast Asia and South Asia. In the Middle East and Persian Gulf, U.S. strategy would aim to defend key friends and allies while deterring radical Arab aggression.

A key postulate of these precepts is that nuclear forces will decline in importance as conventional forces acquire ever-larger roles in carrying out U.S. military strategy. Reliance on conventional forces brings with it continued emphasis on joint operations and on service doctrines designed to employ forces with maximum effectiveness. U.S. forces triumphed in the Persian Gulf because of their technological superiority, high readiness, capacity for joint and combined operations, and soundly conceived doctrines. These advantages were built only through years of painstaking effort, and unless they are safeguarded, they can be lost. If history is any guide, military supremacy can be fleeting. Future wars are unlikely to be so easily won as was Desert Storm: adversaries are likely to learn from Iraq's disastrous performance. For this reason, this is no time for U.S. military strategy to rest on its laurels. A continued emphasis on joint operations among U.S. forces and combined multilateral operations with
friends and allies provides a trustworthy prescription for preserving adequate military strength. Continued emphasis on NATO and other alliances is essential, as is increased use of the United Nations for peacekeeping and related missions.

Especially because Desert Storm was so successful, the Decisive Force model, portrayed in Figure S.5, will continue to provide a viable framework for shaping future U.S. force employment doctrine. This study notes, nonetheless, that the crises of the future might be vastly different, in political and military terms, than the Persian Gulf War. If the Vietnam War was a nightmarish example of unclear goals and weak strategy, the Persian Gulf conflict was fought under ideal conditions: a lack of outside political constraints, clear goals, a humbling adversary, and overwhelming U.S. military supremacy. These conditions are unlikely to be repeated anytime soon. For this reason, Decisive Force should be treated as a preferred model, but not as a rigid script. Future crisis management policies should aim to employ forces in militarily effective ways that achieve clearly articulated goals.

![Figure S.5—Force Employment Policy](image)
Recent experience suggests that U.S. forces are likely to be employed in a wide range of settings in the coming era. Since 1988, American forces have toppled a corrupt Latin American dictator, waged a major campaign in the Persian Gulf, protected the Kurds in Northern Iraq, enforced a no-fly zone in Southern Iraq, delivered food to Russia, provided humanitarian assistance to Somalia and other nations, and stood poised for peacekeeping in Bosnia. Desert Storm aside, all of these operations were outside the scope of common expectations for military doctrine. To the extent these experiences illuminate the future, they suggest that U.S. military strategy should be anchored on the capability to respond flexibly. Standard military plans will continue to be needed to gauge resource commitments and priorities, but for determining how forces are to be employed in specific situations, adaptive planning, rather than adherence to a preconceived plan, will be the order of the day. As Eisenhower said, plans are nothing, but planning is everything.

Sufficient conventional forces will be needed to perform the key peacetime functions of U.S. military strategy, but, inevitably, wartime requirements will play a large role in determining overall force needs. For the years ahead, major regional contingencies (MRCs) in the Persian Gulf, Northeast Asia, and (to a lesser degree) Europe will be the principal threats and thus the primary determinants of wartime requirements. Although the likelihood of concurrent MRCs might not be high, the United States will need to retain sufficient flexibility to react to one MRC in an atmosphere of international tensions elsewhere. For this reason, this study concludes that future U.S. military strategy will continue to be guided by the assumption of planning for two roughly concurrent MRCs.

This analysis shows that a two-MRC contingency can be handled by a force roughly of the same size as the Base Force. A somewhat smaller or larger force may be required depending upon the amount of risk to be taken. U.S. military strategy, nonetheless, will need to take into account the implications of modest drawdowns, if they are pursued. A shift toward reduced emphasis on forward presence and greater reliance on power projection is feasible, but this approach will be viable only if still-adequate forces continue to be stationed in key regions. Additionally, programmatic measures will have to be undertaken to ensure that mobility forces are adequate to project power rapidly, and that forces based in CONUS are capable of per-
forming the missions entrusted to them. Greater efforts to encourage allied contributions could help to alleviate any shortfalls that might occur.

There are limits on how far the Base Force can be reduced, and if those limits are violated, then a more fundamental recasting of U.S. military strategy will be necessary. If a more discriminating set of priorities must be embraced, a viable approach would be to focus on the theaters that are most directly threatened and are least protected by allied forces. In other theaters, responsibility for defense missions would need to be devolved on the shoulders of allied forces. Although degree matters greatly, the extreme case probably would call for U.S. forces to defend the Persian Gulf, and to entrust primary responsibility for Europe and Northeast Asia to allies there. Provided these allies react in compensatory ways, a stable international system might still be achievable. The obvious danger, however, is that any premature and wholesale U.S. military disengagement from these two regions might not be accompanied by constructive actions from allies and potential adversaries. The risk of renewed instability in these vital regions is a powerful reason for refraining from U.S. force reductions that go too far too fast.

NEW MILITARY STRATEGIES FOR VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS

Although a refined version of the Regional Strategy will be appropriate for the international system as it exists today, a radically altered strategy could be necessary if tectonic changes produce a very different world tomorrow. Accordingly, defense planners should begin contemplating the kinds of strategies that might be embraced under alternative circumstances. This step is especially necessary because the pace of change today is so fast that a new strategy might have to be adopted quickly, and being prepared in advance could smooth the transition. Equally important, the U.S. force posture cannot be altered as rapidly as strategy can be changed. Thus, it is important to understand how the force posture choices now at our doorstep will affect our ability to adapt to the events that might lie ahead.

This study presents a set of military strategies for dealing with the spectrum of alternative international systems discussed above.
These strategies are developed only in conceptual terms—in enough detail to illuminate their broad features, but not enough to spell them out in full. These strategies, and the international systems reflected by them, by no means exhaust the possibilities ahead. But they do help illustrate the breadth of changes that might have to be contemplated. Figure S.6 illustrates the level of defense preparedness, relative to the requirements posed by the Regional Strategy, needed to carry out the appropriate strategy in each case—smaller forces for a more harmonious world, larger forces for a less harmonious world. In the extreme case of an unstable multipolar system, requirements could rise well above the Base Force, to a level exceeding the Cold War posture. The text discusses specific force mixes, but in general, each of these strategies would require a balanced combination of ground, air, and naval forces.

A world of global harmony would offer not only tranquil relations among the major powers but also little risk of a major regional conflict. It would require a U.S. military strategy and force posture aimed at preserving harmony through cooperation and at dealing

![Figure S.6—Future U.S. Military Strategies and Force Needs](image-url)
with the limited forms of conflict that remain. In wartime, nothing larger than a corps-sized U.S. commitment, in the context of a multilateral operation, would be required. A world of lessened regional tensions would require greater vigilance in terms of dealing with latent major power rivalries and potential MRCs. However, any likelihood of concurrent MRCs could be safely discounted, and with Europe and Northeast Asia more stable than today, U.S. wartime planning could focus almost exclusively on the Persian Gulf. The resulting virtual one-war strategy would call for a posture 20–35 percent smaller than the Base Force.

A world of enhanced regional tensions could pose larger security requirements than exist today. U.S. strategy would have to be preoccupied with maintaining a balance of power to safeguard stable relations among the major powers, and with being prepared for two concurrent MRCs as well as a host of smaller contingencies. However, the military threats posed by potential adversaries in the Persian Gulf and Northeast Asia would be significantly greater than today. In both regions, adversaries would possess not only stronger conventional forces, but also nuclear weapons and delivery systems. These threats would require the extension of U.S. nuclear deterrence coverage over key allies and a capacity to rapidly inject sizable American forces in a crisis, amidst circumstances more dangerous than encountered in the Persian Gulf War.

A world of renewed rivalry with Russia would bring about intensified U.S. military planning for Europe, but with East/Central Europe as the geographic focal point. U.S. strategy would be anchored on a resurrected and updated form of containment, deterrence, and intense NATO coalition planning. It would continue to plan for two MRCs, but instead of focusing on the Persian Gulf and Korea, the emphasis would be on concurrent MRCs in the Persian Gulf and Europe. The European MRC would be waged in Poland or nearby areas, against sizable and modernized Russian forces. With the Persian Gulf and Northeast Asia also unstable, the effect would be to elevate U.S. requirements well above those posed by the Regional Strategy and Base Force.

A world of unstable multipolar rivalry would include tense relations with Russia and China, but also would be marked by the collapse of today’s Western alliance system. Contemplated here is the disman-
tlement of NATO, almost complete U.S. force withdrawal from Europe, and a decision by Germany to pursue an independent course. In Asia, the U.S. security relationship with Japan has totally collapsed, U.S. forces have been expelled from the Western Pacific, and a relationship of strategic rivalry has emerged between the United States and a nuclear-armed Japan. The global security system thus would be characterized by highly fluid and ever-shifting relations among five major powers: the United States, Russia, China, the European Community, and Japan. U.S. military strategy would be focused on managing these rivalries in ways that protect American interests. Required would be an all-azimuth nuclear deterrent, a powerful navy, and a large expeditionary force capable of waging major wars in Europe and Asia.

In surveying these military strategies, it is noteworthy that the Base Force or a modestly smaller posture not only provides the military wherewithal for the Regional Strategy, but also offers a foundation for dealing with more threatening worlds. If one of these worlds were to emerge, the United States presumably would need to embark upon a deliberate rearmalement effort to build the required forces. In the interim, the existing posture would help ensure against wholesale unpreparedness. The United States would face a dangerous situation of reduced insurance and greater risks, but its force posture would not be grossly inadequate. The same cannot be said for far smaller postures, for the gap between capabilities and requirements would be all the larger.

FORCE CAPABILITIES FOR EXECUTING U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY

How do we determine the force levels that will be needed to carry out a refined version of the Regional Strategy in the current international system? The answer to this thorny question can best be approached by first noting that the strategic nuclear posture is planned for reduction to the levels endorsed by Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) I and II. Figure S.7 shows that, when START II is fully implemented early next decade, the posture will include 1000 launchers and 3500 warheads. Already calls are being heard for a START III accord that might reduce the inventory to 1000–2000 warheads.
Whether a triad posture makes sense under these conditions remains to be determined, but in any event, a smaller nuclear posture should be adequate provided Russian forces are similarly reduced and a stable global nuclear balance is preserved. The emergence of China as an intercontinental nuclear power could erode flexibility in this area, as could nuclear proliferation elsewhere. Moreover, deep nuclear drawdowns can be pursued only if a stable conventional balance is maintained. In any event, the declining size and importance of nuclear forces calls attention to the need to think clearly about future U.S. conventional force levels.

Analysis of U.S. conventional force requirements is clouded by a lack of satisfactory techniques for measuring adequacy. Contingency analysis has been the predominant methodology in recent years, but although it will continue to be employed, its usefulness is eroding. The three MRCs now employed for planning (conflicts in the Persian Gulf, Korea, and Europe) all pose common adversary military threats of 20–30 divisions, several hundred aircraft, and associated naval forces. The effect is to create a requirement for sizable U.S. forces in
each case, but in many quarters, these contingencies are dismissed as so unlikely that they are not an acceptable basis for planning. To be sure, the function of contingency analysis is to gauge force needs, not to engage in political clairvoyance, but even so, threats are hard to justify in the abstract, and therefore some minimum level of credibility is needed.

Even if the political credibility of these MRCs is granted, exact U.S. force requirements are uncertain in each case. Contributing heavily to this uncertainty are unclear allied contributions. In both Europe and Korea, a case can be made that, if allied forces are fully and effectively employed, the need for U.S. forces will be modest. Especially in the coming era of ad hoc operations, optimistic assumptions about allied performance provide a risk-laden foundation for planning, but if prudent conservatism is still to be the bellwether, exactly how is it to be defined?

Even with conservative assumptions, moreover, the erosion of old rule-of-thumb planning standards undercuts the utility of contingency analysis. During the Cold War, accepted convention held that, although some numerical force disparities could be accepted, a reasonable ground balance (e.g., 1.5:1) had to be maintained. Commonly used static and dynamic techniques undergirded this conclusion. In the Persian Gulf War, however, U.S. and coalition forces were outnumbered by 2-3:1 in ground maneuver units, but their total air supremacy, and their overall superiority in technology and readiness, allowed them to fight heavily outnumbered and still win decisively. The old planning standards thereby were overturned, and along with them went the old static and dynamic techniques that now seemed out of touch with modern military realities.

Arguing against the Gulf War as a force-sizing model are sobering considerations. That conflict was militarily unique in many ways, and similar decisive advantages might not be so easily gained in future conflicts. But if some minimum numerical standard is to be applied for U.S. force sizing, exactly what is this standard to be? And how can confidence levels be measured? At the moment, unfortunately, these questions are not readily answered. The appropriate conclusion is that, more now than ever before, contingency analysis cannot provide transparent and credible single-point estimates of U.S. force needs.
Mounting doubts about contingency analysis have recently led to the emergence of a second methodology—resource-based capability analysis. In an effort to avoid the pitfalls of contingency analysis in the face of great uncertainty about future wars and battlefield dynamics, this methodology endeavors to determine the kind of force posture that makes sense in its own right. Whereas contingency analysis asks "How can we defeat the enemy?" this approach asks "What do we need to have a good military team?" Postulating that future major wars are inevitable but are impossible to predict, it calls attention to the need for a diverse set of military assets for joint operations, and for a solid base of support and infrastructure assets.

Undeniably, this methodology offers important insights on the internal characteristics of the U.S. conventional posture. Unfortunately, however, it falls short of answering questions about total force size. Other nations (e.g., Britain and France) have shown that a flexible and diverse posture can be maintained at levels well below those of the United States. To be sure, the United States has global involvements that elevate its requirements beyond that of smaller and regionally focused powers. But exactly what are these requirements? In the final analysis, the issue of force size cannot be settled solely by looking inward. An outward focus is needed, one that addresses battlefield outputs as well as resource inputs.

Recognizing that these two techniques will continue to play important roles, this study proposes a third methodology—"mission-based capability analysis." Aimed at bridging the gap between the two existing approaches, this methodology centers on military outputs needed to fight future wars, but it does not gauge force needs on the basis of specific contingency threats. Anchored on the premise of uncertainty about future wars, it endeavors to determine the kind of strategic wartime missions that U.S. forces in general should be capable of performing. It postulates that, if the force posture is sufficiently large to perform these generic missions, then adequate confidence levels will be achieved.

Assuming that the two-MRC standard will be retained, this methodology postulates that the following missions should be concurrently performed:
- Prompt deployment of a joint U.S. field army capable of applying overwhelming force to one MRC: to be composed primarily of active forces. This posture would include a balanced combination of ground, naval, and air forces.

- Prompt deployment of a smaller war-fighting force, dominated by active units, capable of effective defense operations for a second MRC and counteroffensive operations in most circumstances.

- Maintenance of a small but available strategic withhold (active and reserve component (RC) forces) to provide forward presence in unthreatened theaters and a capacity for small interventions elsewhere.

- Maintenance of a rotation base, provided by RC forces, for replacing losses and relieving units in prolonged fighting.

- Maintenance of a reinforcement hedge, provided by RC forces, that can enlarge either or both of the MRC commitments in the event that requirements exceed original expectations.

The strategic premise of this methodology is that the United States can adequately defend its interests if it deploys sufficient forces to conduct two MRCs while maintaining a pool of uncommitted forces for other purposes. By defining generic requirements thusly, this methodology offers an approach for sizing forces in the face of uncertainty about future wars. It measures adequacy in terms of inherent U.S. capabilities, not domination over specific threats, but it gauges capabilities in terms of mission-oriented outputs, not resource inputs.

At the core of this methodology lies the premise that a large joint field army (seven to ten divisions and associated air and naval units) should be available to fight a single MRC. Some will argue that a posture this large will not be needed for the wars of the future, that smaller forces can rely on their technological superiority to defeat any adversary. This methodology justifies its conclusion with three arguments: In the past three regional wars, the United States has always deployed a joint field army because, when the fog of uncertainty was lifted, this was the level of commitment that turned out to be needed. Moreover, a force this large typically is needed to physically dominate the battlefield and to perform the joint operations
needed to unravel enemy defenses. Finally, manageable force ratios must be maintained even if U.S. forces enjoy major qualitative advantages. Granted that not all Desert Storm units played in equally decisive ways, could General Schwarzkopf's flanking maneuver have been conducted with a force far smaller than the 17 U.S. and allied divisions deployed at the time? The answer to this question suggests prudence in the sizing of future MRC commitments when operational maneuvers are needed.

A range of military needs can thus be postulated for each mission. Figure S.8 is an illustrative estimate of a spectrum of composite requirements for active (A) and reserve component (RC) forces. This spectrum is anchored on prudently conservative assumptions that provide varying levels of confidence. The quantitative basis for this estimate of requirements is presented in Table S.1 and is explained in the text.

As Figure S.8 suggests, the Base Force falls roughly midway in this range of requirements. That is, it does not fully cover requirements if needs are unexpectedly high across the board, but it does suffice in
Table S.1
U.S. Conventional Force Requirements for Generic Wartime Missions (Illustrative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Divisions/MEFs&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Fighter Wings&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>CVBGs&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low-High</td>
<td>Low-High</td>
<td>Low-High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelming force:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st MRC (A)</td>
<td>7–10</td>
<td>8–12</td>
<td>3–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War-fighting force:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd MRC (A)</td>
<td>4–6</td>
<td>5–8</td>
<td>3–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic withhold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A/RC)</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>2–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotational base (RC)</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>1–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcement hedge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RC)</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>0–0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19–27</td>
<td>21–31</td>
<td>9–14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Marine Expeditionary Forces.
<sup>b</sup>Carrier battle groups.

most situations. Because it provides a margin of insurance, moreover, the Base Force is not portrayed here as an irreducible minimum. Reductions in the range of 10–15 percent would reduce this insurance, but would still leave a posture that falls within the adequacy range. Far deeper reductions would not leave the United States militarily crippled, but the effect could be to call adequacy into question, and thereby compel difficult decisions regarding how to allocate priorities among these multiple missions.

If reductions of 10–15 percent are pursued, difficult decisions will have to be made in selecting an optimally effective mix of forces that can best execute the strategic missions and power-projection strategy of the years ahead. A linear reduction (all services reduce equally) would produce the same flexible mix as provided by the Base Force, but arguments can be advanced on behalf of nonlinear approaches that would favor some force elements at the expense of others. The text identifies six illustrative options, and, without endorsing any, assesses their costs and benefits in general terms. Suffice here to say that any reductions will need to be planned carefully, with due regard to the complexities and uncertainties ahead.
CONCLUSION

The United States today stands at an important crossroads. An enduring international peace is achievable, but is far from guaranteed, and something far less appealing is a growing possibility. To help achieve the best while remaining safeguarded against the worst, the United States will need a coherent military strategy and force posture. Defining coherence, however, will be a difficult task in an age of ambiguity. This is doubly so because the United States, with its pragmatic style and pluralist institutions, does not have a reassuring track record at handling international ambiguity during a time of domestic preoccupation. If the road ahead is unclear, the path can be lighted by a concerted effort to recover the lost art of strategy analysis.
Although the author is solely responsible for this study’s contents, the analysis benefitted from the contributions of others. At RAND, Jim Winnefeld, Dean Millot, Marten van Heuven, Paul Davis, Robert Howe, Ted Warner, Roger Molander, David Ochmanek, Kevin Lewis, Ron Asmus, and Peter Wilson played important roles in helping develop the analytical framework. Thanks also are owed to Charlie Kelley and Jonathan Pollack. An early version was reviewed by Zalmay Khalilzad, Paul Bracken, and Abram Shulsky. Their comments and criticisms significantly improved the manuscript. Thanks also are owed to a host of Department of Defense civilians and military officers who provided invaluable insights.
Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

What should be U.S. military strategy for the years ahead? Will the Regional Strategy adopted in 1990 suffice, and for how long? Will a different strategy be needed, and under what circumstances? What level of defense preparedness will be required to carry out an appropriate strategy, and what can be afforded? Will the Base Force be needed, or will a different posture be required? Will smaller forces suffice, or will larger forces be needed? Will a different force structure, embodying an altered mix of weapons and combat units, be appropriate? What will apply for the near term? For the long term?

Although these questions are hard to answer, beyond doubt they are important enough to merit an ongoing national appraisal in search of solutions. Since 1989, significant steps have been taken toward refashioning U.S. military strategy for the coming era, yet many defense planners believe that the process of evaluation may have only just begun. At the same time, the 1992 presidential campaign resulted in the election of Democrat Bill Clinton, who pointedly raised these questions during his long march to the White House and called for major changes in the existing strategy and posture. What lies ahead in the Clinton Administration and beyond is uncertain, but it is clear that these questions will remain on the agenda for some time. For both the immediate and more distant futures, our security and prosperity will hinge on whether we answer them correctly.

Focusing on the next two decades (1993–2013), this study takes aim at these questions, but it does not aspire to provide a fixed strategy blueprint for the United States to follow. The uncertainties ahead are too great, and the need for new intellectual capital is too profound, to
permit confident endorsement of any single military strategy as a solution for the entire period. Indeed, the coming years might bring changes so far and so fast that no one solution will suffice for any extended period. The capacity to adapt swiftly, to switch strategies in response to rapidly changing conditions, might well become the watchword of the day. In any event, correct answers to complex issues can be forged only by first gaining a thorough understanding of the alternatives and trade-offs ahead. Especially because the issues surrounding our future military strategy are unusually complex, this is a time for the sober reflection that is always needed before far-reaching endeavors can be launched.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is not to advocate, but rather to illuminate and inform. Its goal is to help provide the analytical tools needed for dialogue and debate over national military strategy to unfold in an orderly, intelligent, and balanced fashion. By identifying the key factors at work and appraising their interrelationships, this study aspires to create the conceptual framework needed to think systematically about the strategy challenges and choices at our doorsteps, both now and for the future.

DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM

To some, the end of the Cold War means that the subject of U.S. military strategy can be relegated to the backwaters of national policy. To them, the collapse of Soviet power means the world has been rendered sufficiently peaceful to allow the United States to engage in a major disarmament and military withdrawal from involvement in global affairs, thereby rendering moot any need for a new strategy. To the extent that defense preparedness remains necessary, in their view, it can be achieved with a far smaller force posture that provides a limited capacity for responding to small-scale crises. But this force posture is intended to provide military insurance, and is not regarded as an active instrument of national policy in the way that U.S. forces served Washington’s diplomacy during the Cold War. As a re-
sult, this view holds, the United States needs some forces, but it no longer needs a fully elaborated military strategy.\footnote{For a compendium of alternative viewpoints, see Graham Allison and Gregory F. Treverton (eds.), \textit{Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order}, W. W. Norton, New York, 1992.}

Notwithstanding the appeal of this view in some quarters, the subject of military strategy seems unlikely to disappear from the mainstream of American political thought anytime soon. The United States will continue to spend large sums on military forces—in excess of \$200 billion annually—and most observers believe that this expenditure must be guided by the coherent sense of purpose that only strategy can provide. Moreover, military strategy existed well before the Cold War and is likely to outlast that conflict as long as the world remains a turbulent place. The fact that the Department of Defense has seen fit to design a new approach for the post–Cold War world—the Regional Strategy—is an indicator that the subject is still taken seriously in official quarters.

Also, the United States had no coherent military strategy and overseas involvements in Europe and the Asian landmass early in the 20th century, and this deficiency helped contribute to the outbreak of World Wars I and II. After winning World War II, the United States abandoned concern for its military strategy and suffered the consequences of inadequate preparedness when the Cold War broke out. It is unlikely to want to risk repeating the experience. For all these reasons, the United States will continue to have a military strategy. The Bush Administration embraced this position, and upon assuming office President Bill Clinton agreed. The real issue is one of deciding what this strategy is to be.

To analyze this issue, a sound understanding of the components and functions of military strategy in the modern era is needed. By providing a choreographed sequence of actions that enables resources to be applied effectively to the attainment of objectives, military strategy relates means to ends. Commonly it is misconstrued in narrow terms—as a prescription for waging war, for outwitting an opponent on the battlefield. To be sure, military
strategy will still perform this function, but in the coming era, it will have far larger purposes, just as it did during the Cold War.\textsuperscript{2}

Military strategy is best viewed as a component of national security policy. It is a vehicle by which a nation employs military forces to pursue its international political and economic goals, and these goals are pursued not only in wartime, but in peacetime as well. Strategy also is an instrument for determining the forces to be bought, and for gaining maximum leverage from scarce resources that often fall short of meeting all plausible requirements. Strategy thus deals with the employment of military forces, but it has a political purpose, operates in peace as well as war, and wears a dollar sign.

Future U.S. military strategy should be shaped with this larger frame of reference in mind, and it should reflect a properly sophisticated appraisal of the many factors that enter into the calculus of a superpower with global involvements. It should derive from an integrated set of judgments about U.S. national interests and objectives, military missions and doctrine, international dangers, enemy threats, and the capabilities of U.S. and allied forces. It should also strike a sensible balance between requirements and affordability, one that leaves the nation adequately defended at acceptable budgetary cost.

The central issues are these: What military strategy (or set of strategies) will best enable the United States not only to be prepared for the crises and wars ahead, but also to help manage global security affairs in peacetime? What force posture will best carry out this strategy, and how can available resources most efficiently be allocated? What should be the mix of forces, and how should these forces be deployed? Taking into account requirements and affordability, how should we plan to use military forces—in peace, crisis, and war—to attain our national goals and fulfill our international visions?

An effort to address these questions is rendered difficult by the new era that evidently lies ahead. The end of the Cold War has swept away that conflict's bipolar confrontation and the massive Soviet/Warsaw Pact military threat that animated U.S. military strat-

egy for forty years. The once-serious risk of all-out war in Europe followed by global fighting and an intercontinental nuclear exchange has been vastly reduced, if not eliminated entirely. Accompanying this favorable development, however, is the ongoing emergence of a far more complex depolarized global system, with dangers of its own, that defies simple characterization. Moreover, potential adversaries that threaten U.S. interests will still remain on the scene, and many will continue to have sizable military forces that can be used for regional purposes, if not for global warfare. Interstate political conflict thus has not been relegated to the history books, and neither has major war.

Confident predictions about exactly what the future holds are impossible to make, and experts differ sharply in their appraisals. Notwithstanding the vast changes that already have occurred since 1989, the world is experiencing a tectonic upheaval in international politics that might still be far removed from having run its full course. Major additional changes of equivalent magnitude might await us—Europe, Asia, and the Middle East are all highly fluid and changing rapidly. The global security system of the early 21st century could be radically different from what exists today. The outcome might be favorable to global peace, or unfavorable, or somewhere in between. Only time will tell.

What can be said is that, although the military threat facing the United States will be less imposing and immediate than before, the task of analyzing our future strategy and force requirements will no longer be so straightforward and transparent as was the case during the Cold War. In that conflict, the military threat, likely contingencies, our alliances, our objectives, and the military balance were all well known. Indeed, these factors were frozen in ways that made systematic planning relatively easy. The future is unlikely to be nearly so accommodating. To a degree not yet fully appreciated, our future military strategy will need to be anchored on very different premises, more subtle calculations, greater attention to underlying precepts, and more fluid assessments than during the dangerous but remarkably static and illusively simple era that has been left behind.

The upheaval to defense planning brought about by these international changes is reinforced by the transformation taking place in American domestic life. The presidential election of 1992 not only
brought about a change in party leadership, but evidently has marked the onset of a new era in national economic policy. Throughout the Cold War, the national economy remained strong in absolute and relative terms, enabling the United States not only to maintain powerful military forces, but also to shape an activist international policy untrammelled by compelling economic constraints. Indeed, the United States often was able to subordinate its economic interests in order to carry a heavy share of the West's defense burden, to support the industrial recovery of its allies, and to promote a prosperous world economy anchored on free trade.³

This state of affairs is passing into history. The U.S. economy remains the world's strongest in many ways, but recently has shown disturbing signs of stagnation and structural problems that demand new remedies and different priorities. In the years ahead, a large portion of our nation's intellectual and political energy will be consumed by the agenda of domestic economic renewal, thereby detracting from the unrivaled attention that once was devoted to national security policy. The need for costly domestic investments—coupled with the presence of large federal deficits and slow growth rates—could exert a powerful tug on the fiscal resources that can be devoted to military preparedness. The United States will have less scope for carrying the defense burdens of its alliances, and the need to achieve better industrial competitiveness and greater exports may compel more assertive trade and monetary policies in the world economy. Precisely what these changes mean for defense policy remains to be seen, but they suggest that the task of analyzing military strategy will be affected by domestic considerations to a far greater degree than was previously the case.⁴

Even more fundamental, a new century is about to dawn, leaving behind a period that likely will go down as unique in human history. The world has seen an extended period of monumental clashes between the two dominant ideologies of the post-industrial era: democracy and totalitarianism. The United States found itself as

democracy's vanguard in leading a decades-long ideological crusade on behalf of values and visions that went far beyond the narrow pursuit of national interests. Now that democracy has triumphed over fascism and communism, an era of global ideological strife and intense military rivalry evidently has come to an end.

What will arrive in its wake is uncertain, but most experts believe that the United States cannot disengage from overseas involvements now that our global ideological crusade against 20th-century totalitarianism has been successfully accomplished. The age of interdependence and vulnerability has arrived with a permanence that prohibits any return to isolationism, even if domestic economic problems are compelling. Whether the global security system will continue moving toward stability or turmoil is uncertain, but experts generally conclude that the odds for stability and community-building will worsen if the United States disengages. Yet if there is no communist military threat, what is to be our raison d'être in the coming era? Will it be the further pursuit of democracy and similar community-enhancing values, or the promotion of purely national interests, or a combination of the two?

The goal of spreading democracy and partnership will remain a basic purpose of U.S. foreign policy, and will enjoy greater prospects for success than at any past time. But, many experts assert, a sense of realism and greater complexity will be needed to balance this hopeful vision. Perhaps the West's victory in the Cold War can be parlayed into an enduring era of democratic community-building around the globe. Indeed, some observers believe that the nation-state system is destined to be replaced by multilateral institutions and cooperative policies. Recent events, however, suggest that reality may fall short of this ideal. The fragmentation of many European nations that were created after World War I and sustained by the Cold War, the reappearance of nationalism in some quarters, an upsurge in ethnic tensions, mounting economic strife, the threat of nuclear proliferation, and initial signs that the Western alliance might be weakening all point in a different direction. These trends, and the weight of history, suggest that international politics may see the reappearance of old patterns in which purely national interests—as opposed to transcendent ideology—play a dominant role in shaping the foreign policies of many nations.
The reappearance of the national interest as an important calculation in shaping foreign policy and military strategy does not itself imply a descent into competitive interstate anarchy or the disestablishment of still-functional alliances. Presumably, the lamentable outcome of Europe’s “balance of power” politics during the last two centuries has taught enduring lessons on behalf of collective security and cooperation. Moreover, the West won the Cold War because it subordinated national priorities to the larger cause of building security coalitions in Europe and Asia, and this experience will continue to influence the diplomatic conduct of many nations, including the United States. The national interest therefore will be one factor in shaping future policy, and one factor only.

Even so, this change means that U.S. military strategy likely will have to be crafted in a strategic environment quite different from anything experienced in our national history. The European nations have the benefit of participating in the interstate politics of 1648–1914, when practices for pursuing national interests in a more traditional era were forged. From its inception to 1914, the United States remained aloof from world affairs, and was not compelled to forge an activist security policy and strategy aimed at protecting its national interests. As a result, it has no historical legacy to draw upon for dealing with the more traditional, less ideological, and more multipolar form of global politics that may lie ahead. To a worrisome degree, the United States will be faced with the difficult task of acting in a historical vacuum, and will have to create an appropriate approach out of whole cloth.5

These international and domestic changes interact to elevate the importance of thinking deeply about future U.S. military strategy. The task at hand is far more fundamental than performing a mechanistic analysis of how the military threat has changed. Although threat assessment will remain part of the strategy equation, the analytical process will need to address many other issues as well, including how to shape the international environment and to control underlying political and economic changes that eventually could give rise to new threats. The core security precepts that grew out of the Cold

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War—including deterrence, collective security, flexible response, and their bedfellows—will have to be reexamined and perhaps replaced with entirely new concepts. The bedrock issue will be one of deciding how military power can best be employed to serve our national interests and democratic visions in an era that probably will offer a complex and wholly unique blend of the traditional and the modern: a combination of the 19th and 21st centuries.

At the risk of exaggeration, the situation may mandate an intellectual upheaval of revolutionary importance—the casting out of an old strategy paradigm in favor of something quite different. At a minimum, a careful balancing of continuity and change will be needed, and even this moderate agenda promises to be difficult. The absence of a clear global military threat amidst an ambiguous but volatile international environment compels strategy analysis to deal with amorphous developments whose potential consequences are no less severe because of their current lack of clarity. Military strategy ideally is not reactive and focused on today's events, but instead is proactive and focused on tomorrow. It exists not only to deal with already-existing threats, but also to help shape events and to prevent future problems from arising. The tentative and debatable nature of these potential problems, however, makes the task of strategy development all the more difficult. This task is doubly hard for a democracy that places a high premium on the kind of consensus-formation that is normally achievable only when the situation is clear.

Moreover, the task of analysis today requires a penetrating assessment of strategy's most intellectually challenging components. Threat analysis is comparatively easy, as is the development of defense programs when threats are known and military strategy already is agreed upon. Far harder is the crafting of the multiple objectives, integrated security concepts, balanced priorities, and complex tradeoffs that lie at the heart of modern strategy. The challenge of developing future U.S. strategy lies heavily in these areas.

The task of carrying this difficult process to completion will require a more searching evaluation of strategy's hidden dimensions than has been undertaken for many years. One of the negative legacies of the Cold War is that, from the 1970s onward, U.S. military strategy was so firmly established in an unchanging world that the art of strategy analysis—painfully learned in the Cold War's first two decades—was
largely forgotten. To a major degree, defense planning became increasingly narrow, technical, and programmatic. The lost art of strategy analysis will now have to be relearned and applied to a very different era that may demand new approaches to using military power.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This report presents an analytical inquiry into the determinants of U.S. military strategy for the coming two decades. Responding to guidance from the U.S. Department of Defense, it has four specific purposes:


2. Provide forecasts of the future international security environment, including conflict scenarios.


4. Analyze U.S. force capabilities for executing national military strategy, and develop broad policy recommendations.

These purposes call for a deep-probing analysis of future U.S. military strategy in ways reminiscent of the strategy study conducted in NSC-68, an interagency review prepared in 1950. Written at a time when the East-West rivalry was heating up and acquiring a military dimension, NSC-68 established the conceptual underpinnings for U.S. military strategy during the Cold War. Prior to NSC-68, U.S. rearmament had not yet begun and NATO existed as a political alliance, but it lacked organized nuclear and conventional defenses. Concluding that dramatically enhanced U.S. and NATO defense preparedness was needed to balance growing Soviet military power, NSC-68 established containment, deterrence, collective security, and continental defense as core U.S. strategy concepts. From these con-
cepts came recommendations to bolster U.S. nuclear strength, and to enlarge U.S. and allied conventional defenses in Europe and Asia.\(^6\)

The Truman Administration largely embraced these recommendations, as did NATO, and consequently a major buildup was launched that helped shape the West's force posture, military doctrine, and coalition plans during the coming years. The process of strategy development did not end there. In 1957, the United States and NATO adopted the strategy of Massive Retaliation (MC 14/2), which upgraded the importance of nuclear deterrence and downplayed conventional defense in Europe and elsewhere. In 1967, Massive Retaliation was replaced by the Strategy of Flexible Response (MC 14/3), which responded to the USSR's acquisition of a credible nuclear deterrent by attaching greater importance to NATO's conventional defenses. With MC 14/3's adoption, U.S. and Western military strategy for the Cold War was now forged, and although some modifications were made, its foundations remained largely unchanged for the next twenty years.\(^7\)

The challenge now facing the United States is to analyze its future military strategy in the similarly comprehensive terms of NSC-68 and MC 14/3. To this end, this report conducts a multidisciplinary inquiry aimed at assessing the multiple factors that will influence U.S. military strategy. Political analysis assesses how future strategic trends will shape the international security environment facing the United States. Military analysis examines force levels, defense improvement efforts, and technological changes among allied and adversary nations. Economic analysis examines the budgetary resources likely to be available to the Department of Defense in future years, and how these resources can be best invested. The technique of decision analysis is employed to examine U.S. goals, develop alternative strategies and force postures, and assess the implications for U.S. security. The report's goal is to blend together these methodologies to create a rich analytical framework that illuminates

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the requirements and options ahead in ways that suggest guidelines on how U.S. defense policy and strategy can be forged both today and tomorrow.

The analytical horizons of this study extend well beyond a technical appraisal of regional military threats, and beyond today's international security system. Deterrence and defense against regional threats will remain an important goal, but the security challenge facing the United States is likely to be more comprehensive than simply remaining prepared for the next Desert Storm, wherever it might occur. Today's security environment presents a historically unique situation in which regional threats posed by small and medium powers still abound, but relations among the major powers are tranquil for the first time in decades. Perhaps this state of affairs will continue to exist, but alternative developments, driven by the tectonic forces at work in global politics, also need to be considered.

Most likely, future U.S. national security policy will need to have a dual focus: control of regional tensions, and promotion of stable and cooperative relations among the major powers. Both goals will be important, and failure in either area could have serious consequences. Regional conflicts can threaten specific U.S. interests, and any descent into major power rivalry could create a tense atmosphere of worldwide competition. As the Cold War showed, moreover, security troubles in both categories can feed off each other, thereby exacerbating the threats to U.S. interests and goals. Especially if international trends evolve in negative directions, the United States will need a military strategy capable of supporting this dual policy focus. Accordingly, this report examines both regional trends and major power relations, and it crafts military strategies aimed at addressing security challenges in both areas.

The study emphasizes assessing how the current Regional Strategy can be improved upon to handle the security challenges of the next few years, and how this strategy can be adjusted if force levels and resources are less than were planned in 1992. The report also develops a spectrum of alternative strategies for dealing with international conditions that might be confronted in the more distant future. It offers strategies for responding to less threatening, more harmonious worlds than exist today. And it fashions strategies for dealing with more dangerous worlds, including worsened regional tensions and
multipolar rivalries among the major powers. For each strategy, the force levels needed to meet requirements are assessed. The effect is to create a range of options that can be selected as a function of the evolving world situation. These alternatives are presented only in conceptual form and would require further elaboration before being implemented, but they help illuminate the manifold considerations that may have to be taken into account in developing U.S. military strategy in the era ahead.

ORGANIZATION

Following this introduction, Chapter Two analyzes the Regional Strategy and the criticisms levied at it. Chapters Three through Six analyze the factors that will shape U.S. military strategy in the near term and the more distant future. Addressed first are the domestic determinants of strategy, followed by an assessment of international determinants, including U.S. national interests abroad and future developments in international security affairs. The next two chapters examine strategy options open to the United States. Chapter Seven analyzes how the Regional Strategy can be refined to provide a better approach for dealing with international affairs as they exist today and in the near future. Chapter Eight conceptually develops entirely new military strategies in the event that, in the more distant future, the current international system gives way to something very different, for good or ill. Following this treatment of strategy alternatives, Chapter Nine analyzes methodological approaches for determining conventional force capabilities needed to carry out contemporary strategy. It develops a new methodology anchored on performing generic military missions, gauges the Base Force in relation to the requirements posed by this methodology, and offers insights on the implications of reducing the Base Force. Chapter Ten employs this methodology to illuminate options for reducing the Base Force by modest amounts, in the event that reductions of this magnitude are taken. Chapter Eleven provides conclusions.
The best place to begin examining future U.S. military strategy is to assess the Regional Strategy and Base Force. The analysis sets the stage by first developing a general conceptual model of strategy and resource requirements, and by briefly describing U.S. military strategy during the Cold War's final decades. It then describes the Regional Strategy and Base Force as they emerged during 1990–1992, analyzes their underlying premises, and reviews the critiques that have been levied at them and the issues that will influence future U.S. strategy.

A GENERAL MODEL OF MILITARY STRATEGY AND FORCES

For a superpower with global interests and commitments, military strategy in the modern era is a complex phenomenon that faces both outward and inward. Strategy faces outward by providing guidance on how military forces are to be used to promote national goals in world affairs and to contend with threats posed by other nations and alliances. Strategy faces inward by providing guidelines on how forces are to be structured, how the various force elements are to be coordinated with one another, and how the perennial question of resource requirements is to be approached.

Taking into account both the outward and inward dimensions, Figure 2.1 provides an ideal model of how military strategy and forces should be structured. Military strategy should flow from national security policy in a logical and deductive manner, thus ensuring that the strategy supports the larger purpose of pursuing national
goals in world affairs. Military strategy thereafter is divided into separate subcomponents, all of which should support each other in a coordinated fashion. It should provide a nuclear strategy and a conventional strategy that, while handling somewhat separate domains, blend together to underpin the overall strategy. Conventional strategy, in turn, is divided into ground, air, and naval branches. These components too should work together and support one another, thereby providing an integrated, joint approach. Supporting all these strategy components should be nuclear and conventional force postures that reflect the requirements posed by the strategy.

This model may seem obvious to seasoned defense planners, but it helps illustrate the difficulties encountered in developing a fully comprehensive military strategy. Although the key task is to develop an overall strategy that reflects national security policy, the process of strategy development does not end there. The various subcomponents must be developed and related to each other. Even if a sound overall strategy is developed, failure to fashion well-coordinated subcomponents could undermine a nation's ability to carry out the strategy. Moreover, inadequate or improperly structured forces
could also undermine implementation, thereby making the strategy hollow.

These threats, as strategy experts know, are real. The art of shaping a fully coordinated strategy is demanding, and is constrained by a host of powerful barriers, intellectual as well as political, bureaucratic, and technological. During the Cold War, the United States struggled repeatedly to fashion a properly balanced strategy and force posture. Complete success was never achieved, and major failures were encountered along the way. Relative success, however, was attained in the sense that the United States and its allies effectively checkmated the quest for military supremacy relentlessly pursued by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. This accomplishment played no small role in the ability of the Western alliance to meet its security requirements as the Cold War unfolded. The task for the future is to achieve a similar performance in a very different era.

Resource requirements are an essential part of strategy development. Force needs for each subcomponent can be determined only through a detailed assessment of threats, missions, doctrine, and allied contributions in each theater of operations. Yet an overall philosophy toward confidence levels also is important. Because of inherent uncertainties and the need to grapple with probabilities, the art of strategy analysis does not permit any mathematically fixed specification of military “requirements.” Within realistic limits, no single level of capability can be identified below which failure is inevitable, and above which success is ensured. In essence, more is always better, and less is always worse.

At issue therefore is the degree of security to be attained. When resource levels are under consideration, strategy analysis requires judgment about the margin of insurance to be achieved and the level of risk to be accepted. Because large military forces are expensive, this judgment inevitably is conditioned by budgetary cost and affordability. The troublesome questions to be answered are: How much military confidence is to be embedded in the nation’s capacity to carry out its strategy? How much is the nation willing to pay for each extra increment of confidence?

This judgment normally is affected by the importance of each specific situation, and by the amount of danger being encountered. U.S.
military strategy during the Cold War, for example, sought very high confidence in preparing the strategic nuclear deterrent, but was willing to accept somewhat greater risks in preparing theater defenses, and especially so in regions where truly vital interests were not at stake. At the risk of oversimplification, a guiding approach commonly has been employed: a "prudent" level of risk. That is, U.S. strategy has generally not sought near-perfect levels of confidence, and it has been willing to accept some risk. But it also has sought to build sufficient forces to achieve relatively high confidence, and to reduce risks to comfortable proportions. As an illustration, 80 percent confidence of success is often deemed sufficient if the budgetary costs of achieving greater insurance are too high.

In making judgments about desired confidence levels as a function of budgetary cost, U.S. defense planners often have found value in employing the so-called "curve of diminishing marginal returns," displayed on Figure 2.2. This curve postulates that there is a nonlinear relationship between investments and security. That is, major security returns are experienced in the early stages of force building. But as force levels grow to the point where the threat has been bal-

![Figure 2.2—Curve of Diminishing Marginal Returns](image-url)
anced and the probability of success has been elevated to a high level, there are fewer gains at the margin in relation to each dollar invested. Eventually the point is reached where further investments will yield only very small returns, to the point where the gain arguably is not worth the cost.¹

A common rule of thumb employed by U.S. defense planners has been to make investments to the point where the knee of this curve has been reached. At this point, acceptable confidence levels have been attained and further investments would not merit the high budgetary expenditures and opportunity costs experienced elsewhere. To be sure, the exact dimensions of this curve must be developed for each situation, and the value attached to each increment of security is a matter of political judgment. But the concept of prudent risk and the curve of diminishing marginal returns provide a commonly employed approach to the task of mating military strategy to resource investment philosophy. Especially because economic affordability seems destined to play a major role in the years ahead, these tools likely will continue to be employed in developing the future U.S. military strategy and force posture.

