Chapter 5
Implications for U.S. Force Planners

All three dimensions of the strategy for NATO outlined here have implications for U.S. force planners. In many ways, these implications suggest the need for change at the margins. This is, in part, an accident of history: The United States has long had the good fortune of being able to fight its wars far from home. Particularly since World War II, U.S. forces have been postured and equipped for operations in Europe and Asia, regions that remain the major foci of U.S. national interests and power projection. Thus, the military forces of the United States already possess large airlift and sealift fleets, forces configured for expeditionary operations, and a network of overseas alliances and bases to support operations abroad. Nevertheless, as potential adversaries acquire new and more threatening capabilities, more will need to be done to provide the basis for a prompt and effective riposte in the face of short-warning aggression.

SHAPING
The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have long stated that providing an “overseas presence” is an important part of the missions assigned to their forces. In fact, forces from each of the U.S. military services that are stationed or deployed abroad provide “presence.” The presence of U.S. forces (and their families) in Europe and other regions during the Cold War was vital to underscoring the credibility of U.S. security commitments. U.S. forces based abroad have also played indispensable roles by providing a basis for an immediate response to aggression and by participating in joint and combined training exercises with the forces of allied and friendly nations.

That said, the end of the Cold War has led to different and, in some ways, more-demanding requirements for these and related activities aimed at promoting stability and security ties with the West. Even as
these demands have grown, the number of U.S. military forces and personnel in Europe has fallen. Because of this, the United States today is missing valuable opportunities to interact with the forces and planning staffs of military establishments formerly under the sway of the Soviet Union. Although the potential demand for such interactions is, of course, virtually limitless, in light of limits on resources and competing demands, we will have to content ourselves with conducting only the highest-priority “influence projection” missions.

To enhance the quality of these interactions with counterparts in allied and other militaries, the Secretary of Defense in 1997 directed each of the services to create programs similar to the U.S. Army’s Foreign Area Officer (FAO) career specialty. Accordingly, the Air Force has begun to designate officers with fluency in a foreign language and special knowledge of designated countries as FAOs; and the service is providing incentives and opportunities for more officers to acquire such skills through formal education and experience in the field. All told, the Air Force anticipates building a corps of 500 to 700 FAOs. Plans also call for increasing the number of Air Force officers proficient in foreign languages to 6900 (approximately 10 percent of all active duty and reserve officers) by 2005. As these officers gain increased knowledge of other countries and develop personal contacts there, the value of ongoing “outreach” efforts, already high, will grow substantially.

Another low-cost, high-payoff means for projecting influence is the practice of inviting military officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), and government officials from foreign countries to attend professional military education courses in the United States and other allied countries. Courses at the National, Army, Naval, and Air War Colleges; the Army and Air Force Command and General Staff Colleges; the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and others do more than teach Western military planning and doctrine. They also create unique opportunities to form personal bonds that often last through the careers of the graduates and greatly facilitate international cooperation and understanding. Planners in DoD should identify key countries where they would like to promote accelerated Westernization and re-
form and then provide the military services with the (modest) additional resources that would be needed to increase the number of students from these countries in their most prestigious schools.\textsuperscript{2}

The quality of multinational training exercises also can be enhanced. Reports from U.S. Air Force units involved in recent NATO training exercises suggest that allied, partner, and U.S. forces alike would get more out of these efforts if clearer guidance were provided to all participants regarding the desired focus and objectives of the training. Likewise, more effort should be invested in distilling, assessing, and promulgating operational, tactical, and procedural lessons learned from each exercise. Finally, units could benefit from having more time to prepare for exercises prior to the actual deployment.\textsuperscript{3}

The number of multinational exercises NATO can support in a year will always be limited: Few soldiers, sailors, or airmen would wish to be deployed away from their home station more than they have been in recent years. When thinking about how to get the most out of our forces for a given level of operations tempo, two points stand out: First, there is simply no substitute for forward basing of U.S. forces. The difficulties and costs associated with deploying personnel from a Europe-based unit to a NATO exercise, while not trivial, are far less than those associated with deploying the same assets all the way from the United States. It is all but inevitable that a reduction of U.S. forces from Europe would lead to a proportionate reduction in U.S. military outreach activities there—with negative consequences for our core strategy and U.S. influence.