COLD WAR STRATEGY OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE AND GLOBAL DEFENSE

A common misconception holds that U.S. military strategy during the Cold War was entirely threat-oriented. In fact, the strategy was anchored on a comprehensive set of national goals and core security concepts, from which flowed a basic philosophy toward the use of military forces in peace and war. Threat analysis was an important variable in the strategy-development process, but it was far from the only factor, or even the most important. The Flexible Response strategy was embraced not only because it responded to this threat, but also because it provided the best vehicle for pursuing the multiple objectives that were the driving force behind U.S. and alliance policy.²

²See Kugler, NATO Military Strategy for the Post-Cold War Era.
Indeed, earlier in the Cold War the United States embraced the very different and nuclear-oriented strategy of Massive Retaliation as its vehicle for pursuing containment, deterrence, and collective security. But by the early 1960s Massive Retaliation had become outdated by the USSR's acquisition of a credible capability for nuclear retaliation. As a result, Massive Retaliation no longer seemed capable of serving as an all-purpose deterrent. Many Western analysts feared that the Soviet Union, acting under the umbrella of its own nuclear deterrent, would discount the West's threat to respond with a massive nuclear blow, and therefore Moscow might feel free to launch with impunity at least limited conventional aggression. Moreover, a broader range of Western military responses was needed to deal with aggression once it occurred. Massive Retaliation provided only a single apocalyptic script, and the new situation called for a set of more measured responses.

Flexible Response provided the necessary spectrum of options. Like Massive Retaliation, it too was anchored on containment, deterrence, and collective security. But it also took into account the additional objectives that by the 1960s had begun acquiring status in Western strategy, including forward defense, escalation control, and alliance cohesion. As a result, Flexible Response struck a new balance between nuclear and conventional forces. It retained reliance on nuclear forces to deter nuclear attack, and to provide retaliation if the enemy crossed the nuclear threshold. But it also called for stronger U.S. and allied conventional forces to deter nonnuclear aggression, and to provide the means for a strong forward defense of Western borders in the event conventional aggression occurred.

Whereas Massive Retaliation relied primarily on nuclear weapons for deterrence and defense, Flexible Response elevated conventional forces to co-equal status, and assigned separate roles to these two force elements. Nuclear weapons continued to have an important place in the new strategy, but they no longer were viewed as a substitute for adequate conventional defenses. Flexible Response demanded adequacy in both realms, even at the higher budgetary cost required to build a stronger conventional posture.

Moreover, Flexible Response mandated a new approach to escalation in the event conventional defense failed. Whereas Massive Retaliation had called for an immediate all-out nuclear blow aimed
at destroying the enemy's forces and industrial power, the new strategy called for a more gradual escalation aimed at resolving the conflict on political terms before both sides were consumed by nuclear holocaust. As a result, the initial response was to be confined to tactical and theater nuclear weapons, which were to be used in a carefully controlled manner that began with limited battlefield strikes and then escalated gradually in an effort to convince the enemy to desist. An all-out nuclear strike at the enemy's homeland was to be conducted only in the event this graduated response failed, and no other alternative was available. Even then, nuclear strikes initially were to focus on enemy military forces, in the hope that both sides might avoid a city-busting exchange.

Flexible Response's adoption by NATO in 1967 was a controversial event. The primary reason was fear in Western Europe that the new strategy might be unaffordable and could weaken deterrence by downplaying nuclear weapons too far. But this fear was gradually overcome, and as the years passed by Flexible Response steadily embedded itself into Western defense planning. As a result, Flexible Response served as the conceptual underpinning for the many developments that took place in U.S./NATO strategy and forces during the Cold War's final two decades.

As events turned out, Flexible Response did not translate into a downsizing of the U.S. nuclear posture inherited from Massive Retaliation. To the contrary, the nuclear posture remained large, and steadily grew more capable as a result of modernization. During these years, U.S. nuclear planning embraced the triad philosophy, which called for a retaliatory posture of three survivable legs: ICBMs, SLBMs (sea-launched ballistic missiles), and strategic bombers. In the wake came a steady stream of efforts to bolster U.S. strategic forces in response to the major nuclear buildup that the USSR pursued from the mid-1960s onward. U.S. improvement efforts included acquisition of a more durable command and control system, hardened ICBM silos, the multiple independent reentry vehicle (MIRV) warhead, the M-X ICBM, cruise missiles, two new strategic bombers, the Trident submarine, and the D-5 SLBM missile. The effect was to create a nuclear force of about 2000 launchers and 14,000 delivery vehicles. Moreover, by the mid-1980s, the United States was investing large funds into research and development on a new
Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which contemplated eventual deployment of a ballistic missile defense system.

If these nuclear measures attracted great publicity, the conventional programs carried out under Flexible Response were far costlier and had a larger bearing on U.S. strategy for actually fighting a war. During the 1950s and 1960s, fear of the Soviet Union and China led the United States to constantly address defense missions in both Europe and Asia. The end of the Vietnam War and the emergence of the Sino-Soviet rift, however, led to a partial deemphasis on Asia. During the early to mid 1970s, U.S. conventional plans principally focused on Central Europe, where a large U.S. contribution was needed to help deter a Warsaw Pact threat of 90 divisions and 3600 combat aircraft. As a result, the United States continuously deployed in Europe some 300,000 troops, 5-2/3 Army division-equivalents, 550 combat aircraft, and 7000 nuclear warheads. In event of a full-scale war, U.S. plans called for a massive reinforcement effort, culminating in deployment of 20 Army and Marine divisions and over 2000 combat aircraft. In addition, six to eight carrier battle groups and other naval forces were to anchor NATO’s naval defenses in the Atlantic, the northern waters, and the Mediterranean.

By the late 1970s, U.S. defense planning had begun broadening beyond Europe. The tumultuous events in Southwest Asia, including Iran’s descent into instability and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, gave rise to mounting concern for the security of the Persian Gulf oilfields. As a result, the United States began crafting plans and programs for deployment of large forces to the Persian Gulf in event of aggression by the USSR or any other adversary. In total, U.S. plans called for dispatch of some eight Army and Marine divisions, 750 combat aircraft, and four to six carrier battle groups. This effort, it is noteworthy, was to be launched even as a major reinforcement was being conducted in Europe. Hence, U.S. strategy was to defend both Europe and the Persian Gulf concurrently.3

During the 1980s, U.S. conventional strategy evolved to become truly global in character. This development owed partly to an appraisal suggesting that Soviet/Warsaw Pact conventional aggression would

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itself be conducted on a global stage. Prevailing estimates held that the USSR, with its massive forces, would launch concurrent invasions of Europe and the Persian Gulf, while exerting military pressure on Japan and South Korea in the Pacific. Meanwhile, Soviet naval forces were expected to launch global strikes against the West's vital sea lines of communication. As a result, a global U.S./allied deterrent posture was deemed necessary.  

Further contributing to this global focus were emerging developments in U.S. military doctrine. In particular, U.S. naval officers argued that Western military strategy should not be entirely reactive. The Navy's call for a doctrine of maritime superiority envisioned offensive actions designed to exert pressure on enemy forces at vulnerable points. Particularly cited were the Kola Peninsula in Europe's northern waters and Soviet military bases on the Siberian coast near Japan. The extent to which this approach was fully embraced by the United States and its allies was unclear, but owing to the U.S. Navy's ability to project power worldwide, it provided additional impetus to the growing U.S. emphasis on a global defense strategy.

The emergence of this global strategy provided the guiding rationale for the large U.S. conventional military buildup launched under the Reagan Administration. The Reagan buildup called for expansion of the active force posture to reach 18 Army divisions, three Marine divisions (Marine Expeditionary Forces, or MEFs), 24 USAF fighter wings, and a Navy of 16 carriers and 600 ships. Large strategic mobility forces and reserve component forces of ten Army divisions, one MEF, and 12 USAF wings were to back up this posture. The entire posture was to be sufficiently ready, modern, and sustained to fight a strong enemy. The effect was to require major funding increases, which were reflected in the Reagan Administration's endorsement of a DoD budget of $300 billion or more.

Accompanying this trend toward global strategy came coordinated planning among the various U.S. military theaters. Prior to the 1980s, U.S. defense plans had a predominantly regional cast. That is, plans to defend Europe were developed largely in isolation of plans for other theaters, and vice versa. The United States always had tried

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to maintain sufficient forces for more than one theater—the concept of a “1-1/2 war” strategy, embraced during the early 1970s, reflected this concern. But because concurrent wars in several theaters were deemed unlikely, questions about how to coordinate multitheater operations were not given full attention. As a result, some combat and support units found themselves facing a requirement to fight in several different locations, without a clear sense of priorities. Each field commander was given a sharp picture of his forces and missions in event that operations would be conducted only in his theater, but was left with a murky picture of what would transpire if major wars were fought in more than one place.

The arrival of a global strategy compelled a greater focus on concurrent multitheater operations. The result was the preparation of new Operational Plans (OPlans) in which deployment schedules and campaign concepts for Europe, the Persian Gulf, and the Pacific were coordinated. Efforts were made to harmonize the allocation of combat forces, logistic support, and mobility assets among these separate theaters. Above all, emphasis was placed on ensuring that sound priorities were established, that assets were distributed in a balanced fashion, and that individual units were allocated only to one theater at a time. To the extent this effort succeeded, a more coherent global plan emerged, one that helped enable the United States to defend more than one theater at a time.

These global defense plans were anchored on the premise of combined military operations growing out of collective security alliances and coalition arrangements. The idea that U.S. military forces should operate in close cooperation with allied forces was first established in the 1950s and grew to maturity in the following decades. By the 1980s, U.S. plans for Europe called for tightly integrated operations with allied forces not only in Central Europe, but also on the northern and southern flanks. Under guidance from NATO’s integrated command, U.S. forces trained regularly with allied units, and in event of war, would have worked closely with them.

Plans in the Pacific and Asia were also of a combined nature. This was especially true in Korea, where decades of cooperation produced integrated U.S. and South Korean forces and plans. Plans for the defense of Japan and the Philippines were less tightly integrated, owing to the different security conditions and alliance arrangements there.
The emergence of a growing Soviet air and naval threat during the 1980s, however, did lead to improved coordination in both areas. For example, Japan's own defenses required U.S. military support in event of a major Soviet invasion.

The one exception to this pattern of formal coalition planning was the Persian Gulf. There the region's complex politics—and the lack of a well-defined threat, formal security alliances, established command structures, and a U.S. peacetime presence—made combined planning a tentative exercise at best. This barrier was partly overcome in the mid 1980s, when the Iran-Iraq war compelled the western nations to cooperate in securing the Persian Gulf sealanes. Then, in late 1990 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait compelled the United States and its allies to forge an ad hoc coalition to defend Saudi Arabia, and later to mount the major offensive operation that liberated Kuwait.

Along with coalition planning came a growing emphasis on joint operations. Earlier in the Cold War, U.S. ground, air, and naval forces tended to develop their doctrines independently of one another. Moreover, each service pursued questionable priorities in relation to its own missions and the threat, resulting in an uncoordinated response. For example, the Navy lacked the mobility assets to quickly project U.S. ground and air forces to theaters where continental operations were required, and seemed more oriented to winning the sea battle than to assisting in continental defense. The Air Force was primarily oriented to air superiority and deep strike missions, rather than to assisting Army forces that might be seriously outnumbered. The Army, in turn, seemed indifferent to the potential contribution of air forces, but lacked the doctrine and mechanized strength needed to deal with a mobile and heavily armored threat.

From the 1960s onward, a sustained effort was made to promote a better understanding of joint operations, and by the late 1980s, considerable progress was evident. During these years, major steps were taken to procure far better force deployment capabilities through a combination of airlift, sealift, and prepositioning. The Navy developed a greater concern for contributing to continental missions, and the Air Force and Army worked more closely together to forge a capacity for joint operations that blended air and ground forces on behalf of single integrated campaigns. For its part, the Army departed from its earlier emphasis on linear defense to embrace mobile op-
erations and the operational art, and it acquired the versatile forces needed to carry out this doctrine. Aided by an infusion of new technologies and high readiness brought about by the defense spending increases of the 1980s, the result was the highly proficient joint operation that led to victory in Desert Storm.

EMERGENCE OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY AND BASE FORCE

Four decades of Cold War and East-West military rivalry clearly made a profound imprint on U.S. and NATO military strategy and forces. Almost overnight, in ways that far exceeded original expectations, this legacy was uprooted by the sudden end of the Cold War and the West's near-total victory. The situation required a major retooling of strategic thinking, a task that the United States and NATO promptly embarked upon. After calling for strategy reform at the London Summit in July 1989, NATO spent the next 18 months crafting a strategic concept that was officially adopted at the Rome Summit in late 1990. Behind the scenes, meanwhile, the United States embarked on a strategy review of its own, an effort that led to the Regional Strategy. First announced in August 1990 and elaborated over the following year, the new strategy offered a hastily created yet carefully weighed vehicle to reconfigure existing U.S. defense policy to meet the reduced but still important security demands of the coming era.

The Regional Strategy emerged during a brief and tumultuous period that created a new and unique, but distinctly tentative, atmosphere. During August 1990, optimism was rapidly growing about the political future of Europe and the international security order. With Germany soon to be unified and the Warsaw Pact dissolving, the Cold War was officially over in Europe. Soviet forces were scheduled to withdraw from the forward areas, thereby liberating Eastern Europe and eliminating the fear of invasion that NATO had faced for forty years. Moreover, all of Eastern Europe was embracing democracy, and when the aborted coup in Moscow failed, the USSR was pointed toward reforms as well. The future thus seemed to offer an era of spreading democracy, unity, and peace in Europe. Tranquility in Europe, moreover, seemed likely to have a beneficial effect in other regions. Because the superpowers now would often be collab-
orating rather than always opposing each other, stability in Asia and the Middle East seemed especially to benefit.

Notwithstanding this political optimism for a new world order anchored on stable relations among the major powers, questions remained about regional military balances and political relationships around the globe. The Warsaw Pact was being dismantled, but as of early fall 1990, the Soviet Union remained a unified nation. Although the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) and Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaties were designed to help strip away the USSR’s capacity to pose a global military threat, that nation seemed likely to continue to possess large military forces that plausibly could re-threaten Eastern Europe and NATO. In these pre-Desert Storm months, moreover, Iraq remained a strong regional power capable of threatening the West’s vital interests in the Persian Gulf. U.S. forces were rushing to the area to defend Saudi Arabia against Iraqi attack, but the climactic counter-offensive was still months away, and the coalition’s prospects were uncertain. Also, the Korean peninsula remained turbulent, and North Korea still posed a major military threat to South Korea and U.S. interests there. To U.S. defense planners, global war and major power rivalry thus seemed to have faded into history, but purely regional wars of threatening dimensions remained worrisome.

The Regional Strategy reflected the combination of political optimism, guarded military caution, and profound uncertainty mandated by this rapidly changing situation. President Bush first unveiled the Regional Strategy in a speech at Aspen, Colorado, on the day Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. During the following months, marked by the collapse of the USSR and the dramatic Desert Storm victory, the strategy was further developed and codified. The Regional Strategy was officially blessed in a document entitled National Security Strategy of the United States, released by the White House in August 1991. It was discussed in more detail in the National Military Strategy study written by General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This document was published in November 1991.5

The foreign policy assumptions underpinning the Regional Strategy reflected the optimism of late 1990, magnified by the 1991 successes in Europe and the Persian Gulf. Indeed, the White House document held out the promise of a “new world order,” a stable and democratic international system anchored on “our own values and ideals” and marked by peace and global security cooperation under the United Nations. The document was careful to note that this new order was an aspiration, not a fact, and would require hard work. But reflecting on the Desert Storm experience, it offered an upbeat assessment of the years ahead provided the United States acted responsibly as a world leader. To this end, it called for a U.S. foreign policy of peaceful engagement, indivisible security, and community building. Relying on a combination of unilateral action and collectivist principles, this policy was to be implemented through an activist use of the political, economic, and military instruments at Washington’s disposal.

The need for continued U.S. military strength stemmed from the assertion that, notwithstanding the bright prospects ahead, the world remained a dangerous and potentially unstable place. A coherent U.S. military strategy and a strong defense posture were deemed necessary to promote stability and peaceful change, to deter conflicts, and to respond effectively when deterrence failed. As General Powell’s document made clear, the key military feature of the Regional Strategy is that the United States no longer would base its defense preparations on the need to fight a global war. Instead, Powell said, the new strategy would focus on preparing for major regional conflicts (MRCs), with the Desert Storm case being an obvious model. Powell pointed to the Persian Gulf and Korea as possible locations for regional wars, but asserted that although future conflicts were almost inevitable, their specific features could not be predicted. The real threat, he said, was the unknown, the uncertain. Pointing out that the United States had often been surprised by regional aggression in the past, he asserted that the central task was to be prepared to defeat regional aggression in the future, wherever it might occur.

President Bush’s statement had laid down four “foundations” for the new strategy, and Powell elaborated on them—strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution. The rationale behind “strategic deterrence and defense” reflected
traditional missions—to deter and defend against any nuclear threat to the United States and its allies. "Forward presence" focused on the requirement to maintain sufficient U.S. forces overseas to preserve U.S. influence, meet alliance commitments, maintain a balance of power, and respond quickly to fast-breaking crises. "Crisis response" pointed to the need for sufficient forces and mobility assets to respond in strength to any emergency. "Reconstitution" referred to the need to maintain the capacity to rebuild U.S. defense strength to deal with a global adversary, should that threat reappear.

Powell built upon these foundations to articulate eight "strategic principles" for the Regional Strategy: readiness, collective security, arms control, maritime and aerospace superiority, strategic agility, power projection, technological superiority, and decisive force. The imprint of Desert Storm could be seen in these principles, for victory in that conflict was a product of the U.S. ability to project well-trained and well-equipped forces that were used in an intelligent fashion. The "decisive force" principle is especially noteworthy here. Drawing an obvious analogy to the Vietnam War, Powell asserted that, once a decision to fight had been made, half-measures and confused objectives were a prescription for high casualties, defeat, and disaster at home and abroad. The principle of decisive force, he said, was aimed at rapidly assembling the forces needed to win, and then employing these forces under sound doctrine to swiftly overpower adversaries and terminate fighting with minimum loss of life. Desert Storm thus was to be the model for regional wars of the future.

As the Regional Strategy made clear, a major U.S. military drawdown was possible now that the global communist threat was fading, but a still-sizeable posture was needed to deal with the challenges ahead. The largest reductions, it became clear, were to come in the nuclear forces. In the fall of 1990, President Bush announced wholesale cutbacks in tactical and theater nuclear weapons, especially those assigned to the Army and the Navy. The Air Force was to have primary responsibility for tactical nuclear missions, but these missions were being relegated to a position of considerably less importance than during the Cold War. Driven by the START negotiations and by the need to secure dismantlement of Soviet ICBMs in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the reductions in U.S. strategic nuclear forces were also dramatic. As of late 1991, the U.S. posture included about 2000
launchers and 13,000 warheads. The START treaty pointed the way to a smaller posture of about 1000 launchers and 8500 warheads. A subsequent Bush-Yeltsin accord for START II imposed minor changes on launchers, but by eliminating MIRVed warheads on ICBMs and reducing them on SLBMs, the future warhead total was pared to only 3500 warheads. The Commonwealth was to be left with a similar posture, to be based entirely on Russian soil. These reductions on both sides are to be undertaken gradually, and are to come to fruition early in the next decade.

If these nuclear reductions attracted considerable publicity, the changes planned for U.S. conventional forces had greater implications for the defense budget, and possibly for future wars. In a nutshell, the Regional Strategy as defined by the Bush Administration called for a roughly 25 percent reduction in the conventional posture, thereby implying that 75 percent of the Cold War strength was to be retained. Dubbing the new posture the “Base Force,” President Bush asserted that it represented the point below which further reductions would not be prudent. In his strategy statement, Powell revealed that the Base Force would be composed of the units shown in Table 2.1.

The new posture did not reflect a perfect 25 percent linear reduction across the board. Army and Marine divisions were being reduced by 31 percent, Air Force wings by 25 percent, Navy carriers by 20 per-

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<td>Cold War 1991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base Force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aDoes not include two “reconstitution” divisions in cadre status and several independent brigades and regiments.

bCarrier battle groups.
cent, and total Navy ships by 15 percent. Notwithstanding this tilt in favor of the Navy, the picture nonetheless was one of broad continuity in force composition. The Base Force included a balanced combination of ground, air, and naval combat forces. Each component was to be reduced, but the former posture’s emphasis on joint operations was maintained, and the distribution between active and reserve component forces was to remain constant. The new strategy thus called for smaller forces than during the Cold War, but a similar mix of the sort required to execute the regional Desert Storms of the future.

In his strategy statement, Powell divided these forces into three packages: Atlantic forces for the area stretching from Europe to the Persian Gulf, Pacific forces for the Pacific Ocean area of the world, and Contingency forces for “come-as-you-are” wars of unspecified geographic location. Powell divided the forces along the lines displayed in Table 2.2. This scheme did not reflect any rigid allocation; actual deployments would depend upon the circumstances. But this scheme did reflect a belief that the Base Force should provide some units oriented to specific geographic regions, and other forces offering a flexible capacity to concentrate greater strength than might normally be expected.

The Base Force included a plan to keep 150,000 troops in Europe, to include 2.3 divisions, three to four wings, and one CVBG in the Mediterranean. In the Pacific some 100,000 troops were to be kept, mostly in Korea and Japan. This posture was to include a division-equivalent of Army and Marines, three air wing-equivalents, and a WESTPAC-deployed carrier battle group. Backing up these forward-deployed forces were to be units in the United States configured for reinforcement missions in both the Atlantic and Pacific regions. The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Divisions/ MEPs</th>
<th>Fighter Wings</th>
<th>CVBGs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5–6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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</table>
large Contingency force in the United States, in turn, provided a capacity for further reinforcements, thereby allowing a powerful force of Desert Storm dimensions to be deployed to Europe, Southwest Asia, or the Pacific. A combination of forward presence and CONUS-based power projection thus provided the military muscle for the Regional Strategy.

THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Announcement of the Regional Strategy and Base Force was greeted with approval in many quarters and criticism in others. That the United States should remain engaged in international affairs was questioned only by a few vocal isolationists, but the associated concept of a "new world order" was subjected to more widespread attack. Some critics found fault in its allegedly naive optimism about the prospects for international cooperation and tranquility. Others portrayed it as a cynical attempt to perpetuate American superpower domination of the globe now that the Soviet Union had disintegrated. These criticisms were mutually incompatible, but they reflected a lack of clarity in the exact visions, goals, and purposes embraced by the new U.S. national security policy and defense strategy.6

For a combination of budgetary and strategic reasons, the Base Force also came under attack. The primary accusations were that it offered an unimaginative linear downsizing and failed to reduce U.S. defense strength far enough to suit the tastes of critics. Opponents of the Base Force argued that the collapse of the USSR and Iraq's defeat had removed the primary military threats facing the United States, thereby leaving behind reduced challenges that failed to justify a posture of Base Force dimensions. As a result, critics asserted, a smaller and restructured U.S. force posture could better meet future requirements.

One argument was that the U.S. troop presence in Europe could be reduced well below the 150,000 troops endorsed by the Administration's plan. Representative Patricia Shroeder (Democrat,

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6See articles in Allison and Treverton, Rethinking America's Security.
Colorado) called for virtually complete withdrawal of permanently stationed troops followed by reliance on a rotational basing scheme whereby units would periodically deploy the area for exercises. Few critics went this far, but a Johns Hopkins University study endorsed withdrawal to a posture of 100,000 troops or less, and other Capitol Hill figures talked in terms of 80,000. The Administration continued to back the 150,000 figure, but Congress passed a resolution endorsing 100,000 soldiers. The White House chose to ignore this resolution, but the issue of troop strength in Europe remained an unsettled matter.

A second argument, with even larger consequences, held that forces based in the United States could also be reduced below Base Force levels. For example, Representative Les Aspin (Democrat, Wisconsin), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, tabled a “threat-based” analysis asserting that the posture could be safely reduced 10–15 percent below the Base Force. Examining future MRCs, Aspin asserted that the risk of a European war could be discounted, and that a Korean MRC could be handled with U.S. airpower alone. This left only a Persian Gulf MRC as a major worry, but the likelihood of a far smaller Iraqi threat meant that the defense goal could be achieved with a smaller U.S. force than that deployed for Desert Storm. As a replacement for the Base Force, Aspin recommended a smaller posture with emphasis on naval and ground forces, and fewer air forces.

A Brookings Institution study recommended even deeper cuts, to a level 35 percent below the Base Force. Again, the principal assertion was that future regional adversaries in the Persian Gulf and Korea could be handled with relatively modest U.S. force commitments. The Brookings study called for a posture structured along quite different lines than Aspin’s. Whereas Aspin favored carriers and divisions, the Brookings study called for major reductions in these ele-

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ments, and recommended retention of all 15 USAF Base Force fighter wings. See Table 2.3.

In his testimony to Congress in early 1992, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney endeavored to answer the mounting attacks on the Regional Strategy and Base Force. Presenting the Bush Administration’s defense budget for FY 1993, Cheney broke new strategy ground. He argued that the goal of the new strategy was not merely to defend against existing regional opponents, but also to preserve the strategic advantages brought about by victory in the Cold War. By eliminating the threat of the USSR’s hegemonic ambitions, Cheney said, this victory had yielded gains in strategic space and time, thereby placing the Western alliance on the threshold of an era of enduring peace. Cheney further argued that permanent peace was a goal yet to be achieved, and that many difficult obstacles lay ahead. One of the principal tasks for the future, he asserted, was to prevent the reappearance of another threatening hegemon with global ambitions. To achieve this goal, Cheney called for a strategy aimed at shaping the international system by guiding it in the direction of stability, democracy, and cooperation. A strong defense posture, he argued, was needed to perform this shaping function.

Table 2.3
Debate Over the Base Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Army Divisions</th>
<th>Marine MEFs</th>
<th>Air Force Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs</th>
<th>Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DoD Base Force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspin Posture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookings Posture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cheney acknowledged that regional defense would remain an important feature of the new strategy, but he debunked the allegedly mechanistic calculations produced by Pentagon critics. The chief problem confronting analysis, he asserted, was uncertainty. The wars of the future, he claimed, could not be predicted with any confidence, and the Defense Department therefore could not safely assume that enemy threats would be small and easily managed. Employing caution as his watchword, Cheney argued that the Base Force represented the lowest level justified by prudent planning.

In his testimony to Congress, General Powell echoed similar themes and advanced additional military reasons for the Base Force. Powell stressed the limitations of threat-oriented contingency analysis, and underscored the impossibility of predicting future wars. As a result, he said, the United States needed to remain prepared to deal with unforeseen and genuinely threatening events. Powell further asserted that, given the uncertainty ahead, the United States should focus on the combat capabilities of its military posture to ensure that a sufficient array of assets always would be present. Stressing the need for flexibility and diversity, Powell argued for a coherent posture capable of fully performing the multiple missions demanded on the modern battlefield, backed up by an adequate support infrastructure in the United States. He also argued against a too-rapid drawdown in which turbulence might sap the posture’s strength. Like Cheney, Powell argued that the Base Force met the requirements of the new strategy.  

The Cheney and Powell statements added analytical depth to the Pentagon’s public arguments, but touched off further criticisms from opponents. Cheney’s anti-hegemon concept was praised in some quarters for focusing on global events and the major powers, but was attacked in others for being too negative in tone and smacking of unipolarism, unilateralism, and imperial pretensions. The Cheney-Powell defense of the Base Force quieted some critics, but not others. Opponents rejected the argument that uncertainty was an adequate justification for a posture that allegedly could not be linked to spe-

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10See “Statement of General Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate,” January 31, 1992.
specific threats. Further, they debunked Powell’s assertion that the need to preserve an adequate reservoir of capabilities led to a requirement for a posture as large and expensive as the Base Force.

The mounting public debate over the Base Force was brought into sharper focus when internal DoD documents were leaked to the press and unveiled the specific calculations allegedly used to gauge force requirements for MRCs. According to articles printed in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, the Pentagon was anticipating enemy threats of 20–30 divisions with associated air and naval forces for MRCs in Europe, the Persian Gulf, and Korea. The European scenario envisioned a war with Russian troops in Poland and Lithuania, the Persian Gulf scenario contemplated an attack by a rearmed Iraq on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and the Northeast Asian MRC assumed a North Korean assault on South Korea. Taking into account allied forces, Pentagon analyses allegedly concluded, the United States would need to commit 8–12 divisions in Europe, 6 divisions in the Persian Gulf, and 7 divisions in Korea. Accompanying these ground forces would be several hundred combat aircraft and a number of carrier battle groups.¹¹

Taken singly, none of these contingencies generated a requirement for the entire Base Force, but the newspaper articles suggested that the Pentagon was planning its forces on the basis of two roughly concurrent MRCs in the Persian Gulf and Korea. The combination of these two contingencies created a requirement for 14 Army and Marine divisions, 13 USAF air wings, and 8 carrier battle groups—virtually all of the active Base Force units that could be generated at any one time. Although the reserve component forces were left out, the need to provide a rotational base for replacing casualties and to maintain a strategic reserve seemingly offered these forces a secure place in the new strategy.

Although the accuracy of the data was not confirmed by the Pentagon, these newspaper articles touched off further controversy. Critics especially attacked the idea of fighting the Russians over

Poland and Lithuania, but the calculations of force needs for the Persian Gulf and Korea also drew fire from observers who argued that real U.S. requirements would be fewer. The idea that the Pentagon should prepare for two contingencies, however, did engender acceptance. For example, the Aspin study agreed with the idea, as did other analysts who were concerned that only a one-war posture might leave the United States unable to deter a second war while the first war was being fought. Acceptance of a two-war standard, however, did little to temper arguments that the Base Force was too costly, and that it could safely be cut by at least a modest margin.

Administration defense strategy was then subjected to attack from an entirely different quarter by Senator Sam Nunn (Democrat, Georgia), Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Nunn asserted that overlapping roles and missions among the services was producing considerable duplication of combat forces. Nunn especially cited tactical air forces, air defenses, light ground forces, intelligence platforms, and command and control systems. Nunn further alleged that separate service budgets had led to major redundancy and inefficiency in DoD’s overhead and U.S. military infrastructure. Nunn pointed to such areas as research and development, supply and maintenance, medical and legal systems, and the training establishment. Nunn did not question the aggregate size of the Base Force, but he did assert that defense costs could be reduced if unnecessary waste and duplication were pared back.12

Shortly before leaving office in early 1993, the Bush Administration left behind a legacy of its strategic visions in the form of a new national security policy document issued by the White House and a defense strategy document issued by outgoing Secretary of Defense Cheney. Although the two documents reiterated Bush Administration themes with an eye on influencing the future debate, the Cheney document did a particularly effective job of presenting Pentagon thinking in insightful terms and therefore merits a brief description here. Rechristening the strategy as “the Regional Defense

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Strategy," Cheney endorsed four policy goals to guide future U.S. defense efforts:13

1. To deter or defeat any attack against the United States, and to honor our commitments.

2. To strengthen and extend the Western alliance system on behalf of collective security.

3. To preclude any hostile power from dominating a region critical to our interests, and to strengthen barriers against re-emergence of a global threat to U.S. interests.

4. To preclude conflict by reducing regional instability and limit violence should conflict occur.

In articulating these goals, the Cheney document endorsed an underlying vision of preserving and building upon the favorable international conditions created by the end of the Cold War, but it also acknowledged awareness of the potential for troubled times ahead. To this end, Cheney tabled four strategic concepts: planning for uncertainty, shaping the future environment, strategic depth, and continued U.S. leadership. Cheney further identified three enduring requirements for U.S. defense strategy: alliances, high-quality personnel, and technological superiority. Finally, he reiterated his support for the principles of strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution.

A central theme of Cheney's document was that the United States should not repeat the past mistake of disarming and disengaging now that the Cold War is over. To follow this course again, he implied, might easily squander the fruits of Cold War victory and help bring about a new era as dangerous as the old. Accordingly, Cheney called upon the United States to remain militarily strong in ways to meet the still-imposing requirements ahead, and to remain vigilant to new threats that are hard to foresee now. He further called upon the United States to remain involved in international affairs through

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the vehicles of unilateral action, existing collective defense alliances, and cooperative conduct with other nations, including former adversaries.
Chapter Three

DOMESTIC DETERMINANTS OF FUTURE U.S. STRATEGY

Future U.S. military strategy will be influenced by the domestic setting, and not least by the occupant of the White House. The Democratic victory in the November 1992 election placed the task of crafting future U.S. strategy in the hands of President-elect Bill Clinton and his incoming administration. Because the campaign concentrated on domestic issues, national security received less attention than during past campaigns, and the fine points of military strategy were not debated at length. Clinton nonetheless did give several major speeches on foreign policy that included discussions of defense affairs, the most detailed of which was his address to the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles on August 13, 1992. Most observers came away feeling that the basic defense philosophies of Clinton and Bush were similar, although Clinton's speeches did lay out some differences pointing to the direction of changes during his presidency.1

TOWARD A CLINTON DEFENSE STRATEGY: CAMPAIGN SPEECHES

In his speeches, Clinton called attention to America's pressing economic problems, but he also stressed that the United States could

not disengage from international affairs, and that the next President must conduct both a domestic policy and a foreign policy. These policies, he said, are two sides of the same coin. He further asserted that the primary goal of national security policy and military strategy is to ensure that the interests of the United States are protected. He also expressed his own willingness to commit U.S. military forces to battle if that step was required. The effect was to make clear that U.S. defense policy would remain under responsible stewardship, a point that Clinton further stressed in his arguments that the Cold War was a bipartisan victory to which past Democratic Administrations had contributed heavily.2

Just as Clinton portrayed his domestic policy as neither liberal nor conservative, he offered a national security philosophy that blended idealism and realism, and cast aside doctrinaire formulas and sterile ideology. Like Bush, Clinton asserted that the post–Cold War world offers great opportunities but also remains a dangerous place in which the United States must actively safeguard its interests. Clinton then went on to attack Bush for an alleged lack of vision, a tendency to cling to the status quo, and an inability to seize the initiative on behalf of desirable change. But rejecting the foreign policy views common in some quarters of the Democratic Party, Clinton offered a new synthesis of his own that cut across ideological and party lines.

Clinton especially criticized Bush for failure to promote American economic renewal at home and democracy abroad. Charging that Bush was blind to America’s economic malaise, he asserted that economic decline would doom the United States to a weak foreign policy in both trade relations and security affairs. He thus portrayed economic renewal as a means not only to restore domestic prosperity, but also to underwrite an assertive American role in world affairs. Turning to foreign policy, Clinton asserted that Bush was too committed to traditional balance-of-power policies and therefore was insensitive to the role of democratic values in bringing worldwide peace and prosperity. Sharply criticizing Bush for neglecting to adequately support democratic and free-market reforms in the former Soviet Union, he expressed concern that this lack of foresight might

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contribute to restored authoritarianism and belligerent conduct, thereby bringing about renewed international tension.

When he addressed defense policy, Clinton faulted Bush for failure to create an adequately revamped military strategy for the new era. He criticized Bush for simply shrinking the existing Cold War force posture in an unvisionary and mostly linear fashion, a tactic that might have appeased the military services but left a posture of questionable relevance for future requirements. For both strategy and force posture, Clinton asserted, a more innovative and coherent approach anchored on a clear-eyed appraisal of the coming era is needed.

A proper approach, Clinton acknowledged, would not yield vastly greater defense savings. In laying down a defense platform that many interpreted as fairly conservative, Clinton criticized members of his own party "who see defense cuts largely as a piggy bank to fund their domestic wish lists, with our defense structures and missions as an afterthought, rather than a starting premise." Rejecting any wholesale disarmament, Clinton called for $60 billion of cuts from Bush's five-year defense program, but this left a defense budget 95 percent as large: $1.36 trillion for fiscal years 1993–1997. Clinton left open the possibility of further spending cuts if additional economies could be found, but not at the expense of essential military capabilities.

Clinton's expressed goal thus was not to reduce the defense budget far beyond the Bush plan, but rather to fashion a better strategy and force posture for meeting the security challenges ahead, and to do so at affordable cost. To this end, he called for greater intellectual rigor in defense planning and analysis, a point also trumpeted by Representative Les Aspin. Clinton asserted that a proper approach must begin with a fresh assessment of the military threats ahead, then define the military missions needed to defeat those threats, and then adapt U.S. forces to carry out those missions. The threats envisioned by Clinton included regional aggression, new belligerency from former Soviet republics, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, terrorist attacks, and local conflicts that might spill across borders. The missions endorsed by Clinton were to maintain nuclear deterrence, reassure allies and discourage potential adversaries, promote collective security, preserve freedom of the seas, protect U.S. economic interests, and provide U.S. technological superiority.
To many, this stance did not seem to downgrade the national security goals, interests, and threat perceptions endorsed by Bush’s Regional Strategy. Clinton broadly agreed with Bush that U.S. forces must continue playing an important role in maintaining a worldwide military equilibrium needed to protect U.S. interests and allies. Moreover, Clinton’s speeches suggested that the threats of regional aggression in the Persian Gulf and Korea would animate his approach in much the same way that these threats affected the Regional Strategy. Although critical of the B-2 bomber and SDI, Clinton supported Bush’s policy for sharply reducing U.S. nuclear weapons while maintaining an adequate deterrent. Agreement also was evident in Clinton’s statement that, although the United States should be capable of unilateral action if necessary, NATO and other U.S. security alliances should be retained. In doing so, Clinton rejected the isolationist impulse in both parties, and made clear that pursuit of fair trade policies and altered burden-sharing arrangements should not be carried to the point of fracturing these alliances or creating rival trading blocs.

Clinton tabled no specific agenda for NATO reform, but he did indicate that the alliance should play an activist role in managing Europe’s security affairs. This stance implied that NATO should look beyond the narrow mission of defending only its borders, a course that Bush shied away from until late 1992. This stance alone was important, for it marked rejection of the idea, prevalent in some quarters, that NATO should be retired and responsibility should be handed over to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the West European Union (WEU), and the European Community (EC). Clinton’s praise for the NATO’s Rome Summit of 1991 clearly implied that Atlanticism, collective security, and NATO coalition defense would remain key principles of U.S. policy. Indeed, his criticisms of Bush’s alleged passivity in handling mounting troubles in Eastern/Central Europe and the former Soviet Union suggested that U.S. and alliance policy for these regions should be stronger and more assertive.

Further differences with the Bush approach were apparent in other areas. Clinton tabled no fully elaborated alternative to replace the Regional Strategy, but he expressed clear concern that this strategy was not well-thought-out or aligned with the challenges and re-
quirements ahead. Also, Clinton called on America's allies in Europe and Japan to shoulder a greater share of the military burden. He also called for stronger U.S. efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation in the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

Equally important, Clinton displayed an apparent greater willingness to employ U.S. forces in crises abroad. Indeed, Clinton criticized Bush for halting Desert Storm too early, and for failing to intervene in the Yugoslavian civil war. His stance on Yugoslavia implied a willingness to employ U.S. forces in less-than-ideal situations where political importance mandated the firm application of military power guided by clear goals and sound doctrine. The idea that the United States should remain aloof until events deteriorated to the point where only massive and untrammeled U.S. military intervention can save the day thus was rejected by Clinton as a rigid principle of U.S. doctrine.3

The specific ideas tabled by Clinton on the shape of U.S. conventional forces helped illuminate his views on strategy and suggested a similar blend of continuity and reform-minded change. Calling for a redesigned Base Force to better suit a revamped strategy, Clinton endorsed a smaller forward presence in Europe than that backed by Bush, but a still adequate posture of 75,000–100,000 troops. Accompanying this change was to be a greater emphasis on power projection from the United States, backed by programmatic initiatives to achieve this capability. To provide adequate projection forces, Clinton called for a revised posture based on the principles of mobility, agility, flexibility, readiness, and smart weapons. To achieve the required mobility, Clinton called for more cargo ships and transport aircraft, and to provide adequate agility and flexibility, he called for Army and Marine forces better designed to meet the new contingencies ahead. Noting that the Warsaw Pact military threat was now history, he argued that U.S. ground and air forces no longer should be designed primarily to fight in Central Europe, but instead must now be capable of waging war in a broader range of settings.

3Subsequent to taking office, the Clinton Administration urged more military involvement in Yugoslavia, but for the most part, this approach has been rejected by the West European allies.
Clinton's call for less forward presence and greater reliance on power projection marked an important strategy departure, but underlying it was a belief that the United States should remain sufficiently powerful to fight the Desert Storms of the future. Indeed, Clinton implied concern that future regional wars would not be as easy as Desert Storm, where the United States encountered an opponent who pursued a weak military strategy once American forces began arriving. To this end, Clinton endorsed a continuing emphasis on the high readiness and technological superiority that made Desert Storm possible. Moreover, his call for improved mobility suggested a belief that U.S. forces should acquire the capacity to deploy overseas even faster than during the Persian Gulf War.

Clinton did not spell out the size of his conventional posture, but his call for a military manpower reduction from 1.6 million to 1.4 million troops implied a 10–15 percent cut in the Base Force. His call for a Navy of ten carriers, as opposed to Bush’s 12 carriers, suggested a continuing emphasis on a balanced mix of maritime and continental defenses. Clinton did not discuss how the Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force were to be structured, but he did express a desire to improve the readiness of the reserve component forces. In any event, his endorsement of a still-large DoD budget suggested that the main purpose of his conventional defense reforms is not to justify a radically diminished posture, but rather to build a more responsive posture for handling demanding regional threats.

Clinton went on to endorse Senator Nunn's call for a close examination of service roles and missions, and of the DoD infrastructure and support base in the continental United States (CONUS). Elimination of redundancy and duplication, he said, might save additional money. He cautioned, however, against any unplanned dismantlement of the defense industrial base that might leave inadequate production lines while casting skilled defense workers into the ranks of unemployment. Indeed, his national security speeches all suggested clear realization that a vibrant, if reduced, industrial base anchored on high technology would remain a key element of U.S. military strategy.
THE ROAD AHEAD

The year 1992 thus witnessed sharp debates over the Regional Military Strategy and Base Force, culminating in the election of a new President committed to changes that amounted to a refinement of the current approach, but important nonetheless. What the future holds will be determined only when the Clinton Administration has been in office long enough to fully fashion its own approach. What can be said now is that the current strategy and posture are unlikely to survive wholly intact. Much will depend upon the debates and political decisions that lie ahead. Especially because the new Administration has assumed power with a clean slate to write on, the need for continued study and analysis is obvious.

Indeed, the need for study and analysis was officially acknowledged by the Clinton Administration in the weeks after the new President took office. In his inaugural address and State of the Union message, Clinton stressed his commitment to maintain a strong defense posture to deal with a still turbulent world. In response, the new Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, submitted only modest changes to the FY93 budget and program left behind by the Bush Administration. He further announced that he had initiated a major “Bottom-Up” review within the Department of Defense aimed at developing future policy and budgets. Further changes to the Bush legacy were to be delayed pending completion of this study.

The Clinton approach remains to be fully developed, but it is likely that the Regional Strategy will continue being criticized on grounds that it has not yet matured to meet the requirements of a fully elaborated strategy. This is suggested not only by the critical public reaction to the strategy, but also by its internal contents. The very name “Regional Strategy” suggests a geographic focus rather than the close relationship between ends and means that normally characterizes most good strategy titles (e.g., flexible response). In addition, the strategic concept is unclear, and the strategy’s foundations and principles seem to reflect a hodgepodge of uncoordinated ideas rather than a coherent theory. If the Regional Strategy, or something like it, is to survive, these deficiencies will have to be remedied. Indeed, regardless of what strategy is ultimately embraced, it will need to have the well-developed analytical superstructure that is the telltale sign of a sound approach.
Similarly, the tough debates of 1992 suggest that the rationale for the Base Force is not yet fully developed in terms that can command widespread consensus. Cheney and Powell made valid points in asserting that the rationale must be anchored on judgments extending well beyond the narrow province of contingency analysis. As they correctly argued, the role of military force in shaping international politics must also be assessed, as must the requirements for building a flexible capacity to respond to the uncertainties ahead. The validity of these abstract arguments, however, does not itself mean that an analytically powerful explanation for the Base Force—as opposed to something smaller or larger—has yet been assembled. Further refinements are needed in this area, too.

The staying power of the Regional Strategy and the Base Force thus depends upon whether the supporting rationales for both are brought to greater maturity. In the final analysis, their staying power will be determined more by external factors than by analytical arguments offered on their behalf. In particular, two external determinants seem destined to play especially influential roles in the years ahead: the evolution of the international security system and the availability of budgetary resources in the United States.

The Regional Strategy and Base Force are anchored on a singular judgment about the future international system. This judgment holds that relationships among the major powers will be stable, but that regional tensions will remain sufficiently high to create the risk of military conflicts with medium-sized powers. If this judgment proves accurate, the Regional Strategy will continue to offer an appropriate approach. But if different conditions evolve in response to the rapid changes sweeping over the globe, an entirely different military strategy might have to be adopted.

The different possibilities need to be recognized here. A major diminution of the risks of regional wars might mandate development of a new strategy with a more relaxed stance toward continued conventional defense preparedness. Conversely, any intensification of political tensions and weapons proliferation in key regions could require a somewhat altered strategy with stronger military forces. Beyond the matter of heightened regional tensions, any return of military-security rivalry among the major powers could undermine one of the current approach's most important premises, thereby
mandating adoption of an entirely new strategy with quite different goals, policy actions, and forces. As will be discussed later, uncertainty about the future makes it hard to foresee what strategy will be required, but the analytical task can best begin by acknowledging that additional international changes may be coming, and they could yield a requirement for further changes in U.S. military strategy.

In the final analysis, strategy will be influenced not only by developments abroad, but also by how these developments are perceived and evaluated in the United States. It remains to be seen what perceptions will take hold and whether they are aligned with reality. The United States has an uneven track record in judging events beyond its borders.

PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE DEFENSE SPENDING

Similar uncertainty abounds about future DoD budgets. For the FY93–97 period, Secretary Cheney charted a budget course that would begin at $267.6 billion for FY93, but as the post–Cold War drawdown proceeded, would decline to $237.5 billion (in real terms) by the final year. This amounts to a nearly 4 percent annual reduction, and coupled with a growing economy, would bring defense spending down to 3.4 percent of gross national product (GNP), the lowest share in over 50 years. Secretary Cheney's *Annual Report* of February 1992 was silent on the years after FY1997, but assuming the Regional Strategy and Base Force (or something like them) are retained, modest but sustained spending increases evidently will be needed thereafter.4

The primary reason for the need for growing defense budgets from FY98–2010 is an upcoming wave of procurement requirements for all three services. During this period, the Army, Navy, and Air Force plan to embark on sustained programs to replace aging systems with an entire new suite of modern weapons, most of which will be costly. As Figure 3.1 suggests, the total expense for these weapons will amount to $460–$575 billion. About one-half of these procurement

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funds are to modernize tactical air forces. The Air Force plans to buy the F-22 and the Multirole Fighter; the Navy plans to buy the A-X, updated F-18s, and eventually an F-18 replacement; the Army intends to procure the Comanche attack helicopter. Acquisition of 4600 aircraft of various types will cost $240–$300 billion. Added on top comes a $100–$125 billion program to procure new Army tanks and other ground systems, and $120–$150 billion to procure Navy carriers, destroyers, submarines, and other ships. These requirements must be added to steady-state funding needed to buy munitions, spare parts, mid-life overhaul, and other items, all of which increase the procurement budget further.

Funding of these weapons, coupled with other steady-state procurement programs, could elevate the total DoD procurement budget by nearly 50 percent. To meet this requirement while keeping other accounts adequately funded, the DoD budget will have to increase annually by about 1.3 percent in real terms from FY98 through FY2008. Figure 3.2 portrays the trend lines. This figure, it should be emphasized, is based on a "best estimate," and the actual increase could be higher or lower. Assuming no changes to the Base Force, a reasonable lower estimate is for real increases of 1 percent annually; an upper estimate is for increases of about 2 percent or more annually.

MILITARY STRATEGY AMIDST DOMESTIC ECONOMIC RENEWAL

Whether these budgetary resources will be available to DoD will depend on national priorities and on the health of the national econ-
omy. Figure 3.3 illustrates the key sensitivities. If the DoD budget share of GNP remains at 3.4 percent, then the required DoD budgetary growth can be funded if the economy expands at a modest rate of 1.3 percent annually or more. A less optimistic picture holds, however, if the DoD’s share of GNP is reduced in the near future and is not increased thereafter. As Figure 3.3 shows, an illustrative reduction to 3 percent of GNP would cause a near-term shortfall of nearly $30 billion. Thereafter, the shortfall would depend upon national economic growth. With 3% annual growth in GNP, the shortfall could be eliminated early in the next decade. With 2 percent annual GNP growth, a shortfall would continue through FY2010 but later be remedied. A 1 percent annual GNP growth would perpetuate substantial budgetary shortfalls for the next two decades.

Although modest budgetary shortfalls can be accommodated without changing military strategy, at some point inadequate funding would compel reversion to a less ambitious strategy. Insufficient funding requires cutbacks in some combination of force structure,
readiness, modernization, and sustainability. Careful planning, elimination of duplication, and reduction of inefficiencies can buffer the negative impact while retaining the strategy intact, as was attempted in the 1970s when U.S. defense budgets were in decline. But at some juncture, hollowing-out of the force posture can reach the stage where management solutions are no longer viable.

The exact point of strategy departure is hard to ascertain, but these forecasts do suggest that the fate of DoD's strategy and force posture will be tied to the performance of the national economy. The near-term issue is the share of GNP that will be allocated to defense. Although the ongoing DoD drawdown is reducing this share to 3.0–3.4 percent by the late 1990s, even this allocation is rendered uncertain by the federal deficit, competing domestic priorities, and political opposition to tax increases. Much will depend upon how military requirements are weighed in relation to the nation's domestic agenda.

For the long term, the dominant issue will be the degree to which the national economy grows at a sustained pace. Beyond doubt, the foundation of an adequate defense budget is a strong economy. Whereas a dormant economy normally leads to belt-tightening in defense policy and elsewhere, an expanding economy provides resources for investment in a variety of areas, including national defense. As Table 3.1 shows, any effort to forecast the future is clouded by the mixed legacy of the past. 6 During the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. economy went through cycles of expansion and recession, but showed an average growth rate of about 3.5 percent annually. During the following two decades, this growth rate slowed to average only 2.3 percent annually—a development that some economists see as a harbinger of the future brought about by declining productivity and competitiveness.

Moreover, the growth rate in the late 1980s was only 1.8 percent, and the recession of the early 1990s produced growth rates of less than 1 percent annually. Because the population expands at about 1 percent, an equal economic growth rate means that the national stan-

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6 Data taken from Department of Commerce statistics on U.S. economic performance.
dard of living is not rising, and that the scope for new initiatives is narrow. Adding to the problem is the need to devote sizable amounts to paying for the federal debt and growing entitlement programs. Whereas in 1950 only about 10 percent of GNP was devoted to domestic government spending, by 1990 the allocation had risen to 17 percent and was showing signs of increasing in the future. These trends could combine to place constraints on future DoD spending increases.

The ability of the United States to afford a sizable defense posture and an ambitious military strategy thus will depend upon whether economic renewal is successful. Whereas a dormant economy could compel military retrenchment in the face of still-imposing international requirements, a healthy economy would provide the budgetary flexibility to meet the defense needs that arise, large or small. Analysts who read the available economic data can come away with different conclusions. To some, a modest upward DoD budgetary slope will be affordable because the national economy can be expected to grow and the nation will remain willing to spend 3.0–3.4 percent of GNP on defense. Other analysts, foreseeing less economic growth and a more stringent fiscal environment ahead, might come to a less optimistic conclusion.

Only time will tell, and much will depend upon decisions taken outside the Defense Department. What can be said is that DoD's bud-
getary future will depend upon national attitudes toward defense preparedness and the ability of the U.S. economy to recover the sustained growth rates that marked most of the Cold War. At a minimum, these factors should be regarded as variables in the defense policy equation, not constants. Any analysis of future U.S. military strategy, including the interplay between requirements and affordability, should be undertaken with this uncertainty in mind.
Although future U.S. military strategy will be influenced by domestic considerations, it also will be shaped by how American interests are affected by developments abroad. Indeed, now that the Warsaw Pact military threat no longer exists, it has become commonplace to assert that future U.S. security policy and military strategy should be anchored on our “national interests.” The rationale is that interests transcend the disappearance of specific enemies, and carry over from one era to the next regardless of how international and domestic conditions might change. They therefore can be used to define our enduring aims and security requirements, and to guide our actions. As Lord Palmerston said, friends and enemies come and go, but interests are permanent. Permanence, in turn, offers comforting certitude in an age of ambiguity.

Because this position has powerful appeal, it seems destined to become an underlying premise of U.S. strategic thinking. In particular, it offers the alluring promise of a rock-solid foundation upon which to erect defense policy during an era that may lack clear adversaries and global threats. Yet closer inspection reveals that this stance is not a cure-all, or a replacement for analysis and consensus formation. In the years ahead, defense planning may begin with interests, but it will not end there.

Indeed, defense planning must begin with a careful definition of exactly what constitutes our national interests, for they are less clear-cut and obvious than implied by Palmerston. Geopolitical theory notwithstanding, interests are not etched in stone. Nor do they spring from the international environment independent of appraisal
by the governments that must defend them. In order to be acted
upon, they must be perceived as important, and history shows many
examples of nations that failed to grasp their own interests. For ex-
ample, the United States itself often misinterpreted its interests in
Europe during the early decades of the 20th century. Moreover, all
interests are not in fact permanent. Because the United States has
global involvements, it pursues many interests. Some of these stem
from fixed geostrategic circumstances and are truly permanent, but
other interests are relative and subject to evaluation. Some interests
are shaped by national values and visions, which themselves are not
constants but rather change somewhat from era to era. Because
many are neither fixed nor irrefutable, interests thus must be defined
and reaffirmed through policy choice.

The importance of policy choice becomes even more important
when examining the mechanics of using interests as a basis for de-
fense planning. Interests commonly are discussed in abstract terms,
but to be useful in the analysis of strategy and force posture, they
must be specified with great clarity and given operational meaning.
Otherwise, they provide no concrete guidelines for action. Also, they
must be weighed and balanced carefully. To provide insights on the
costs and risks to be borne in their pursuit, they must be accompa-
nied by a sense of their importance in the overall scheme of priori-
ties. Finally, interests must be accompanied by an assessment of
how they are affected by the international system. After all, interests
must be backed up with military power only if they are menaced in
some way or if assertive actions are required to advance them.

The following questions therefore need to be answered Exactly what
are U.S. interests, and how do they enter the realm of defense policy?
To what degree will they require and justify military protection? How
will the nature of this protection be influenced by international
trends ahead? Because a fog of confusion surrounds current thinking
about U.S. interests in future world affairs, the answers are not self-
evident. By analyzing future trends in U.S. national interests and in
international security affairs, this chapter endeavors to clear away
some of the fog.
THE NATURE OF U.S. INTERESTS

The term "interest" can be defined as an asset or state of affairs to which considerable importance is attached. As history shows, interests can be either legitimate or illegitimate, and the anarchical nature of the modern nation-state system provides many examples of each. "Legitimacy," an amorphous term subject to interpretation, is based on an inherent right deriving from sovereignty, physical circumstances, history, legal titles, and respect for other nations. Under international law and common diplomatic practice, legitimacy bequeaths the right to use military power to protect interests that are threatened by nations with illegitimate designs. Like any other country, the United States thus will be on solid legal and political ground if it anchors its military strategy on its legitimate interests.

On a number of occasions, the U.S. government has endeavored to define American interests as they affect national policy and strategy. The most recent attempt came in 1991. In his *National Security Strategy of the United States*, President Bush identified the following four interests and associated objectives as drivers of U.S. policy for the coming era:

- **Interest:** *The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure.* To this end, the United States seeks to deter and defend against attack on itself or its allies, effectively counter threats short of armed attack, maintain adequate military strength and improve stability through arms control agreements, promote democratic change in the former Soviet Union, foster restraint in arms transfers and military adventurism, and reduce the flow of drugs into the United States.

- **Interest:** *A healthy and growing U.S. economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.* To this end, the United States seeks to promote a strong American economy, ensure access to foreign markets and resources, promote an open world economy, and achieve cooperative solutions to key environmental challenges.

- **Interest:** *Healthy, cooperative, and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.* To build and sustain these rela-
tionships, the United States seeks to strengthen and enlarge the existing community of democratic nations, establish more balanced partnerships with its allies; strengthen international institutions; and support West European unity, close transatlantic ties, and cooperative security institutions in Europe.

- **Interest: A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.** To this end, the United States seeks to promote stable regional military balances, diplomatic solutions to regional conflicts, the growth of democratic institutions, economic and social progress, and reduction of threats to democracy.

Although many analysts might want to tinker with this portrayal, it provides a workable presentation of bedrock U.S. interests that is similar to previous attempts to grapple with this amorphous subject. When the weighty demands of defense policy and strategy are considered, however, the limitations of this portrayal as a basis for planning are also apparent. For all their intuitive appeal, these four U.S. interests are described in terms so abstract that they lack the specificity needed to develop usable guidelines for planning. Apart from Europe, other geographic regions are not mentioned, much less differentiated. Also not provided is a sense of importance and priority, or an assessment of how these interests are being affected by developments abroad. For the military planner, the following questions immediately arise: Which of these interests justify the use of military force? Exactly where and to what degree? Which interests are sufficiently threatened to necessitate force planning on their behalf? Unfortunately, these critical questions are left unanswered.

The task of achieving greater relevance to defense policy can begin by categorizing national interests on the basis of their relative importance and the implications posed for employing military force on their behalf. At the risk of some oversimplification, the following scheme divides interests into five categories of descending importance:

- **National Survival:** The most fundamental national interest, survival mandates the use of all necessary forms of military power to ensure its protection. That is, the United States would be prepared to employ whatever level of nuclear and
conventional force is needed to safeguard national survival. Military restraint thus does not enter the calculus in defense of this interest.

- **Vital interests** are essential to long-term national survival and prosperity. Their loss might not immediately threaten national survival, but eventually it might. To safeguard vital overseas interests, the United States unequivocally would be prepared to use large conventional forces, to accept high risks, and to pay a heavy cost. In principle, it also would be willing to use nuclear forces, especially when there is a threat to the survival of allies to which the United States has treaty commitments. The U.S. stance toward nuclear force, however, would be guided by a sense of proportion and restraint. To avoid massive damage and threats to national survival, U.S. actions would be guided by the goal of avoiding nuclear escalation except in extremis, and of controlling escalation once the nuclear threshold is crossed.

- **Major interests** are important to the United States, but fall short of being vital. That is, their loss would cause serious damage, but would not transparently pose a major threat to national survival and prosperity. In principle, these interests are important enough to justify use of military power on their behalf, but force employment would be guided by a cost-benefit calculus more stringent than for vital interests. Resort to force would not be automatic and unequivocal, but might be undertaken if the circumstances—the stakes, risks, costs, and prospects for success—are appropriate. As an illustration, the likelihood of using military force might be 50 percent, as compared to 100 percent for vital interests. Primary reliance would be placed on conventional power, and there would be a strong bias against using nuclear weapons in absence of a decision by the enemy to cross the nuclear threshold.

- **Peripheral interests** are of lesser importance than major interests: their loss might hurt, but would not inflict serious damage. The United States would vigorously protect these interests with the traditional tools of statecraft, but would be unlikely (e.g., less than a 25 percent chance) to employ military force on their behalf. These interests thus fall outside the normal boundaries of defense planning, yet conditions plausibly can arise in which at least modest military operations could be
undertaken to safeguard them. Use of military force thus cannot
be ruled out, but would be subjected to even stricter tests of cost-
effectiveness than for major interests.

- **Insubstantial interests** are of relatively minor importance, and
their loss would not harm the nation as a whole. Because there
are no conditions under which military forces would be
employed to protect them, these interests can be entirely
discounted from U.S. defense policy.

This categorization scheme is useful because it helps illuminate how
the role of national interests in U.S. defense planning will show pat-
terns of continuity and change in the years ahead. Continuity will
come from two sources: (1) National survival will remain the
bedrock goal of U.S. defense policy, and (2) America's vital interests,
which are dictated heavily by geostrategic considerations, will retain
their traditional character. Change will come from an important de-
velopment that, if manifested fully, could bring about sharp but dis-
quieting departures in defense planning. Whereas national survival
and our vital interests will be less heavily threatened than during the
Cold War, the need to employ military force to defend major inter-
est might well expand, perhaps significantly. If so, the effect will be
to confront U.S. military strategy with a quite different and more
ambiguous calculus than before.

U.S. forces have been built to defend clearly threatened vital inter-
ests. Because this approach has been anchored on the assumption
that the forces generated by this rationale would be sufficient to
handle all lesser-included cases, it has not allowed room for building
forces for protecting purely major interests. But if vital interests are
not directly threatened in the coming era, this approach runs the risk
of leaving insufficient forces to defend major interests that are
threatened. To avoid this risk, major interests may have to enter the
defense calculus in far more influential ways than before.

**DECLINING THREATS TO VITAL INTERESTS**

As in the past, America's vital overseas interests will continue to have
a global scope, thereby compelling U.S. defense strategy to maintain
internationalist horizons. During the 19th century, the United States primarily embraced a policy of isolationism anchored on the assumption that it did not have vital interests beyond its borders worth defending. Moreover, the British Navy not only protected American shores from foreign invasion but also fostered an international climate favorable to U.S. commercial goals. By fundamentally altering this detached and sanguine calculus, the events of the first half of the 20th century imparted an outward-looking and more worried stance to U.S. foreign policy and military strategy. The political, economic, and technological changes of the past few decades have deepened America’s involvement with the outside world and increased its vulnerability to negative events. In the wake of the Cold War’s abrupt end, some observers called for a return to at least a quasi-isolationist outlook, but the dominant consensus rejected this view. The primary reason was a deeply felt belief that, like it or not, the United States continues to have vital interests that will demand constant safeguarding.

The United States will remain vitally concerned about protecting its borders, offshore waters, North America, and Latin America from foreign threats. Likewise, it will still have a vital interest in preserving rights of travel and trade, and access to the maritime sealanes, air corridors, commercial markets, and the world economy. Accompanying this interest will be the time-honored goal of maintaining a strong military presence on the world’s oceans, including the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the waters joining them.

America’s traditional vital interests on the Eurasian landmass will remain unchanged. The United States will have an undiminished interest in preventing Western Europe and Northeast Asia from falling under domination by hostile powers. It will also have an interest in ensuring that Persian Gulf oil and other critical natural resources remain available. Barring any change to existing treaties, it will continue to have security commitments to traditional friends and allies in Europe, the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and the Far East. The need to preserve close contacts with these nations and regions, in turn, will dictate continued interest in preserving access to the

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1The United States, of course, did expand into the Caribbean, Hawaii, and the Philippines. But it remained aloof from entangling involvements in Europe and the Asian mainland.
northern waters, the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, the Persian Gulf, and the Straits of Malacca.

Current trends suggest that future military threats to these interests will be far less severe than was the case during the Cold War. Throughout that conflict, national survival was directly endangered by the threat of Soviet missile attack. In addition, vital American interests in Europe, the Far East, and the Persian Gulf were constantly subjected to the threat of local aggression by the USSR and its allies. Today, Russia and its Commonwealth partners still possess intercontinental nuclear weapons, but the likelihood of a full-blown nuclear crisis seems remote. Moreover, the risk of war in Central Europe has diminished greatly. Conflict might occur there, but is less likely to directly threaten NATO’s borders, the traditional demarcation line where U.S. interests become vital. Only in the Far East (Korea) and the Persian Gulf are vital U.S. interests still endangered, and even there, the risk is less severe. The effect is to eliminate, or at least reduce, most of the clear threats to national survival and vital overseas interests that once animated U.S. defense planning.

GROWING IMPORTANCE OF MAJOR INTERESTS

The decline in threats to vital U.S. interests, however, will be accompanied by an expansion of the role played by major interests in American military strategy. One reason is the changing political geography in Europe, which is elevating once-peripheral nations to a higher status. Another reason is that U.S. overseas economic interests are rapidly growing, in an atmosphere of mounting strife that could have military consequences. Also, a number of functional interests seem destined to acquire greater emphasis in U.S. foreign policy. These changes will enlarge the circumstances in which military force might be used on behalf of this category of interests.

Because of the dramatic changes taking place in Europe’s political geography, U.S. interests there are steadily marching eastward. During the Cold War, the nations east of NATO’s borders—most in the communist camp—were regarded as peripheral interests at best. This judgment, at least, is suggested by the failure of NATO’s nations to intervene when Hungary and Czechoslovakia were invaded by the Soviet Union. In the years ahead, many of these nations will make progress toward becoming democracies, will join the European
Community and the WEU, and will draw closer to NATO. This particularly will be the case among the northern tier countries, albeit less so in the Balkans. As these nations are brought into the Western community’s orbit, their standing in the hierarchy of U.S. geostrategic priorities can hardly help but go upward.

Several of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) emerging from the Soviet Union’s breakup might themselves acquire the status of a major interest. With communism now dead, the United States has powerful reasons to see democratic and free-market reforms succeed in Russia, and to bring that country into the Western community in ways that will encourage it to pursue a benign foreign policy. The same applies to the Baltic states, Belarus, and Ukraine. Because these nations directly adjoin Eastern Europe, the continent’s stability could be affected by their continued sovereignty and by their success in achieving democracy and capitalism.

Ukraine is of special importance. Endowed with 54 million people and impressive resources, Ukraine is equivalent to France in size and potential strength, and faces powerful incentives to behave as an independent nation with an agenda of its own. In fundamental ways, its emergence as a sovereign country changes the strategic landscape in Eastern/Central Europe, and could have a major bearing on whether enduring peace is achieved. A democratic Ukraine secure from external threats and able to exert a restraining hand on neighbors could contribute heavily to the quest for stability. By contrast, an authoritarian Ukraine, armed with strong military forces, could threaten its western neighbors and otherwise play the role of a rogue elephant. Likewise, chronic tensions between Russia and Ukraine could leave Europe constantly tottering on the brink of crisis. Especially if both countries have intercontinental nuclear weapons, the implications for the United States are obvious, and hardly peripheral.

Because the stakes are so high, the question arises whether these nations in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are acquiring the status of vital American interests. With many already seeking membership in NATO and the EC, this question is likely to acquire increased importance in the years ahead. Soul-searching will spill over into the military arena because collective commitments by NATO, with guarantees of automaticity, can be extended only if de-
fense of these nations is classified as a truly vital interest. The outcome is uncertain. At the moment, official opinion holds that NATO membership should not be extended eastward; by implication, these nations thus are still regarded as less than vital. But a debate is under way, and this judgment could change.

Even without a decision to classify these nations as vital, however, it is hard to see how the United States and NATO any longer could turn a blind eye toward major aggression that threatened their sovereignty and democratic institutions. Much would depend on the circumstances, and because each case would have to be judged on its individual merits, restraint often might be the best course. Nonetheless, situations are imaginable in which intervention—small or large—might be deemed necessary. For this reason, the possibility of U.S. and allied military operations in the territory occupied by these nations is likely to play a growing, if conditional, role in U.S. military strategy.

Conspicuously left off this list of major interests are the Balkans, and the new Commonwealth nations of the Caucasus and Central Asia, which run along an arc stretching from the Black Sea to the China border. Most security experts regard these nations as still peripheral, but even here, the judgment is no longer clear-cut. Developments in these peripheral areas could indirectly threaten regions of greater importance. This linkage is especially true in the Balkans where turbulence easily could spread outward, thereby threatening NATO members Greece and Turkey, or even drawing in the major powers. Similarly, mounting ethnic strife in the Caucasus could threaten Turkey, and with the spread of Islamic fundamentalism fueling passions, even developments in Central Asia could have larger consequences. This especially will be the case if Kazakhstan remains a nuclear power, or if the region becomes a focal point of rivalry between Russia and China.

Elsewhere on the Eurasian landmass, the political geography is not changing a great deal and U.S. interests there are not expanding. This picture of stable interests, however, could give way to something different in the event that Asia, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia experience political upheavals of a magnitude similar to Europe's.
In Asia, Japan and South Korea will remain vital interests, as will the Australia-New Zealand-U.S. (ANZUS) nations and the critical Pacific sealanes. Although Taiwan's status is ambiguous, the United States has long-standing ties to it. The United States also has treaty relationships with the Philippines and Thailand that make these nations at least major interests, and arguably more. The remaining nations of Southeast and South Asia fall into a gray area requiring a case-by-case appraisal, but they commonly are not regarded as vital. Because of its communist government, China currently is beyond the pale of U.S. interests as they affect U.S. defense planning. It is here that the possible effects of changing political geography in Asia are most evident. If communism were to fall and be replaced by a government aspiring to democracy and free enterprise, China's status in the hierarchy of U.S. interests could rise, thereby having an impact on defense planning not unlike what is transpiring in Europe. But this favorable development is far from ensured.

In the Middle East and Southwest Asia, nations vital to the United States include Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf oil sheikdoms; Egypt and a few other friendly Arab governments are often characterized as major interests. The remaining nations of the Arab world, often led by anti-Western Islamic regimes, are not regarded as interests that might require U.S. military protection; indeed, some are genuine adversaries. Virtually all of sub-Saharan Africa remains peripheral. The scope of U.S. interests could narrow if the Islamic revolution spreads further—into North Africa, for example. Conversely, the pendulum could swing in the other direction if Islam loses steam, the Arab-Israeli peace process succeeds, and pro-Western governments return to power in key nations. In this regard, it is noteworthy that before the Ayatollah Khomeini took power, Iran was a close friend to the United States and was regarded as a vital interest. The exact nature of American interests in the Middle East and Persian Gulf thus will depend on that region’s turbulent politics. Barring major changes in political geography, however, continuity is to be expected.

Although the impact of new political geography currently is confined largely to Europe, the growing importance of U.S. economic interests is being manifested worldwide. America's dependence on Persian Gulf oil and other natural resources is well known, but less commonly appreciated is the growing U.S. involvement in international
commerce. This involvement is carried out through a complex network of trade, monetary, investment, financial, and technological relations. At present, less than 10 percent of the U.S. economy derives from this commerce, well below the 20 percent averaged by other industrial powers. But even so, the total volume is large, has been growing rapidly in recent years, and promises to increase more in the future.

In recent years, patterns of trade have been shifting toward involvement with a growing number of nations, many of which do not have security alliances with the United States. As Table 4.1 shows, America's primary trading partners today are still Canada, Mexico, Western Europe, and Japan. Nonetheless, the United States in 1991 exported $21 billion to Southeast Asian nations, $13 billion to the Middle East and Southwest Asia, and $27 billion to China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Exports to these regions are likely to grow, and U.S. business investments there will increase as well. Also, U.S. economic involvement with Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, currently small, is likely to expand by large amounts.

To an unprecedented degree, America's prosperity is a function of its ability to participate profitably in a healthy world economy, and this dependence is likely to deepen. For good or ill, this trend seems destined to acquire growing security implications that potentially can have an important impact on U.S. defense plans. Throughout the Cold War, America's economic interests remained subordinate to our nation's strategic goals and the ideological rivalry between

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democracy and communism. As a result, these interests were relegated to the outer periphery of U.S. military strategy. With strategic concerns now diminishing and economics rising in importance, this situation is changing, and a balance reminiscent of earlier times is being reestablished. Whether economic interests will come to be defended with the same fervor previously accorded to vital strategic aims is an open question, and the answer will depend on whether these interests are threatened by adversarial military power. Especially because economic strife might become a central axis of future international tensions, nonetheless, U.S. defense strategy will need to address the growing possibility that American military forces may have to be employed on the behalf of these interests.

Use of military forces to defend U.S. economic interests is likely to be manifested in several ways. At a minimum, there will be a powerful incentive to perpetuate existing military alliances in Europe and Northeast Asia to help maintain a cooperative economic climate and to ensure that U.S. business investments in these regions are not threatened by new adversaries. Beyond this, increased security involvements might accompany growing economic relationships with other nations, or even precede them as a device to help encourage increased trade and investment. Southeast Asia, where U.S. trade relations are rapidly growing, is one obvious candidate. If so, this development will grow out of a perception that the presence of U.S. military forces and commitments can help foster a warmer climate for two-way commerce.

Along with this calculus might come mounting concern that increased economic interdependence will be a breeding ground for military conflict. The likelihood could be especially high during periods when the world economy is in recession, less-developed nations are mired in poverty-stricken turmoil, and the industrial powers are experiencing slow growth. One risk is that aggressors might perceive an opportunity for local economic aggrandizement. In this regard, the Persian Gulf War, which involved a struggle for control of the world’s oil resources, might be a harbinger of the future. Conceivably, U.S. military forces might again have to be used to defend access to critical resources, or to rebuff direct threats to U.S. economic assets, commercial sealanes and airways, and trade relationships. As U.S. economic involvement with other nations grows,
the likelihood of further incidents like Desert Storm might well increase.

Another risk, discussed openly in recent months, is that economic protectionism might take hold, thereby driving the world economy into rival trading blocs or even mercantilist behavior. In this event, economic friction might beget a descent into chronic military competition driven by mutual disdain and perceptions of adversarial relationships. Plausibly, the United States could find itself facing military threats from economic rivals, or might itself be compelled to threaten the use of force against predatory economic adversaries that assert their goals with military force. A more distant but not remote possibility is that economic tensions could trigger full-scale war between nations with competing agendas.

The military conflicts of the Cold War were not caused by economics, but warfare due to economic antagonism was common fare in earlier times. It is worth remembering that the Pacific conflict in World War II was triggered by American refusal to acquiesce in the Japanese campaign to establish economic dominance over Asia. Today the United States and Japan are close allies, but the phenomenon of economics-inspired warfare among the industrial powers does have roots in recent history. Fortunately, the relatively open nature of modern international commerce means that nations today have far less incentive to fight over control of key resources. As the Persian Gulf conflict showed, however, warfare growing out of economic turmoil has not been relegated to the history books, and it may be on the verge of making a comeback.

Even on territories not normally deemed important for strategic and economic reasons, functional interests can lead the United States to seriously contemplate the use of force. One functional interest is crisis management aimed at preventing a local conflict from spreading outward to more important areas. A related interest is that of enforcing international codes of conduct. Both interests have been manifested in the Yugoslavian civil war, and they account for the mounting calls for Western military intervention in a conflict that otherwise might have been dismissed as a purely local event. With growing conviction as the fighting escalated in Bosnia-Hercegovina, observers argued that the civil war might spill across the borders of adjoining nations, or failing that, set a bad precedent by allowing
Serbian aggression to succeed. The slow but steady increase in military pressure applied by outside nations in 1992 testified to growing recognition of the importance of these interests.

A third functional interest is that of preventing nuclear proliferation. The signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the late 1960s signaled widespread agreement that, because proliferation can pose a major threat to global security, it should be prevented. For the following two decades, proliferation failed to accelerate in the ways feared by many. In the early 1990s, nevertheless, it became evident that several nations, including adversaries of the United States, were making steady progress toward building nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles. South Africa’s admission that it previously owned nuclear weapons especially raised eyebrows, as did North Korea’s threat to withdraw from the NPT. Alarm further spread when the prospect was raised that nuclear weapons and technology might be stolen from the disintegrating Soviet military establishment and sold abroad. To help prevent this destabilizing development in the years ahead, a variety of sanctions will be available under UN auspices, but military force is the ultimate resort.

A number of other interests also fall into this general category. Humanitarian assistance, counterterrorism, domestic control, peacekeeping, and peacemaking are obvious examples: all five have required the use of military forces. Controlling the sale of illegal drugs is another example with special relevance to the United States. Conceivably, the growing importance being attached to environmental control might also lead to the future use of military force against transgressors. Finally, it is possible that support for democratic reforms might itself have to be backed with military power in some areas.

The need to manage crises, to establish codes of conduct, to prevent nuclear proliferation, and to pursue other functional interests could well pull the United States into military involvements in regions that otherwise would be deemed less than vital, and even peripheral. As of 1992, American forces were protecting the Kurds in northern Iraq, enforcing a no-fly zone in southern Iraq, and providing humanitarian assistance to Russia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Somalia. Meanwhile, plans were being drafted for military intervention in the Yugoslavian
civil war, and calls were being heard for air strikes against Iraqi nuclear facilities.

The possibilities ahead are mind-stretching. The Balkans and Central/Eastern Europe to the Ural Mountains are obvious candidates, but events also might compel growing involvements in such peripheral areas as North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, resumption of the "Great Game" in Central Asia and nuclear proliferation in South Asia might make that immense but largely forgotten region a sleeper in future international politics. Developments of this sort could impart radical departures in how U.S. interests are defined and military strategy is shaped.

In his call for a "new world order," President Bush alluded to the importance of these functional interests in preserving international tranquility. Bush's lofty concept was criticized by many as unrealistic, and indeed, it does not seem likely to become a central rallying cry for future global security policy. Nonetheless, these functional interests undeniably have gained in importance in recent years, and might well continue growing in the future. To the extent this is the case, these interests will become factors to be taken into account in fashioning U.S. military strategy for the coming era.

In summary, the global communist military threat has receded, but for complex reasons, the United States is acquiring new interests worldwide. Seemingly these new interests fall short of being vital, but they may be sufficiently important to justify commitment of military forces on their behalf in some circumstances. Because a cautious and conditional attitude will be applied, the likelihood of U.S. military involvement in any single situation might be low. Because the number, diversity, and geographic scope of these situations may become large, however, U.S. military forces might be called upon to intervene far more often than in the past. Much will depend upon the stances adopted by other nations and the effectiveness of collective security institutions. The fact that the United States will remain a global superpower with a leadership role, nonetheless, could impart special responsibilities on it.

The emergence of this growing class of major interests could add a new dimension to U.S. strategy and greatly complicate the task of preparing military forces. In years past, the common practice has
been to spend the large amounts needed for military forces only on behalf of truly vital interests. Lesser interests normally did not qualify. The emerging situation may well require a reappraisal of this stance. If only vital interests are to be safeguarded, the disappearance of clear military threats to those interests could lead to a sharp downgrading of U.S. defense requirements. If careful planning is not conducted, the unintended result could be a diminished and poorly structured force posture incapable of defending lesser interests whose combined weight far exceeds their individual importance. The risks can be resolved only through a careful appraisal of the all-important programmatic details. This ambiguous issue will need to be addressed in the shaping of future U.S. military strategy and forces.
If national interests will lay the foundation of future U.S. defense policy and strategy, the international environment ahead will play a key role in determining the superstructure that should be built atop this foundation. Simply stated, a peaceful world permits a relaxed stance, whereas a threatening environment requires a more assertive strategy and a stronger force posture. We may well ask: What assumptions about the international system should be embraced by U.S. defense planning?

During the Cold War, the bipolar international system remained remarkably static for many years, thereby simplifying the planning problem. If the past three years are any indicator, the future offers a fluid era of continuing change. An international equation previously anchored on a few constants is being replaced by a far more complex equation, composed of many variables and unclear relationships, with unknown coefficients and exponents. Until change gives way to enduring stasis, U.S. policy and strategy will not have the luxury of being anchored on a single estimate of the future environment. Plans will have to be forged in the face of great uncertainty, and the capacity to adapt flexibly, to accommodate new and unexpected environments, may become a key standard by which policy alternatives should be judged.

This uncertainty, however, does not justify a decision to abandon the quest for usable estimates about the future. Regardless of how difficult they might be to forge, sound estimates are needed to accurately gauge the opportunities, challenges, and threats that lie ahead. In absence of these estimates, the United States will run the risk of be-
ing caught unprepared, and might be unable to adapt fast and effectively enough. Beyond this, accurate estimates are needed to determine how the United States should behave today to shape the future tomorrow. To be sure, U.S. policy cannot control global security affairs—especially in the complex era ahead, a sense of realism is needed. But as a superpower, the United States is not doomed to muddle through with a purely reactive policy able only to cope with circumstances created by external forces. To a degree, U.S. actions will influence how the international system evolves. An activist policy anchored on visionary goals is needed, but this policy can be carried out with expectations for success only if assessments are available that accurately gauge the impact of alternative courses.

Sound estimates are needed for shaping U.S. foreign policy, but they especially will be required for defense policy. As in the past, intelligence estimates will be needed as a key input to help formulate U.S. military strategy and force levels. They also will continue being required, in concrete detail, to help shape specific plans and programs. In contrast to the past, moreover, the United States will require a clear understanding of the conditions in which marginal adjustments are no longer possible, and an existing strategy and force posture must give way to something entirely new. For all these reasons, intelligence estimates will remain a necessary feature of defense planning from top to bottom.

Although the evolving international system is being driven by complex dynamics, these dynamics fortunately are not beyond the scope of forecasting, or at least systematic analysis. Degree matters heavily. The effects of uncertainty can be buffered by supplementing single-point estimates with sensitivity analysis that illuminates the alternative futures ahead, thereby helping planners adjust to the range of circumstances that might be faced. Sound decisionmaking anchored on usable intelligence estimates thus remains an achievable goal.

A WORLD OF REGIONAL TENSIONS?

The key intelligence judgment facing U.S. military strategy is whether the international environment will continue to reflect the assumptions embraced by the current Regional Strategy, or will a very different environment ultimately evolve? As Figure 5.1 suggests, the man-
Key issue: Now that the Soviet military threat is gone, what kind of system can be expected?

- Like today: Tranquil relations among major powers, with troublesome regional tensions and current U.S. military requirements?
- A more harmonious world with lower requirements?
- A more threatening world with higher requirements?

Figure 5.1—Future International Security System

The manner in which these questions are answered will have a major bearing on future U.S. strategy, force requirements, and program priorities. Continuity will allow the Regional Strategy and Base Force to remain in place, with only marginal adjustments to partially changing conditions. By contrast, a radically altered environment could mandate adoption of an entirely new strategy and force posture.

The Regional Strategy rejects the notion that history has come to an end, that democracy and peaceful conduct have emerged so triumphant that global tranquility has become a permanent condition. But it does adopt the idea that international security affairs will be less turbulent and stressful than during the Cold War. This conclusion, as discussed earlier, is anchored on the postulate that relations among the major powers will be relatively stable and harmonious. The Regional Strategy forecasts a world in which the Western alliance will remain united under the banner of collective security and close economic collaboration. Meanwhile, relations with Russia and China are destined to improve markedly from the tense hostility of the previous era.

In particular, the Regional Strategy discounts any return to global rivalry with either nation. It does not rule out the possibility of local rivalry with Russia in Europe, or with China in Asia, and it calls for a military balance of power in both areas to safeguard against this risk. But it views this military balance more as an insurance policy than a
central feature of the new strategy, and as a near-term expedient. Looking to the future, it embraces, and deems realistically achievable, the long-range goal of building cooperative relationships anchored on respect for mutual interests and on democratic reforms in both nations. The Regional Strategy thus expects a more peaceful world achieved through a combination of undiminished partnership with current allies and growing collaboration with former global adversaries.

Where the current strategy foresees continuing stress is in regional hot spots around the world where U.S. interests are endangered by local adversaries. In Europe, strategists will keep a cautious eye on democratization and demilitarization in the former Soviet Union, but are primarily worried about the emergence of ethnic antagonisms, economic chaos, border disputes, and resurgent nationalism in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Europe, however, is not the Regional Strategy’s chief concern. A more pressing worry is Southwest Asia, where the Regional Strategy is concerned about a resurgent military threat to the Persian Gulf oilfields operated by Saudi Arabia and other friendly Arab sheikdoms. Another worry is the continuing tense standoff on the Korean Peninsula, where heavily armed North Korea poses a military threat to South Korea, and its capital, Seoul.

Because U.S. military forces could be called upon to perform in many different situations and in other places, these three geographic areas are not the Regional Strategy’s sole focus. Nonetheless, the major regional contingencies (MRCs) stemming from these areas pose the greatest military threats to the United States, and therefore they will influence future U.S. military requirements. All three MRCs, it is noteworthy, pose serious but yet relatively modest military threats compared to what was faced during the Cold War. The need to counterbalance these threats, taking into account allied contributions, plays an important role in shaping the need for the Base Force, or something like it.

The staying power of the Regional Strategy depends upon two critical variables: the nature of regional threats and relations among the major powers. The following analysis examines trends in both variables. It concludes that, for the immediate future, the assumptions underlying the Regional Strategy are likely to remain an appropriate
basis for planning. For the mid to long term, however, a broader range of possibilities—good and bad—should be taken into account. The analysis of future U.S. defense policy thus should continue to refine the Regional Strategy, but it should also begin developing, at least conceptually, new strategies for quite different worlds.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES NOW UNDER WAY

For the United States and many other nations, the future international system will be judged in part on whether the system is stable. The term "stability," as used here, does not mean an absence of change, for change is inevitable and in many ways desirable. Stability means an absence of major violence and serious threats to legitimate U.S. national interests. At issue is whether the vast changes now under way in international affairs will promote this kind of stability, or undermine it.

A short time ago, many analysts felt optimistic that an enduringly stable international order would follow in the wake of the Cold War's dramatic end, and they endorsed creation of a formal security architecture to guide the transition to this goal. Contributing to the optimism was the explosive growth of democracy over the past two decades. As of 1973, only 30 of 122 nations were democracies in the sense of having open competitive elections for political office. By 1990, the number of democracies had grown to 59. For complex reasons, democracy was embraced heavily in Latin America and, to lesser degrees, in Asia and South Asia. The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe accelerated a global trend, and since then democracy has spread to sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, even if all these nations remain permanent democracies, it is still the case that only about 45 percent of existing nation-states have democratic governments, and only 40 percent of the world's population lives under these conditions. Today, nondemocratic governments remain in power throughout much of the Eurasian landmass and in the Middle East/Persian Gulf: the regions that are the focal points of international tensions. To be sure, democracy is beginning to plant roots in the former Soviet Union, as well as South Asia and other turbulent regions. But the very turbulence of these regions raises questions about whether democracy will be a cure-all even if it does take permanent hold. After all, democracy thus far has primarily taken hold
in regions (e.g., Western Europe and South America) where borders were settled and other traditional causes of interstate conflict had ameliorated.

An issue for debate is whether democracy brings about pacific foreign policies, or whether an already tranquil regional setting makes democracy possible. Regardless of the answer, democracy today is expanding into new regions that are clearly volatile, and the outcome—for democracy as well as peace—is uncertain.¹

In any event, the optimism of the past year has now given way to a more guarded appraisal. Events of the recent past suggest that a formal security architecture is unlikely to emerge, and that the future international system might not be as stable and cooperative as was originally envisioned. These developments do not mean that all hope for an orderly future has been abandoned. But they do mean that, because old problems remain and new ones are emerging, security and stability are goals to be achieved, not conditions to be expected.

More fundamentally, these developments suggest that the future international system is a variable in the policy calculus, not a constant, and that the process of upheaval launched in 1989 may well be far from over. The end of the Cold War witnessed the emergence of a still-existing Western alliance network coupled with a broadly cooperative world economy guided by the G-7 group of nations. Meanwhile, communism in former Warsaw Pact nations was being dismantled, the Soviet Union collapsed, and many former adversaries were embarking upon efforts to enhance democracy, free enterprise, and partnership with the West. These changes undeniably provide the building blocks for creating a stable international order. Any effort to gauge the future must come to grips with five separate revolutions that, in addition to expanding democracy, are sweeping international affairs today, with unpredictable consequences. Each of these revolutions seems to be creating countervailing trends—some are pointed toward stable tranquility, others toward chaotic upheaval. The future will be shaped by how these transformations take shape and interact with each other in whirlpool fashion.

To be sure, a number of forecasts have been offered, but there is no discernible consensus, and what unites them is that none are being made with confidence. Continuity is possible, but conceivably the years ahead will offer a world of tranquility in which relations among the major powers remain intact and regional threats are less severe than today. Alternatively, a more turbulent world might be the outcome, a world in which regional tensions are more severe and relations among the major powers have slid back into chronic rivalry. The world may be headed toward an enduring era of peace, or toward a far darker state of affairs, or somewhere in between. Because the outcome is unknowable and not fully controllable, the United States today faces strategic uncertainty of vastly greater dimensions than at any time in recent memory.

Figure 5.2 lists the five revolutions. The first two revolutions are reshaping the underlying structure of the international system, and the final three are defining new patterns of consensus and conflict within this system.

CHANGING ROLE OF THE NATION-STATE

Whereas some analysts regard the nation-state as a primary cause of anarchy in world affairs, others less impressed by the perfectability of mankind appraise it in more positive terms. To the latter, the nation-

- The role of the nation-state is changing.
- Bipolarity is giving way to greater multipolarity.
- An ideological transformation is taking place.
- The world economy is undergoing upheaval.
- Modern military technology is spreading.