Second, it may be possible to manage routine operations so as to achieve a modest increase in interactions with selected military forces from new member or partner nations. One approach would be to begin shifting some routine training by U.S. air and ground forces to training areas on or near the territory of new NATO members and PfP nations. By doing so, U.S. and other forces from Western countries could combine some of their essential routine training with military outreach, inviting host country forces to observe and accompany de-

\textsuperscript{2} Such an initiative would require, for some countries, an accompanying increase in English language training resources as well.

\textsuperscript{3} It is not unusual for U.S. Air Force squadrons in Europe to receive their “operations orders” to deploy to a NATO exercise only a day or two prior to execution.
ployed units on training missions. Because high-quality training frequently demands special support facilities (such as live-fire and instrumented ranges), creating a suitable training environment in new areas might involve significant costs. However, over time, it may make sense to move in this direction. A similar approach could be taken with respect to “real world” operations. For example, officers and NCOs from new member countries could spend time observing and, increasingly, participating in the planning and execution of such operations as the patrolling of the skies over Bosnia or northern and southern Iraq.

COPING

The implications of the coping dimension of the core strategy are essentially the same for U.S. forces as for their allied counterparts. First, U.S. forces, whether based abroad or at home, will need to continue to enhance their ability to deploy rapidly and to operate effectively from deployed locations. Continued modernization of the U.S. Air Force’s fleet of military airlift aircraft is called for. Some units—notably, elements of the bomber force—also require additional support equipment so that they can quickly deploy and operate away from home station. The U.S. Army is also taking some steps to enable its forces to deploy more quickly. To date, these have primarily involved prepositioning heavy equipment and supplies in areas of potential conflict. Over the past several years, for example, the Army has substantially increased stocks of equipment in the Persian Gulf region.

Second, it will become increasingly important for U.S. forces to be able to operate effectively in the face of enemy capabilities to deliver weapons of mass destruction, and to defeat such weapons before they can strike their targets. The main implications of this have been touched on above. In addition to deploying more-effective defenses against ballistic and cruise missiles, U.S. forces will need to get better at finding and destroying small mobile targets (notably, mobile missile launchers and their associated vehicles) and deeply buried targets where WMD might be stored. Finally, it is worth repeating that the basic elements of the U.S. nuclear posture in Europe should be retained in anticipation of the day when all of Europe falls within range of mis-
siles and WMD from any of a number of hostile or potentially hostile states. Deterrence through the threat of retaliation will be a necessary if not sufficient answer to these emerging threats, and it seems self-evident that NATO’s threats to retaliate will be more credible if the means of retaliation are deployed in Europe and subject to NATO release authority.

Finally, U.S. and allied military forces should evolve toward greater effectiveness in the difficult environment of smaller-scale operations. The earlier discussion in Chapter Three highlighted the fact that the operations most frequently undertaken by NATO forces will be characterized by the need for highly asymmetric outcomes. That is, U.S. and allied forces will be expected to achieve their objectives fairly quickly while risking few losses and inflicting minimal unwanted casualties. Such objectives might range from monitoring military activities in a distant country, to coercing recalcitrant leaders, to destroying an enemy’s fielded forces.

These are demanding criteria, and in some cases military planners will be unable to assure their civilian leaders of success. But to the extent that Western militaries can improve their capabilities for rapid mobility, all-weather/day-night reconnaissance, suppression of enemy air defenses, precision attack, and force protection, they will become increasingly relevant to the needs of policymakers struggling to protect Western interests in a turbulent world.

**HEDGING**

The main implications of NATO’s hedging strategy for U.S. force planners are the same as those mentioned above. Principally, U.S. defense officials and military leaders should expect that they and their allied counterparts will be compelled increasingly to deal with the possibility that a hostile state or group could threaten allied territory, populations, and forces with weapons of mass destruction and delivery vehicles of growing range and sophistication. This calls for accelerating investments in active warning and defense systems. It will also mean retaining, on European soil, the means of retaliating against such attacks.
Measures that would be useful in deterring or defeating a future large-scale conventional military threat in Europe—the other concern animating the hedging dimension of the strategy—are, by and large, those that would also help ready U.S. and allied military forces for effective expeditionary operations. In addition to the modernization priorities outlined above, air bases should be upgraded along the periphery of the treaty area.