Figure 5.2—Revolutions Taking Place in International Affairs
state has a healthy effect by maintaining domestic order and by facilitating normal diplomatic relations with the outside world. In Europe, for example, the emergence of the secular nation-state since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 has had countervailing effects, some bad but many good. On the one hand, European states have shown since then a tendency to fall into conflict with each other over sovereignty, borders, control of economic assets, political ideology, diaspora, and other causes. On the other hand, the rise of the nation-state coincided with a drop-off in the religious wars that had wrecked Europe for many years, and brought about agreements on international law and diplomatic practices that helped regularize relations among Europe’s quarreling factions. Moreover, the development of modern governmental institutions in these areas helped to dampen internal strife among social groups as well as to achieve a more equitable distribution of economic goods, thereby promoting greater social harmony. A similar case can be made for other regions of the world.

Regardless of where the truth lies, the nation-state system inherited from the global conflicts of the 20th century is undergoing significant changes. Assessment of the impact of these changes will be vital in developing future U.S. national security policy and defense strategy. Doing so accurately will require a clear-eyed capacity to weigh the net impact of conflicting trends by recognizing how patterns of continuity and change are likely to interact. Also needed will be a capacity to distinguish the fundamental from the ephemeral, and the real from the ideal. A sense of balance and proportion is required, one that cautions against the premature adoption of sweeping generalizations that oversimplify a complex reality.

The most noteworthy trend is the sheer growth in the number of nation-states populating the world. In 1920, there were only 64 nation-states. By the early 1960s, the number had grown to 110, and today it stands at 145. This explosive growth owes to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, Turkish, and Soviet empires in Europe, and to the independence movements that swept over Africa and Asia as imperialism receded after World Wars I and II. Today, many of these countries have the trappings of modern statehood: functioning governments, established borders, a stratified society, a sense of national identity, an integrated economy, a common currency, a civic culture, and substantial interests abroad. The result has been to
greatly increase the number of actors on the world stage, all of them pursuing foreign policies and interacting with each other. This development alone has greatly complicated the search for order and common values.

Another complication is the emerging distribution of power, as measured in the physical capacity to pursue a foreign policy and military strategy. Today, the United States is the only truly global superpower, but immediately below it on the hierarchy of power are a growing number of nation-states that, at a minimum, wield major power—economic or military—at least in their immediate regions. Included in this category are Russia, China, Germany, France, Britain, Japan, India, and others. One notch below are a host of medium powers that are capable of making their presence felt. Indeed, a number of minor powers are acquiring this capacity. The effect is to greatly multiply the number of nations that, at least in their own regions, can back up their foreign policies with coercive leverage of one type or another.

The great issue is whether this development—the appearance of more nation-states, and more with coercive power—will translate into growing order or anarchy. Many trends can be cited for asserting that the modern nation-state is becoming embedded in a host of external and internal constraints that limit its latitude for independent action. Some analysts see in these trends hope that nation-states will no longer have the freedom to engage in war with each other, and that an enduring era of cooperation will be thrust upon them by irresistible forces beyond their control. Foremost among these trends is the growth of multinational institutions, such as the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), CSCE, and G-7, the European Community, and other bodies. The international economy has also become far more interdependent in ways that constrain unilateral action. In particular, the emergence of multinational corporations and complex trade patterns has created a web of interlocking economic relationships that cut across national borders and limit national sovereignty. Furthermore, mounting political pluralism and stronger democratic institutions within nations are eroding the capacity of national governments to make foreign policy choices independently of the wishes of their social constituencies. Growing educational levels, the rapid spread of mass communications, and increasing international travel all blur the na-
tional identities that once separated mankind. The effect is to help promote a common outlook that inhibits the ability of governments to achieve the internal mobilization needed to wage war against each other.

Notwithstanding the importance of these trends, there are countervailing reasons for concluding that other fundamentals will still apply. Even though multilateral institutions are growing stronger, the world will still remain divided into nation-states, most of which are unlikely to surrender their sovereignty any time soon, especially in foreign policy and defense strategy. To the extent that multilateralism prevails, it will be because nation-states pursue this course as a policy instrument, not because collective institutions are strong enough to prevent them from doing otherwise. The incentives to pursue collectivism clearly are powerful, but multilateral institutions will have to prove their worth before they are endowed with irreversible powers. The past year alone has seen numerous attempts to use the UN, the CSCE, and other bodies for collective purposes, and the results have been mixed. If this pattern prevails, nation-states are likely to use these institutions only on a selective basis, rather than as a cure-all for international anarchy, or as a substitute for national policy.

The end of the Cold War has opened the door to global cooperation through multilateral institutions. Yet it also has removed the political ideology of anti-communism as a compelling reason for nations to band together. As a result, many nations are now left facing the need to define their visions in terms of their own aspirations. They will be doing so in an atmosphere in which the common bonds among old partners are weaker than before. For this reason, re-nationalization may yet outweigh multilateralism’s effects.

Raw resources will continue to be an important factor in determining the ability of nation-states to act on their own, including actors that today are only minor powers. As their economic strength expands, these nation-states will possess the resources to develop assertive foreign agendas and strong military postures of their own. This especially applies to once-impoverished nations in several regions that are today parlaying their successful export strategies into stronger military power-projection capabilities. To be sure, all nations will be subject to the pressures of politically aware populations and pluralist
institutions. But internal pressures can propel governments toward war, rather than constrain them from this course. Indeed, scholars of international relations have long regarded mass politics and modern communications to be a mixed blessing for the cause of peace.

A critical issue will be whether growing interdependence acts to prevent nation-states from pursuing their agendas at each other’s expense. The hope that this will be the case has surfaced before, and has been dashed by grim experience. As the 19th century came to an end, many theoreticians held that expanding economic and social ties were rendering Europe immune from future wars. Yet the 20th century proved to be Europe’s most violent. The reality is that interdependence brings many nations into greater contact with each other, thereby making them more vulnerable to the behavior of their neighbors. The effect can be growing cooperation, but it can also cause greater friction.

These countervailing trends will be played out on a region-by-region basis. The impulse to multilateralism and diminished national sovereignty is strongest within the Western alliance that united the United States, Japan, and Western Europe. Yet, it is this alliance that is most vulnerable to corrosion now that the Cold War has ended. Many observers already are worried that the United States and Japan are drifting apart, and may even be launched on a collision course owing to competing economic agendas. NATO’s cohesion has eroded at least somewhat because of a diminished external threat and mounting internal economic squabbles. In Western Europe, the drive toward EC integration continues, but there are growing doubts that the common security policy mandated by the Maastricht Treaty will be achieved any time soon. Even if Western Europe does not drift back toward renationalization, the EC’s progress might well stop at the point where only quasi-economic union is achieved. If so, the effect will be to leave West European governments in the position of still relying at least partly on national calculations to shape their foreign policies and defense strategies.

Much will depend upon four issues: (1) Whether a suitable new transatlantic bargain for NATO can be fashioned, (2) whether Germany remains anchored in Western Europe, (3) whether the EC can find a satisfactory way to overcome mounting doubts about Maastricht, and (4) whether the EC can be expanded to acquire new
members in the near future. The goal of achieving a unified and enlarged EC embedded in a flourishing transatlantic alliance is far from a sure thing. To the extent that reality falls short of ideal visions, the nations of Western Europe will be required to chart their own courses as dictated by their individual interests.²

In East Central Europe and the Balkans, the system of jury-rigged nations created after World War I is rapidly fragmenting into smaller entities, thereby proliferating the number of countries. Yugoslavia already has crumbled, Czechoslovakia has broken apart, and mounting ethnic unrest is raising questions about the territorial integrity of Hungary and Romania. Within the former Soviet Union, an entire empire has collapsed, spinning off some 15 new nations, all proclaiming sovereignty. The fragmentation, moreover, may well not stop at the national borders created in the USSR’s wake. Internal upheavals driven by separatist movements already are occurring in several nations in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and Russia itself possibly will fracture, thereby creating further fragmentation.³ In this region, the nation-state system thus is making an impressive comeback. The presence of severe ethnic conflicts, economic frictions, unclear borders, and large diaspora promise to make it quite anarchical.

Elsewhere around the world, the nation-state system remains largely unchanged, but it was mostly anarchical to begin with, and the end of the Cold War does nothing to strengthen the already-weak impulse to collective thinking. Particularly in Asia and the Middle East/Persian Gulf, but also elsewhere, the previous era provided a fixed security framework that shaped the policies and expectations of many nations. With this framework fast disappearing, some nations are experiencing weakened security guarantees and a less cooperative economic environment, and other nations are sensing far greater latitude for pursuing their own agendas. This change does not downgrade the potential importance of collectivist influences coming from other directions, but the end of the Cold War clearly does

provide nations in these regions greater incentives for independent actions, and greater scope for carrying them out.

TOWARD A MORE MULTIPOLAR SYSTEM

In addition to the nation-state preserving its status as a largely independent actor, the global security system is changing from a rigidly bipolar structure to something more fluid and multipolar, but whose exact character defies ready description. Today's international system is far from multipolar in the way this term is traditionally defined. To a degree, the current system is "unipolar" in the sense that the United States remains the only global superpower, and it leads a network of still-strong alliances in Europe and Asia. Greater multipolarity has been brought about by the collapse of the communist bloc, which has spawned a large number of new Eurasian nations with weak security bonds among them. Meanwhile, Asia, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and South Asia all lack strong collective security institutions. Perhaps the current system is "polyarchic;" in any event, it is certainly depolarized. It is long removed from a classical multipolar model in which nations consciously pursue competitive balance-of-power policies at each other's expense and alliances are constantly shifting. Yet, some elements of multipolarity are clearly present, and if present trends continue, they may gather force in the years ahead. Although the outcome defies prediction, neither global collective security nor pure multipolarity is likely to prevail. To the extent an equilibrium is reached, it is likely to be suspended half-way between these two extremes. But its exact dimensions must be regarded as a variable, not a constant, in the U.S. security calculus.4

To an important degree, the stability of the new system will be heavily influenced by familiar structural features. In general, a more multipolar system will tend toward stability if it is dominated by nations with moderate agendas, and if a military balance of power is a natural

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state of affairs rather than an artificial construct of shifting alliances. By contrast, a multipolar system will tend toward instability if its members pursue conflicting political agendas, and if a military balance of power is not readily maintained. Because these determinants are all rapidly changing variables, gauging the future stability of this more multipolar system is a hazardous enterprise.5

Experience with multipolar systems, going back to the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, has not been a sanguine one. Europe, especially, plunged into turmoil when Napoleon appeared on the scene in the 1790s and virulent nationalism raised its head. From 1815–1848, the Concert of Europe, a club of authoritarian leaders led by Austria and Russia, maintained stability. Once Germany unified under Bismarck, however, Europe’s multipolar system veered toward chronic tension and instability, leading to World War I in 1914. In the years after that war, multipolarity took on a global cast as Japan became a major power, and the result again was a plunge into world war.

This unhappy historical record creates no deterministic law that a future multipolar system inevitably will be unstable, but it raises caution about any judgment that stability will be an inherent characteristic. As history shows, a core problem with a multipolar system can be that without organized alliances, would-be aggressors with offensive military power are left free to attack weaker nations one by one, unfearful of a collective response. Faced with chronic insecurity, potential victims have no recourse but to build imposing defenses, which can be threatening to otherwise peaceful neighbors, thereby stimulating armaments competition even among nations with benign intentions. To the extent alliances are formed, they tend to be loose and transient, often lacking sufficient strength to deter but creating enough entanglements to escalate crises. Unstable multipolarity thus can allow rogue elephants to run free, stimulates conflict where it otherwise might not exist, offers weak mechanisms for crisis management, and can help trigger escalation—all bad features.

However, multipolar systems come in different shapes and sizes, with differing implications. Much will depend upon the exact politi-

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cal-military nature of the future system, and especially upon whether unstable features are offset by stabilizing dynamics. Moreover, each of the three critical regions offers a combination of unstable and stable features. At the moment, the Middle East/Persian Gulf remains rife with political tensions and military competition, but the search for peace continues through multilateral diplomacy. In Europe, national agendas may be reappearing, but although some small powers are pursuing dubious goals, the major powers are treating each other with equanimity. In Asia, old antagonisms may lurk beneath the surface, but the major powers do not find themselves at loggerheads, and indeed they are exploring ways to improve relations. Enduring stability thus is not guaranteed, but although today's more multipolar system may not be standing on firm ground, at least it is not standing on quicksand.

Any effort to gauge the stability of tomorrow's more multipolar system is beclouded by the fact that the major actors have not yet defined their foreign policies in this system. Only the United States has laid down the broad features of an activist policy for itself, and with domestic economic troubles looming, even its visions are not yet fully elaborated. The other four major powers—Russia, China, Germany, and Japan—are all currently in a quiescent stage. Russia has entered a period of strategic retreat and internal preoccupation as it endeavors to shape a new government and economy. Still wedded to communism, China is struggling to combine authoritarian continuity with gradual free market reforms of its economy, and thus is also internally focused. A similar pattern of self-absorption applies to Germany, which is grappling with the turbulent effects of its recent unification and is limiting its foreign policy horizons to nurturing the EC. Motivated by the goal of enhancing domestic prosperity, Japan is pursuing a vigorous foreign economic policy aimed at expanding exports and market share, but continues to play a passive role in Asian security affairs.

For all four nations, this pattern of internal self-absorption and external passivity is a historical anomaly, and sooner or later it seems destined to change. Currently consumed by long pent-up domestic problems, all of these nations are wearied from forty years of Cold War. But internal problems ebb and flow, and weariness eventually can give way to fresh enthusiasm for pursuing foreign involvements as a means to define a nation's greatness. The impulse to look out-
ward is reinforced when foreign policy becomes an indisposible means for achieving domestic visions, and is further accentuated when the international environment is sufficiently pliable to be manipulated and is too threatening to be ignored.

With the constraining effects of bipolarity now removed, almost inevitably all four nations will eventually be driven by events to pursue more assertive foreign policies reflective of their rich histories, powerful energies, psychological dispositions, enduring security dilemmas, and important roles in world affairs. By virtue of their sheer size alone, Russia and Germany are destined to dominate Europe, and the same applies to Japan and China in Asia. Once these nations begin the inevitable transition to more activist foreign policies in the fluid and open-ended setting that characterizes tomorrow's depolarized system, they will begin to interact in complex and forceful ways.

Prospects for international harmony in the years ahead will be influenced by the manner in which this interaction unfolds. Notwithstanding their long histories of mutual antagonisms, at the moment these four nations have generally tranquil relations with each other, although this tranquility may be a temporary by-product of their unassertive foreign policies. The key issue is whether tranquility will hold when these nations begin pursuing assertive agendas and find their agendas influenced, and perhaps frustrated, by each other. At that juncture, the search for a satisfactory equilibrium will begin, and the real international system of the future will begin to take shape.

Neither renewed conflict nor permanent cooperation is inevitable; the outcome will be influenced by developments in economics and security affairs. Currently, security has receded in importance and economics has gained preeminence, but because these two dimensions of foreign policy do not exist in isolation, eventually security affairs will reemerge to claim a role more reflective of history and enduring structural conditions. With this development, the asymmetry of the current situation will become more apparent. Germany and Japan have immense economic power but lack military strength, whereas Russia and China are nuclear-armed military powers with comparatively backward economies. An opportunity presents itself for enduring cooperation if the economic strength of Germany and Japan can be harnessed to help propel Russia and China to greater
prosperity. But the situation is also ripe for deterioration if a collaborative economic relationship is not established as a result of limited horizons by Germany and Japan or of failure by Russia and China to reform their governments and foreign policies. In this event, the military imbalances among these nations could affect how political equilibrium is pursued, and whether it can be established at all.

If Russia does pursue an uncooperative agenda, its military power could again become a factor in the Eurasian security equation. Throughout history, a strong military establishment has been a permanent fixture in Russia, but recently Russian forces have been badly weakened by declining morale, low readiness, and poor cohesion. Whether this trend will continue is uncertain, for although the Yeltsin regime originally talked of demilitarization, calls are now being heard for efforts to halt the decline and preserve a strong army. Even if START II is fully implemented, Russia will remain a major nuclear power, and if recent trends are reversed, it probably will emerge with a sizable army and comparably large air and naval forces. If policies are launched to make the military establishment more professional, modern, and mobile, Russia will be able to project sizable forces beyond its borders.

In this event, the effect will be to create a military imbalance of power in Eastern/Central Europe that could weaken political stability. NATO’s borders will not be immediately threatened, but Russia will enjoy military preponderance over all its neighbors, and through Belarus, it will continue to have access to Poland. Only Ukraine, with its 54 million people, will pose a potential counterweight, but Russia’s assets will outnumber Ukraine’s by a ratio of at least 3–4:1. Moreover, Ukraine, whose own political future is uncertain, will pose a potential military threat to the weak nations on its western border: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova. This imbalance could create incentives for the shifting alliances and diplomatic maneuvers that are the hallmark of an unstable multipolar system.

As with Russia in Europe, China’s foreign policy and military power will have an important bearing on whether Asia remains stable. A decade ago, China began downsizing its military forces as part of its economic campaign, but the past few years have seen the pendulum swing in the other direction. The motives are unclear, but growing acceptance that China will pursue a more assertive foreign policy is
probably a powerful concern. Exactly how this foreign policy will unfold is uncertain, particularly because China's own government is subject to factional debate. Regardless, defense spending has been rising and ambitious programs have been launched to modernize China's forces. Over the coming years, China's nuclear strength probably will expand in the form of more land-based missiles and perhaps SSBN submarines. A similar strengthening of China's army and air force already is under way, and in the future, the Chinese navy probably will develop growing blue-water capabilities. These military improvements will not have negative political implications if China's foreign policy follows a benign course, but the results could be quite different if a less cooperative diplomacy is pursued. In this event, China will loom as a threatening military power in Asia, operating amidst a regional imbalance of power in which Japan, Korea, and Russia serve as only partial counterweights.⁶

The United States can act as a global superpower and add its influential presence in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf. By promoting moderate political agendas and stable military balances, it can exert a strong, calming effect in all regions, thereby helping offset negative trends. But the United States is not a panacea, and if the weight of American power is left out, all three regions may become structurally unstable. Because U.S. policy is a variable, not a constant, this sobering picture needs to be considered in assessing the future.

In Europe, many quarters have come to recognize that a true Europe-wide community, stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, must be built. With the EC internally preoccupied and reluctant to expand rapidly, however, the feasibility of this vision is open to question. We wish to avoid a turbulent Russia left on the outside, looking at a prosperous EC led by a Germany that increasingly is coming to dominate the continent. This situation would not augur well for stability, especially if Germany and Russia return to their old competitive struggle.⁷

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Whether Russia and Germany will find cause for renewed political conflict in Europe, especially absent a U.S. presence, has not been determined. Neither nation is currently pursuing an outward-looking foreign policy, and both appear more interested in mutual cooperation than antagonism, yet in the past, periods of cooperation have been followed by conflict. Moreover, surface appearances are not reassuring. Whereas Germany will be a democracy with great economic strength but a less-endowed military posture, Russia will retain sizable military forces and might be ruled by an authoritarian government of some sort. The two nations, moreover, will find themselves confronting each other across a power vacuum in Eastern Europe made up of small, militarily vulnerable, and internally turbulent nations. Perhaps an enduring equilibrium will be found. In the absence of equilibrium, however, this situation is a natural breeding ground for trouble, and if conflict emerges, the asymmetrical distribution of economic and military power may well invite Russia to use military force to offset German economic strength. If it perceives this danger in advance, and receives inadequate reassurances from NATO and the WEU/EC, Germany would have an incentive to build a stronger defense posture, with negative consequences that would reverberate across all of Europe.

Similar uncertainty beclouds stability in Asia, especially in absence of an enduring U.S. presence. Russia, China, and Japan are not currently pursuing outward-looking foreign policies, so there is a political equilibrium set against a background of bitter historical animosity among all three nations. Whether Russia will return to assertiveness is uncertain, but its refusal to return the disputed Kurile islands to Japan suggests that it is not in strategic retreat. Meanwhile, with both Japan and China destined to embrace more active foreign policies in the years ahead, the stability is uncertain.8

Because Japan has a small military establishment oriented toward homeland defense, not power projection, its foreign policy will be manifested through growing economic dominance in Asia. China plausibly will welcome growing economic ties with Japan, but not at the expense of its own internal development and foreign trade. In

8See Barber Conable, Jr. and David M. Lampton, "China, the Coming Power," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 5, pp. 113-152.
this event, Japan's emergence might well alarm China, as it already has alarmed some other Asian nations. In reaction, China, with its weaker economy, could well turn to its growing military power to counterbalance Japan and influence it to pursue a regional agenda acceptable to Peking. Whether Tokyo would acquiesce is uncertain, but if it did not, a Japanese military buildup would be a logical result, with destabilizing consequences.

Notwithstanding the current peace negotiations, the Middle East/Persian Gulf region today remains dominated by immoderate agendas, bitter political rivalries, and military imbalances. Israel faces hostile Arab powers, and continues to deter aggression through a powerful military establishment primed for offensive warfare. In the Persian Gulf, the conservative sheikdoms rule countries teeming with Islamic discord, and have little military power to offset the heavily armed military establishments of the radical Arab nations to the north. The Persian Gulf War of 1991 was a direct outgrowth of this unstable situation, which despite Iraq's defeat, continues today. For both the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, a further military explosion remains a possibility.

THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY

The stability of the more multipolar system ahead will be affected by the ideological transformation now sweeping over the globe. Western-style democracy has won a triumphant victory over communism, and many hope that it will be installed in new places, but this outcome is far from certain. Especially barring the way are Islamic fundamentalism and mounting signs that in Europe and Asia, communism might be replaced by ethno-nationalism, or even fascism. These ideologies might dissipate in the years ahead, but if they emerge as strong rivals to liberal democracy, strenuous conflicts over political values and visions might reemerge. In any event, as Samuel Huntington points out, interstate relations will be strongly affected by the political and cultural values embraced by the principal actors. In the future, the international system will remain multicultural, with Western democracy coexisting alongside Orthodox,

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Slavic, Islamic, Hindu, Confucian, and Buddhist values. The heterogeneity will make for great diversity, but possibly at the expense of harmony.

An interesting feature of the Cold War is that ideology gradually lost its inflammatory impact as the conflict unfolded. From the outset, democracy was unwilling to resort to force to topple communism. Consequently, the core risk was that adherents of communism might launch a military crusade against the West. Faced with stiff Western resolve, communism gradually lost its xenophobic anger toward democracy and capitalism, and became willing to accept a temporary accommodation in order to allow the allegedly irrefutable laws of history to work their natural course. Because they are less impressed with historical determinism, the new ideologies and their adherents may be even more antagonistic to democratic capitalism, and more prone to risk confrontation. If so, the new international system might be rendered unstable by ideological clashes of greater intensity than seemed likely a short time ago.

Even if democracy surmounts this challenge, the international system will not become permanently stable if other key factors pull heavily toward instability. Because of their common ideology, commitment to civil values, and pluralist institutions, democracies are far less likely to wage war against each other than are rival ideologies. Nonetheless, democracy is no guarantee against wars that might be launched for reasons that go beyond common political institutions. Among these reasons can be ethnic antagonisms, economic strife, border disputes, and control of valuable resources. Democracy ensures that national policy will respond to the wishes of the body politic, but if the mass public favors aggression, then that stance will be adopted.

Although Western political values are gaining favor in former communist countries, distaste for those values remains deep-seated in substantial parts of the Islamic world, although the fervor attached to Islamic fundamentalism tends to ebb and flow. The recent upsurge of hostility to the West is a product of endemic poverty in Arab countries, anger over U.S. support for Israel, and resistance to the unsettling effects of secular modernization. Although some Islamic nations are pursuing expansionist policies as an outgrowth of geopolitical agendas, Islam as a cultural force has not pursued
religious crusades for many years. Iraq’s aggression against Kuwait was a product of radical Arab nationalism, not Islamic fundamentalism. Many Islamic nations today are internally preoccupied, an internal focus reinforced by physical separation from Europe. Moreover, the Islamic world is divided into radical and moderate factions that pursue sharply different foreign policy agendas. Unless internal upheavals bring radicals into power, such moderate Islamic nations as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Pakistan will continue to place high value on constructive relations with the United States and its democratic partners. Also, the radical Islamic world itself is divided into contending factions. Indeed, Iran, Iraq, and Syria—the leading radicals—typically expend so much energy quarreling with each other that they have little left to fight the West, or to unite themselves.

For these reasons, the West’s worst fears are unlikely to come true anytime soon, but nonetheless, Islamic fundamentalism will continue to pose challenges to Western interests and international stability for many years. Apart from tensions over Israel, the most obvious locations are the Persian Gulf and North Africa, but developments in Central Asia also merit close appraisal. Moreover, internal upheavals could topple pro-Western governments in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, thereby greatly increasing the problems faced by the West. Barring these developments, Islamic fundamentalism will remain a problem to be managed, rather than a major threat of global proportions.10

In Europe and Asia, the chief ideological concern is that resurgent nationalism, especially in the hands of authoritarian regimes, will produce malevolent foreign policies with destabilizing consequences. In recent years nationalism has not been an active political force on either continent, but the 19th century in Europe is a continuing story of how this ideology can have profoundly destabilizing consequences. Nationalism first appeared in xenophobic form in postrevolutionary France, where the changes unleashed by destruction of the ancien regime produced Napoleon’s imperial conquests across Europe. Following Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo in 1815,

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Europe's autocratic regimes temporarily kept revolutionary forces in check, but in the following years nationalism grew rampant. By 1890, virtually all of Europe's major powers—some of them democracies—were engulfed in nationalism and the imperial foreign policies that flowed from it.\footnote{See Vitaly Narumkin, "International Security and the Forces of Nationalism and Fundamentalism," Adelphi Papers 286, New Dimensions in International Security, Winter 1991/92.}

The main proponent of imperial conduct was Germany—although this nation was ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm, its internal order was becoming increasingly democratic. This development, however, did not translate into pressures for a benign foreign policy. Indeed, Kaiser Wilhelm probably would have gone to war long before 1914 had he heeded popular opinion, the German press, and the parliament. Austria-Hungary and Russia, both conservative monarchies, were highly nationalist, but so were Britain and France, both established democracies. The resulting clashes in Africa and the Balkans played a major role in triggering the cataclysm following Sarajevo. Nationalism by no means was the sole cause of World War I, but it contributed heavily, and the accompanying spread of democracy did little to keep it in check.

World War II, of course, saw aggressive nationalism on a global stage, carried to extremes. Virile nationalism lay at the core of Nazism in Germany, and it plunged Europe into its most devastating war. In the Pacific, Japan's nationalist agenda of imperial expansion plunged all of Asia into a devastating conflict. In the end, Germany and Japan were both crushed, and their nationalist ideologies were discredited. Whether their defeat spelled the permanent end of nationalism in other places, however, was less clear.

Following World War II, nationalistic fervor cooled in democratic Western Europe, but the collapse of communism evidently is unleashing it again among many former Warsaw Pact nations. What is noteworthy about this trend is that it is being accompanied, even propelled, by strong impulses toward democracy. Many newly liberated nations in and around Europe are defining their sovereign visions in terms of ethnic separatism. The collapse of multinational states in this region is producing a larger number of smaller new na-
tions, many professing democratic aspirations and some even building democratic institutions, but nearly all drawing psychological energy from ethnocentric nationalism. The result is mounting instability and violence. This trend has been manifested most openly in Serbia's conduct, but it shows signs of spreading elsewhere, and conceivably could engulf much of East Central Europe and the Commonwealth.

Notwithstanding this trend, the principal threat to international stability posed by nationalism is that democracy and benign external conduct will fail to take hold in Russia and China. The collapse of communist rule in Russia has been followed by an effort led by Boris Yeltsin to establish democracy and free enterprise, but the outcome is uncertain. The task of disestablishing the old command economy amid free-fall economic collapse is alone daunting, but the simultaneous effort to build entirely new political institutions vastly complicates the enterprise. The harsh reality is that economic reform can normally be achieved only amidst political and social stability, and political reform normally can succeed only amidst economic and social tranquility. As history shows, democracy is hard to transplant onto infertile soil, and free enterprise is hard-pressed to take hold in absence of an active middle class, a productive workforce, an efficient agrarian sector, and a prosperous industry. In addition to its current turmoil and the lack of time for an evolutionary approach, Russia's history, autocratic institutions, Slavic values, deep social cleavages, and growing criminal societies are further imposing barriers against democracy sinking deep roots.

Experts disagree on where Russia is headed, but a growing number are worried that Western-style democracy will not be the outcome. A collapse into warlord anarchy and civil war is possible, but some form of nondemocratic government may also emerge. Bolshevik communism has been thoroughly discredited, and virulent fascism seems too close to Stalinism to gain popular support. A more likely outcome is a conservative authoritarian regime with a strong executive ruling a weak parliament, coupled with a mixed economy dominated by state-owned industries, monopoly capitalism, and free enterprise among the agricultural and service sectors. A parallel might be Mussolini's Italy—a closer model may be the Pinochet regime—but something uniquely Russian is the best bet.
Even as Russia struggles to build a new government and economy, that nation debates its future foreign policy. One faction led by Yeltsin supporters embraces a close partnership with the Western alliance; at the other extreme is a highly nationalist faction that foresees rivalry with the West. In the middle is a centrist faction that calls on Russia to pursue a traditional foreign policy in Eurasia anchored on a pragmatic interpretation of Russian national interests and on Slavophile concepts. This faction sees the future as offering neither permanent rivalry nor cooperation with the West, but rather a more fluid pattern of relationships in both Europe and Asia. In this vision, Russia would cooperate with former Cold War rivals in some policy areas, but it also would pursue a security equilibrium in Europe and Asia anchored on a military balance aimed at preventing the emergence of hegemonic powers that threaten Russian interests. This strategic goal, members of this faction acknowledge, could bring Russia into some form of rivalry with Germany, Japan, and other nations, including the United States.

In principle, a conservative Russian government need not pursue an expansionist policy, and its need for flourishing trade relationships will be a major incentive for a forthcoming stance toward the Western democracies. Nonetheless, Russia’s Slavic values are a natural breeding ground for hostile paranoia toward European outsiders. The need to justify internal authoritarianism alone could bring hostility directed at the United States and its democratic partners. Especially if Russia does not achieve economic prosperity, smoldering resentment over loss of its imperial realm could bring about resurgent nationalism and irredentism. Also, concern about the fate of ethnic Russians living beyond Russian borders could engender hostility to immediate neighbors, and geopolitical rivalry could produce bad relations with Ukraine and the Baltics. Together or apart, all of these factors could propel Russia toward unbenign conduct, but not automatically so. An equally plausible outcome is that Russia will establish stable relations with its neighbors. Only time will tell.

China’s future is similarly uncertain. Communism remains in power there, and for the past 13 years, the regime has endeavored to achieve rapid economic expansion and free-market reforms without undermining its own existence. Notwithstanding the brutal Tiananmen Square affair in 1989, this effort thus far has been successful.
China today is still an impoverished nation with a per-capita income only one-sixth that of most Western democracies, but with growth rates averaging 9 percent annually, it undeniably is making huge economic strides, and its GNP already may be nearly one-half that of the United States. This upward path has been anchored on agricultural reform, industrial expansion, and growing trade relationships with the outside world. If this trend continues, massively populated China, now a generation behind Korea and other East Asian nations, will become an economic powerhouse within a decade or two.

This development will have a profound impact on Asian security affairs, but the exact implications of an economically powerful and outward-looking China will be influenced by political trends within that nation. Surface appearances alone raise serious doubts about the capacity of totalitarianism to survive amid a prosperous economy anchored on free-market principles. Because of China's unique political culture and society, however, the outcome might not be parliamentary democracy as that term is defined in the West. A uniquely Chinese political system will be built, and most likely it will be marked by strong authoritarian institutions embracing a nationalist ideology. A Chinese government of this sort might interact with its neighbors in peaceful ways, but equally plausible, it might pursue the path of xenophobic and belligerent conduct.

THE WORLD ECONOMY

The stability of the future international system will also be affected by the upheaval taking place in the world economy. During the Cold War, the world economy was dominated by the Western industrial powers, and was guided by the rules of free trade and cooperative adjustment laid down by the Bretton Woods Accord, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the G-7. The world economy ahead will include a number of influential new actors on their way to competitive status, as well as increasingly vocal states still mired in poverty. Moreover, interdependence will increase further as many nations place ever-growing reliance on trade, monetary, financial, and technological flows from abroad to sustain their domestic prosperity. Even if consensus is preserved on basic principles for managing the world economy, these developments can
hardly help but complicate the already stressful process of finding coordinated policies that upgrade the common interest.  

Moreover, the future world economy might be run by new and less cooperative rules than were previously followed. Nothing has happened to invalidate David Ricardo's theory that free trade will enlarge the world economy by compelling nations to specialize in areas of competitive advantage. As the saying goes, a rising tide lifts all boats. For this reason, free trade remains the economic principle embraced by the major industrial powers in theory, if not always in practice. The goals of GATT and the G-7 are to continue expanding free trade, and the future might see further progress in this direction. Nonetheless, an expanding global economy does not benefit all nations equally, and differential growth rates can bring dislocations and deep resentment. Moreover, a growing number of nations have discovered the equally valid theorem that individual participants can benefit if they play by self-serving rules while everyone else adheres to Ricardo's edicts. Among the countries that have suffered the consequences of unfair practices, questions increasingly are being asked about whether free trade should be replaced by rules more narrowly focused on the national interest rather than the collective good.

In all likelihood, the future of international economic cooperation will depend upon the degree to which satisfactory growth rates can be maintained. Provided the world economy exhibits sustained growth in ways that bring prosperity to all nations, a spirit of cooperation will prevail. If growth and prosperity are low and not satisfactorily distributed, cooperation will suffer. The consequences will be worse during a global recession when the comparatively disadvantaged suffer even more. The irony is that cooperation is most needed when times are tough, but is less achievable precisely for this reason.

This irony is worrisome because the recent global recession has shaken confidence that downturns are cyclical, and that economic booms always follow in their wake. In past years, the world economy has been fired by the American, German, and Japanese economies, all of which demonstrated great strength. The U.S. economy has been victimized by mounting deficits and weakened productivity.

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the Japanese economy has displayed previously unrecognized structural flaws, and Germany's performance has been marred by the troublesome demands of unification. The troubles encountered by all three economies suggest that booms might be harder to come by, and that nagging recessions can give way to true depressions. A special worry is that the collapse of 1929 led the United States and Europe to adopt strict protectionist measures, thereby triggering the Great Depression that caused political chaos in Europe and helped bring about World War II. Although governments everywhere have learned from this harsh experience, what is past here can still be prologue.\textsuperscript{13}

Especially if the future does not offer a return to sustained growth, a key risk ahead is that the Western allies, no longer needing to band together to protect their security, might part company as a result of growing economic competition. This particularly could occur if the GATT and G-7 collapse, giving way to rival trading blocs pursuing protectionist policies. At the moment, the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) is being organized in North America, the European Community is pursuing economic and monetary unity, and a variety of Pacific basin concepts are under examination. These groups hope to reduce trade barriers among their members, and disavow the idea of erecting barriers to outside countries. But the future is uncertain. Currently, public attention is focused on the trade dispute between the United States and the EC over agricultural subsidies. The nations that have relied most heavily on protectionism and self-serving export strategies, however, lie in Asia. Japan is most often criticized, but Korea, Taiwan, and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) also fall into this category. Failure by Asian nations to lower their trade barriers could propel North America and Europe to pursue similar protectionist policies, thus producing a global departure from the principles of free trade and a possible descent into competitive mercantilism.

Reciprocal interactions between security and economics are especially important in gauging the future. Security and economics go hand in hand, and are the basis of real reciprocity. In essence, se-

curity partnership can provide the foundation that makes possible economic cooperation, thereby further strengthening the impulse to collective defense. Yet tensions in either area can beget problems in the other. Just as eroding security bonds can weaken commitment to economic collaboration, mounting trade rivalry can undermine military alliances. Degree matters, of course. A minor upsurge in economic competition is unlikely to fracture otherwise sound alliances, but a major upsurge might do so, especially if a sense of external danger is no longer present. Any major unraveling of NATO and the U.S.-Japanese security relationship would undermine one of the main pillars of stability in the more multipolar system ahead. The consequences would be all the more severe if economic tensions grow to the point where the Western allies fall into genuine rivalry among themselves, and begin engaging in outright military competition. Because the Western governments today are pursuing policies aimed at maintaining their security partnerships and collaborative economic relationships, the risk of a downturn this severe seems slight. But over the long term, this development cannot be ruled out. The key to avoiding it is statesman-like behavior, but history shows many cases in which statesmanship was cast to the winds.

A more immediate risk is that poverty in key regions will reach the boiling point and spill over into military conflict. The risk is especially great in the Middle East, where endemic poverty and population explosion in many Arab nations is an underlying cause of Islamic anger toward the West. If the economies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union continue their free-fall descent, poverty there could also become a source of predatory behavior and hostility toward the European Community and the United States. Because many of its economies are booming, Asia seems less vulnerable, but China today remains a backward country that could still fall victim to poverty-generated discontent if its current expansion slows. Many of the nations in these regions possess sizable military arsenals, and until they embark on the path to sustained economic growth and prosperity, they will be potential sources of conduct aimed at upsetting the status quo.
THE PROLIFERATION OF MILITARY TECHNOLOGY

The stability of the future international system will also be affected by trends in military technology proliferation and by how these trends affect political-economic relationships. This fifth revolution has begun, and it deserves careful appraisal. The collapse of the Soviet global military threat has had the biggest stabilizing effect, but other positive developments, such as in strategic nuclear forces, are also noteworthy. At present, only the United States, Russia and the Commonwealth, Britain, France, and China possess intercontinental nuclear weapons. Neither Germany nor Japan have plans to acquire them, most other nations remain firm signatures to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the IAEA is becoming better able to discourage proliferation. Moreover, the START I Treaty is reducing U.S. and Russian forces to 6000 warheads apiece, and a START II agreement has been reached to reduce to about 3000 warheads within a decade. Calls are being heard for even deeper reductions as part of an international effort to promote nonproliferation and devalue these weapons as usable instruments of security policy.

Efforts also are under way to promote a stable conventional balance. In Europe, implementation of the CFE Treaty will reduce conventional forces to far lower and safer levels, while retaining sufficient forces for defense. Russia and other Commonwealth nations are being influenced by domestic problems to reduce below CFE levels. NATO's nations are downsizing by 25–50 percent, while forging plans to preserve sufficient strength to protect alliance borders and maintain a regional balance. Also, efforts are being made to promote military cooperation among former adversaries in Europe.

In other regions, an overall conventional balance is being maintained. In Northeast Asia, China and Japan do not threaten each other, and fear of nuclear proliferation aside, the military situation on the Korean peninsula remains stable. In Southeast Asia, North Vietnam has not emerged as the military expansionist power feared by many, and no signs are yet evident of destabilizing military rivalries elsewhere. In South Asia, a delicate but enduring military standoff exists between India and Pakistan. In the Middle East, Israel maintains a balance against its Arab rivals, and in the Persian Gulf, the destruction of Iraq's offensive power has helped stabilize the situation at least temporarily. All of these regions present serious polit-
ical tensions, but for the most part, the conventional imbalances that exist today do not create attractive incentives for war.

Notwithstanding the current stable situation, potential future problems may arise if negative technological trends accelerate and gain control. A special threat to regional stability comes from the worrisome prospect that weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and delivery systems, will proliferate in the years ahead. Despite the NPT and the best efforts of the IAEA, nuclear weapons are commonly thought to have entered the arsenals of several small nations. Fortunately, these nations tend to be status quo powers with defensive aims, but the risk is that nuclear weapons will fall into the hands of nations with radical agendas. Obvious candidates include Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and Libya; a related concern is that the START process might fail short of completely removing nuclear weapons from Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Short of the immediate risk of regional nuclear crises, proliferation might beget further proliferation as current signatories to the NPT perceive no alternative but to withdraw and pursue their own programs. The worst by no means is inevitable, but if it occurs, the effects will be profoundly destabilizing. A long-term threat is that Germany and Japan somehow might become so unsettled by international instability to pursue nuclear arsenals of their own. In the improbable event this development were to occur, it would have profoundly destabilizing consequences.

Even without major nuclear proliferation, conventional weapons are rapidly spreading, bringing destabilizing consequences of their own. Only one or two decades ago, modern conventional weapons were generally not found outside the inventories of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, but in recent years this pattern has changed because of the accelerating sales of conventional arms. Further contributing to this trend has been the collapse of the Soviet Union, which has spawned a number of new nations with impressive arsenals. Ukraine, for example, might wind up being as well-armed as Germany and France. The ongoing effect is to transform politically unstable areas of Europe into armed camps, capable of immense violence by governments, ethnic groups, and terrorist organizations. The effects already

are being seen in Yugoslavia, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and other Commonwealth nations. The risk of such large arsenals is that violence in Europe will spread.

Similar trends are noticeable in other regions. In Northeast Asia, China has embarked on a program to improve its conventional posture, and in the future might well acquire the air and naval forces needed for a significant power projection capability. At present, Japan's security policy is driven by defensive goals, but its military budget has increased, and its posture is slowly acquiring a better capacity to project power beyond Japan's borders. In time, the effect could be to produce military competition between China and Japan, with control over nearby waters and trade lanes becoming a focal point of rivalry. The military balance in Korea remains tenuous, and if the political standoff is resolved, a unified Korea will be a strong military power that could pose a threat to nations in the region.

In Southeast Asia, military improvements are under way in a number of nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Because these nations have small forces and are pursuing defensive objectives, the immediate effect is not to threaten stability. But in time, the effects could be destabilizing if serious political tensions emerge and are accompanied by an imbalance of military power. Similarly cautious judgments must be made about South Asia. There, India is acquiring stronger naval forces and otherwise upgrading its military establishment, and Pakistan continues to modernize its forces. Because political stability is heavily influenced by military balances between India and Pakistan, and between China and India, any major shift in the military equilibrium could have a negative impact, and perhaps help propel the subcontinent to war.15

Perhaps the most militarily volatile region is the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, where wealth from growing oil revenues will provide resources for ongoing military competition if the peace process fails. The Arab-Israel rivalry is an obvious potential candidate for intensified rivalry, but if North African regimes acquire modern conventional weapons the Mediterranean and NATO's southern nation might be threatened. In the Persian Gulf, Iraq is trying to rearm and

Iran is making efforts to acquire submarines and other modern weapons. As both nations improve their arsenals, the military threat in the Gulf region will increase. If the trends are worrisome over the next few years, they are doubly so in the long term. Conventional proliferation does not beget instability if a military balance between regional actors is maintained, but when anti-status quo powers acquire offensive weapons that provide dominance over neighboring states, the effects are highly destabilizing.

Responsibility for maintaining a balance of power in the face of these developments will lie heavily with the United States because of its superpower status. American forces cannot be everywhere, however, and their ability to stabilize will be hostage to the complex changes sweeping over military technology. At the moment, American forces are technologically superior to any adversary, but with modernization on all sides, they may not be able to maintain this status decisively.

The superiority of American hardware was vividly demonstrated in Desert Storm. Especially important in the Gulf War were American advantages in command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I), weapons, smart munitions, electronic warfare, and logistic support. These advantages enabled U.S. forces to wage a coordinated air and ground campaign that decisively defeated Iraqi forces with remarkably few losses to the United States and its allies. Over the coming years, another revolution evidently lies ahead in such areas as high-speed computers, sensors, fiber optics, delivery systems, and munitions. If the benefits are fully funded, the technological sophistication of U.S. forces will be further enhanced.

Even as American forces improve, proliferation of conventional weaponry promises to elevate potential adversaries onto a new technological plateau. In the years ahead, nations like Iraq and Iran can be expected to acquire models at least equivalent to those currently in the U.S. inventory. Along with better-equipped ground forces, these nations are likely to deploy stronger air and naval forces that perform robust defensive missions. The outcome will depend on the interaction between U.S. and adversary weapons. The United States will doubtless remain superior in a purely technical sense, but there is uncertainty in assessing how operational dynamics on potential battlefields will be influenced.
The technological advantages shown by U.S. forces in Desert Storm, which came as a surprise to many observers, relied heavily on areas where the gap plausibly could be narrowed by seemingly minor developments. Examples are air defense suppression, operational fires, air interdiction, artillery support, and armor survivability. As military experts know, all five of these areas experienced a "back-and-forth" competitive dynamic during the Cold War, with many changes in the side holding the advantage. Only a few years ago, for example, serious doubts existed about whether USAF could suppress enemy air defenses and conduct effective interdiction strikes, and about whether the Army's tanks could survive enemy antitank fires and defeat his armor. That these fears had evaporated by the eve of Desert Storm does not mean that similar concerns about the future can be laid to rest.

American military dominance in Desert Storm, moreover, owed to factors reaching far beyond technological superiority. U.S. forces benefited hugely from better training, leadership, and tactical doctrine. In absence of these qualities, American technology might have mattered little more than was the case in Korea and Vietnam—wars in which better U.S. weapons fell far short of swinging the balance. Perhaps most important, American forces were highly skilled in combined arms operations and in executing the operational art. Iraq's forces were fighting out of their league, but the primary reason was not inferior technology. Even with the technology at their disposal, a more professional Iraqi army and air force could have put up a far stiffer fight.

Although American forces showed supremacy at the time of Desert Storm, this is not predestined to remain the case in the future. Winning armies sometimes rest on their laurels, and losing armies often learn from harsh lessons and fight far better the next time. Moreover, technological advantage is a highly unstable phenomenon, subject to seemingly marginal events whose impact is difficult to gauge in advance. It can ebb and flow, shifting from offense to defense. The force holding the upper hand in one war can find its advantage far smaller, or even gone entirely, in the next war.

Consequently, the uncertain future merits close appraisal and careful safeguarding. To the extent the United States preserves its current advantages, it will remain capable of decisively defeating opponents
at low cost to itself. But if these advantages are narrowed, adversary forces will become more competitive with U.S. forces. In this event, regional deterrence will be weakened, and the stabilizing impact of U.S. military power will be reduced.

IMPLICATIONS

Because of these five revolutions, the stability of tomorrow's international system will be subject to the turn of events. The opportunity is great, but so are the challenges, risks, and dangers. Especially because U.S. military power and political engagement lend stability, the future might see major political progress toward enduring peace in all three key regions. In Europe, Russia might succeed in pursuing political-economic reform, and might draw closer to Germany and the EC, thereby creating a truly stable and unified continent. In Asia, the three dominant powers might find ways to harmonize their regional designs, especially if Japanese economic strength can be employed to help bring prosperity to Russia and China. In the Middle East, the current peace process might succeed, thereby lessening tensions and reducing the fervor of Islamic fundamentalism. If this progress is made in all three regions, the international system will settle into enduring peace and tranquility.

In all three regions, nevertheless, the trends plausibly could be in the opposite direction. The great risk is that the more multipolar system ahead will be driven to tension and conflict by multiplying nations, resurgent antagonisms, reborn nationalism, new ideological frictions, mounting economic strife, and proliferating military technology. Moreover, there is the risk that these negative trends could be exacerbated if the United States, burdened by its domestic problems, were to withdraw from any or all of these regions. In this event, an otherwise manageable multipolar system could be rendered unstable, perhaps volatile. The problem would be serious enough if one region became less stable than now, but it would be far worse if all three regions plunged into turbulence, thereby feeding off each other. In that case, the United States might look back on the Cold War with a wistful nostalgia.
Because of the great uncertainty ahead, future U.S. military strategy analysis should not be rigidly based on a single estimate, but rather should take into account a spectrum of alternative international systems. Figure 6.1 presents one such spectrum. It does not exhaust the possible permutations and combinations, but it does help illustrate the breadth of outcomes that might have to be considered over the coming two decades.

In the middle of the spectrum (World 3) is the current international system as postulated by the Regional Strategy, a world of non-adver-

![Figure 6.1—Spectrum of Alternative Global Futures](image)

- Low risk of war
- Low political conflict
- Small-scale hostilities

- High risk of war...
- High political conflict
- Large-scale hostilities
sarial relations among the major powers but continuing regional tensions that could require commitment of U.S. military forces. To the left are two more tranquil worlds: (1) a system of reduced but still serious regional tensions, and (2) a truly harmonious world in which regional tensions have all but vanished and the major powers have achieved enduring cooperation. To the right are three more turbulent worlds: (4) a system of increased regional tensions, (5) a system in which these regional tensions are accompanied by adversarial relations with Russia, and (6) a highly multipolar world in which problems with Russia and China are magnified by the collapse of the Western security alliances in Europe and Asia. These six alternatives, it should be emphasized, provide points along a continuous spectrum measuring international stability and instability. Other alternatives are possible. For example, the international system could settle somewhere between Worlds 3 and 4, or between Worlds 4 and 5.

The world of the Regional Strategy will remain an appropriate basis for U.S. defense planning during the immediate future, and perhaps for the longer term as well. As planning peers further into the future, however, the likelihood increases that tectonic change will produce a different international system. As a result, U.S. defense planning for the medium to long term will need to be sensitive to the full range of possibilities. Of these, Worlds 2 and 4 are accorded higher probability than their more distant cousins. Nonetheless, a harmonious world is not beyond the pale, and there is a nontrivial risk that rivalry with Russia or even a turbulent multipolar world will be the outcome.

Most likely, none of these extreme outcomes would unfold overnight, and all three would require a combination of events that many experts might deem as highly improbable. Nevertheless, the improbable is still possible, especially in a world turned upside down in which common expectations no longer define the outer limits of plausibility. Moreover, the past three years have shown that tectonic upheavals do not always occur at glacial speed. Sometimes they come suddenly, when they are not anticipated, and with devastating force, like an earthquake. They can also occur in ways that defy logic and violate patterns once deemed immutable, thereby creating entirely new rules of causality and sequentiality as they unfold.
For these reasons, the United States should be prepared for the improbable, and it should not assume that years of warning will be available or that it will be able to react with leisure. Positive events, of course, most often are the easiest to handle. Whereas adept diplomacy might be needed to make the most of the situation, they normally do not require new or radically different military forces. Indeed, the chief task they impose is that of downsizing. Negative events, however, are a different story. In addition to requiring a new diplomacy and security policy aimed at protecting newly threatened interests, negative events can require the building of larger forces and different strategies, possibly at a faster pace than national resources permit. This risk of being outpaced by unanticipated negative events provides grounds for caution about being too optimistic about what the future holds.

A harmonious world would require a resolution of global disputes to a degree that seemingly flies in the face of history and the negative trends at work today. Nonetheless, history does not work in deterministic ways, and conceivably conflict resolution and community building might reach unimagined heights. As for the less sanguine outcomes, rivalry with Russia could occur if reform in that nation fails and power is assumed by a nationalistic government with a hostile attitude toward the West. This development might have seemed unlikely a year ago, but recent trends in Russian politics are causing even optimists to have second thoughts.

Any descent into a turbulent multipolar world would require an unstatesman-like dismantling of the Western alliances in the face of adversarial relations with Russia and China. The fact that the Western alliances remained cohesive throughout the Cold War, however, is no guarantee of their future unity. If member nations are led by governments that embrace different strategic priorities, economic frictions and other fissures could pull these alliances apart. This risk might seem slight if adversarial relations with Russia and China were to occur well before the Western alliances had fallen apart. But the risk would be far greater if these two developments unfolded in tandem, thereby creating the kind of ambiguity that can lead to disastrous strategic policies on several different fronts at once.
Beginning with the current international system, the key military and security features of these alternative futures are more closely appraised below.

CURRENT REGIONAL MILITARY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

The starting point for analysis of the current system lies in recognition that, although relations among the major powers in Europe and Northeast Asia are tranquil, this stability is not self-perpetuating but requires propping up by U.S. military power. As the Regional Strategy correctly discerns, this peacetime challenge can be met through a combination of forward presence and power projection from the United States. The analytical process, however, must further address specific regional challenges and threats that might require commitment of U.S. forces in crises and wars.

For the immediate future, three major regional contingencies (MRCs) seem likely to continue being focal points of U.S. defense planning. The first contingency is another Persian Gulf war with Iraq over Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The second MRC is a North Korean invasion of South Korea. The third MRC is a war with Russia somewhere in Central/Eastern Europe. Whereas the first two MRCs are sufficiently plausible to be taken quite seriously, the third contingency is less plausible, but must be guarded against as part of NATO's efforts to defend its borders and maintain a military balance in Europe.

These MRCs will be less daunting than the threat of global aggression faced during the Cold War, but they will impose challenges that will require coherent U.S. defense planning. For each MRC, the military challenge facing the United States will be driven by the adversary force, allied contributions, mobilization and reinforcement timetables, battlefield dynamics, and U.S. defense objectives. Another important factor is simultaneity: more than one MRC might occur at the same time. For all six factors, the United States will confront far greater uncertainty than during the Cold War.

Planning for an MRC in Europe must begin with an appraisal of the size and nature of the Russian force posture. The CFE Treaty permits the former Soviet Union to have equipment for approximately 50–60
divisions in the ATTU\textsuperscript{1} area; coupled with forces in Siberia, the total would rise to some 100 divisions and 5000 combat aircraft. The breakup of the USSR into separate nations, however, leaves Russia with a smaller force posture, and economic constraints will produce an even smaller posture yet. Russia has not yet made final decisions, but based on preliminary data, it seems likely to maintain an army of 10–20 active divisions and 40–50 mobilizable divisions counting reserves. Most likely, only about one-half of this force would be available for an offensive operation beyond Russia’s borders, but for any attack into Central/Eastern Europe, Belarus probably would join, and would contribute about 5 divisions. Ukraine could add another 5–10 divisions, but barring a rapprochement with Russia, its participation is not likely. Together, these factors add up to an estimated Russian projection force of 25–30 divisions and 1200–1500 combat aircraft.

Although this estimate of force size seems reasonable, a question remains whether the Russian army will have doctrine, weapons, readiness standards, and support structures to permit a power projection mission. As discussed earlier, the Russian army has endured down periods before only to emerge as a cohesive institution. Moreover, the growing support for a professional army, Russia’s still-substantial defense industry, the need for mobile forces capable of defending Russia’s long borders, and the Russian army’s preference for mechanized doctrines are all reasons why history is likely to repeat itself.

The precise timelines on which a Russian power projection mission could be launched cannot be predicted. Any Russian aggression against Western interests would require a deterioration of political relations that would take months, maybe years, to unfold. Politics aside, the physical act of mobilizing the Russian army and moving it to the forward areas would take a considerable period, although the time could be reduced if the Russian military takes steps to enhance readiness and prepare its transportation network. Even so, several weeks and months could be required. The question is whether, and to what degree, the West would take advantage of this strategic

\textsuperscript{1}Atlantic to the Urals.
warning to mobilize its own defenses. Uncertainty on this score is a reason for prudence on the part of U.S. military planners.

Another large uncertainty is the potential contribution from allied forces. Because a Russian invasion that does not threaten NATO’s borders would fall short of activating Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, it would not mandate a collective response. Any Western response therefore would fall into the category of an ad hoc operation under Article 4. Depending upon the specific situation, the allied contribution could range from small to large—from as little as 5–10 divisions to as many as 25–30 divisions with associated air forces. At a minimum, U.S. planning can safely rely on participation of forces from the nation(s) being invaded, and if German and British forces were not committed, it is hard to see how the United States could realistically contemplate what would be a nearly unilateral endeavor. A mid-range estimate of 10–20 allied divisions and 500–1000 combat aircraft seems a prudent bet, although sensitivities need to be taken into account.

A further uncertainty is the battlefield situation and the implications posed for U.S. military operations. During the Cold War, NATO planned to conduct a well-prepared linear defense of the inter-German border, and this plan permitted toleration of a ground force inferiority of about 1.5:1. Any future war in East Central Europe would be fought under very different conditions. The United States and its allies could not count on being able to prepare a well-organized defense in advance, and they might well be compelled to fight a mobile maneuver war, one requiring counteroffensives. These conditions could negate the earlier acceptance of numerical disparity, but Western qualitative advantages in air power, weapons, training, and leadership would buffer the effect. The critical issue is precisely how far can these advantages be relied upon, not only in Europe but elsewhere. This question will be addressed in the sensitivity analysis of U.S. force requirements.

Uncertainty in planning for a European MRC will be comparable to the uncertainty encountered in preparing for a Persian Gulf MRC. Iraq will remain the primary adversary in DoD planning, but in the aftermath of Desert Storm, its military establishment evidently will be smaller than before. A reasonable estimate is that Iraq will be able to field a highly mechanized invasion force of 20–25 divisions and
400–500 aircraft. The adversary posture, however, could be larger if Iran and possibly Syria were to band together to form a radical Arab coalition. As for allied contributions, it is important to remember that, during Desert Storm, these contributions were substantial: roughly six divisions and 300 combat aircraft. For a future Desert Storm, the contribution could be large or small, ranging from only two to three divisions from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, to ten divisions and 500–600 aircraft (with naval support) if the NATO allies were to become heavily involved. Once again, a prudent estimate in the mid-range seems appropriate, but sensitivities should be examined.

An especially important uncertainty is the military environment of a future Persian Gulf MRC. During Desert Shield/Storm, the coalition had the major advantage of an opponent who stopped at the Saudi border and then waited passively, thereby allowing U.S. and allied forces several months to build overpowering forces in the theater. When Desert Storm began, Iraq allowed the coalition to conduct a massive air campaign before the ground assault got under way. Because a future adversary is not likely to be so accommodating, a prudent estimate is that the next Desert Storm will be more demanding. For example, enemy forces might drive deeply into Saudi Arabia and aggressively interfere with Western buildup efforts. If this buildup is successful, U.S. and allied forces would then have to conduct sweeping counterattacks against a more effective resistance than was mounted by Iraq during Desert Storm.

A Korean MRC presents a more predictable situation for defense planning, but has dangers of its own. Barring a political settlement, North Korea evidently will continue to field a large force of about 35 division-equivalents, mostly infantry but backed up by 3000 tanks, 9000 artillery tubes, and 730 combat aircraft. Defending against it will be a South Korean (ROK) posture of 24 divisions, 1800 tanks, 4500 artillery tubes, and 400 combat aircraft. Surface appearances suggest a North Korean numerical superiority of 1.5:1 or greater, but offsetting this disadvantage are elaborate South Korean defense positions, high troop density, and mountainous terrain yielding only a few narrow corridors for attack.

In the past, defense assessments have commonly held that South Korean forces should be able to rebuff an attack if they are provided U.S. tactical air, naval, C3I, and logistics support, suggesting that a
major contribution from U.S. ground combat forces will not be necessary. Two worrisome concerns, however, blur this confident assessment. The first concern is that the North Korean army might succeed in capturing Seoul, which is located only 25 miles from the demilitarized zone, thus compelling a counterattack that a battered ROK army might not be able to launch. The second concern is that the ROK army might succumb to shock and suffer an unraveling of its cohesion. This development could cast responsibility for a ground counteroffensive more squarely into U.S. hands.

If these three MRCs are to be a focus of U.S. regional defense plans, a key question is whether two of them might occur simultaneously. During the Cold War, U.S. defense plans worried about a concurrent Soviet assault in Europe and Southwest Asia, but with concern about Europe fading, the major issue is whether MRCs in the Persian Gulf and Korea might break out at roughly the same time. The lack of close political relationships between Iraq and North Korea argue against formal coordination, especially of the sort that might produce two simultaneous surprise assaults. Nonetheless, both governments doubtless are aware that a distant contingency that entangles U.S. forces might create an opportunity elsewhere. For this reason, prudence seems to dictate U.S. plans that hedge against the possibility of these two MRCs occurring together—if not simultaneously, then a few weeks or months apart.

An additional point about MRCs is that although these three MRCs provide a basis for defense planning in the current international system, they do not exhaust the situations in which U.S. forces could be committed in major wars. For example, Russia might invade Ukraine, or Iraq and Syria might gang up to invade Turkey. More distant possibilities are an Arab-Israeli war that turns against Israel, or a Russian-Chinese war, or a Chinese invasion of Southeast Asia or South Asia. Only an invasion of Turkey would trigger existing formal U.S. defense commitments, but the other conflicts could threaten American interests.

Moreover, not all future wars are destined to be classical ground campaigns. As demonstrated in Desert Storm, the growing offensive power of air forces suggests that future wars might be dominated by air campaigns fought at long distances. Because of their large air forces, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf all provide
fertile soil for air wars. Also, the growing importance of economics and maritime commerce suggests that, to some degree, sea battles might make a comeback. For example, what would the United States do if Russia were to impose a naval blockade of the Baltic states? How would we react if Iran employed its growing naval power to block entrance into the Persian Gulf, or if India tried to control transit through the Indian Ocean, or if the ASEAN countries denied access to the Straits of Malacca, or if China tried to control the Spratly Islands or the waters surrounding Taiwan? Because of the changes under way in military technology, untraditional contingencies like these merit appraisal.

Also, it is important to emphasize that the United States could face military conflicts that fall short of MRC status, but still require significant force commitments. Operation Just Cause, the intervention in Panama, is a good example. In Europe, the class of lesser regional contingencies (LRCs) is dominated by a host of potential peacemaking and peace-enforcing operations aimed at settling conflicts in Yugoslavia or among a number of small powers in Europe, the Balkans, and the Commonwealth. In Asia, U.S. forces might be called upon to protect Thailand, to intervene in a Spratly Islands dispute, or to help quell a coup in the Philippines. In the Middle East, U.S. and NATO military forces might be required to deal with security threats emanating from North Africa, as was the case in Operation El Dorado Canyon, when Libya was bombed. In Southwest Asia, U.S. intervention might again be needed to protect the Persian Gulf sealanes or to shore up a friendly regime threatened by internal chaos. In South Asia, the United States might have to provide security assistance to Pakistan in event of another Indo-Pakistani war. Any region around the globe thus could become a location for an LRC.

Finally, there are smaller contingencies and missions. The United States will continue to fund a sizable worldwide security assistance program, and increasingly it will find itself developing military relations with former adversaries in Europe. As in the past, humanitarian operations might have to be mounted in such disparate places as sub-Saharan Africa, the former Soviet Union, South America, and South Asia. In the future, U.S. involvement in UN or CSCE peacekeeping missions might grow. Counterdrg operations in Latin America, and counterterrorism and hostage-rescue missions any-
where will remain part of the military agenda. These small contingencies might not have a large impact on the overall size of the U.S. force posture, but they will have implications for the acquisition of specific capabilities and the development of plans.

**VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS**

Let us now briefly discuss the key features of the very different worlds that might lie ahead.

**World 1: Global Harmony**

In this international system, the major political-military tensions and faultlines that undergird the Regional Strategy are eliminated. Relations among the major powers have reached the stage of enduring cooperation so that the United States no longer must maintain an overall military balance. Meanwhile, political conditions in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf have stabilized to the point where there is no risk of an MRC in any of these regions. To be sure, local stresses and frictions remain, and small conflicts might be fought in many places, but their dimensions are limited, and the risks of escalation are slight. U.S. forces might have to be committed in a variety of circumstances, to perform a range of missions. But these contingencies would be far less demanding than envisioned by the Regional Strategy.

**World 2: Reduced Regional Tensions**

This international system is more stressful than World 1, but provides a major reduction of the political-military tensions in key regions that animate the Regional Strategy of World 3. Contemplated here is a further stabilization of Europe to the point where any prospect of a regional war with Russia can be confidently dismissed. Tensions in Korea are reduced and the military balance stabilized. As a result, if a war were to occur, South Korean forces could be relied upon to defend themselves without assistance from U.S. ground combat forces—only U.S. air, naval, and specialized assistance would be needed. Only the Persian Gulf remains a turbulent region in
which a major military conflict might break out that could require the commitment of large U.S. forces.

Although the United States will continue to face the prospect of having to fight one MRC, it no longer confronts the need to plan for two MRCs, both of which could consume large American forces. This is a key implication for U.S. military strategy. In other respects, the requirements facing U.S. strategy are unchanged. The United States still needs to maintain an overall balance of power to manage regional stresses and relations among the major powers, and it continues to face an undiminished set of lesser contingencies. But the elimination of the threat of two concurrent MRCs marks this international system as quite different from that addressed by the Regional Strategy.

World 4: Enhanced Regional Tensions

In this world, relations among the major powers remain stable, but regional tensions are worse than are contemplated in the Regional Strategy. In Europe, Eastern Europe and major parts of the former Soviet Union have deteriorated into chaos and violence, thereby presenting greater requirements for peacemaking and peacekeeping missions. More important, the Middle East and Persian Gulf have fallen into turmoil as a result of the spread of anti-Western Islamic fundamentalism and military proliferation. In addition to building stronger conventional forces, Iraq and Iran both have acquired nuclear weapons and regional delivery systems, so that the military threat to vital interests in the Persian Gulf and elsewhere has become far greater. Similar instability prevails in Northeast Asia, where a turbulent North Korea has also acquired nuclear weapons.

World 5: Renewed Rivalry with Russia

In this international system, chronic rivalry among the major powers has reappeared to supplement the still-serious regional tensions of World 4. The dominating event is failure of reform in Russia and the emergence of an authoritarian government with the trappings of a quasi-fascistic ideology. Moreover, Russia has recovered its balance, is now pursuing an outward-looking foreign policy aimed at reestablishing an imperial realm, and has built military forces capable of ex-
ternal aggression. For the United States, the chief implication for military strategy is that the previous concern for maintaining a balance of power must now give way to a greater emphasis on deterrence and actual defense. In particular, U.S. defense planning must now take seriously the prospect of an MRC against a Russian adversary in Central and Eastern Europe.

World 6: Unstable Multipolar Rivalry

In this international system, relations with both Russia and China have soured, but equally important, the Western alliances have collapsed. In Europe, the United States has permanently withdrawn and NATO has been disestablished, to be replaced by a WEU/EC security pillar. This pillar, however, has proven weak, and as a result, Germany has been left so insecure that it has decided to enlarge its conventional forces and build its own nuclear deterrent. In Asia, the Mutual Security Treaty with Japan has been torn up, U.S. forces have been expelled from Japan and Northeast Asia, and a relationship of genuine strategic rivalry between the United States and Japan has emerged. The effect is to create a turbulent multipolar system, with great tension among the major powers in Europe and Asia, and the United States is deprived of a forward military presence that would permit it to wield stabilizing influence in both regions.

NEED FOR VISION AND CONCERTED ACTION

What will be the outcome if the dynamics of fragmentation outpace those of integration? In this case, and without implying inevitability or even high confidence, a prudently conservative estimate is that, over the mid to long term, the future international system will head toward a world of moderately enhanced regional tensions with somewhat less tranquil major power relations. That is, a system suspended between Worlds 3 and 4 might evolve. Implied here is a system less stable than now, one not destined to endemic worldwide conflict, but sufficiently tense to create the prospect for chronic military competition in some areas that periodically could give way to violence. Because American interests would be affected, this international system would require constant U.S. efforts to shore up stability on a global and regional basis.
The foundation of this system would be the emergence of moderately multipolar relationships among the major powers. Collective security institutions (e.g., the UN and CSCE) would have modestly enhanced powers but would fall far short of being able to fully manage the world's security problems. The Western alliances would still exist, but in looser and less integrated ways than today. Both Europe and Asia would be affected, but Asia more severely. Loosening will be brought about by mounting economic frictions and by an inability to form a united front for dealing with amorphous security problems that do not immediately threaten member-nation borders. Military cooperation will still be possible, but will have to be mounted in ad hoc ways on a case-by-case basis.

Meanwhile, the Western nations will find themselves facing relationships with Russia and China that are best characterized as traditional, reminiscent of the late 19th century. That is, the two nations will be neither close partners nor chronic adversaries of the United States, but rather countries with whom relations will be normal but guarded, capable of both improving and deteriorating as the future unfolds. Implied here is the judgment that Russia and China would not emerge as benign democracies integrated into the Western community. Rather, they will be nations with authoritarian governments that retain strong military power and pursue foreign policies driven by traditional geopolitical interests. These interests would produce a mixture of cooperative and uncooperative behavior that vacillates between an inward-looking stance and external assertiveness. With both nations, tranquil relations would be possible but not guaranteed, and periodic descent into rivalry would be possible.

The dominant by-product would not be direct confrontation with the United States, but rather perpetually uncertain political dynamics in Europe and Asia suspended somewhere between stability and chaos, and capable of moving in either direction. In Europe, Russia would have uneven relations with Germany and the EC, with influence over Eastern Europe and the Balkans becoming a bone of contention. In Asia, a complex triangle of ever-shifting but potentially stressful relations would emerge among Russia, China, and Japan. Meanwhile, Russia, China, and the Muslim nations would engage in a competitive struggle for the destiny of Central Asia. For these reasons, the situation would require continuing efforts by the United States aimed at preserving stable relations with Russia and China, but also
aimed at maintaining a military balance vis-à-vis these nations amidst a more multipolar setting than today.

Against the background of these multipolar relations among the major powers, regional problems would ebb and flow, with uneven consequences. Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and many of the Commonwealth nations, including those in Central Asia, would continue to be wracked by economic strife, ethnic conflict, social upheaval, border troubles, and weak governments. The situation on the Korean peninsula might see amelioration or even unification, but Southeast Asia could become less stable than now, and South Asia will remain turbulent. Meanwhile, the Middle East and Southwest Asia would remain the region most susceptible to the kind of political instability that might produce wars requiring major commitments of U.S. military forces. The proliferation of military technology, in turn, would make U.S. military intervention in this region harder to mount than during the recent Persian Gulf War. For all these regions, continued U.S. vigilance would be in order, particularly if American interests expand in the ways contemplated by this study.

Although this estimate is offered as a basis for planning if unhealthy dynamics take over, it by no means is static: both better and worse international systems are a distinct possibility. If the future international system were to drift from the current situation toward the less palatable alternatives contemplated here, stability clearly would suffer, and in more than marginal ways. A world of dramatically enhanced regional tensions would magnify the instabilities of the current international system by increasing the likelihood that regional conflicts will occur, and by elevating the military threat posed to American forces. A worse scenario would be the instabilities created by confrontation with Russia or a descent into multipolar rivalry. Both regional and global instability would reinforce each other, greatly intensifying the problems faced by U.S. security policy and military strategy.

In a world marked by bad relations with Russia, there would be an ever-present risk of a major European conflict with that nation, and virtually any regional crisis outside Europe would be far harder to manage than was the case in the Persian Gulf War. At a minimum, the United States and Russia would be less able to cooperate, and indeed, the situation might bring them into confrontation, thereby
posing the threat of escalation. A world marked by unstable multipolar relations would be all the more unmanageable. In addition to the risk of a direct confrontation among the major powers, regional crises would drag in these powers and create a fog of confusion regarding how they would interact. The effect can be illustrated by contemplating the current Yugoslavian civil war in a turbulent atmosphere in which Western Europe, Russia, and the United States were sharply at odds. Precisely this kind of situation triggered the 1914 explosion. The difference is that, whereas the instability was confined to Europe in 1914, it now would be manifested worldwide, constantly threatening to transform a local crisis into a global war.

A major conclusion of this study is that international environments worse than today should be taken seriously in U.S. military strategy. This especially is the case as analysis peers beyond the near term into the more distant future. This judgment does not imply that a more threatening environment is inevitable or even probable, but that it is plausible enough to be guarded against. This potential for instability makes designing a national security policy and military strategy to defend U.S. interests in the years ahead doubly uncertain. Status is possible, but it is far from guaranteed, and neither is stability ensured. The opportunity for enduring peace is present, but so is the risk of a more dangerous international system. The wide spectrum of possibilities ahead suggests that, although the Regional Strategy may be aligned with the current system, future changes might compel the United States to consider different military strategies, to be embraced and discarded as the situation warrants.

A fundamental point about strategy analysis, however, is that the future of international affairs will not be entirely driven by impersonal forces. It will be heavily influenced by the policies and visions of many governments, including those of the United States. Although the United States will not be able to control events, it will possess a high degree of leverage growing out of its superpower status, its global involvements, its ability to tip the military balance in many regions, and its major roles in both security affairs and the world economy.

The task facing the United States is to use this leverage constructively with maximum effect from this year onward. It should do so in a manner animated by goals extending beyond management of the
current international system, and by horizons ranging from the near term into the distant future. As Figure 6.2 implies, the basic strategic goal of U.S. policy should be to encourage the international system to move to the left of this spectrum, and prevent it from drifting to the right. That is, the United States should pursue cooperation and community building, while setting up roadblocks against a descent into enhanced regional tensions, renewed rivalry with former adversaries, and multipolar chaos. The design of future U.S. military strategy should be undertaken with this political-military vision in mind.

Figure 6.2—Three-Fold Challenge Facing U.S. Military Strategy
To the extent U.S. interests and the current international system remain unchanged, the Regional Strategy, or something akin to it as adopted by the Clinton Administration, will remain a viable basis for U.S. defense planning. As history suggests, virtually all newly created military strategies require modifications after their initial trial run is complete, and thereafter are updated periodically to reflect new conditions. Now that two years of experience have been gained with this strategy, to what degree are improvements in order? Given the changes that already have occurred, or seem likely to occur in the near future, to what extent will alterations or further embellishments be needed? To answer these questions, this chapter examines a number of ways in which the Regional Strategy might be further developed and altered.

TOWARD A BROADENED STRATEGIC CONCEPT

A military strategy is only as good as the strategic concept that brings it to life. A strategic concept can be defined as a set of postulates and rigorous arguments that creates the all-important intellectual and normative framework within which strategy is designed. Beyond this, a strategic concept establishes the basic premises of the strategy itself; to draw an analogy, it erects the foundation and girders of the new strategy, leaving the remainder of the job to more detailed analysis. Typically, a strategic concept is composed of assertions that: (a) illuminate the chief international problems ahead and U.S. security policies to be pursued, (b) forge tight linkages between national security policy and defense strategy, (c) provide a credible
theory regarding how military power can support national policy and strategy, and (d) establish a sense of priorities.

In addition to offering purposeful vision and a sense of direction, a good strategic concept helps build consensus at home and abroad for the U.S. defense effort, and helps provide the Department of Defense coherent guidance for preparing specific plans and programs. To perform these functions, a strategic concept normally must have several ingredients. It must articulate clear relationships between ends and means, and it must strike an acceptable balance between idealism and realism, between hopeful optimism and prudent conservatism, and between desired capability and budgetary affordability.

During the Cold War, the United States benefited from a series of effective strategic concepts, each of which was adopted at the proper moment and then cast aside when conditions changed. A good example is the strategic concept laid down by Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger in the mid-1970s. At the time, the United States was impaled on uncertainty because the Soviet Union was both endorsing détente and pursuing a major military buildup. Striking a proper balance between alarm and complacency, Schlesinger resolved this uncertainty by calling for a responsive but moderate U.S. buildup even as détente and negotiations were to continue. His concept acted as a guiding force in U.S. defense policy and strategy for several years, leaving many positive departures in its wake.

In the early 1980s, President Ronald Reagan laid down a new strategic concept of his own. During the two years prior to Reagan's election, President Carter had accelerated the U.S. buildup advocated by Schlesinger and recrafted U.S. military strategy to build a defense capability for the Persian Gulf. Reagan took this logic a giant step further by calling for an era of American strategic resurgence aimed at matching the Soviet military buildup. Significantly increasing U.S. defense spending, Reagan pointed U.S. military strategy in the direction of building better global defenses. His concept called for a stronger nuclear deterrent, improved continental defenses in key regions, and maritime superiority. Reagan's visionary agenda was criticized in many quarters as wastefully extravagant, but many of its military objectives were achieved, and in all likelihood, the effort
played a role in influencing the Soviet Union to come to terms by ending the Cold War.

The issue today is whether the current strategic concept is equally strong, or whether improvements are required. The past year has witnessed criticisms of this concept on the grounds that it is too narrow, unilateralist, negative, and focused on the near term. Moreover, since 1990 domestic and international economic objectives have become more prominent in ways that have implications for U.S. defense policy and military strategy. The modifications contemplated here respond to these developments by offering suggestions for broadening and recrafting.

The current concept's key postulates are displayed simply in Figure 7.1. As this figure suggests, the concept has two dominant objectives—to deter regional military threats, and to discourage the re-

![Diagram of Regional Strategy and Posture]

**NOTE:** R(−) means fewer requirements

*Figure 7.1—Current Strategic Concept*
appearance of a rival hegemon with global military power. Achievement of these objectives is intended to produce a safe international environment that protects American interests, thereby allowing the United States to defend itself at affordable budget levels.

Figure 7.2 portrays alterations suggested for a broadened international agenda that is aligned with an increasingly important domestic policy. It draws on the positive legacy of Secretary Cheney’s final statement of January 1993, President Clinton’s initial strategic guidelines, and the analysis in this study. It is aimed not only at managing current problems but also at preventing emergence of an unstable international environment in the long run, and at encouraging the evolution of a cooperative and democratic international community that serves U.S. interests. It is anchored on U.S. national military strengths and on our enduring collective defense alliances, but it is not exclusionary. Rather, it uses these foundations to reach out and include other nations, including former adversaries, in building a web of cooperative ties that promote peace, order, democratic values, and mutual prosperity.
The new strategic concept thus aspires to positive goals, and it uses achievement of these goals as a means to help prevent the emergence of negative developments that could bring about an era of conflict, strife, and war. It is anchored on the premise that U.S. military strength, collective defense alliances, and multilateral cooperation can lay a solid foundation upon which political partnership and economic collaboration can be built. This foundation, moreover, can provide the means for addressing the threats and dangers that remain. By endeavoring to guide the international system toward a stronger community of democratic partners, this concept further aspires to prevent descent into the kind of turmoil that might evolve if events are allowed to take their own course. In these ways, this concept combines idealism and realism to provide a short-term and long-term strategic vision on behalf of which U.S. military power can be harnessed.

The first proposed change is to retitle the new strategy: “Strategy of Cooperative Security and Regional Defense.” The current title draws attention to the shift away from global planning toward regional threats, but says nothing about the ends and means of the strategy. The new title would rectify this problem by drawing explicit attention to the key U.S. goals: To preserve existing alliance collective defense partnerships, to develop cooperative security relations with other nations and former adversaries, and to maintain strong regional defenses against threats to U.S. interests. As for means, the revised concept would preserve a capability for unilateral action, but it would place a clear emphasis on its preference for multilateralism, thereby reducing public criticism that the Regional Strategy is too unilateralist. The effect of this better illumination of ends and means would be to bathe U.S. military strategy in new and more positive light.

The second change in the strategic concept would be to add a third security objective to the two already existing. By focusing on regional threats and future hegemonic opponents, the current concept ignores the risk that an unstable international system will be brought about unintentionally, as a result of rivalry among the major powers. If history and the analysis of multipolar dynamics are indicators, this risk is sufficiently tangible to be taken seriously. The revised concept would rectify this deficiency.
The third change broadens the focus of U.S. defense policy. As a supplement to the present concept's singular emphasis on security objectives, the revised concept would elevate international and domestic economics to co-equal status. It would call on U.S. military strategy to help support U.S. economic objectives abroad and at home. Its goal would be to promote a cooperative and healthy world economy that will contribute not only to international stability but also to a more prosperous U.S. economy. A stronger U.S. economy, in turn, will make a proper level of defense spending all the more affordable, thereby further contributing to global security and the protection of U.S. interests.

This feature of the revised concept, anchored on the assumption that security affairs and economics interact in mutually reinforcing fashion, puts forth new postulates for the analysis of U.S. defense policy. The United States cannot conduct an effective foreign policy if its economy is weak, and it cannot rebuild its shaky economy if the international security system is unstable. Unstable security affairs not only would drain American energy and resources away from economic renewal, but also would contribute to an uncooperative world economy, thereby further reducing American prosperity. Conversely, a stable international system anchored on U.S. military strength and flourishing alliances helps promote the collaborative economic relationships that make possible a two-way flow of trade, monetary policies, investments, finances, and technology. As a result, the U.S. economy benefits, as does the prosperity of friends and allies.

Are these postulates valid? To be sure, they amount to novel departures not only for American strategic thinking, but for contemporary economic analysis as well. This novelty, however, derives from the failure of both economics and strategic analysis to perceive the real-life linkages between these two endeavors that have existed, perhaps unnoticed, for many years. Arguing in favor of these postulates are both logic and history. Security affairs and economic relationships are two sides of the same foreign policy coin. Nations that have close security partnerships are more likely to have collaborative economic relationships, and vice-versa. Conversely, rivalry in one area can beget competition in the other. Precisely for these reasons, economic competition helped breed the security rivalries that yielded World Wars I and II. Reacting to these failures, Western strategists at
the onset of the Cold War wisely established cooperative goals in both areas by creating NATO and the Bretton Woods Accords. Success in one area helped beget success in the other. As a result, members of the Western alliance both remained secure and grew more prosperous at the same time. This outcome was no accident: it was a sought-after by-product of deliberate policy.

Moreover, the evidence is strong, if not always well documented, that this beneficial economic outcome affected not only our West European and Japanese allies, but the United States as well. As many analysts have pointed out, the United States made important concessions to our allies to gain their security cooperation. Less often acknowledged is that these nations made important economic concessions to gain U.S. security protection. The assertion that American economic health was singularly victimized by ungrateful and profit-seeking allies runs afoul of the fact that the United States purposefully sought economic recovery by these nations not only to contain communism but also to build a healthy world economy in which American growth would be stimulated. If the United States was so exploited, then how is it that the American economy remained, at least until recently, the world's strongest and most vibrant? Internal strength was partly responsible, but so also was a favorable international climate that did more to serve American economic interests than is commonly realized.  

The historical record shows that the Bretton Woods Accords established the American dollar as the world's strongest currency, thereby conferring many advantages on the United States in financial and monetary policy. Moreover, the concept of free trade under GATT not only opened the U.S. economy to imports, but also helped open many foreign economies to U.S. exports. Meanwhile, both Germany and Japan agreed to measures to help offset the stationing of U.S. troops on their soil. Perhaps more important, during the 1960s the European Economic Community, led by Germany, overruled France by agreeing to allow U.S. multinational corporations to enter Western Europe, a decision that accounts for the large and profitable American investments there today. In the early 1970s, the allies re-

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1 For analysis, see Wolfram F. Hanreider, *Germany, America and Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1989.
sponded to U.S. pressures to alter worldwide economic practices in
order to support American interests. This exchange gave rise to the
G-7 group of nations, which has served as a vehicle for coordinating
economic policies and protecting American interests for more than a
decade. These important developments were a direct reflection of
U.S. security guarantees.

Pointing out this historical record is not to claim that the record is
ublemished or to deny that problems lie ahead. The GATT negotia-
tions have fallen short of perfection, and some allies have embraced
protectionism in recent years. Because they have grown so strong—
partly through heavy reliance on export policies—the EC and
Japanese economies potentially pose serious competition that could
damage American economic health if fair trade practices are not es-
established and U.S. industry fails to achieve greater productivity. The
relationships of the future, however, are not destined to be forged
under zero-sum conditions, and the United States will not be lacking
important influence of its own. Neither the EC nor Japan has an in-
terest in seeing the U.S. economy fall into permanent decline, and
they have a still-strong interest in preserving American security reas-
surances in the fluid times ahead. Consequently, the elements of re-
newed economic partnership are present, and they will not be ad-
dressed in a security vacuum.

What is novel is not the proclamation of a connection between se-
curity and economic affairs that (for good or ill) has existed for over a
century, but rather elevation of this connection into a conscious en-
deavor for future U.S. military strategy. In reality, U.S. military strat-
edy played a silent but important role in promoting U.S. and allied
economic interests throughout the Cold War, and the advancement
of those economic interests contributed hugely to the security agen-
das of these nations. The real issue is the manner in which U.S. mili-
tary strategy will continue to serve our nation’s economic agenda,
and whether this role will be officially acknowledged.

Especially because fundamental changes are at work with conse-
quences that are hard to foresee, the United States will be better off
by bringing the relationship between security and economics into
sharp focus. The alternative of allowing events to take their own
course in absence of coordinated policies could produce a negative
outcome brought about by failure to understand how events in each
domain affect each other. Clearly, the end of the Cold War means that the old security-economic bargain between the United States and its closest allies will need to change. At issue is the nature of the new bargain, and whether a mutually satisfying equilibrium can be found. The U.S. military contribution to alliance security will be less important than during the Cold War, but to a still significant degree, it will remain an influential factor in the ability of the United States to craft a new bargain that makes sense. It can be fruitfully employed, however, only if its potential contribution is publicly understood.

Just as isolationism and protectionism were inappropriate in the past, they are unlikely to work in the future. The basic agenda endorsed here is to carry forth the Cold War legacy of security-economic collaboration into the future, and to steadily broaden it by admitting other nations into the partnership. A related agenda is to avoid a downslide in alliance relationships that could be brought about by the interaction of eroding security bonds and mounting economic rivalry. By preserving security ties intact, this formulation endeavors to help keep economic competition in perspective, thereby giving all sides a greater incentive to seek cooperative solutions. And by promoting continued economic collaboration, it aims at fostering a political climate that will help maintain the close relations in security affairs that also are key to building global peace.

In summary, the purpose of these changes is to create a refurbished and broadened strategic concept that is better aligned with the multifaceted problems and opportunities ahead. In addition to providing U.S. military strategy with a better name that identifies its larger purposes, the revised concept would embrace a positive vision of the international environment to be created, while articulating a more comprehensive theory of the dangers to be avoided. Likewise, it would bring security affairs and economics under the same policy and strategy umbrella, rather than treating them as separate entities. Together, these changes would create a new strategic concept more responsive to the complex currents sweeping over American domestic life and post-Cold War international affairs.

TOWARD ALTERED SECURITY PRINCIPLES

Once basic premises have been established through creation of a strategic concept, the art of strategy-building develops a set of secu-
urity principles to provide strategy its operational content. To use an earlier analogy, whereas the strategic concept erects the foundations and girders of strategy, security principles add the wallboards and roof. These principles bring focus on the specific problems to be addressed, goals to be pursued, actions to be taken, forces to be built, and programs to be funded. Because these principles determine how implementation is to be carried out, they can make the difference between effective and ineffective strategy. For this reason, each of them must be well-construed and must illuminate the relationship between ends and means. Together they must form a cohesive whole in ways that are comprehensive and that provide tightly coordinated guidelines for action.

During the Cold War, U.S. military strategy benefited from sound principles. Today analysts must decide whether the security principles of the Regional Strategy, displayed in Figure 7.3, are similarly sound. This study's judgment is that, although these principles have functioned effectively since 1990, it is time to alter them somewhat. Although these principles have intuitive appeal and pass the test of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current foundations:</th>
<th>Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic deterrence and defense</td>
<td>• Focus on means, not ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Forward presence</td>
<td>• Insufficiently elaborated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Crisis response</td>
<td>• Primary issues not addressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reconstitution</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current strategic principles:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Readiness</td>
<td>• Hodgepodge of apples and oranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collective security</td>
<td>• Military principles are incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arms control</td>
<td>• Not tied together to form coherent theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maritime and aerospace superiority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic agility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Technological superiority</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Decisive force</td>
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Figure 7.3—Problems in Regional Strategy Security Principles
initial inspection, problems arise when they are examined closely with more demanding standards in mind.

In marked contrast to such Cold War staples as forward defense and flexible response, the foundations of the Regional Strategy mostly focus on means without defining ends. As discussed earlier, this shortfall raises a host of troublesome questions about the conceptual adequacy of these principles. Do we seek forward presence or influence? Do we seek to respond to or resolve crises? Because actions should not be taken in absence of clear goals, the distinction is important. Does reconstitution, which addresses the means of response in the event the Soviet Union rebuilds a global threat, remain an important concern now that the USSR is defunct? Only strategic deterrence qualifies as a satisfactory goal-oriented principle, but questions can be raised about its centrality in today’s world. Do we still seek to deter, or is something less stark being pursued?

Similar criticisms can be levied at the subsidiary set of strategic principles endorsed by the Regional Strategy. Together, these principles present a motley set of disparate political and military terms that do not mesh well to form a coherent whole. Precisely how do collective security and arms control relate to the five purely military principles? Why is forward presence a foundation and power projection a mere principle? Do the two not work together in equally important ways?

The answers are not obvious. Indeed, these principles seemingly offer an unstable melange capable of breaking down if subjected to outside perturbation. Moreover, the military principles themselves are not fully inclusive. Does the endorsement of readiness and technological superiority mean that force structure and sustainability can be disregarded? Does the embracing of aerospace and maritime superiority mean that ground superiority no longer matters? If unbalanced programs are indeed pursued, will the outcome be decisive force? Clearly something better is needed.

The approach offered here is displayed in Figure 7.4. It does not eliminate all problems, but it comes closer to erecting a coherent theory by achieving greater logical order, coherence, completeness, and relevance. Two new categories have been established. The first
Figure 7.4—Proposed New Security Principles

category, "strategic foundations," is composed of political-military principles that illuminate the specific goals of future U.S. strategy. The second category, "military principles," illuminates the military means that are to be pursued to attain these ends. These two categories thus work together, with the latter providing the military instruments for carrying out the former.

Beginning with the protection of national interests as the bedrock goal, eight strategic objectives are endorsed here. Alliance partnership, cooperation, and community-building are brought together to create a unified vision of positive goals. The objectives of dissuasion through a stable balance of power and threat-specific regional deterrence illuminate how U.S. strategy will seek to prevent war when confronted by potential adversaries. Stalwart defense, crisis resolution, and escalation control provide core objectives for using force when military conflict occurs. Representing a blending of ends and
means, forward presence and power projection are designed to work together for pursuing higher-order U.S. objectives in peace, crisis, and war. Industrial preparedness provides the benchmark for maintaining the raw materials needed to undergird U.S. military power. At the end comes nuclear reassurance at low force levels, to be pursued along with nonproliferation.

In contrast to the Regional Strategy's four foundations with their emphasis on means rather than ends, the effect is to frame a set of interlocking objectives that together define the specific aims of U.S. military strategy. These objectives represent a blend of continuity and change when compared with U.S. strategy during the Cold War, but the new departures are especially noteworthy. In particular, nuclear deterrence, previously the overriding goal and the vanguard of U.S. strategy, is downgraded to a position of reduced emphasis, where it now functions as a form of back-up insurance against unanticipated events. Moving into the premier role is conventional military power, which is now regarded as the primary instrument by which U.S. security objectives are pursued.

Whereas the Cold War primarily brought an emphasis on preventing and prosecuting military conflict, conventional military power would now be employed on behalf of a more subtle and multifaceted agenda commensurate with today's complex international system. In particular, conventional power will be used to help guide the international system in peacetime away from turbulence and toward stability. As discussed earlier, this goal will be pursued through a combination of continued partnership with current allies, expanded military cooperation with former adversaries, a stable balance of power in key regions, and continued deterrence of still-existing foes. When conflict occurs, U.S. military objectives would continue to emphasize defense of allied borders and vital interests. In contrast to the Cold War, however, greater emphasis would be attached to the objectives of settling crises by political means and preventing the spread of fighting by either horizontal or vertical escalation. In these ways, U.S. military strategy will become more attuned to the challenges of crisis management and limited war.

Whereas the Regional Strategy places dominant emphasis on forward presence, the new approach emphasizes the need to blend forward presence and power projection from the United States. The
The precise distribution of forces between them is a matter of detailed analysis, but the critical point here is that they should be viewed as interlocking. Forward presence will be needed to credibly manifest U.S. resolve and to provide an initial crisis response, but in the years ahead, the primary reservoir of American military power will reside in the United States. For this reason, power projection needs to play a role of growing importance in undergirding U.S. security objectives, and improvements to it can help compensate for reductions in overseas troop deployments. At the same time, power projection will not be physically or politically possible in absence of the military infrastructure and alliance relationships provided by forward presence. To a degree, tradeoffs between them can be contemplated, but beyond certain limits, the one cannot substitute for the other. For U.S. military strategy to work, a properly balanced relationship between them will be needed.

In the second category fall 11 military principles that together provide guidelines for preparing U.S. forces to pursue the eight objectives. Readiness remains a dominant concern, but it is to be achieved within the framework of a balanced force posture. Force employment is to be guided by joint and combined operations, the capability for responding to the full spectrum of contingencies ahead, and the decisive but proportional application of military power. This approach to employment is to be fostered by a combination of global agility and technological superiority for ground, naval, and air forces. Maritime operations are to be guided by the principles of sea control and littoral projection, and continental operations are to be guided by operational maneuvers conducted by ground and air forces working together. The final two principles call for the capacity to mobilize responsive and rearm deliberately.

Although these issues will be discussed in greater detail below, a key point here is that future U.S. strategy needs to be anchored on a coherent theory of military operations that is both politically responsive and militarily effective. The principles advanced here are aimed at laying the conceptual foundations for such a theory. Immediate responsiveness would be provided by ready and well-armed active forces, equipped with high-technology systems that can react quickly and decisively, and that can operate closely together in response to national guidance. To achieve this capability, a balanced combination of combat forces, support forces, and mobility forces will be
needed. Less expensive reserve component forces would provide a capacity to promptly mobilize larger combat and support units in the event that crisis requirements overwhelm the active posture. Finally, the capacity to rearm deliberately over a period of several (perhaps seven) years would replace reconstitution as a military principle. The guiding concept is to preserve the ability to rebuild U.S. forces in measured fashion in the event that the international system takes a turn in any one of several negative directions.

SECURITY FUNCTIONS OF U.S. MILITARY FORCES

Although a strategic concept and core security principles combine to establish the major elements of military strategy, the precise ways in which U.S. military forces are to be used in peace, crisis, and war are yet to be determined. The following analysis provides some preliminary insights that can help frame the terms of dialogue.

The future role of strategic nuclear forces will be diminished because the threat of nuclear war with Russia is vastly lower than in earlier years. During the Cold War, U.S. defense planning was preoccupied with concern that an intercontinental nuclear war could arise from a surprise Soviet disarming attack on the United States or escalation of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in Europe. Because relations with Russia are no longer adversarial, fear of a surprise attack has all but vanished, and in any event, the START accords are making it a far less viable option. As for the risks of escalation in Europe, the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact and the CFE accord together have appreciably reduced the conventional military threat to NATO, thereby allowing the alliance to scale back its once heavy reliance on nuclear deterrence and defense.

These changes do not mean that strategic forces can be retired entirely from U.S. military strategy. An adequate posture must be retained to ensure against the unlikely event of an attack by Russia or any other power against the continental United States. Moreover, the United States will still need to provide extended nuclear deterrence coverage over close allies that do not have nuclear weapons—Germany and Japan figure prominently in this calculus. Finally, the new NATO strategic concept makes clear that the option to escalate will remain a last resort in the unlikely event that alliance borders are threatened and the conventional defense fails.
Notwithstanding these caveats, the alliance already has downgraded the once preeminent role of nuclear weapons in its strategy. Deliberate escalation and general nuclear response perhaps will remain on the books, but only as theoretical options that are no longer taken very seriously. Moreover, the shrinkage of the conventional and nuclear threat to NATO means that targeting requirements are diminishing to the point where they can be met with a much smaller force. The decisions to withdraw nearly all nuclear weapons from Europe's soil, to remove most tactical nuclear weapons from U.S. forces, and to pursue ambitious reductions in START II reflect this judgment.

Additional reasons suggest a downgrading of nuclear weapons in U.S. strategy. Whereas a NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation would have been an all-out affair posing a grave threat to the existence of the Western alliance and democracy, future conflicts probably will be limited wars. They will be fought over limited stakes, with limited means, in limited space and time, and with a clear eye on control of escalation and an early political settlement. Because nuclear weapons inflict such widespread damage, they normally would not be appropriate weapons for these conflicts. U.S. conventional power should be sufficient to achieve national objectives at low cost. The dominance shown by U.S. forces in Desert Storm provides comforting reassurance on this score provided continuing efforts are made to preserve the advantages shown then.

Nuclear proliferation is a worrisome threat that would destabilize the more multipolar international system ahead. To a degree, bipolarity helped buffer the dangers posed by nuclear weapons, but multipolarity would accentuate those dangers by making crises less predictable. Imagine, for example, a modern-day equivalent of 1914 with nuclear weapons in the hands of the various participants. An equally daunting proposition is a nuclear civil war in the former Soviet Union, or a nuclear-armed Ukraine experiencing troubles with the five small nations on its western borders. Nuclear crises in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, Northeast Asia, and South/Central Asia are equally grim prospects.

The United States will be hard-pressed to push for a vigorous non-proliferation regime if it continues to embrace nuclear weapons as a centerpiece of its own strategy. The validity of this judgment is re-
lected in current START dynamics. One reason why both the United States and Russia are contemplating reductions well beyond START I is to provide an incentive for Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to yield the nuclear missiles on their soil. What applies to the soil of the former Soviet Union is applicable elsewhere. The best way for the United States to lead the cause of nonproliferation is itself to set an example by relegating nuclear weapons as far as possible to the backwaters of its military strategy. Indeed, a hypothetical case can be made for a worldwide effort aimed at banishing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

For the foreseeable future, nuclear weapons will remain a fact of life, and indeed, some plausible developments could give them a new lease on life. For example, acquisition of these weapons by radical Arab powers could require the extension of U.S. nuclear deterrence coverage over friendly nations in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. The same judgment applies to the Korean peninsula. If nuclear weapons were used by an adversary power to help prosecute a regional conflict, the United States might have no choice but to retaliate, especially if American troops were threatened. Barring these developments, however, ongoing efforts to downgrade the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. military strategy can continue.

A diminishing role for nuclear weapons means that conventional forces will become the centerpiece of future U.S. military strategy. Because nuclear weapons will count for less, American strategy will lean heavily on conventional forces in peacetime to help perform the important function of shaping the international system, of driving it away from instability and toward stability. This will take place through a combination of unilateral action, alliance partnership, cooperation with former adversaries, and traditional and new defense missions.

The specific mechanisms will differ from region to region, but the commitment of U.S. forces will be animated by a broader and more subtle strategy calculus than during the Cold War, when the predominant emphasis was on deterrence in its crudest form. In Europe, U.S. strategy most likely will aim at maintaining a peacetime military balance that defends NATO allies, reassures East European nations, and dissuades Russian expansionism while encouraging cooperative relations with that nation. In Asia, the United States will emphasize
deterrence on the Korean peninsula, but for the overall region, it will aim at preventing a descent into major power rivalry by maintaining a peacetime balance of power that defends Japan, dissuades Russia and China from expansionist conduct, and reassures friendly nations in Southeast Asia and South Asia. In the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, a mixture of continuity and change will prevail. There, U.S. peacetime strategy likely will be to contain rivalries in ways that reassure Israel and other friendly nations, defend vulnerable partners in the Persian Gulf, and deter aggression by radical Arab nations.

In all three regions, the peacetime commitment of U.S. forces, as well as actions in crises and wartime, will be further affected by the patterns of multinational cooperation that prevail. In Europe, U.S. commitments will continue to be channeled through the NATO alliance, but growing concentration on out-of-area missions likely will bring about a greater reliance on ad hoc cooperation under Article 4 of the NATO Treaty. Existing bilateral security treaties with Japan and Korea will provide the basic framework for U.S. involvement in Northeast Asia's security affairs, whereas a mixture of formal treaties and informal relationships will guide American military actions in Southeast Asia and South Asia. In the Middle East and Persian Gulf, the United States most likely will continue to lack either bilateral or multilateral defense treaties, and its actions therefore will be undertaken within the framework of less formal relationships. Should a major military contingency reoccur in the Persian Gulf, a military response once again would have to rely on creation of an ad hoc coalition.

EMPLOYMENT OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES

U.S. strategy is expected to turn to conventional forces as the principal instrument for managing crises and fighting future wars. Accordingly, U.S. conventional forces, in addition to being adequately strong, will need to be guided by a sound doctrine that takes into account the full set of missions likely to be performed. As mentioned earlier, the past few years alone have shown how diverse these missions are likely to be. U.S. forces have toppled a corrupt regime in Panama (Just Cause), waged a major war in the Persian Gulf (Desert Storm), delivered food to Russia, protected the Kurds in Northern Iraq (Provide Comfort), enforced a no-fly zone in southern
Iraq, backed UN-imposed sanctions in Yugoslavia, and intervened in Somalia to prevent famine (Restore Hope). The years ahead are likely to see a host of relatively small but demanding missions in humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, peacemaking, and limited interventions. These missions will need to play an important role in shaping U.S. military doctrine, but similar to the past, the major wars that might be fought will have to play a big role too.

Based on the analysis in Chapter Four, Table 7.1 presents a best estimate of the military conditions likely to prevail in the three MRCs that will dominate U.S. defense planning in the near future. As this figure suggests, adversary force levels will be far smaller than the massive Warsaw Pact threat faced in Central Europe during the Cold War, but will still be large enough to be taken seriously. Each of these three MRCs, moreover, presents unique features that will require U.S. employment doctrine to make special adjustments for each case. All factors considered, the Persian Gulf and Korean MRCs are the most probable scenarios and pose the most manageable threats. The European MRC is far less likely to occur, but poses greater dangers.

The current DoD doctrine for handling MRCs is that of Decisive Force, as displayed in Figure 7.5. Designed to avoid the pitfalls of the Vietnam War, this doctrine is patterned on the successful Desert Shield/Storm experience. It calls for a clear specification of U.S. political goals and a solid understanding of how U.S. forces can be ex-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Condition</th>
<th>Persian Gulf</th>
<th>Korea</th>
<th>Europe</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Aircraft</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium–high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium–high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear weapons</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions by U.S. allies</td>
<td>Low–medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium–high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>Mobile, non-linear</td>
<td>Static, linear</td>
<td>Mobile, non-linear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7.5—Force Employment Policy

Expected to achieve these goals at acceptable risk and cost. It also calls for U.S. force commitments to be subjected to finite limits in space and time. Rejecting incrementalism and graduated escalation, it calls for the wartime application of U.S. military power in quick and decisive ways.

As shown in Figure 7.5, this doctrine suggests deployment of U.S. forces to a crisis-engulfed region in distinct but interrelated stages. Deployment is to begin with a small force designed to signal resolve and thereby deter adversary attack (flexible deterrent options, or FDOs). Following this, sufficient forces are to be sent to achieve a viable defense capability against a full-fledged enemy attack (immediate response forces). The process is to culminate with deployment of overwhelming forces to conduct a counterattack capable of inflicting operational defeat on enemy forces. This doctrine implies no automaticity in moving through all four stages if U.S. goals are achieved somewhere along the way. In cases where a full commitment is needed, nonetheless, the preference is for a speedy buildup, an aggressive field campaign aimed at a quick and successful resolution of the crisis, and a prompt departure of U.S. forces.
This doctrine provides a better approach to crisis resolution and warfighting than did the confused and hesitant gradualism of the Vietnam War. The successful outcome of the Persian Gulf War, which yielded a clear-cut military victory with few American casualties, provided a real-life laboratory for validating the premises of Decisive Force. In applying this doctrine to future conflicts, nonetheless, U.S. defense planners will need to remember that the exact circumstances of the Gulf War are unlikely to be repeated. Indeed, the three MRCs surveyed here are likely to have unique features that will present very different, and possibly less amenable, conditions.

A future Persian Gulf conflict might demand an even quicker U.S. deployment, a difficult forced entry, and a far longer and harder fight to achieve victory. A Korean MRC might require only a small U.S. commitment if ROK forces perform well, but if ROK forces are quickly defeated, this MRC could require a difficult rescue mission with large U.S. forces that might have to wage a painful counterattack on rugged terrain. A European MRC could present the most difficult conditions of all. American and allied forces might have to conduct cross-country movement across long distances, operate without a well-developed logistics base, and conduct a maneuver war against a strong opponent operating close to his own bases and air defense network. For these reasons, all three MRCs could be harder to prosecute than was Desert Storm.

All four phases of deployment and employment, moreover, could unfold in fashions different than contemplated by the Decisive Force doctrine. Especially if determined adversaries are encountered, the requirements to deter aggression could be higher than small force packages. Once combat begins, military considerations will play a large role in shaping campaign plans, although political objectives can become influential as well. After all, political judgment led to the halting of Desert Storm at the Euphrates River, thereby allowing Iraqi forces to escape destruction. Even if military goals are dominant, future adversary forces might fight more skillfully than did Iraqi forces, thereby making both defensive and offensive missions more challenging enterprises. These possibilities do not negate the Decisive Force model for these MRCs, but they do caution against false expectations, and they mandate keen sensitivity to the different circumstances encountered in each situation.
The Decisive Force doctrine must look beyond these three canonical scenarios to anticipate other situations that might create different imperatives. For example, current expectations hold that these MRCs will occur in a global vacuum so that events elsewhere can be ignored, but this might not be the case. Indeed, U.S. actions toward one MRC might affect important developments elsewhere, and could cause crises to explode or simmer down, thereby imposing a broader calculus on American policy. The classical case of interacting events, of course, is the 1914 crisis in which a minor event in Bosnia escalated out of control because the key players were so transfixed by Balkan imbroglios that they failed to see the larger implications for Europe. A key contributor to the outbreak of World War I was German military doctrine. Crafted in a political vacuum, this doctrine called for a rapid mobilization followed by a crushing offensive into France. Even though the original crisis did not pit Germany against France, Kaiser Wilhelm followed its dictates, thereby preventing diplomacy from resolving from what otherwise might have been a limited dustup between Russia and Austria-Hungary. Kaiser Wilhelm’s foolishness is unlikely to be repeated anytime soon, but the experience calls attention to the need to weigh military doctrines for individual crises in light of their larger political impact.

Another possibility to be thought about soberly is that of an MRC involving nuclear weapons. Russia already has nuclear weapons, and in the years ahead, North Korea and adversaries in the Persian Gulf might also acquire them. Consequently, the current assumption that MRCs will be entirely conventional affairs might have to altered. What are the implications for U.S. military doctrine? The answers are unclear. In some cases, the situation might call for the United States to act with far greater restraint than envisioned by the Decisive Force model, and in other cases, the United States might have to escalate more rapidly and decisively. Especially because analysis has only begun to scratch the surface of future regional crises, the entire issue, including the implications for Decisive Force, merits sober thought.

Finally, a host of smaller future contingencies might fail to provide the political-military clarity of current MRCs and the Decisive Force doctrine. Peacekeeping and peacemaking are obvious cases where political dynamics might require different doctrinal formulations, but so could a host of limited military interventions that might be undertaken. For example, operations conducted in defense of eco-
nomic interests (e.g., overseas investments or access to markets) or functional interests (e.g., codes of conduct or democracy) might be focused on objectives other than seizure of terrain or the destruction of enemy forces. These objectives plausibly could require the use of force in ways different from those contemplated by Decisive Force.

These caveats by no means invalidate Decisive Force, but they do suggest that this doctrine should be treated as a preferred model and not a rigid script. In the conflicts ahead, flexibility and adaptability might well be needed. U.S. military doctrine should foster these characteristics, not impede them. The underlying premise of Decisive Force will remain valid: military operations should be undertaken only when goals are clear and the relationship between ends and means is fully understood. An accompanying postulate must remain a key guide. Military operations, once launched, should continuously support the political goals they were originally designed to serve. As Clausewitz said, warfare is politics by other means.

Especially in the complex era ahead, Clausewitz's dictum fully applies to the design of U.S. military operations in crises and wars. In some cases, the overriding goal might be military victory on the battlefield, and in other cases, the goal might be a political settlement set in the context of events elsewhere and the need to avoid escalation. In some situations, national goals might call for a quick buildup and an overpowering offensive campaign, and in other situations, national objectives might call for a different script. What matters is that, in each case, coherent military operations should flow from insightful political assessments that clearly articulate national goals and accurately grasp how military force can most effectively be employed to achieve these goals.

The core judgment offered here is that U.S. doctrine should be anchored on the decisive and proportional use of force. In this approach, commitment of U.S. forces would always be undertaken in a manner responsive to the situation at hand, with due regard to U.S. goals, the immediate crisis, and the larger setting. Decisive commitment would be aimed at promptly achieving clear-cut goals with minimum risks and costs. Together, the principles of decisiveness and proportionality offer a well-balanced doctrine for handling the crises and wars ahead.
This approach implies a flexible stance toward the development of military plans, including OPlans and contingency plans. The Pentagon has already embraced "adaptive planning," which breaks OPlans into modules and provides branch points for moving in alternative directions as mandated by events. This change has lessened the risk that OPlans and their associated deployment schedules will act as straitjackets, and has provided U.S. military commanders a greater capacity to react flexibly to ever-changing events. Further adaptability will be needed. Continued development of command and control procedures, along with appropriate computer software, can improve performance. Likewise, use of multiple scenarios in programming can help ensure that U.S. forces can meet unexpected situations.  

To carry out a doctrine of decisive and proportional force, future U.S. military doctrine must remain anchored on joint operations. Desert Storm showed that mastery of jointness is the best means for carrying out national policy, for assembling overwhelming power, for managing complex crises, and for gaining victory on the battlefield. The capacity for jointness shown in that conflict was a relatively recent achievement. During the Cold War's early stages, as discussed earlier, the joint perspective was given only pro forma lip service and service doctrines were not well coordinated. The Navy was preoccupied with the sea battle to the exclusion of continental campaigns, the Air Force focused on the air battle with little regard for how airpower could aid the ground battle, and the Army and Marines gave insufficient thought to how they could work together to win land campaigns. These problems were overcome only through laborious and patient efforts, carried out over a period of decades, to knock down the imposing barriers to joint thinking. These efforts first bore fruit by bolstering NATO's defenses in Central Europe and then were manifested in the Persian Gulf. The impressive accomplishments in Desert Storm do not negate the lateness of their arrival, or the fact that lingering problems were in fact encountered.

A core challenge will be to preserve this hard-won capability, and success will not come automatically. The lack of a single dominant

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scenario and operational concept could cause service and Command in Chief (CINC) doctrines to drift apart. The lack of a global threat might lead regional problems to be addressed in isolation, and differing military problems in each region might produce the crafting of dissimilar doctrines that lack common themes. Moreover, the services will be subjected to changing technology, declining budgets and manpower levels, new missions, and shifting imperatives that might influence them to look inward, not outward. Unless developments are carefully monitored through strong management, the effect could be to propel the services in separate directions, away from joint collaboration.

If the need for jointness grows because defense resources are shrinking, what doctrinal principles—beyond decisive and proportional force—should animate this cause? Forward presence will remain an essential component of U.S. military strategy, but power projection from the United States will be the primary means by which American forces arrive at the scene in a timely and effective manner. This will be especially true for major conflicts requiring large-scale military operations. Joint doctrine thus must begin with development of coordinated OPlans that deploy forces from all services in a balanced and integrated fashion. Adequate OPlans will be needed for all theaters of operation, especially for MRCs, and they will need to be continuously updated to reflect ongoing changes.

The task of power projection does not end there, however. Since the premium will be on global agility and prompt arrival at distant places, OPlans must be accompanied by adequate strategic mobility forces. Mobility, in turn, is provided by a combination of airlift, sealift, prepositioned equipment, prepared infrastructure, and force packages designed with time-phased deployment requirements in mind. The past decade has witnessed major improvements in U.S. lift capabilities brought about by expensive programmatic initiatives, but even so, the buildup in the Persian Gulf took six months—longer than originally hoped. Many factors were involved, but lack of adequate sealift was important. U.S. sealift will need to be strengthened if a sound joint deployment doctrine is to be maintained.

In addition to building adequate mobility forces, the United States will need to design its combat and support forces with agile power projection in mind. In general, the first forces to converge at the
scene of a crisis are USAF interceptors, light infantry forces, and locally available naval units. These forces typically are intended to signal a deterrent message and to erect an initial defense screen. Following these forces come units intended to provide a thick defense screen—additional air wings, heavier ground forces, initial logistic support units, and two or three carrier battle groups. At the end of the deployment cycle come the forces needed to conduct a powerful counteroffensive—more USAF units with strong interdiction and ground attack capabilities, armored and mechanized ground forces, a full complement of logistic support, and two or three more carrier battle groups. In its readiness levels and internal mix, the U.S. force structure will need to be designed to fulfill these requirements that flow from the power projection mission.

If Desert Storm is a valid indicator, joint doctrine for combat operations should be anchored on the goal of maximizing the synergy offered by separate services and force elements performing a wide variety of demanding missions in coordinated fashion. Anchored on the premise that combat power is determined by far more than mass and firepower alone, synergy refers to combat dynamics that enable the whole to exceed the sum of its parts. It is achieved through the skillful use of force multipliers and highly synchronized operations that exert decisive leverage on enemy forces in ways that destroy their cohesion, thereby causing them to unravel. Aided by high readiness and sophisticated technology, it is this capacity for synergy achieved through jointness that enables U.S. forces to dominate opponents in more decisive ways than may be suggested by numbers alone.

The concept of battlefield synergy through jointness provides a guiding criterion for shaping the doctrines of the individual services. Whereas the Navy concentrated on maritime superiority during the Cold War, the regional contingencies ahead evidently call for a new doctrine aimed at local sea control and littoral power projection. Through the skillful use of combatants and fleet marine forces, the goal of the new naval doctrine would be to achieve the favorable conditions that allow U.S. air and ground forces to deploy in strength, unfettered by enemy opposition. Once this goal has been achieved, the new doctrine would call on naval forces to play a contributing role in the overall joint maneuver scheme.
For USAF, the Desert Storm experience suggests that modern air-power has acquired the capacity to play a more decisive role in regional contingencies than was previously thought possible. With synergy and leverage as the benchmarks, an appropriate air doctrine would call on USAF forces to quickly gain air superiority and, if possible, air supremacy through a coordinated campaign, aided by the other services, to suppress enemy C3I systems, air defenses, air bases, and interceptors. Following success in this phase, attention can then be devoted to an intensive campaign of strategic bombing, interdiction, and close air support aimed at destroying enemy ground combat forces, logistic support units, supply bases, communications networks, and headquarters.

For the Army, Desert Storm validates the efforts made during the 1980s to switch ground doctrine from linear defense to nonlinearity, maneuver, and mastery of the operational art. To achieve synergy and leverage in the future, Army doctrine should continue being anchored on operational maneuver for defense and offense. Emphasis should be placed on finding the best means to combine firepower, cross-country mobility, breakthrough and flanking tactics, exploitation, and shock action. As in Desert Storm, the dominant goal of this approach would be to fracture the enemy's cohesion and then defeat him in detail. Success in this endeavor provides the best assurance for avoiding prolonged attrition battles that can have frustrating political consequences.

In the current environment, any attempt to forecast joint doctrine runs the risk of relying too heavily on the Desert Storm model and misinterpreting that model's real meaning. Future wars might well be as different from Desert Storm as that conflict differed from the Vietnam War. The Persian Gulf War especially should not be misinterpreted to mean that smaller ground forces can always overpower large enemies, or that airpower alone can win future wars, or that powerful navies are irrelevant to the conflicts ahead. What Desert Storm does illustrate is the value of well-prepared forces, a balanced posture, joint doctrine, a flexible capacity to perform multiple missions, and sound campaign plans aimed at exploiting enemy vulnerabilities. To the extent that these principles are embedded in future defense plans, U.S. military strategy will be well-served.
MULTILATERALISM AND ALLIANCE PLANNING

Future U.S. military strategy and doctrine will continue to have compelling reasons for combined planning with old allies and new partners. Indeed, a deepening of this combined involvement seems mandated by the new challenges ahead. If the recent past is prologue, a growing number of humanitarian, peacekeeping, and peacemaking/peace-enforcement missions will be performed at trouble spots around the world. These operations likely will be conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and other international organizations (e.g., CSCE). In some cases, committed U.S. troops will find themselves working alongside unfamiliar partners. For example, it is possible that U.S. and Russian forces will undertake military missions together.

The growing importance of collective missions and combined operations requires that U.S. military strategy and forces be adjusted to develop a credible capability. This will mandate new departures in doctrine, training, procedures, and equipment. The situation will create powerful incentives for the United States to intensify its efforts to further strengthen the ability of the UN to perform these missions. The explosion of humanitarian and peacekeeping missions during 1991–1993 has already threatened to overwhelm the UN’s limited financial, administrative, logistical, and military resources. A concerted effort to strengthen UN capacities would help provide an invaluable multilateral mechanism for handling the growing requirements that seemingly lie ahead.

Measures to preserve and strengthen existing collective-defense alliance relationships in Europe and Asia also are required. To an important degree, Western Europe remained secure during the Cold War because the United States and its NATO allies mastered the complex art of coalition military planning. The value of this experience was borne out in Desert Storm, when a hastily assembled ad hoc coalition of many nations was able to conduct a well-orchestrated offensive campaign involving ground, naval, and air forces. In the future, contingencies might arise calling for unilateral U.S. actions, but as often as not, coalition operations, even of an ad hoc nature, will be the order of the day.
The critical issue will be whether combined planning will remain feasible in an era in which the incentives for alliance partnership might decline and renationalized defense planning could occur. Although the answer is uncertain, strong U.S. efforts on behalf of continued planning could help bring about a favorable outcome. A future agenda for NATO can be briefly outlined. First, NATO must remain capable of defending its borders against uncertain threats. NATO must retain an integrated military command for this purpose, with the United States playing an important role. NATO must maintain a balanced combination of rapid reaction, main defense, and augmentation forces. The posture can be built by U.S. and allied forces working together, guided by principles of fair burden-sharing and appropriate specialization in roles, missions, and functions.

Beyond defending its borders, emerging circumstances seemingly will propel NATO in the direction of developing a better capability for operations outside NATO territory. Already, NATO has offered to serve as a peacekeeping arm of the CSCE, and future alliance operations might be launched in several disparate areas, including East Central Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf. At the moment, NATO lacks the command relationships, forces, logistic support, and mobility assets needed to perform demanding missions of this sort. Improvements in this area, expanding upon the existing Rapid Reaction Corps, make sense. U.S./allied joint training, interoperability, standardization of weapon systems, and development of common doctrine and procedures should continue to be emphasized.

Looking beyond NATO, intensified military collaboration with the nations of East Central Europe is inevitable. Indeed, Poland and other nations plausibly might enter NATO and the WEU in future years, thereby providing the basis for formal alliance relationships. Also, bilateral defense cooperation programs have been launched with Russia and Ukraine, and although their charter currently is limited, it might expand in future years, to the point of including joint exercises and other measures.

Similar recommendations can be offered for the U.S. military involvement in other regions, but progress will be affected by the lower amount of alliance military planning there. In Northeast Asia, U.S. military forces will remain involved in defending Japan and Korea,
and combined planning with them will continue to be important. To the extent forces from these nations become committed to peacekeeping and other military missions outside their borders, intensified U.S. cooperation with them will be needed. In Southeast Asia, the United States will remain committed to the defense of Thailand and the Philippines, and the emerging security situation will create reasons for growing military collaboration with forces from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Australia.

In the Middle East and Persian Gulf, dangerous security trends point toward a deepening U.S. military involvement and closer collaboration with friends and allies, particularly with countries bordering the Mediterranean—Egypt, Israel, and Turkey. To the extent that the peace process succeeds, intensified cooperation with other Arab powers might become possible. In the Persian Gulf, a dangerous power vacuum may eventually lead to creation of a security alliance between the United States and friendly Arab governments. Short of this, security collaboration to the extent permitted by political conditions will continue to be an imperative.

IMPACT OF LOWER FORCE LEVELS

Mounting fiscal constraints suggest that the future Base Force will be reduced somewhat in ways that will necessitate alterations in U.S. military strategy. The reasons will be discussed in Chapter Nine, but it is appropriate to note here that a modest (10–15 percent) reduction in the Base Force need not compel any wholesale scaleback in the military goals of the Regional Strategy. Rather, emphasis will shift away from forward presence and toward power projection from the United States. The likelihood of this adjustment is increased because President Clinton during his campaign called for a greater role for power projection to be carried out by agile, mobile, ready, and technologically sophisticated forces.

Most probably, this change will be manifested in reductions in U.S. troop strength in Europe from 150,000 soldiers to 100,000 or fewer. Rather than a posture of an Army corps of 2.3 divisions and 3.5 USAF fighter wings, the new posture would include a dual-based Army corps (with two to four stationed brigades) and 2.5 air wings. Meanwhile, the U.S. military presence in Asia might be reduced somewhat below the 85,000 troops, 1.6 divisions, and three
USAF/Marine Amphibious Wings (MAWs) currently planned. Remaining forces configured for prompt overseas deployment in a crisis would be based in the United States. Table 7.2 displays how the distribution between forward presence and CONUS-basing will be changed for ground, air forces, and naval forces\(^3\) should a 10–15 percent reduction be imposed on the Base Force.

Although any drawdown in force levels by definition brings less insurance, the reduced posture contemplated here seemingly provides the wherewithal to execute a revised strategy placing greater emphasis on power projection. The new troop levels in Europe and Asia would not provide an operational response equivalent to the current Base Force, but these levels would allow for pursuit of most important missions and goals. With these levels, the United States would still be able to maintain influential positions in alliance command structures, to train with allied forces, to maintain a regional balance of power, and to mount an initial response to most crises. For major crises and wars, increased reliance would be placed on reinforcement from CONUS, where powerful forces would be available.

The feasibility of this approach depends upon whether programs are adopted to ensure that reinforcement can be undertaken with suffi-

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**Table 7.2**

<table>
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<th>Force</th>
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<th>Reduced Force</th>
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cient speed to compensate for the reduced forward presence. Options include prepositioning, airlift, sealift, improvements in overseas infrastructure, and development of lighter combat forces that can be moved faster. Provided appropriate reinforcement measures are adopted and sufficient forces are maintained in CONUS, a shift away from forward presence to power projection does not seem likely to un hinge U.S. strategy in a fundamental way.

A less optimistic appraisal faces force reductions far beyond the modest scope contemplated here. Far greater drawdowns in Europe or Asia would deprive the United States of the forward presence needed for peacetime missions and to mount an initial crisis response. Wholesale withdrawal from these regions might remove the military infrastructure that enables power projection from CONUS. Likewise, far deeper cuts (e.g., well beyond 20 percent) in CONUS-based forces could leave insufficient ground, air, and naval units to meet reinforcement requirements even if an overseas military infrastructure is maintained: see Chapter Nine for analysis. The most extreme case would be total withdrawal from Europe and Asia, coupled with reductions in CONUS that leave considerably fewer forces on hand.

Although degree and specifics matter greatly, the key risk is that U.S. military strategy might be propelled downward onto a lower plateau. Barring achievement of a more stable international system and greater optimism about military balances in key regions, drawdowns are unlikely to reach the point where the United States is rendered unable to respond to a single MRC. A more feasible prospect is that insufficient forces will be available to respond fully to two roughly concurrent MRCs, thereby leaving what could amount to a “one war” strategy. This strategy might suffice if the international system evolves toward stability, but in the opposite case, U.S. strategy could find itself impaled on the horns of a dilemma. In addition to being unable to defend two regions at the same time, the United States might feel constrained from responding decisively to even one contingency if other regions are unstable. Hesitancy to respond in any single theater because of insufficient forces could weaken stability in all three regions—Europe, Asia, and the Persian Gulf.

The obvious strategic response for the United States would be to try to devolve greater responsibility onto the shoulders of allied forces in
some or all of these regions. For example, if the United States reserved some forces for regional involvements beyond mounting a single MRC, it could use the surplus forces to pursue greater role specialization based on division-of-labor principles. These American forces could perform a smaller but still useful set of military missions. Allied forces could be bolstered so they were capable of performing their new missions. In Europe, a likely candidate would be to beef up allied ground forces, thereby relegating the United States to perform air and naval missions. In Asia, U.S. policy probably would focus on strengthening South Korean ground and air forces, and on encouraging Japan to acquire stronger naval forces so they could perform more maritime missions in the Western Pacific. Similarly, a policy aimed at strengthening the forces of Saudi Arabia and other friendly Persian Gulf nations would make sense. Success in these endeavors could permit the United States to focus its smaller forces on roles and missions where the greatest leverage could be applied.

If the United States could handle only one MRC, it could be compelled to divest itself of military responsibility for other regions. The most obvious candidate for complete devolution is Europe, where the risk of a major conflict has diminished and West European allies in theory have the resources needed to defend themselves. Accompanying U.S. divestiture presumably would come an effort to encourage the emergence of a fully independent West European defense pillar under the WEU and the EC. If the United States disengaged from Asia, South Korea and Japan would be encouraged to build sufficient turn to defend themselves without American aid. Disengagement from Europe and Asia, in turn, could allow the United States to fully turn its strategy and forces to the Persian Gulf, where allied forces are unlikely to acquire the strength to defend against powerful adversaries.

On the surface, a one-war U.S. strategy focused on the Persian Gulf appears feasible, but when the details are considered, troublesome problems emerge. For example, power projection to the Persian Gulf requires the availability of a military infrastructure in Europe and in the Western Pacific as well. As Desert Shield showed, U.S. transport planes were required to refuel in Western Europe to reach the Persian Gulf, and American cargo ships transited through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal. This successful effort was made
possible by the elaborate network of U.S. military bases and communications facilities in Europe. A smaller, but still significant, number of cargo ships traveled across the Pacific, and the U.S. military infrastructure there was critical to this effort. If U.S. military forces were to disengage from Europe and Asia, would this military infrastructure and the political support from allied nations still be available? If not, power projection to the Persian Gulf would be rendered all the more difficult, or at least far more costly through unilateral means.

An equally worrisome concern is whether U.S. allies in Europe and Asia would strengthen their forces in the ways sought by a U.S. policy of devolution. In Europe, nearly all NATO allies are reducing their own forces to an equal or greater degree than is the United States. They might react to U.S. disengagement by rebuilding their postures and uniting to create a strong defense pillar, but if the past is prologue, the opposite might occur. In this event, Western Europe might drift in the direction of disarmament and an inward-looking neutralism that could leave a destabilizing imbalance of power in Europe. Another risk is impetus for renationalization. The most feared outcome is a decision by Germany to acquire nuclear weapons and otherwise become a dominant military power, but a number of other less dangerous but still troublesome outcomes, all of a multipolar nature, are also possible. Similar worries cloud devolutionary visions in Asia. In theory, American power can be offset by strong Japanese and South Korean forces, but these nations might not respond with sufficient vigor, thereby leaving a regional imbalance. Alternatively, both might pursue unattractive military programs, including nuclear forces, that would have negative consequences of their own.

Even if devolution is successfully carried out, questions arise on whether allied defense pillars in Europe and Asia would serve American interests and the goal of stability in these regions. Would a militarily independent WEU/EC remain a close friend of the United States and a promoter of harmony in Europe? Would a militarily strong Japan and South Korea remain allied to the United States and a contributor to Asia stability? How would Russia and China react if the United States were to withdraw, leaving them to face ancient rivals possessing strong forces?
These daunting questions do not negate the worthy goals of building stronger allied security pillars and better burden-sharing relationships in both regions. Nor do they invalidate the conclusion that a less-ambitious U.S. military strategy will be possible if the international systems become more stable than they are today. But they do illustrate that devolution could have good results or bad, depending upon how it is conducted and the circumstances surrounding it. A partial U.S. disengagement anchored on new roles and missions is one thing; a complete withdrawal is something else again. A gradual U.S. drawdown timed in harmony with constructive allied responses may be a sound idea, but a precipitous withdrawal, undertaken before allied policies are known, would run the risk of negative consequences. A total U.S. withdrawal undertaken at the time permanent peace is achieved in these regions would be a sensible step, but a premature withdrawal, when danger still lurks, would not.

The great risk is that a poorly thoughtout U.S. military strategy, brought about by unwisely deep force cuts and anchored on truncated regional visions, could help propel the international system to move glacially in the direction of multipolar instability. The risk would be less if surrounding political-economic conditions encourage harmony, but greater if these conditions are otherwise. Degree matters heavily, of course. But in the worst case, the United States might still have sufficient forces to fight a regional war in Southwest Asia, yet it would have lost its larger goal of promoting the stability in Europe and Asia that is necessary for a harmonious international system. For these reasons, devolution and a one-war strategy make sense only when the international conditions favoring them have truly come to pass, not before.
NEW MILITARY STRATEGIES FOR VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS

Although defense planners will primarily shape U.S. military strategy for the current international system, they should begin to think about appropriate military strategies for a wide spectrum of different systems. Anchored on the assumption that the Base Force, or something like it, reflects requirements imposed by the current international system, Figure 8.1 illustrates the level of defense preparedness needed for the alternative systems identified in this study. The analytical rationale for current force sizing will be discussed in Chapter Nine. The strategies and associated force postures are illustrative only; actual future strategies and force postures would need considerable additional analysis.

As this figure suggests, U.S. military requirements will dip well below current levels if the international system becomes more harmonious, and could rise significantly if the system becomes far more unstable. Beginning with a world of global harmony and then examining progressively less stable worlds, the following discussion examines the military strategies that seem appropriate for each alternative system.

A WORLD OF GLOBAL HARMONY

A world of global harmony would be characterized by the disappearance of most forms of major conflict and war. Relations among the major powers would be highly cooperative and the risk of major regional conflict would have faded. Anchoring this highly stable international system would be continuing partnerships among the Western allies in Europe and Asia. Meanwhile, democratic reform
and free enterprise would have succeeded in Russia and China. Pursuing a benign foreign policy in Europe, Russia joins NATO and the EC, as do East European and Commonwealth nations, bringing about a true Euro-Atlantic community. In Asia, China, Russia, and Japan enjoy cooperative relations, Korea is unified, Southeast Asia is prosperous, and South Asia is stable. In the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli dispute has wound down because the peace process has succeeded, Persian Gulf oil is secure, and Islamic fervor has diminished.

Accompanying these favorable political developments are equally positive security and military trends. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and conventional technology has been halted, and arms control regimes have reduced forces to defensively stable levels. Some localized frictions remain, but military conflicts growing from them do not threaten to escalate into larger confrontations. Moreover, collective security institutions are strong and are the primary vehicle for using military force to address regional instabilities.

Portrayed here is a vastly more harmonious and cooperative world in which security management would be a far less demanding en-
deavor. The United States would still need a coherent military strategy and force posture to defend its interests, to promote global stability in peacetime, to manage crises, and to handle local conflicts that might occur. Far fewer defense resources would have to be committed than now, and U.S. military strategy would become very different.

The central goal of U.S. military strategy would be to preserve this harmonious world and to manage the limited problems that arise. U.S. security relations with the major powers would be animated by strong alliances and cooperative relations, thereby obviating the need for conscious efforts to maintain a global military balance of power under competitive conditions. An appropriate U.S. military strategy would be dominated by a vastly diminished role for central nuclear deterrence and by the complete elimination of extended nuclear deterrence in any active sense. As a back-up insurance policy, U.S. conventional power would support American commercial interests, respond unilaterally to local brush-fire conflicts, and contribute to collective security in the unlikely event that a major regional conflict occurred. In this world, the most demanding wartime requirement would be for commitment of three to five divisions, along with commensurate air and naval forces, for a single contingency. Thus, U.S. defense planning would need nothing larger than corps-sized wartime deployments.

Under this strategy, an illustrative U.S. force posture would include a small but secure strategic nuclear posture—perhaps a few SSBNs and strategic bombers armed with a payload of warheads numbering 500 or less. A small SDI system would guard against accidental launches, but SDI coverage would be extended worldwide and might be managed by the United Nations. In the extreme case, nonproliferation policies might succeed to the point of completely banishing nuclear weapons and other instruments of mass destruction from state ownership. In this event, any residual responsibility for nuclear deterrence might be vested entirely in the United Nations.

An illustrative U.S. conventional posture might be only 35–60 percent as large as envisioned by the current Regional Strategy and Base Force. Forward presence might be eliminated entirely, but more likely, cooperative security policies would call for the stationing of one brigade, an air squadron, and a small residual infrastructure in
both Europe and the Western Pacific. Total manpower requirements in each theater might be approximately 25,000–30,000 troops, with small military outposts maintained elsewhere, including in the Persian Gulf. Table 8.1 illustrates the type of conventional posture that might be maintained assuming a linear downsizing for each service.

Although this posture assumes a linear drawdown, in actuality non-linear concepts might define force requirements for U.S. military strategy in a harmonious world. For example, continued concern over control of the maritime sealanes might give rise to a naval posture near the high end of the range postulated here. Meanwhile, somewhat smaller active ground and air forces might be kept on active duty, with the remainder placed in reserve component status. Another possibility is that a larger number of air wings and fewer ground forces might be kept on active status. In any event, the conventional posture would be far smaller than is now planned.

Any attempt to forecast the size of the U.S. defense budget for this military strategy is confronted by many uncertainties, but one can assume the budget will be well lower than is currently planned. Surface appearances suggest that a small nuclear posture and a conventional posture only 35–60 percent as large as now would beget a similarly small budget, but realities would be more complex. In particular, the need to maintain mobility forces, C3I systems, a CONUS military infrastructure, an active R&D effort, and an industrial base would have an elevating effect on defense spending.

Table 8.1
Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a Harmonious World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Army Divisions/MEFs</th>
<th>USAF Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs/Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>4-7/150-230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8-13</td>
<td>10-16</td>
<td>4-7/150-230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A WORLD OF REDUCED REGIONAL TENSIONS

In terms of stability and tension, this international system falls between the current situation and a harmonious world. It is characterized by generally stable but not yet fully harmonious relations among the major powers. Although neither Russia nor China have become full-fledged democracies, both are internally preoccupied and not expansionist. Both are militarily strong and only somewhat cooperative with the Western alliance, but neither poses an immediate military threat to the United States or its allies. Against this background of major power relations, the key regions present an uneven pattern. In Europe, the Balkans and Eastern Europe remain unstable, but frictions are local and can be handled by CSCE and NATO. In Asia, Korea is unified, and apart from local tensions, stability prevails across the arc stretching from Japan to India. The chief threat to stability comes from the Persian Gulf, which remains turbulent and not readily amenable to collective security actions.

In this international system, U.S. military strategy would have two dominant goals. The first goal would be to contain residual tensions among the major powers and to encourage relations to evolve toward full-fledged harmony. The second goal would be to manage the still-turbulent Persian Gulf, while attending to lesser yet important local troubles in Europe and Asia. In contrast to the situation prevailing in a harmonious world, these goals would mandate a military strategy aimed at preserving a stable military balance of power vis-à-vis the major powers in Europe and Asia, and at maintaining full-fledged regional defenses in threatened locations. The military requirements posed by these goals, however, would be less urgent and demanding than today.

The United States would still need to maintain central and extended nuclear deterrence, but in a context of negotiations aimed at lower force levels than envisioned by START II. A key distinguishing feature of this strategy lies in its implications for conventional forces. Whereas the United States today faces pressures to prepare for two MRCs, in this world it would have to prepare for only one MRC. Equally important, the geographic location of this MRC could be pinpointed. Because the risks of major regional wars in Europe and Northeast Asia could be safely discounted, only the Persian Gulf would remain a source of major conflict. As a result, the United
States could safely plan its conventional defenses on the basis of a one-war strategy anchored on a potential repeat of Desert Shield/Storm.

U.S. nuclear force levels would be affected by START III negotiations. An illustrative posture would include a triad of ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers that deploys 1000 warheads. Possibly a limited SDI system would accompany this offensive posture. For conventional forces, forward presence in Europe would amount to some 75,000 troops or less, including 1 division and 1.5 wings. In Asia, about 50,000 troops would be deployed, including two Marine brigades and a USAF wing in Japan. With regard to total force levels, the need to prepare for only one MRC would allow for reductions well below the current Base Force, but substantially larger forces would be needed than under a world of global harmony. Table 8.2 presents an illustrative posture, representing 60–80 percent of the Base Force’s strength.

The centerpiece of this posture is a deployable active force of six to seven Army divisions, one to two MEFs, seven to ten USAF wings, and three to four CVBGs—enough for a Persian Gulf MRC against projected adversary threats. The range reflects uncertainty about wartime requirements, and could be expanded if either more optimistic or more pessimistic assumptions were deemed appropriate for planning. For example, greater confidence in U.S. military domination over future adversaries could reduce requirements. Conversely, concern about larger and more capable threats could inflate requirements. The posture envisioned here would be capable of a major joint operation in the Persian Gulf, one in which allied forces also could contribute. It also would provide assets for a host of multilateral humanitarian, peacekeeping, and peace-enforcement missions that might be needed under UN, CSCE, or NATO auspices.

### Table 8.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Army Divisions/ Marine MEFs</th>
<th>Air Force Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs/Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>9–12</td>
<td>11–14</td>
<td>7–10/265–375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>4–6</td>
<td>5–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13–18</td>
<td>16–21</td>
<td>7–10/265–375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, this posture provides forces for other requirements that would have to be met during an MRC, including a small strategic reserve and a rotation base. Although the need to conduct joint operations would call for a balanced posture, conceivably alternative mixes could be pursued. Greater emphasis, for example, could be placed on tactical air forces and less emphasis on ground maneuver units. In any event, the need to plan for major combat operations against a sizable opponent would dictate a requirement not only for conventional forces of this magnitude, but also for sufficient investments in readiness, modernization, and sustainability. Total fiscal cost for this posture would fall somewhere between the budgets required for the Base Force and for a harmonious world.

A WORLD OF ENHANCED REGIONAL TENSIONS

Whereas the previous two international systems presented a more tranquil environment than today, a world of enhanced regional tensions offers more turbulence. Similar to today's world, major power relations in this system are stable, if mildly competitive. The chief difference is that regional tensions are considerably greater. In Europe, violent upheavals and interstate conflicts have spread in the Balkans and East Central Europe, and threaten to engulf the former Soviet Union. An internationalization of the Yugoslav civil war puts Serbia in conflict with its southern neighbors, there are border frictions between Hungary and Romania, tensions mount between Russia and Ukraine, and Poland is insecure. In Northeast Asia, the political-military confrontation on the Korean peninsula has intensified because North Korea has not only bolstered its conventional offensive power but has acquired nuclear weapons and tactical missile delivery systems.

The most destabilizing developments are in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. The Arab-Israeli dispute remains unsettled, Syria remains a radical power, and Islamic fundamentalism has swept into North Africa, producing chronic tensions along the southern Mediterranean littoral. In the Persian Gulf, anti-Western governments ruling Iraq and Iran are seeking to overthrow the conservative Arab sheikdoms to the south. Military tensions in the Gulf region have increased because both Iraq and Iran have strengthened their conventional forces. Equally important, both nations have acquired
nuclear weapons and tactical delivery systems capable of striking Saudi Arabia and Israel. As a result, a far greater military threat is posed to the Gulf oilfields than exists today.

The basic goal of U.S. military strategy would be to preserve stable relations among the major powers while containing regional tensions and defending U.S. interests if war occurs. In this world, central and extended nuclear deterrence for Europe and Asia and a stable balance of military power in both regions would still be needed. A key change is that extended nuclear deterrence coverage would now have to be provided over South Korea and U.S. allies in the Middle East/Persian Gulf. In Northeast Asia, this requirement would necessitate reaffirmation of the mutual defense treaty with the ROK and the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons onto South Korean soil. In Southwest Asia, the new departures would be even more profound. A mutual defense treaty would have to be signed with Saudi Arabia and other friendly Persian Gulf nations, and U.S. nuclear weapons and delivery systems would have to be deployed onto their soil. In essence, the United States would acquire nuclear treaty commitments there similar to those now existing in Europe and Asia.

U.S. conventional defense planning would be affected, too. In Europe, the risk of an MRC with Russia would remain low, but the United States would need to work with the NATO allies to develop better military operations beyond alliance borders in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and possibly the former Soviet Union. In Northeast Asia, the United States would have to work with South Korea to bolster that nation's air and missile defenses, and its ground forces. Because North Korean nuclear delivery systems plausibly could be used against Japan, Japanese air defenses should be bolstered. Intensified security collaboration with Russia and China would help manage Northeast Asia's increasingly tense security affairs. In the Middle East, greater U.S. security assistance would have to flow to Israel and Egypt to improve both nations' air defenses. In Southwest Asia, increased security assistance and stronger air defenses would be part of an expanding network of military alliance relationships anchored on coalition planning and an integrated command.

Because of these developments, U.S. forward presence would increase beyond current plans. At a minimum, 150,000 American troops would remain in Europe, and programs would have to be un-
dertaken to strengthen the capacity for peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations to the east. In Northeast Asia, deployment of additional air defenses would elevate U.S. military strength from 85,000 to about 100,000–120,000 troops. Sizable U.S. forces would be permanently stationed in the Persian Gulf. The required force might include one Army brigade, one or two Patriot air defense brigades, one or two USAF air interceptor wings, appropriate command staffs, and logistic support. In addition, Navy combatants would regularly deploy to the Gulf region. Total U.S. manpower requirements could reach 50,000 troops. The combined effect from all three theaters would elevate forward presence from the roughly 200,000 troops now planned to 300,000 troops or slightly more.

U.S. planning for MRCs in Korea and the Persian Gulf would also face elevated requirements. U.S. plans for both regions would be anchored on the prospect of facing more dangerous conventional threats, including surprise attacks that overpower initial U.S./allied defenses and make intervention by U.S. reinforcements more difficult. Equally important, U.S. plans would need to address the risk that both MRCs might become nuclear crises in which nuclear weapons were used against American forces. As was the case for NATO defense planning in Europe during the Cold War, U.S. military doctrine for Korea and the Persian Gulf should take into account the possibility of tactical nuclear war, including rapid escalation across both regions.

In this world, U.S. requirements for strategic nuclear forces would remain as currently planned, but tactical nuclear weapons would make a comeback. Conventional force requirements would increase not only because of a larger forward presence, but also in response to increased adversarial military threats in Korea and the Persian Gulf. Improvements to allied forces in both regions would partly offset the increased threats, but to the degree full offset was not achieved, additional U.S. forces would be needed to make up the gap. Although the amount could be higher or lower, this analysis illustratively postulates a growth in requirements by 10–15 percent beyond Base Force levels: enough to accommodate an enlarged overseas presence while maintaining an adequate rotational base in CONUS. Table 8.3 illustrates the conventional force levels that might be deployed, assuming retention of the mix embodied in the Base Force.
Table 8.3

**Illustrative U.S. Conventional Posture for a World of Enhanced Regional Tensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Army Divisions/Marine MEFs</th>
<th>Air Force Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs/ Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>16–17</td>
<td>16–17</td>
<td>13–14/500–520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>12–13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24–26</td>
<td>28–30</td>
<td>13–14/500–520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the natural instinct might be to expand the U.S. posture linearly, the specific military situations in Korea and Southwest Asia might impose unique requirements. Nonlinear expansion and altered mixes are plausible. Arguably, no additional CVBGs would be needed for these conflicts, and, at least in Korea, currently planned U.S. and allied ground forces already seem enough to cover the terrain adequately. Most likely, nonlinearity would be pursued by placing greater emphasis on tactical air forces, whose firepower and lethality might enhance conventional defense in both regions. In the extreme case, the new U.S. posture might be composed of 22 divisions/MEFs, 33–39 fighter wings, and naval forces of 12 CVBGs and 450 ships.

**A WORLD OF RENEWED RIVALRY WITH RUSSIA**

Renewed rivalry with Russia in Europe and elsewhere would have a profound impact on U.S. military strategy. Contemplated here is a Russian nation led by an authoritarian government, armed with a large nuclear and conventional arsenal, and pursuing an expansionist foreign policy around its periphery. This development would take place against the background of enhanced regional tensions discussed above. Central and extended nuclear deterrence would be recast in a bright spotlight. In addition, the current philosophy of pursuing cooperative relations anchored on a balance of power in Europe and Asia would give way to restored emphasis on coalition planning for such traditional missions as containment, deterrence, and defense. Moreover, the dynamics of European security affairs might compel a formal extension of NATO's security guarantees to Poland and other nations in East Central Europe. The result could be
a new Cold War that would shape not only European security affairs but Asian politics as well. In this system, the United States would benefit from the continued existence of security alliances in Europe and Asia, but the task would be far harder than the challenges facing today's Regional Strategy.

In Europe, the United States and its NATO allies would now have to take quite seriously the risk of a major conventional war with Russia somewhere east of NATO's current borders. A sizable U.S. presence in Europe of Base Force dimensions (150,000 troops) would be needed. U.S. wartime force requirements for this contingency would be heavily dependent upon Russian and allied force levels. Russia might deploy a larger posture than allowed by the CFE regime; even if this regime were still honored, a Russian projection force could include 30 well-armed divisions, 1200-1500 combat aircraft, and naval operations in the Atlantic intended to interdict U.S. resupply and reinforcement. Contemplated here is a Russian force with a modern doctrine, high readiness, and mastery of joint operations with advanced technology systems. Depending upon which nations joined the fray, allied force contributions could range from small to fairly large, but inevitably sizable U.S. forces would have to be committed. This commitment could vary from as few as 5-7 divisions and 7-9 fighter wings to as many as 12-15 divisions and 17-20 wings.

In addition to again taking major war in Europe seriously, the United States would have to recast its global defense plans. Whereas the current Regional Strategy focuses on simultaneous conflicts in the Persian Gulf and Korea, the new situation would require that Europe be factored into the concurrence equation. In the extreme case, the United States might have to plan against three MRCs: in Europe, the Persian Gulf, and Korea. At a minimum, it would face strong incentives to switch its two-contingency plan (now focused on Korea and the Persian Gulf) to address simultaneous conflicts in Europe and the Persian Gulf, both of which would require large U.S. force commitments against powerful adversaries. Concurrently, a peacetime deterrent posture in Korea would have to be maintained. By substituting Europe for Korea as the second MRC, the effect would be to elevate U.S. conventional force requirements.
The U.S. strategic nuclear posture would still be anchored on a triad, and nuclear launcher and warhead levels would reflect the status of START negotiations. A START II agreement might be carried out, but more likely, START I would be the outer limit of accommodation, thus compelling deployment of some 6000 warheads. Conventional force requirements would be influenced heavily by specific assessments of the military balances for the European and Persian Gulf MRCs, but as an illustration, a posture 15–25 percent larger than the Base Force is suggested here to meet the postulated adversary force levels. A 25 percent expansion, it is noted, would return the U.S. posture to Cold War levels. Table 8.4 illustrates the conventional posture that might be deployed if a linear buildup is pursued. A nonlinear buildup probably would take the form of more tactical firepower and marginally fewer divisions, carriers, and ships. Alternatively, a larger portion of tactical air units might be configured as active units rather than the active/reserve mix portrayed in the table.

A WORLD OF MULTIPOLAR INSTABILITY

A world of multipolar instability would bring nightmarish instabilities matching, or even exceeding, the worst features of the bipolar Cold War. Multipolar rivalry among the major powers would be accompanied by still-serious regional tensions in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf. In this system, a conservative authoritarian Russia emerges as a nation with a nationalist ideology, sizable military strength, and an outward-looking diplomatic agenda that brings about an uneasy standoff with its neighbors. A similar situation prevails in Asia, where an authoritarian China emerges as an

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Army Divisions/ Marine MEFs</th>
<th>Air Force Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs/Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>17–18</td>
<td>17–18</td>
<td>14–15/520–560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>9–10</td>
<td>13–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26–26</td>
<td>30–32</td>
<td>14–15/520–560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
economic and military power with a diplomatic agenda aimed at asserting influence at the expense of its neighbors, including Japan.

Meanwhile, NATO has eroded into a loose and weakened alliance with no integrated defense planning. The United States retains close relations with Britain, where some American troops remain stationed. U.S. relations with Germany and France, however, have cooled considerably, and American forces have entirely departed from the European continent. The EC has fallen short of unity, has not created a security pillar, and has come to be led by a German-French axis with Germany as the dominant partner. Deprived of military assurances by the weaknesses of NATO and the EC, Germany is now pursuing an independent security policy in Central/Eastern Europe, and has rebuilt its military forces, which now include an independent nuclear deterrent similar to that of France and Britain. The result in Europe is a tense multipolar setting that pits Germany in an uneasy standoff with Russia, with these nations separated by a power vacuum in East Central Europe and the Balkans marred by chronic political-economic frictions.

The situation in Asia is even worse. China and an increasingly powerful Japan confront each other amidst a setting of tense economic and military rivalry. To worsen matters, the mutual security partnership between the United States and Japan has collapsed. Replacing it has come a relationship increasingly marked by overt economic rivalry and initial signs of military competition. Deteriorating relations with Japan have led to withdrawal of U.S. forces from that nation and from the Western Pacific in general. The U.S. presence is characterized by only periodic naval deployments in absence of permanent basing arrangements. Deprived of its security guarantees from the United States, Japan has embarked on a path of military armament and has begun deploying a nuclear deterrent posture of SSBNs/SLBMs. The militarization of Japan, in turn, has exacerbated tensions across Asia, heightened rivalry with Russia and China, and produced a troubled political climate covering the entire arc from Vladivostok to Southeast Asia.

The result is multipolar rivalry and instability on a global scale. Not only are Europe and Asia both unstable, but tense relations between Russia and China have linked these regions. This linkage has created an international security system marked by interacting frictions
among five dominant powers—Russia, China, a German-led EC, Japan, and the United States. Further contributing to the tense climate are chronic instabilities in the Middle East/Persian Gulf and South Asia. Because the major powers no longer cooperate, these and other local instabilities provide ample opportunities for the major powers to fall into crisis confrontations.

Because evolution of an international system this unstable would require collapse of the Western alliances at the same time that rivalry reappears with Russia and China, its emergence will be dismissed as unlikely. Yet, the late 19th century provides a disturbing parallel of how security mismanagement can transform systemic stability into multipolar instability through a process in which old friends are lost at the same time that new enemies are created. Moreover, some of today's trends point in this direction should similar misconstrued policies be pursued. Even if a highly unstable multipolar system is as far-fetched as it is undesirable, a lesser but still worrisome version of this model merits contemplation in any effort to address the future.

An unstable multipolar world would impose upon the United States a military strategy very different from the Regional Strategy of today. Rather than pursuing cooperative security within the framework of existing security alliances, U.S. strategy would have to manage competitive multipolar dynamics in the absence of alliances. The situation would call for the diplomatic styles of Metternich, Castlereagh, Talleyrand, Bismarck, and other practitioners of 19th-century European realpolitik. Security would have to be managed on a global scale, rather than in a single region, and in a strategic environment complicated by the widespread presence of nuclear weapons. The dominant goals would be to protect narrow American interests while trying to contain international tensions in order to prevent the kind of global conflagration seen in World War II.

In this world, U.S. military strategy would be anchored on unilateralist principles, aided by ad hoc and ever-shifting partnerships that would form temporarily only to evaporate when old problems gave rise to new challenges. With neither friends nor enemies permanent, extended nuclear deterrence would give way to a singular preoccupation with central deterrence conducted on an all-azimuth basis. In Europe and Asia, the dominant U.S. objective would be to check expansionist rivalries and to stabilize tense relations among the major
powers. This objective would be pursued in absence of collective defense planning or today's network of overseas bases. The United States would require a large navy of combatants and support ships to defend its interests, maintain sea control, and project power. Large maritime deployments would be needed in the Pacific, and Atlantic deployments would be larger than currently planned. Supplementing this maritime concept would be plans focused on dispatching large expeditionary ground and air forces to handle major conflicts in Europe, Asia, and the Persian Gulf.

The U.S. force posture would need to be redesigned to carry out this very different strategy. Plausibly, the United States would be required to rebuild its nuclear posture of the Cold War, but even if START remains in force, a triad posture of some 1600 launchers and 6000 warheads would be necessary. As an illustration, the conventional posture might be 25-50 percent larger than the Base Force. It might be composed of a large navy, moderately expanded active ground and air forces, larger reserve forces, and beefed-up mobility forces. Table 8.5 provides an example of a buildup, but many other force mixes might serve equally well or better. Arguably, for example, the United States could get by with a large navy and air force, but a smaller ground force than postulated here. Fear of concurrent wars in Europe, Asia, and the Persian Gulf could elevate requirements even for land forces. After all, the United States was compelled to raise a large army to fight World War II—the kind of conflict that is a potential by-product of this international system.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR AFFORDABILITY AND DELIBERATE REARMAMENT**

These alternative strategies pose differing implications for long-term U.S. defense spending. If the United States succeeds in guiding the current international system to a world of reduced regional tensions and growing harmony, it will be free to lower its defenses and reduce military spending well below current plans. The effect will be to liberate more money for reducing the federal deficit, investing in domestic infrastructure, and building a prosperous post-Cold War economy. If this endeavor fails and the current international system is replaced by a far less stable world, then expensive rearmament would be faced.
Table 8.5

U.S. Conventional Force Posture for an Unstable Multipolar World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Army Divisions/ Marine MEFs</th>
<th>Air Force Wings</th>
<th>Navy CVBGs/Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>16–18</td>
<td>18–22</td>
<td>15-20/560-720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>12–16</td>
<td>15–21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28–34</td>
<td>33–43</td>
<td>15-20/560-720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assuming isolationism is rejected and policies are adopted to continue defending U.S. overseas security interests, current plans to reduce military spending to 3.0–3.4 percent of GNP would have to be replaced by elevated budgets that could consume a significantly larger fraction of GNP. Whereas a small buildup would elevate spending to 4–5 percent of GNP, recreation of the Cold War posture would consume 5–6 percent, and the posture mandated by an unstable multipolar world might cost 8–10 percent of GNP. Moreover, the effect could be magnified if the combination of added defense spending and a worsening world economy produced slower U.S. economic growth.

Perhaps the U.S. economy will reignite to restore earlier high growth rates, but in absence of this achievement, there is concern about whether the United States could financially afford a large defense buildup. Yet failure to respond could endanger not only American security interests but also prospects for the healthy world economy that is needed to help fuel U.S. prosperity. As Figure 8.2 suggests, moreover, military rearmament could not occur overnight. Even if the Base Force is maintained and the posture is enlarged at a moderate 5 percent annually, several years would be required to attain the levels demanded by strategies for the less stable worlds analyzed here. In the event of an unstable multipolar world, up to eight years of rearmament would be needed. The effect would be magnified if the Base Force were to be cut appreciably, thereby requiring a buildup back to Base Force levels before larger postures could be pursued. In the extreme case of a 45 percent reduction, up to 18 years could be required before the posture needed for an unstable multipolar world could be achieved. A crash rearmament program,
of course, could narrow these timelines considerably. That effort, however, would require far greater defense expenditures than envisioned here. In any event, the budgetary requirements of rearmament alone, to say nothing of the troubled security situation, create compelling arguments for a contemporary U.S. policy and strategy aimed at preventing this kind of competitive multipolar system from coming to pass.

The time required to achieve deliberate rearmament measures the risks that would be faced in the interim from any one of the more turbulent international systems contemplated by this study. To a degree, these risks are lowered because a more dangerous world would not emerge overnight. Regional tensions would require years of deterioration to achieve the levels discussed here, and even a malevolent Russia would need some years to rebuild its tattered defense establishment. In particular, an unstable multipolar world likely would require many years to evolve. If the United States anticipates trouble, it could begin rearming in advance, and thus would be better prepared when trouble arose. Yet the fast pace of interna-
tional change today is eroding standard expectations—if bipolarity could collapse almost overnight, would multipolarity truly take one or two decades to evolve? Regardless, the United States does not have a good track record for anticipating trouble ahead, and the growing focus on domestic priorities reduces the likelihood that it will correctly anticipate international downturns tomorrow.

These complexities illuminate the dilemmas and uncertainties facing U.S. military strategy today. The Regional Strategy (or something like it) may be well designed for today's world, but the international environment is not in stasis. The prospect of a more tranquil order offers the allure of reduced forces and military spending. The risk of a drift toward greater international instability, nonetheless, means that a watchful eye will have to be kept on the possibility of larger defense requirements and very different strategies than now planned. This risk is hard to measure, but it seemingly is large enough to be taken seriously.

To avoid the painful dilemma of having to choose between security and prosperity, the United States has major incentives—strategic and economic—to do everything in its power to ensure that a downward international drift does not occur. Like virtually all defense postures, the Base Force is not an irreducible minimum: within prudent limits, marginal reductions may reduce confidence levels but will not plunge the United States into a strategic abyss. Yet, adequate U.S. defense strength and a coherent military strategy are influential factors in helping to preserve the stable international environment that is needed not only to safeguard our security interests but to allow domestic economic recovery. Especially because a more dangerous world needs not only to be guarded against but also actively prevented, the case against a premature and wholesale disarmament will remain an important consideration in shaping the future U.S. military strategy and force posture.
Because strategy and forces are inseparable, analysis of future U.S. military strategy must be accompanied by assessment of force capabilities needed to execute the strategy. This especially is the case for contemporary U.S. military strategy, which is anchored on the need to maintain sizable forces for a variety of purposes. However, assessment of force needs itself is a difficult analytical task. This chapter examines analytical methodology, discusses nuclear force needs, and then considers alternative methodological techniques for gauging necessary conventional capabilities. After developing a new methodology based on generic missions, it applies this methodology to assessing the ability of the Regional Strategy, or something like it, to meet wartime requirements.

FUTURE NUCLEAR FORCES

Strategic nuclear forces are being reduced as a result of unilateral initiatives and the START I Treaty, and will be reduced further if START II is fully implemented over the coming decade. Figure 9.1 illustrates the implications. At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. posture was composed of approximately 2000 launchers and 13,000 warheads.


2Chapter Nine focuses on contemporary force needs for the current international system. This methodology was also used in creating the illustrative force postures for alternative international systems and defense strategies discussed in Chapter Eight.
including 1000 ICBMs, 672 SLBMs, and over 300 bombers. The START I Treaty charts a course toward a reduced posture of about 1200 launchers and 8500 total warheads, with 6500 warheads counted under START procedures. The first phase of START II retains a similar number of launchers, but calls for a drawdown to about 4250 warheads, primarily through retiring MIRVed ICBMs. The second phase of START II, to be achieved by 2003, calls for a further drawdown to about 1000 launchers and 3500 warheads.

By the time START II is implemented, U.S. launchers will be at 50 percent of Cold War levels and warheads will be reduced to about one-fourth of original levels. The posture will still be a triad, but different from the Cold War. The ICBM component will include 500 Minuteman III missiles, each carrying one warhead. The SLBM leg will include 18 Trident submarines, carrying 432 SLBMs, with a mix of C-4 and D-5 missiles mounted with four warheads apiece; the total count will be 1728 warheads. The bomber leg evidently will be composed of approximately 70 bombers, including cruise missile-carry-
ing B-52s and penetrating B-2 Stealth bombers; the 95 B-1s currently in the posture will be configured for conventional use. Further, tactical and theater nuclear forces are now being dramatically reduced. The future U.S. substrategic nuclear posture will be composed primarily of air-delivered bombs. Ship-based nuclear warheads are being retired or stored, and ground-based missiles and warheads are being destroyed.

Whether START II will be fully implemented remains to be seen, but even if it should be, imposing issues will still confront nuclear force planning. The dominant issue will be future requirements for the size and internal characteristics of the strategic posture. The need for the large Cold War posture was driven by the desire for ample insurance, by fear of a surprise disarming attack, and by the large Soviet/Warsaw Pact target system to be struck. The desire for insurance remains, but reductions in the Soviet nuclear threat and in targeting requirements have permitted U.S. planning horizons to be lowered to START II levels. Debate over force levels, however, is not likely to end with START II. Indeed, calls already are being heard for reductions to 1000 or fewer warheads.

These calls emanate from a desire to achieve the lowest possible force levels as well as nonproliferation goals. Some quarters believe that reductions lower than START II will be needed to convince other nations, including Ukraine, to be practicing members of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. At the moment, this sentiment does not advocate complete nuclear disarmament. But it does embrace the idea that the United States cannot set a sufficient example unless, in the context of mutual reductions by Russia, reductions lower than START II are embraced.

If the START II-posture of 3500 is deemed adequate, will a smaller posture of 1000 warheads be sufficient if Russian force levels are also reduced this far? This question will require careful appraisal. Surface appraisal suggests that a triad could be maintained with a force of (for example), 250 ICBMs, 7 SSBNs with 24 missiles armed with 3–4 warheads, and 15–25 bombers. Cost-effectiveness, however, could compel consideration of a two-legged dyad, perhaps composed only of ICBMs and SLBMs, or SLBMs and bombers. In any event, a critical matter will be whether targeting requirements can be met with 1000 or 2000 warheads. Must a large set of urban,
industrial, and military targets be considered in U.S. war plans? Clearly, flexibility must be retained through multiple options, but possibly deterrence and other key objectives can be realized with smaller assets. Another issue will be whether several medium powers with sizable inventories will permit such reductions. Currently, Britain, France, and China all have a nuclear posture that will include several hundred warheads by the late 1990s. To what extent do strategic considerations mandate that the United States maintain a force posture larger than these nations? The answer is not self-evident, and the question merits serious consideration.

Analysis of lower force options, of course, must consider that even a nuclear world envisioned by START II might not be attained. Failure of reform in Russia could lead that nation to back away from START II. Moreover, Ukraine might decide to become a nuclear power by retaining possession of some or all of the ICBMs currently on its soil. China might decide to build an even larger posture—deployment of more ICBMs and SLBMs could give that nation a greater capacity to strike the United States and other nations. Also, other powers might enter the nuclear club in ways that could affect U.S. force requirements. In the end, prospects for START II and lower force levels will be heavily influenced by the degree to which U.S. nonproliferation goals prove achievable.

The United States will need to address its defensive systems as well as its offensive force requirements. The current DoD program goal is to deploy an effective CONUS defense against limited attacks while maintaining strategic stability. A related goal is to provide theater missile defense of forward-deployed U.S. troops and of friends and allies. This goal is being pursued through the GPALS (Global Protection Against Limited Strikes) program, which integrates strategic and theater missile defenses. Subject to compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, present plans call for procurement of land-based interceptor missiles in the United States coupled with an improved Patriot system for overseas deployments. In the long run, technological improvements might permit deployment of space-based systems (e.g., Brilliant Eyes and Brilliant Pebbles). The options ahead are broad, and a complex set of issues will have to be addressed: technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness, military needs, and strategic stability.
METHODOLOGY FOR SIZING U.S. CONVENTIONAL FORCES

If conventional forces are to play a larger role in U.S. strategy, an adequate posture must be ensured. But what are to be the standards for gauging adequacy in a world that lacks clearly defined threats? The issue is more fundamental than arguing about "How much is enough?" and "How low can we go?" At bottom, the issue is the analytical methodology to be used for defining conventional force needs. Only when a sound methodology is created will it be possible to measure adequacy in quantitative ways.3

Creating a sophisticated yet transparent methodology will not be easily accomplished, and will require an ongoing effort for some years to come. Thus far, two methodologies have dominated the public literature: threat-based contingency analysis and resource-based capability analysis. Both have attractive features and will continue to play important roles in defense planning, but each also suffers from liabilities. Accordingly, this study advances a third methodology that, although not a complete solution, offers complementary strengths of its own: mission-based capability analysis. This technique centers on outputs, not resource inputs, and it defines adequacy in generic ways rather than in response to specific contingency situations.

The central argument advanced here is that mission-based capability analysis can help gauge requirements for the U.S. conventional posture, and help build public understanding of why sizable forces are needed in an era when threats to U.S. interests are unclear. This is not to imply, however, that this methodology should entirely replace the other two approaches. Threat-based contingency analysis will still be needed to examine specific conflicts to which U.S. forces might be committed, and resource-based capability analysis will be needed to examine the internal characteristics of the force posture. The three methodologies thus are best used in tandem, as a package of techniques that can work together to shed illuminating light on conventional force needs. After discussing the first two methodologies, the following pages examine this third technique in some depth.

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Threat-Based Contingency Analysis

Of the three methodologies, contingency analysis has enjoyed the most widespread use in recent years. This methodology determines U.S. military requirements on the basis of an in-depth examination of postulated wartime situations. It begins by defining future military contingencies in which U.S. forces might be committed. For each contingency, it postulates a scenario that lays down assumptions regarding mobilization rates, reinforcement and buildup schedules, an expected D-Day, campaign plans, employment doctrine, and capabilities for adversary and allied forces. Using this input data, it employs a combination of static and dynamic techniques to gauge the likely outcome of combat under varying conditions and assumptions. Employing this output data as the basis for evaluation, it then calculates the U.S. force contributions that are needed to confidently achieve a favorable result for that contingency. To build a theory of overall requirements, it adds the contingencies that might have to be faced concurrently.

As the Cold War experience shows, the strength of this methodology lies in its ability to be explicit and quantitative, and thereby to aid planning and programming by permitting detailed analyses of single events. Simply stated, it allows for the mathematical determination of force requirements in a setting that permits in-depth examination of the many variables that enter into the planning process. It by no means eliminates the need for judgment, but it does help narrow the uncertainties and reduce the risk of relying on arbitrary guesswork. Provided the analysis is accurate, decisions can be taken with assurance that sufficient means have been identified to achieve predetermined ends. This technique thus permits a well-guided military buildup when additional forces are needed, and it also provides a valuable basis for determining how forces can best be reduced when the threat has diminished.

Notwithstanding these strengths, however, contingency analysis has drawbacks that are magnified at times of uncertainty about what wars are likely to be fought. The Cold War was well-suited for this methodology, but that conflict was unusual in the sense that virtually all of the ingredients needed for in-depth contingency assessment were known. Contingencies, force levels, and campaign strategies could be identified with some confidence. Even where uncertainties
existed, a consensus emerged on acceptable assumptions for planning, thereby facilitating the analysis. Unfortunately, the end of the Cold War has shattered this once-solid edifice, leaving in its wake major uncertainties that limit the future applicability of this methodology.

Looking back, contingency analysis has an uneven track record that leaves doubt in the minds of some about its ability to predict conflicts. The Cold War may have produced consensus on contingencies for planning, but what stands out is that the wars actually fought were different from the conflicts expected. Throughout the Cold War, U.S. planners were focused primarily on Central Europe, and this effort undeniably played a major role in achieving containment and deterrence there. Nonetheless, a surprise attack led to a major war in Korea, large U.S. forces were dispatched to fight in Vietnam, and when war came in Southwest Asia, it was waged on behalf of defending Kuwait against Iraq rather than protecting Iran against the Soviet Union. In all three conflicts, U.S. forces had to be committed in ways not forecasted by contingency analysis.

These experiences have led to a central argument against contingency analysis—it produces tunnel vision, draws too heavily on historical analogy, and too often calls the shots wrong. The wars that are expected seldom occur, and the conflicts that are not taken into account arise in ways that regularly catch planners by surprise. When these unexpected wars break out, carefully laid plans have to be uprooted and new departures quickly improvised in ways that allegedly lead to a ragged response because overoptimization has led to a loss of flexibility. The damming conclusion, this argument holds, is that because contingency planning creates analytical blinders, it often does more harm than good.

The counterargument is that this critique carries a partial truth too far. To be fair, contingency analysis was by no means blind to theaters other than Europe. Following the Korean War, it played a useful role in helping maintain adequate defenses in Korea. If the Vietnam War was a disaster, failure occurred because of flawed strategy, not because contingency planning failed to foresee conflict in Southeast Asia. The United States knew that war was looming there long before American forces were deployed. By calling attention to the possibility of war in the Persian Gulf, moreover, contingency
analysis did help alert U.S. forces to the growing danger there, and it triggered a host of programmatic measures that produced a far better response than otherwise would have been the case. Equally important, the intense focus on Central Europe helped prepare U.S. and allied forces to conduct the coalition campaign and joint operations that were the keys to success in Desert Storm.

The judgment of this study is that Eisenhower was right: plans are nothing, but planning is everything. Contingency analysis cannot be held accountable to the impossible standard of clairvoyance. What matters is that U.S. forces are adequately prepared when the unexpected inevitably occurs. By alerting planners to broad classes of problems and by demanding coherent programs, contingency analysis can help produce the required preparedness and flexibility. The trick is to ensure that contingency analysis serves as an aid to planning, not as its master, and especially not in some inflexible way. To be effective, contingency analysis should encourage breadth of vision even as it probes deeply into specific events.

A core issue will be whether contingency analysis helps illuminate the challenges ahead, or instead produces blindness to them. Contingencies are heuristic devices but nonetheless they must be credible. If contingencies lack credibility, they can lead to diminished interest in defense planning, and credibility is hard to achieve in today’s environment. For a variety of reasons, all three MRCs now facing defense planners lack plausibility. War with Russia in Europe seems very unlikely, North Korea appears adequately deterred, and Iraq evidently has learned its lesson and in any event is too weak to attack Kuwait again. In all three cases, the situation might change in the years ahead and entirely new problems emerge. But until danger is obvious, the American taxpayer, forgetting that U.S. military strength helps discourage threats from emerging, might be reluctant to spend large sums to prepare for wars that seem unlikely.

Quite apart from the credibility problems encountered by the three MRCs, a fundamental problem with contingency analysis is that war seems like a low-probability event when any specific situation is examined. Indeed, the costs and risks of aggression can make war look like an irrational act. Driven by raw emotions and ambitious designs, participants in a real situation might embrace an entirely different calculus, and they may not be rational. But the outside observer, not
fully cognizant of the human dynamics at work, might fail to appreciate the dangerous undercurrents, particularly if the participants conceal their real motives. Moreover, war can be caused by a disastrous chain of unplanned events, but precisely because this chain is unintended, it can be almost impossible to credibly forecast.

In retrospect, 1914 is readily explainable, but as late as 1913, anyone predicting this bizarre chain of events would have been dismissed as a worrywart. When Hitler appeared on the scene in 1933, his threatening agenda was apparent to all who chose to see, but few wanted to look, and with most nations internally preoccupied, even fewer wanted to act. If World Wars I and II looked like low-probability events in advance, forecasting major wars in today’s international system seems like an exercise in even more remote crystal-ball gazing. To be sure, regional tensions are bubbling up, but the constellation of political and military events needed to create a high risk of major war seemingly exists in few places. As General Powell said, the Pentagon is running out of obvious enemies to plan against.

The absence of enemies today does not mean that they will fail to materialize tomorrow, but that does little to enhance the credibility of contingency analysis. This especially applies in the United States, which is so far removed from turbulence overseas that threats to peace typically are not recognized until they are painfully obvious. Past failure to recognize deteriorating international situations has led the United States to be caught off guard. In the past 45 years alone, the United States has been surprised by the onset of the Cold War in Europe (1947), by military aggression in Korea (1950), the Middle East (1973), and the Persian Gulf (1991). If the past is prologue, the United States will continue to lack a sensitive antenna, which will lower the acceptance granted to contingency analyses, which are intended to provide alerts about low-probability events.

Because wars so often have occurred out of the blue from unforeseen causes, the sobering lessons of history, uncertainty about the future, and simple prudence argue in favor of maintaining strong U.S. defenses. Although future wars may be of unknowable origins and places, they are not less real. To avoid arbitrary decisions, defense programs must be anchored on concrete postulates, and contingency analysis has helped provide those postulates. If contingency
analysis is no longer sufficiently credible to perform this function, what is to take its place?

Even if the three current MRCs are accepted as a credible basis for planning, they do not provide the stable assumptions offered by the old Cold War contingencies. Major uncertainty about enemy threats and allied force contributions leads to a wide range of plausible estimates for U.S. force requirements. Moreover, shifting battlefield and technological dynamics have eroded old rules of thumb. Common prudence calls for U.S. and allied forces to be as strong as the enemies to be fought, but analysis and experience suggest that, within limits, a smaller force can defend against a larger opponent. During the Cold War, for example, one commonly used standard held that NATO should aspire to a ground force ratio of 1.5:1 (in the Warsaw Pact's favor) and an air ratio of 1:1. The rationale was that, for complex reasons, these ratios would allow NATO to execute a forward defense of the inter-German border. The Persian Gulf War, with its offensive maneuvers and fluid battlefield dynamics, seemingly has exploded these ratios. There U.S. and allied forces faced a worse ground ratio (2–3:1), but, benefiting from larger air forces than deployed by Iraq, they achieved an overwhelming victory as a result of total air supremacy, superior technology, better doctrine, and higher readiness.

The Desert Storm experience seemingly suggests that less demanding ratios can now be embraced, but exactly what should be the new ratios? Could similar success have been achieved in Desert Storm if a smaller force had been deployed? If so, by how much? To what degree, moreover, was Desert Storm a uniquely favorable war whose lessons should not be generalized? In that conflict, U.S. air forces quickly gained air supremacy and thereafter mounted a month-long bombardment campaign before the climactic ground assault was launched against a battered Iraqi army. Will future wars allow for similar air supremacy, or will enemy air defenses be less easily suppressed, resulting in a less effective air bombardment? If the air campaign is less one-sided, will U.S. ground forces show the same superiority against an enemy army that is less badgered from the air? To the extent that similarly favorable conditions do not apply, U.S. force requirements could be different from those experienced in the Persian Gulf War, but exactly how different is an imponderable.
Even more fundamental, the analytical techniques previously used to measure combat power apparently have been invalidated by Desert Storm. During the Cold War, planners often used the WEI/WUV (Weapon Effectiveness Indices/Weighted Unit Values) technique to develop static measures, but the Gulf War suggests that this technique, in its preoccupation with hardware, underestimates the importance of differences in doctrine, training, C3I, munitions, and technological sophistication. Simply stated, the Iraqi army compared favorably to U.S. and allied forces in WEI/WUV data, but because of inferiority in other areas, it was fighting out of its league. Desert Storm has raised other troubling questions about the computer-based simulations that have been used to study combat dynamics. For the most part, these simulations failed to grasp the synergism of joint operations carried out with modern weapons and doctrine.

Future conflicts will have to be judged on their own merits, and new analytical techniques adopted. In the interim, decisions will have to be made about U.S. force levels, and these decisions will be affected by how today's uncertainties are handled. Because of these uncertainties, force requirements for each MRC can vary widely, depending upon whether optimistic or pessimistic assumptions are embraced. Figure 9.2 illustrates the sensitivities. In the European contingency, for example, only 6 U.S. divisions are required if a 1.5:1 force ratio is needed to defend against 24 Russian divisions, and if allied nations contribute 10 divisions. The requirement could rise to 10 U.S. divisions with a more demanding 1.2:1 ratio, or if the allies contribute only 6 divisions. The requirement could grow to 15 U.S. divisions if the threat is 30 divisions, the allies contribute 10 divisions, and a 1.2:1 ratio is needed. All of these planning factors are plausible for the European scenario, and similar variations apply to the Persian Gulf and Korean MRCs.

The range is enlarged when two contingencies are considered together. In the most optimistic case, only six divisions would be required (none are needed in Korea because U.S. airpower alone is presumed adequate). In the most pessimistic case, 28 divisions are needed to meet demanding requirements in Europe and the Persian Gulf. A mid-range estimate is 12-18 divisions. Similar variation applies to estimates of air and naval requirements. The effect is to
Figure 9.2—Contingency Analysis Cannot Provide Single-Point Estimates

Erode credibility of any single-point estimate of U.S. force requirements.

In the end, decisions will be driven by how much confidence is desired, although the old standards of prudent conservatism and diminishing marginal returns might be hard to apply because their meanings will be difficult to measure and subject to technical debate. For these reasons, the future of contingency analysis as a force-sizing methodology is itself uncertain. It will continue to be used as an indispensable contributor to planning, but it will not provide firm solutions to the problem of defining conventional force requirements. Beyond doubt, contingency analysis can contribute a great deal of information, but it alone cannot be expected to settle debates about the size of the U.S. force posture.
Resource-Based Capability Analysis

This methodology is anchored on the premise that the future is too uncertain to permit confident forecasts of wars. Consequently, it focuses on building a force posture that will be strong and flexible when judged on its own merits, independent of speculation about specific regional conflicts. In addition to mandating a posture that reflects U.S. military strategy, this approach requires forces that are coherently structured and internally balanced. In particular, the posture must provide an adequate mix of combat capabilities for joint operations missions. Moreover, the combat forces must have adequate support units for overseas deployments and a sufficient military infrastructure in the United States. A posture that meets these tests of adequacy presumably will be capable of handling the challenges ahead, whatever they might be.

In addition to providing analytical tools for building an adequate posture, this methodology offers the promise of defusing controversy over contingencies and scenarios. In the quest for credibility, this methodology does not require widespread agreement that any specific war should be planned against. It merely requires acceptance of the assumption that major war—somewhere and sometime—remains sufficiently worrisome to be taken seriously. Having gained acceptance of this prudent premise, it then turns public debate to the force posture itself, whose internal characteristics presumably can be explained on the basis of military reasoning.

In essence, this methodology is inward-looking, and therein lies its strengths and weaknesses. It asks “Do we have a good team?” not “Can we beat the opponent?” This methodology is hard-pressed to address the issue of whether current U.S. forces are large and strong enough to meet the challenges ahead.

Equally important, this methodology cannot explain why the Base Force, or something like it, is needed. After all, many medium-sized nations with militarily vigilant strategies have achieved adequate coherence, balance, and diversity with postures much smaller and differently structured than the Base Force. Great Britain, Germany, and France all fall into this category, as do Israel, South Korea, and Japan. To be sure, these nations do not face the global requirements
and demanding military conflicts that the United States does. A global superpower cannot dismiss external challenges from force planning. If a still-large U.S. conventional force posture is needed, it is for reasons that lie beyond the analytical horizons of this methodology, that stem from the international system rather than from the inherent nature of military forces.

In the final analysis, this methodology can help decide the internal mix of the U.S. posture, and draw attention to the dangers of losing internal coherence and balance. But in shaping the size of the posture, attention to security outputs cannot be sacrificed on the altar of an exclusive preoccupation with resource inputs. Although a well-prepared military posture undeniably is a worthy goal in itself, force requirements will continue to be heavily influenced by key foreign policy goals, future military threats, and necessary missions in peace, crisis, and war. The United States will need sufficient forces for these purposes. Nothing less, and nothing more.

Mission-Based Capability Analysis

This methodology endeavors to bridge the gap between the two previous approaches, neither of which is proving satisfactory. By blending their strengths while avoiding their pitfalls, mission-based capability analysis creates a new approach that does a better job of defining U.S. military requirements in ways that are general and therefore transcend individual wartime situations. This methodology has the potential to offer a better public explanation of the force posture that is chosen, persuasively illuminating the reasons why a particular level of defense strength is needed in an age of unclear threats.

Like contingency analysis, the new methodology is outward-looking, but it does not size U.S. forces according to specific wars. While acknowledging that American forces are most likely to be employed in particular regions against specific threats, it does not anchor the justification for the U.S. force posture on any one single-minded assessment of threat-driven contingency requirements. Like resource-based capability analysis, it seeks to determine the kind of posture that makes sense on its own merits, independent of debates over individual contingencies. But unlike resource-based capability analy-
sis, which is inward-looking, it addresses military outputs, not re-
source inputs.

The unique nature of this methodology, which adopts the core goals
of resource-based capability analysis, can be illustrated by examining
the basic question posed by it. Rather than asking "What kind of
posture do we seek?" it asks "In general, what kind of military
missions do we want to be able perform in peace, crisis, and war?" It
then sizes the U.S force posture so that these missions can be carried
out. It posits the question, "Recognizing that many different games
are likely to be played against a variety of opponents, what kind of
game plans do we want to be capable of executing?" It then designs a
military team capable of carrying out these game plans.

This methodology is anchored on the premise that defense policy
and strategy must be crafted in the face of great uncertainty and in-
ternational ambiguity. Accordingly, it aspires to a posture that pro-
vides the wherewithal for handling general classes of problems by
being capable of generic, strategically meaningful missions. Its chief
postulate is that, especially because the international problems
ahead are impossible to forecast with any precision, the United
States will need a conventional posture capable of handling general
problems that will manifest themselves in many different ways. Its
claim to credibility rests on the assumption that, whereas specific
contingencies are scarcely believable and military forces cannot be
justified as a public good in themselves, sizable defense strength will
be seen as needed to perform certain generic military missions.

This methodology begins the analysis of force requirements by call-
ing attention to three important military missions that will take place
in peacetime. Because the United States is a maritime nation that
depends on overseas commerce, a vital mission is to maintain a vi-
able naval presence on the world’s waters to ensure sea control. As
in the past, this mission will require four naval fleets: in the Atlantic,
the Mediterranean, the Eastern Pacific, and the Western Pacific. In
addition, to meet alliance commitments and to maintain a balance of
power in key regions will require sufficient forward-deployed ground
and air forces for a continental presence. Finally, a combination of
forward presence and large CONUS-based forces is needed to project
a clear image of a decisive military response in the event U.S.
interests are directly threatened.
These peacetime missions mandate sizable defense strength. It is the military missions in crises and wars, however, that play a dominating role in this methodology's assessment of total force requirements. Assuming that U.S. strategy will remain anchored on the premise of being prepared for concurrent conflicts, this methodology uses five wartime missions for force-sizing. The first mission is to apply decisive and overwhelming force to one MRC. The second mission is to apply a sizable warfighting force to a second roughly concurrent MRC. This posture would be capable at least of achieving a highly confident defense, and in most cases, would have powerful counteroffensive capabilities. The third mission is to maintain a sufficient strategic withhold (or reserve) to preserve a forward presence in unthreatened theaters and to fulfill other requirements that might arise even as two MRCs are being confronted. The fourth mission is to provide a rotational base for replacing casualties and relieving MRC-deployed units that need to be withdrawn for rest and recovery. The fifth mission is to provide a reinforcement hedge, made up of sufficient units to fulfill unanticipated requirements for the two MRCs and other operations.

The core postulate here is that, if the conventional force posture is sufficiently large to perform these five missions concurrently, then it should be capable of meeting the crisis and wartime demands likely to be imposed by U.S. military strategy in a turbulent international arena. An equally important postulate is that all of these missions must be performed if confidence in U.S. defense capabilities is to be maintained. That is, one or more of these missions cannot be wholly discarded without sacrificing the coherence of U.S. military strategy. As a result, force-sizing is more complex than simply preparing for two MRCs. Even as major military operations are being mounted in two regions, three other missions with their contingent forces must be performed. In essence, this methodology asserts that the five missions are interrelated to the point where they should not be viewed in isolation from each other, but rather should be seen as an integrated whole.

Just as this methodology focuses on generic missions, it also calls for force requirements to be assessed in generic terms. It does not anchor requirements for any of these missions on a single discrete event, with all its controversies over technical issues. Rather, it gauges requirements according to a general class of events that call
for the individual mission in question. For example, it does not base its estimate of military needs for decisive force on a specific MRC (like the Persian Gulf). Instead, it postulates decisive force needs for the entire class of MRCs likely to be encountered. A similar generic approach is applied to the other missions.

This methodology does not ask "How many forces are needed to wage war in the Persian Gulf and Korea?" This question not only engenders controversy by assuming that these specific wars are singular concerns, but also ignores other potential MRCs. In an effort to avoid these problems, this methodology asks "How many forces are needed to conduct two MRCs in general, assuming we will pursue an offensive campaign in one, and a war-fighting campaign of at least defensive dimensions initially in the other?" By posing the force-sizing question in general terms, this methodology not only sidesteps paralyzing debates over estimates for individual theaters but also casts a wider multitheater net in its efforts to accurately characterize the force requirements ahead.

Table 9.1 illustrates the ground, air, and naval forces likely to be required assuming that joint operations will be needed for each mis-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Divisions/MEFs, Low-High</th>
<th>Fighter Wings, Low-High</th>
<th>CVBGs, Low-High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelming force:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st MRC (A)</td>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War-fighting force:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd MRC (A)</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic withhold (A/RC)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotational base (RC)</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcement hedge (RC)</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19-27</td>
<td>21-31</td>
<td>9-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: "A" indicates that mostly active forces are needed, and "RC" indicates that reserve component units will suffice.
sion. A range of low and high estimates reflects sensitivity to alternative contingencies, adversary forces, allied contributions, operational concepts, weapons performance characteristics, and planning standards. Whereas the "high" estimates are based on relatively conservative assumptions, the "low" estimates are based on less pessimistic but still prudent calculations. Indeed, many critics would assert that the low estimates are themselves inflated.

This mission-based theory of requirements postulates that, for most MRCs, deployment of a joint field army of 7–10 divisions/MEFs, 8–12 USAF wings, and 3–6 Navy CVBGs will be needed to provide the military wherewithal for decisive and overwhelming force. For defensive options in the 2nd MRC, Figure 9.1 postulates that one or two Army/Marine corps, backed up by commensurate air and naval forces, normally will be required. Conceivably, this amount of force could permit counteroffensive operations (e.g., if allied performance is strong), but if not, the United States could pursue sequential operations whereby a counteroffensive is launched first in the major theater and then in the second theater after forces have been redeployed. A strategic withhold of two or three divisions and related forces provides a capacity for other missions, including forward presence and minor combat operations. The rotational base identified here is sized to offset casualties and replace exhausted units, and the reinforcement hedge is sufficient to deploy an enlarged field army for the 1st MRC, or to achieve decisive and overwhelming force for the 2nd MRC if sequential operations are not appropriate.

The requirement for a joint field army for the 1st MRC is especially important. This requirement stems partly from reasoning by historical analogy. Since 1950, the United States has fought three MRCs in Korea, Southeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. For all three conflicts, it deployed a field army of approximately 10 divisions, along with commensurate air and naval forces. During the Cold War, moreover, U.S. plans called for initial deployment of a 16-division D-Day force in the event of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in Central Europe. Thus,

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4The term "joint field army" signifies a force substantially larger than single corps-sized operations. Although its size is flexible, it normally would include three to five Army corps, a numbered air force with 1.3 fighter wings per ground division, and one to two carrier task forces. By contrast, an "army group" would include six to nine ground corps and commensurately larger air and naval forces.
historical experience shows that the United States, when confronted with major regional conflicts, has typically judged that a force of field army dimensions is needed to conduct battlefield operations. When the next MRC occurs, the United States most likely will again deploy a joint field army.

A second consideration is that a field army establishes the density needed to create a dominating physical presence on the battlefield. Figure 9.3 shows the area covered by a U.S. field army in Europe, Korea, and the Persian Gulf. The larger display indicates terrain coverage by a 10-division field army deployed on defensive frontages, and the smaller display shows coverage for offensive frontages. This figure shows how a field army can assert control over the battlefield, thereby creating immunity to quick defeat and allowing U.S. commanders to seize the initiative.

A third factor is that a joint field army is normally required to achieve manageable numerical ratios against enemy forces. Although qualitative advantages in training and technology can enable U.S. forces

Figure 9.3—U.S. Field Army Provides Dominating Physical Presence
to fight outnumbered and win, if future adversaries learn from Iraq's harsh experience in Desert Storm, there will be limits on how far quality can be relied upon to replace quantity. If future regional adversaries field 20–30 divisions and several hundred aircraft, sizable U.S. military commitments will be needed for all conflicts in which allied nations play only a supporting role and contribute relatively small forces. As a general rule, a U.S. joint field army can provide the mass of forces needed to keep future balances within manageable limits and allow attachment of allied forces without sacrificing operational coherence, so that U.S. advantages in technology and training can prevail.

Finally, and perhaps most important, a field army provides the number and array of forces to execute a coherent campaign plan through joint operations. The importance of this factor can be illustrated by examining the Desert Storm offensive campaign, the ground portion of which is displayed on Figure 9.4. The combined U.S. and allied
buildup during Desert Shield yielded a coalition posture of about 17
division-equivalents, 1800 combat aircraft, and 6 CVBGs. With an air
force this large, the coalition was able to mount and sustain a multi-
mission air campaign that quickly attained air supremacy and then
conducted a sustained effort at interdiction and strategic bombing.
When the time came for the ground assault, the coalition had enough
maneuver units to mount a coordinated and multi-pronged offensive
that fractured the enemy’s cohesion in ways that led to the Iraqi
army’s defeat. In the ground campaign, it was the combination of di-
rect frontal assaults, flanking operations, and the threat of amphibious
attacks that unraveled the Iraqi defense.

Arguably, the Desert Storm success could have been achieved with
smaller forces, yet how many fewer is an imponderable. Not all of
the combat forces in Desert Storm played equal roles, but the point is
that the forces worked together as a joint team. Some forces had to
be committed to secondary missions to create the favorable battle-
field conditions that allowed other units to perform the primary
missions successfully. Had fewer forces been available, some sec-
ondary missions would have been sacrificed, and conceivably this
loss might have denuded the effectiveness of forces performing pri-
mary missions. Perhaps deployment of VII Corps and associated air
and naval forces during Phase II of Desert Shield was not necessary.
U.S. military commanders, however, did not feel this way at the time,
and their insistence on sizable numerical strength may have played a
larger role in the outcome than surface appearances suggest in
hindsight.

The margin of victory in warfare often is narrow, and it normally
turns on the capacity to execute a coherent scheme of operational
maneuver with high coordination, speed, and synchronization.
Adequate forces are needed for this purpose. Notwithstanding the
importance of better quality, sufficient quantity will remain an irre-
ducible requirement for the operational schemes of the future.

World War II provides an illustration of how adequate quantity can
influence the capacity to execute demanding operations. In the
Battle of France in May 1940, the German army executed its famous
blitzkrieg destruction of French and British forces by concentrating
large armored forces in the Ardennes and then mounting high-speed
operations of breakthrough, exploitation, and rear-area maneuver.
This victory was made possible by major German qualitative advantages, but it was also heavily influenced by the fact that the attacking German army was composed of 136 divisions, thereby permitting the concentration of some 45 divisions in the Ardennes breakthrough sector. Four years later, the Germans again attempted an Ardennes breakthrough during the 1944 Battle of the Bulge. This attack failed for many reasons, but a key factor was that, because only 65 divisions were available in the western theater, the Germans were able to concentrate only 25 divisions in the Ardennes. As a result, the Germans lacked sufficient forces to exploit the early breakthroughs that were gained, thereby allowing American and British forces to counterconcentrate. Had another 10 divisions been available, the outcome might have been different.

If a joint field army remains an appropriate standard for guiding U.S. plans for future regional wars, how many combat units will need to be deployed to constitute it? History, terrain, and operational dynamics seemingly point toward a normal posture of about 10 divisions and 1200 combat aircraft, but this is only a rule of thumb, not a fixed requirement. In some cases, for example, a smaller posture of about 7 divisions and 850 aircraft might be needed. In other cases, a larger force of about 14 divisions and 1700 aircraft might be necessary. A similar range applies to naval forces. Each conflict will have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, according to professional military judgment. What matters for force sizing is that the U.S. posture must remain large enough to provide enough ground, air, and naval units to fulfill requirements for the array of plausible cases. The theory of mission-based requirements portrayed by this study is intended to meet this test of sufficiency, while providing enough forces to meet other needs even as a field army deployment is conducted.

**ADEQUACY OF THE BASE FORCE**

To what degree is the current Base Force capable of meeting the requirements posed by this new methodology? Figure 9.5 shows that the Base Force falls roughly in the middle of the range, providing a margin of insurance but falling short of complete confidence. The Base Force can respond to MRC contingencies that pose relatively modest demands, while meeting other mission requirements. For
the years immediately ahead, MRC contingencies seem likely to fall into this category. As for more demanding situations, the Base Force provides sufficient active combat units for deploying a 10-division force (with air and naval support) that would allow for a repeat of Desert Storm. In this event, active forces of five divisions, three fighter wings, and six CVBGs would still be available for other missions. These forces might be enough, but if demands elsewhere were relatively high, reserve component (RC) forces would have to be drawn upon. In particular, RC fighter wings would need to be activated, but the historical record shows that USAF RC units have impressive combat capabilities.

Where the Base Force might fall short is in the event of high requirements across the board. In this case, larger RC forces, including Army combat forces, would have to be activated and deployed. In the extreme case, requirements plausibly could exceed even a fully mobilized posture by a margin of about 15 percent. This deficiency measures the risk that accrues with the Base Force, but because the likelihood of uniformly high requirements is low, this risk is within
prudent limits. Throughout the Cold War, by comparison, the United States and its allies regularly ran much greater risks. Although degree matters greatly, reductions in the Base Force would reduce the margin of confidence postulated by this theory of requirements.

Because adequacy is determined by more than the total number of combat forces in a posture, the Base Force’s internal characteristics must be carefully appraised. If Desert Storm is a valid indicator, U.S. forces today seem sufficiently ready and modernized to meet any challenges. Indeed, the superiority shown in these areas provides an additional margin of confidence to the Base Force’s adequacy, but if this superiority is to be maintained, training and weapons upgrades must be funded. As for sustainability, Desert Storm was fought in about one month, and given the nature of modern warfare, future MRCs are likely to be similarly intense but brief. Although six to nine months of staying power is best, a programmatic practice of maintaining WRM/WRS (war reserve munitions/war reserve stocks) stocks for three to four months may be adequate for the years ahead. Provided major funding shortfalls are not encountered, confidence should be in order for the three pillars of defense strength: readiness, modernization, and sustainability.

A somewhat less confident picture emerges when the composition of Base Force combat units is examined. One issue is whether USAF is maintaining adequate close air support (CAS). The future posture will be dominated by F-15/F-16 multirole aircraft, with only two A-10 wings to be retained. By late 1993, only 159 A-10s will remain in service, compared with 435 A-10s and 246 A-7s in 1990. Arguing in favor of this plan is that improved avionics and the growing lethality of air-ground munitions provide greater confidence that ground targets can be destroyed by fast-moving fighter bombers. Because of its antiarmor cannon, rugged durability, and high maneuverability, the A-10 nonetheless provides an attractive platform that made significant contributions in the Persian Gulf War. At present, USAF procurement plans do not envision a replacement for the A-10; only the F-22 and the multirole fighter are planned, and they will replace the F-15 and F-16.

Questions also can be raised about the ground posture. One issue is whether sufficient heavy divisions will be available. The 15-division
active posture will provide only eight heavy Army divisions (two armored and six mechanized). The remaining seven divisions are more lightly configured Army and Marine Corps units. Desert Storm required deployment of five heavy divisions (17 heavy brigades), and because potential adversaries are becoming better armed, a future MRC could require this many heavy units and plausibly more. In theory, eight heavy divisions should be enough, but in the unlikely event of two armor-dominated MRCs, the Army might be spread thin. Weighing against this risk is that Army light divisions are equipped with antitank weapons and some tanks, and that Marine MEFs are more mechanized than is commonly realized. Moreover, adequate infantry forces must be maintained to be prepared for conflicts requiring these assets. Even if a wholesale shift toward mechanized forces is deemed improper, however, the heavy/light mix will continue to merit close appraisal.

The Army's RC posture provides a sizable pool of two mechanized and three armored divisions that can be drawn upon to remedy any deficiency in heavy units, but a second issue enters the picture: RC combat force readiness. During Desert Shield, a large number of Army RC support units and USAF RC combat wings were quickly mobilized and deployed to the Persian Gulf, and they acquitted themselves well in Desert Storm. Unanticipated delays were encountered, however, in mobilizing Army RC combat brigades. The units mobilized had to be sent through lengthy refresher training, and they attained deployable status only as the conflict was ending. Subsequent investigation has shown that these units typically take far longer to prepare than many planners realized: up to 60-130 days when requirements for crew, company, battalion, and brigade operations are added up. Unless measures are taken to reduce this training period, Army RC forces will provide less insurance for quick-mobilization MRC contingencies than originally anticipated in the Base Force design.

In addition to the need for adequate combat forces, U.S. military strategy also requires sufficient support forces, which must be carefully appraised. An Army division is composed of 16,500 troops, but it must receive support from nondivision combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units. When manpower at the corps and theater level is added up, total CS/CSS support requirements can grow to 23,000-33,000 troops per division. During the Cold War,
emphasis was placed on maximizing the number of combat formations, and as a result, only about two-thirds of required CS units and one-third of CSS units were structured as active formations. The remainder were placed in RC status. Desert Storm confirmed the validity of this approach, and the Base Force has been designed to preserve a proper active/reserve mix of support units, but inevitably the active Army posture will continue to be somewhat support-light. To a degree, an additional margin of risk accrues here, especially in the event of two concurrent MRCs that might demand early commitment of large combat formations.

Plans to deploy larger U.S. forces overseas require sizable strategic mobility forces, and this capability also merits close evaluation. The fact that the United States was able to deploy 500,000 troops to the Persian Gulf in only five to six months is a monumental achievement when judged by historical standards, but nonetheless, this buildup took longer than the two to three months originally identified as the target. Many factors contributed to the delay, but the lack of greater prepositioning, airlift, and sealift were especially important. Also contributing were low readiness of some sealift assets, breakdowns en route, and delays in loading and unloading.

To help correct the deficiency, several remedial programs have been launched. Steps are being taken to preposition more U.S. equipment in the Persian Gulf. Acquisition of the C-17 transport will increase U.S. airlift capacity from 48 to 53 million ton miles per day (MTM/D); a light division requires about 60 MTM/D to reach the Persian Gulf in a week. Sealift is being enlarged from 15 million to 21 million square feet of unit equipment in a single sailing. Roughly 20 million square feet are needed to deploy four divisions, and depending upon loading-unloading time and ship speed, cargo ships can reach the Persian Gulf within 30 days. The effect of these initiatives in prepositioning, airlift, and sealift should be to permit deployment of a 7–10 division force (with air and naval units) to the Persian Gulf within two to three months—a sizable improvement. Nonetheless, these programs must be fully funded and implemented, and even then, careful management will be needed to overcome the many barriers to swift power projection even if adequate mobility assets are available.

Other requirements highlighted by Desert Shield/Storm could create troubles in future operations. Now that adversaries are acquiring of-
fensive missiles, the need for adequate missile defenses, including an improved Patriot and the ability to destroy missile launchers with air strikes, is obvious. Better minesweeping is needed. During the Cold War, the European allies specialized in this mission, and the U.S. Navy consequently downplayed it. Adequate field-deployable medical facilities must be ensured in the event higher casualties are taken than were absorbed in Desert Storm.

The requirement for high tactical mobility, including operational-level shifts in large ground formations, exposed the Army’s heavy dependence on truck transports, including vehicles for moving armored equipment. Also, Desert Storm showed the value of advanced precision-guided munitions; reliance on them is destined to grow and will include cluster munitions that can destroy armor. Unless adequate funding is provided, however, there will be insufficient stocks of these weapons. U.S. performance in real-time intelligence and C3 systems was impressive. Enemy order-of-battle information was far better than in previous wars, modern navigational aids were critical in helping U.S. forces coordinate the ground attack, and AWACS and JSTARS systems showed their potential for real-time target acquisition and fire control. Even so, continued improvements in C3I will be needed to ensure that U.S. forces are capable of taking advantage of the force multipliers offered.

Finally, two areas of U.S. technological superiority that were critical to Desert Storm will require careful safeguarding. The first is air defense suppression, which was key to allowing U.S. air forces to gain air supremacy and then to launch the highly destructive bombing campaign that badly weakened Iraqi forces. The second is domination in artillery fires and in armor-antiarmor exchanges. U.S. Army forces, with far better artillery and armor/antiarmor firepower, were able to destroy large Iraqi ground formations at low casualties to themselves. Without U.S. technological superiority in these two areas, the Desert Storm ground campaign could have been far more difficult, as will future conflicts against well-prepared adversaries.
Chapter Ten

MAXIMIZING EFFECTIVENESS IF FORCES ARE MODESTLY REDUCED

This chapter uses the methodology of mission-based analysis to analyze how U.S. conventional military power can be maximized and aligned with contemporary strategy if the current Base Force is modestly reduced. This study neither endorses nor precludes reductions, but it does note that pressures for defense spending cuts have been growing, that many in Congress and elsewhere have called for smaller combat forces, and that during his campaign, President Clinton endorsed lower military manpower levels and fewer Navy carriers. If a drawdown is undertaken, it should be pursued intelligently and the new U.S. posture structured to maximize its combat effectiveness. Accordingly, the various paths to force reduction merit close appraisal.

This analysis examines options that reduce the Base Force by an overall amount of 10–15 percent. This level has been commonly endorsed by those favoring reductions, and many regard it as an outer limit of safety under current international conditions. The subject of safe limits, however, is hotly debated and seems likely to remain contentious, with some arguing that deeper cuts are permissible, and others asserting that even 10–15 percent reductions are too much. This study’s view is shaped by the analysis presented earlier, which suggests that the Base Force falls midway in the range of wartime requirements as shaped by prudently conservative assumptions, and it thus provides a margin of insurance. Accordingly, this study concludes that decisions about how far the Base Force can be reduced should turn on judgments regarding how much of this insurance can be forgone, and how many additional risks should be accepted.
To the extent this study accurately forecasts future requirements, the Base Force is a sensible posture, but it is not an irreducible minimum below which U.S. security would be irrevocably compromised. Although modest reductions of 10–15 percent would sacrifice the insurance provided by the Base Force, the resulting posture would still fall within the range of future requirements, and its smaller size need not compel a major downgrading of U.S. wartime planning horizons if intelligent reposturing decisions are taken. In particular, sufficient forces would still be available for sizable joint operations for two roughly concurrent MRCs, albeit with greater reliance on RC forces than before. Moreover, improvement measures can be pursued in other areas, including modernization and readiness, to help offset the loss. Barring international conditions that obviate the need for planning against two MRCs, far deeper reductions (e.g., beyond 20 percent) likely would violate the threshold of continuity in war plans, and therefore are not considered here. The implications of international systems requiring both less demanding and more demanding U.S. military strategies were addressed in Chapter Eight.

Analysis of modest reduction options can best begin by discussing the budgetary savings that might accrue. Surface appearances suggest that a 10–15 percent drawdown in conventional forces would reduce the DoD budget by a similar amount, but the reality is more complex. Because the DoD budget includes eight other programs, general-purpose forces and guard/reserve forces account for only about 50 percent of defense spending. Moreover, forces typically are phased out over a period of several years to avoid undue disruption, thus yielding less near-term saving in reduced operating expenditures. Also, procurement accounts typically are not comparably reduced during the first few years because modernization needs of remaining forces must still be met. As a general rule, a 10–15 percent drawdown will yield 3–5 percent savings for the Future Year Defense Plan (FYDP) period and 6–8 percent savings over the long term.

If force reductions of 10–15 percent are decided upon, the Department of Defense will face the demanding task of structuring the new posture in a manner that best supports a somewhat altered U.S. military strategy. The need for joint operations argues in favor of retaining a balanced posture, but the impending alteration in strategy may argue for a nonlinear approach and a different scheme
of priorities than is represented in the Base Force. The challenge therefore will be to retain a posture that permits joint operations and reflects the new strategy. Prudent military planning requires that any force downsizing be guided by calculations more sophisticated than planning by mindless subtraction. History shows that nations wedded to the past often fall victim to the future; accordingly, innovative departures should be pursued when they make sense. The goal is not to perpetuate old approaches, or to avoid stressful upheaval, or to pursue change for its own sake. Rather, the goal should be to design a visionary and well-conceived posture that reflects the new situation facing U.S. defense policy.

Vision and coherence can be achieved only through careful attention to programmatic detail, thus raising some important questions. Should the Base Force be reduced in a manner that preserves the currently planned mix at lower levels? If not, then how should priorities be reallocated? Should emphasis be shifted to ground forces, or to air forces, or to naval forces? Equally fundamental, should current roles and missions be retained, or should a new approach be adopted, with different force structures for each service? The answers are not self-evident, and the questions deserve careful thought.

**ILLUSTRATIVE OPTIONS FOR FORCE POSTURING**

The following paragraphs outline six force reduction options with various combinations of linearity and nonlinearity. Table 10.1 portrays these options and the postures illustratively associated with them. Although some cost differences exist, the options offer similar savings, and they differ primarily in terms of force priorities and alternative approaches to strategy and military effectiveness. With the exception of the New Roles and Missions posture, these options eschew radical changes in force mix that would produce wholesale reductions in one or more elements. Because even marginal changes have important strategic implications, these options offer significantly different approaches to restructuring. These options by no means are exhaustive or definitive, and they will require in-depth technical analysis before decisions can be made. These options, however, help illuminate many of the issues and alternatives facing U.S. conventional force planning.
### Table 10.1

**Alternative Conventional Combat Force Postures (active/RC forces)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posture</th>
<th>Divisions /MEFs</th>
<th>Fighter Wings</th>
<th>CVBGs/ Ships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base Force</td>
<td>22 (15/7)</td>
<td>26 (15/11)</td>
<td>12/435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Base Force</td>
<td>19 (13/6)</td>
<td>22 (13/9)</td>
<td>10/370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground-Oriented</td>
<td>21 (14/7)</td>
<td>19 (12/7)</td>
<td>9/345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime-Oriented</td>
<td>19 (12/7)</td>
<td>20 (12/8)</td>
<td>11/390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air-Oriented</td>
<td>18 (12/6)</td>
<td>25 (15/10)</td>
<td>9/345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced RC Forces</td>
<td>21 (11/10)</td>
<td>24 (11/13)</td>
<td>10/360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Roles and Missions</td>
<td>22 (15/7)</td>
<td>25 (14/11)</td>
<td>11/360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For the New Roles and Missions posture, divisions and fighter wings are somewhat smaller than for the Base Force and other options.*

Figure 10.1 illustrates how these options perform in relation to the wartime force requirements postulated in this study. All preserve sufficient total assets in relation to these conservatively calculated...
requirements, but they offer differing approaches toward military insurance and effectiveness. Although overall adequacy is important, all force elements need not fall exactly within the band of requirements displayed here. The force posture must be sufficiently balanced to ensure that all critical missions can be performed with adequate intensity, but because the services provide overlapping capabilities, some variations in internal mix are allowable. For example, strong USAF and Navy air forces can provide ground attack capabilities that help compensate for otherwise marginal deficiencies in land forces. Similarly, powerful ground forces equipped with weapons that provide long-range operational fires can lessen the need for air support. Within limits, these features provide some room for flexibility and nonlinearity in selecting a U.S. posture that best supports the new strategy and provides an optimum mix of cost-effective capabilities.

**Reduced Base Force**

Of the six alternatives examined here, this option would cause the least disruption. It imposes an equal across-the-board reduction, thereby yielding a downsized version of the Base Force that maintains the currently planned mix at lower levels. The Army would have 10 active divisions and the Marine Corps would still deploy 3 MEFs; the Air Force and Navy would have forces as indicated. As a sub-alternative, 11 or 12 CVBGs could be kept in exchange for a smaller number of other ships. The Base Force’s two Army RC “reconstitution divisions” would be eliminated. By reducing in a linear fashion, this option preserves the flexible capacity for joint operations offered by the Base Force. However, it also alters the force posture in distinctly nonlinear ways aimed at achieving a better capacity for power projection:

- The U.S. forward presence in Europe would be reduced from 150,000 troops to 100,000 or slightly fewer. The new manpower level would provide a dual-based corps and 2.5 fighter wings in Europe. The Asia troop strength of 85,000 would be reduced somewhat.

- Programs would be launched to improve strategic mobility through better sealift, modestly enlarged airlift, greater emphasis on overseas prepositioning, and development of a better military
infrastructure in the Persian Gulf. Readiness of selected RC units would be increased to make them available for earlier deployment.

- Service doctrines would be oriented toward power projection. The Navy would prepare for transport and offshore littoral missions, and the Army and Air Force would focus on intervention against strong adversaries. Greater attention would be paid to peacekeeping, peacemaking, and related nontraditional missions.

- Programs would be launched to preserve U.S. technological superiority by taking advantage of coming developments in sensors, information processing, intelligence systems, guidance, and penetrativity.

Ground-Oriented Posture

This option preserves ground forces nearly as large as the Base Force. Under it, the Army would have 11 active divisions and the Marine Corps 3 MEFs; RC ground forces would be untouched. Meanwhile, the Air Force is reduced to 19 wings, and the Navy to 9 CVBGs and 345 ships. The military rationale for this option is that future MRCs will require a ground posture similar to the Base Force, but that USAF's demonstrated superiority in Desert Storm allows for greater air drawdowns, and the declining maritime threat permits a smaller Navy.

Maritime-Oriented Posture

This option departs from linearity by preserving a greater margin of insurance in maritime assets. Rather than reducing to 10 CVBGs and 370 ships, 11 CVBGs and 390 ships are retained (or 12 CVBGs and five ships). In exchange for a larger Navy, it provides a marginally smaller Army and Air Force that still are sufficiently large to meet minimum wartime requirements. The core rationale is that maritime dominance is a traditional premise of U.S. grand strategy, that aircraft carriers can project airpower into littoral areas where bases are lacking, and that an extra carrier will permit higher forward deployments in peacetime. Moreover, this rationale holds that U.S. air and
ground forces enjoy sufficient superiority over potential adversaries to justify lower force levels without undue risk.

This posture would preserve 9 active Army divisions, 3 active MEFs, and 20 fighter wings. U.S. troops strength in Europe would be reduced to 75,000 soldiers. This option would seek to compensate for smaller ground and air forces by intensifying pursuit of qualitative improvements, seeking greater contributions from allied forces, and pursuing role specialization in coalition planning.

Air-Oriented Posture

This option trades off a smaller Navy and Army for a larger Air Force. The core rationale is that airpower is especially mobile and agile and has acquired an ascendancy justifying a greater emphasis on it. Except in the Persian Gulf, moreover, U.S. forces will be fighting as members of coalitions that include large allied ground forces, and U.S. air forces will enjoy a comparative advantage in these coalitions. Compared with the Base Force, USAF units would perform a relatively broader scope of missions, including greater emphasis on ground attack and defense of the sealanes. Similar to the other alternatives, this option would pursue measures to increase the mobility, agility, readiness, and technological superiority of U.S. projection forces.

Ground forces would be reduced by about 20 percent, but the active posture would still include 9 Army divisions and 3 MEFs: enough to meet the minimum requirements postulated above. The most notable reduction comes from a 25 percent cut in naval forces, which are reduced to 9 CVBGs and 355 ships. The rationale for this nonlinear drawdown is that the declining threat to U.S. maritime supremacy and the growing importance of power projection lessen the need for CVBGs. A posture of 9 CVBGs, moreover, would be at least minimally adequate to perform the future peacetime, crisis, and wartime missions.

Enhanced Reserve Component Forces

Whereas the other alternatives retain the Base Force's emphasis on active units that can respond to short-warning emergencies, this op-
tion adopts an approach anchored on the assumption that, although concurrent MRCs might have to be fought, they are unlikely to erupt within a few weeks of each other. Instead, it postulates that a longer interval of three to four months is likely. This approach takes advantage of this assumption to build larger mobilizable combat forces at the expense of reduced readiness. Compared with a linear reduction of the Base Force, it exchanges two active Army divisions and two active fighter wings for four RC divisions and four RC wings. As a result, the new posture would provide only enough active forces to handle one MRC. The capability to deal with a second MRC would be vested primarily in the RC Forces, but by exchanging smaller active forces for larger RC forces, this option would provide nearly as many total assets as does the Base Force.

The option raises the issue of whether, and to what degree, greater reliance can be placed on less expensive RC forces. This approach is most feasible with regard to USAF RC forces, which have successfully performed combat missions on short notice. Nonetheless, additional training of selected RC units might be needed for a broader set of missions. At present, RC wings maintain combat proficiency by concentration on two or three missions, less than the five or six missions of active wings. By adding one or two missions to the portfolio of some RC wings, this option would help buffer against the negative effects of deemphasizing active units.

A larger imponderable is the readiness of Army RC units. At present RC CS/CSS units can be mobilized and deployed within a few days, but RC combat brigades require longer to mobilize and conduct refresher training. Accordingly, this option calls for a concerted effort to reduce this period through a combination of measures:

- Greater use of active cadres.
- Greater recruitment and retention of trained personnel for RC units.
- Better use of paid drill periods to achieve crew and platoon efficiency.
- Expanded use of simulators.
- Acquisition of more modern equipment.
• Expanded reliance on the “round-up” program whereby RC brigades are attached to active divisions.

New Roles and Missions

This option alters present roles and missions for the purpose of achieving a more streamlined posture that is better aligned with U.S. military strategy. It is anchored on the assumption that the current practice of overlapping roles and missions promotes jointness, and it therefore avoids any wholesale streamlining that would unduly sacrifice this attribute. But it does aim for marginal streamlining that would eliminate unnecessary duplication and redundancy. In the process, U.S. combat forces would achieve greater effectiveness by focusing on a more narrow set of missions, eliminating less-needed assets, pursuing innovations in force structure, and placing greater emphasis on technology, agility, mobility, and readiness.

As Figure 10.2 suggests, the current approach provides a significant degree of overlapping roles and missions among all four force ele-
ments. The Air Force and Army overlap in close air support (CAS) missions. The Army and the Marine Corps overlap in light infantry roles, and the Marines Corps and Navy overlap in airpower. The result is sizable air inventories in four separate air forces and a large number of light infantry forces. This overlap promotes a capacity for joint operations, and total elimination of it would run the risk of producing services that are inward-looking. Nonetheless, many DoD critics argue that healthy overlap has given way to counterproductive redundancy, and that streamlining therefore is needed.

Figure 10.2 shows approaches to reduced duplication. The first approach would partially transfer the CAS mission from the Air Force and the Navy to the Army and Marine Corps, and the second approach would reverse the flow by investing this mission primarily in the Air Force and Navy. In both approaches, the light infantry mission is transferred primarily to the Marine Corps, and the Army focuses more heavily on mechanized combat. For illustrative purposes, this option envisions the former approach, but the latter approach merits careful study as well.

This option maintains a similar number of ground and air maneuver units as that of the Base Force, but divisions and wings become somewhat smaller. A reduction in unit size is made possible by the growing lethality and survivability of U.S. forces, thereby permitting missions to be accomplished by smaller units. Key features are as follows.

- The Air Force would concentrate on air superiority and interdiction, with less emphasis on close air support. The Air Force would be composed of 25 wings (14 active/11 RC), and each of these wings would be authorized 60 aircraft (versus 72 aircraft now). By comparison, most other nations deploy wings of 42–54 aircraft. Because munitions lethality is increasing and attrition rates are declining, a smaller USAF wing should still be capable performing the missions demanded of a wing. By deploying a larger number of smaller wings, the effect is to preserve the Air Force's capacity for multicontingency operations. To help offset any negative effects, the Air Force would increase its emphasis on high-technology systems, including modern combat aircraft, C3I systems, munitions, and maintenance.
The Army would focus on armored/mechanized combat and would deemphasize light infantry missions. The Army would be composed of 11 active and 6 RC divisions, each of which would have about 14,000 personnel. The effect of deploying a larger number of smaller divisions is to enhance strategic mobility and battlefield agility, as well as the capacity for multicontingency operations in different geographic areas. These benefits are achieved at some sacrifice to unit size and sustainability, but the lethality and survivability shown in Desert Storm suggest that critical missions can now be accomplished with somewhat smaller divisions than before.

A shift toward smaller divisions would reflect the changes under way in Army doctrine. As Desert Storm showed, the growing importance of the operational art, including counteroffensives, suggests that emphasis should be shifted away from the massed firepower, attrition, and linear defense concepts of the Cold War era. Especially because a new battlefield is emerging, greater emphasis should be placed on high-speed and synchronized maneuvers, which are arguably best accomplished by a larger number of smaller agile units. Accompanying this shift would come greater reliance on the corps as a primary war-fighting instrument, a step that would promote better force coordination in pursuing the operational art. The Army also would become more high-technology intensive. To compensate for any reduction in USAF close air support, one Army active division would be configured as an "operational fires" unit, with three brigades composed of MLRS/ATACMs (Multiple Launch Rocket System/Army Tactical Missile System) and attack helicopters. The combination of enhanced operational fires and more agile heavy divisions would enhance the Army's capacity to dominate the modern battlefield through a combination of long-range fires and maneuver.

The Marine Corps would become responsible for light infantry and amphibious operations. It would be structured with four active divisions and one RC division, each with 14,000 personnel. One of these divisions would be equipped with a larger suite of air transportable armor and antiarmor systems than is now the case, and an RC brigade equipped with MLRS/ATACMs and attack helicopters would be formed. Marine air wings would be
reduced by one-half, and greater reliance would be placed on the Navy for close air support.

- The Navy would focus on littoral power projection and the mission of providing air support to the Marine Corps. The Navy would be structured with 11 CVBGs and 360 ships, and it would place increased emphasis on high-technology systems.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

Evaluation of these six options turns on U.S. strategic priorities and military requirements, but it is also affected by potential budgetary savings. As discussed above, these options offer similarly sized total force reductions, and therefore would yield similar budgetary savings of roughly $60–80 billion over the FYDP period. Within this range, however, differences do exist. In general, the Air-Oriented option and the New Roles and Missions option appear to provide savings at the high end of this range. The Reduced Base Force and Enhanced RC Forces options offer savings in the middle, and the Maritime-Oriented and Ground-Oriented options provide the least savings. In offering these observations, however, this analysis notes that cost analysis is an inherently complex enterprise subject to many uncertainties. All of these options merit close inspection of costs before decisions are taken.

Perhaps the most important point to be made is that modest reductions in the conventional posture do not offer a ready vehicle for significantly reducing the defense budget. Larger force reductions would be needed to achieve additional savings, but if requirements are undiminished, the effect could be to eliminate combat forces that cannot safely be sacrificed if U.S. military strategy is to remain intact. The proper approach is not a major dismantling of the conventional posture, but rather a balanced approach. For example, sizable savings probably can be found in efforts to consolidate the DoD overhead and infrastructure. Also, savings can be gained through pruning back acquisition spending, perhaps through developing less sophisticated technology, pursuing a high-low mix, and elongating the life span of existing weapons through inexpensive mid-life upgrades. Each of these approaches, of course, entails military sacrifices and uncertainties of its own, and therefore should be undertaken only after careful analysis of the full implications.
Military effectiveness is beyond the scope of this study. The guiding standard should be to select a force posture that reflects a coherent strategy, makes best use of available assets, takes advantage of comparative U.S. advantages, and can perform essential missions through joint operations. All six of these options craft a smaller posture that is aligned with future U.S. strategy and requirements, but they differ in their specific implications. They can be appraised as follows:

- The Reduced Base Force posture would be easiest to implement, and might provide the best balanced and most diverse mix of forces should international events compel swift adoption of a very different strategy than currently is required. Arguably, however, this posture does not go as far as the other options in reconfiguring the posture for a new strategy of power projection. Would this option provide a coherent posture for the new era? Or does it amount to little more than mindless planning by subtraction?

- The Ground-Oriented posture preserves the sizable land forces needed for concurrent MRCs, but it might be criticized for imprudently sacrificing air and naval forces—assets where the United States enjoys a comparative advantage and that allies are less capable of providing. In particular, would nine CVBGs be enough to perform essential maritime missions in peacetime and wartime?

- The Maritime-Oriented posture best ensures control of the seas, but it yields the smallest forces for carrying out regional wars on the Eurasian landmass. At issue is whether continental missions demanded by future MRCs can be performed with active land and air forces that are 20 percent smaller than the Base Force.

- The Air-Oriented posture yields the highest savings and the most responsive forces for high-technology power projection, but might be criticized for having too few ground and naval forces. In particular, would nine active Army divisions and nine CVBGs be enough, especially if the domination by airpower shown in Desert Storm proves illusory?

- The Enhanced Reserve Component posture maintains the largest mobilizable ground and air forces, but it could be criticized for
relying too heavily on RC ground combat forces that might not be deployable in time to meet quick-breaking emergencies. If the active Army is reduced to eight divisions, would RC divisions be capable of delivering when the chips are down?

- The New Roles and Missions posture reduces duplication and is highly innovative in pursuit of power projection, but it could be the hardest to implement, and it runs the risk of sacrificing some of the capacity for joint operations. Also, to what degree would movement to new roles and missions, along with the simultaneous adoption of smaller Army and USAF combat units, cause a lengthy disruption within the U.S. military?

These options, illustrative of the issues ahead, suggest that if the conventional posture is to be downsized, reduction can be approached in a variety of ways, depending upon strategic priorities and the degree of desired innovation. Nonetheless, designing a smaller and restructured posture to execute a new military strategy in a highly fluid international system is quite complex. Moreover, any force reduction, if not compensated by improvements in other areas or by a more tranquil international environment, by definition will produce a weaker posture and therefore less military insurance for the coming era. Because difficult tradeoffs will have to be confronted, the choices ahead are not easy. For this reason, a careful review of conventional force posture and strategy will be needed, involving close consultation among the Office of the Secretary of Defense staffs, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CJCS, and the services.
A central conclusion of this study is that the United States stands at the threshold of a new era in international affairs. This is a time of great uncertainty in which complex developments in daily affairs are being accompanied by changes that could produce an outcome wholly dissimilar to what exists today. Uncertainty, however, is no prescription for paralysis. For good or ill, our security and economic interests will be affected by developments abroad, and our ability to protect these interests will bear on whether domestic economic recovery is attained. Because of its superpower status, the United States can influence, guide, and shape the international system of the future. To do so, however, active involvement must be coupled with a sound military strategy backed up by adequate defense strength.

The United States has a unique opportunity to capitalize on its currently advantageous situation in a manner that helps foster an enduring era of democratic peace and prosperity. But international conflict has not been permanently relegated to the history books, and success by no means is ensured. Moreover, the United States remains vulnerable to a strategic disaster in the long term if it either mishandles international affairs, or fails to achieve domestic economic recovery, or far worse, fails at both. For this reason, awareness of the opportunities ahead should not preclude alertness to the dangers.

Looking back, the United States has had a history of effective action when it has forged a coherent policy, but it has been far less effective when ambiguous situations have created confusion about goals and priorities. In these cases, the United States too often has fallen vic-
tim to its pragmatic intellectual style and political pluralism, which have combined to produce indecision and drift. In the past, the United States has relied on its powerful physical resources to offset these weaknesses, but with economic health now a variable rather than a constant, this approach no longer will suffice. Especially because the situation today is highly ambiguous and the United States is turning to focus on domestic problems, indecision and drift are to be guarded against. A sound military strategy is no cure-all, but it can help the United States act more wisely, both now and in the future.

Although the task of designing a new military strategy and force posture has begun, it by no means is complete. Even if the international system remains as it exists today, with turbulent regional conditions against the backdrop of stable relations among the major powers, further work on the current strategy is needed. A better strategic concept should be fashioned, a different set of security precepts should be assembled, and a new approach that places greater emphasis on power projection with mobile, agile, and high-technology forces will need to be created. Equally important, the looming prospect of further reductions means that a coherent relationship between strategy and forces may have to be forged with a somewhat smaller posture.

The prospect of a very different international system creates powerful incentives for designing entirely new military strategies for the future. A broad spectrum of approaches is needed. Required are strategies for more harmonious worlds than now and for more turbulent worlds. Needed are regional strategies that focus on local actors and global strategies that focus on the major powers. These strategies need be developed only in conceptual form, but they should be sufficiently elaborated to ensure that their requirements are understood, and that the United States has the military forces and intellectual capital to adapt rapidly, should that prove necessary.

This study has endeavored to provide insights on how the current strategy and force posture can be altered, and on how different strategies can be designed for truly different worlds. More fundamentally, however, it has called attention to the need for our nation to recover the lost art of strategy analysis in a revolutionary age. Analysis and planning are themselves not panaceas, and they cer-
tainly are no substitutes for wise judgment, but they can help. The United States showed impressive skill in crafting an imaginative strategy at the Cold War's onset, but since then, we have become so accustomed to a world of unchanging constants that we have forgotten much of what goes into the art. Now that a truly revolutionary age is upon us, this art will have to be relearned, for in the final analysis, our brainpower counts as much as our resources.

In addition to official documents cited in this study, useful official Department of Defense documents include Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Report on Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States* (GPO, 1993) and *Joint Military Net Assessment, 1992* (GPO, 1992).