A RAND NOTE

U.S. Grand Strategy for the 1990s and Beyond

Thomas Hirschfeld

November 1990

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PREFACE

The profound global changes foreshadowed by the events of 1989 imply new strategies and different forces for the United States. When 1989 began, the United States was still the acknowledged standard bearer of two competing global viewpoints. As the year ended, the United States was the only remaining global power, armed against adversaries whose forces, purposes, and cohesion were withering away. U.S. interests whose defense required the use of military forces had become harder to identify. The very meaning of defending freedom and of honoring commitments to the alliances we built to defend it was not as clear as a year ago, thanks to the decline in the global confrontation with the USSR and the global collapse of communism's appeal.

Although the threat that had justified and shaped U.S. forces was in sharp decline, there remained a sense that the USSR, China, and a few of the declining number of communist states retain substantial military capabilities. Yet whatever those capabilities represent for the future, they no longer suggest an ascendant, attractive, or cohesive global movement. However, resurgent nationalisms, historical differences, and confrontations between increasingly capable third world antagonists justify some forebodings about the future.

This Note shows how the changed global environment could permit the evolution of different kinds of U.S. forces to support four alternative future U.S. strategies. The work represented here was performed under the project entitled "Alternative Futures: Implications for the Army" for the Arroyo Center's Policy and Strategy program sponsored by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Doctrine, Training and Doctrine Command, U.S. Army.

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SUMMARY

The changes of 1989 imply a transformed U.S global role, from leading a worldwide alliance against other power centers to helping other countries make the world a safer and a more prosperous place. Such a transition could take a decade, but it appears to be under way already. These changes also suggest prompt examination of national objectives and goals, to assure that military resources necessary to support them are available. Most observers agree that certain national objectives—such as the protection of American territory, lives, and property—would remain in any circumstances. At a minimum, that means active forces adequate for territorial defense. Furthermore, the experience of the last 40 years testifies to some continued need for nuclear weapons and some form of global reach, the ability to punish at a distance.

Finally, these changes justify modifications in force planning away from the worst contingency (being ready for global confrontation with a constellation of forces including another superpower) toward lesser and more likely regional conflicts. Aside from strategic forces and some capability to punish at a distance, that means planning for smaller and less ready heavy forces, plus more light forces and lift, and a healthy mobilization base against major contingencies. Otherwise, the United States seems to have a wide choice of forces for the future, depending on estimates of how active it wishes to be in defense of its remaining identifiable interests and whether those interests match those of other states, making cooperation rather than unilateral action possible. Those choices break down into four possible future strategies. The United States can:

- Retain the full range of mission capabilities as the last remaining global power (*Only Global Power*).
- Rely mostly on collective security by preparing to engaging in combat operations only in cooperation with others (*Collective Security*).
- Confine U.S. military cooperation with others primarily to logistic and technical support (*Arsenal of Democracy*).
- Return to a modern version of the 1930s, maintaining a mobilization base against the worst contingencies (*Disengagement*).

These strategies typify alternatives that are suitable for different circumstances, rather than exclusive approaches or predictions of outcomes. There is an intended

continuum between "Only Global Power" and "Disengagement." For example, many intermediate combinations are possible, such as a force posture where the United States is something less than a global power capable of performing all missions unilaterally with forces in being but is still not entirely dependent on the cooperation of other countries for all types of sustained intervention.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1989 was a year of dramatic change, from a largely bipolar confrontational world to a more uncertain one. From leading a worldwide alliance against other power centers, the United States has transformed its external role to helping other countries make the world a safer and a more prosperous place. In the words of the March 1990 U.S. National Security Strategy paper, this means helping protect the safety of the nation, its citizens, and its way of life. How this happens depends on policy, of which military force is only one instrument. Managing the environment and steering trade policy toward open markets are obvious areas where the United States still has opportunities to lead.

In Europe, direct U.S. influence is bound to decline as multilateral issues of investment, trade, and continental reorganization displace east-west security as the focus of attention. Although the United States has important interests in these processes, there is no obvious leading American role in redesigning Europe. But the United States will remain an influential power in almost all foreseeable circumstances, as the ultimate guarantor of the security arrangements that follow European economic integration, Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations, and German unification, and as the major nuclear power. Like Britain, the United States will continue to resist attempts by any hostile power or group of powers to dominate the Continent, although no such power or group of powers seems inclined to try at the present time. Active American diplomacy and some continuing U.S. military presence may help discourage Eastern European exuberance and should promote German self-confidence and, thereby, a degree of stability.

If Japan is changing from an essentially passive player to a more active shaper of world events, then only a mutually satisfactory security relationship with the United States as a Far Eastern makeweight will inhibit Japan from building forces to assure her security in East Asia against her larger, poorer, and militarily more powerful neighbors. Such Japanese forces would frighten the rest of Asia. In the Middle East the United States is for now the only power that has sufficient weight with all parties to nudge Arabs and Israelis in less confrontational directions, and a necessary player in any scenario affecting the flow of oil. In short, the United States has changed from a major power trying to lead a global coalition confronting adversarial movements to a power that encourages friends, clients, and allies; retains a strong sense of community with countries sharing American values; and defends its own national interests.

American national objectives that translate into force requirements are harder to articulate than before. Confronting and containing communism have become less urgent as Communism's attractions fade with failure, Soviet military power wanes, the Warsaw Pact collapses, and Soviet attention turns to growing domestic problems. Even a resurgent Communist party, rampant Russian nationalism, or increasing internal chaos, all quite dangerous in themselves, do not imply a viable Communist alliance capable of confronting Western interests in Europe. Nor do any of these imply a global revolutionary movement or an inspiring secular religion assuring social justice for the majority of mankind according to discovered historical laws. Those gods have failed.

Without active Soviet support or the threat of Soviet strategic exploitation, third world countries seem far less likely than before to suddenly claim Marxist orientation; and it matters far less to us if one should. Even avowed Soviet clients now understand that Soviet support is a declining asset at most. Several, notably Ethiopia and Mozambique, are hedging their bets. Even Cuba is beginning to contemplate perestroika, or at least discuss it. The one apparently intransigent holdout (North Korea) may be more fragile than it looks, if more dangerous for that reason. China is at best a shaky bastion, needing good relations with the West to prosper. Vietnam is also failing and looking for Western help. Nicaragua has adjusted its leadership. Although these circumstances suggest greater U.S. freedom of military action, at least in the third world, they also identify fewer clear national objectives requiring its exercise.

II. U.S. NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The safety and prosperity of the Republic, the defense of national territory, and the protection of American citizens' lives and property remain unambiguous U.S. objectives. Under those headings are actions that make such objectives possible—freedom of navigation, access to essential resources, and the ability to punish potential adversaries on a global scale.

Defense of "freedom" will remain an objective in some form. Nevertheless, the collapse of the Communist movement suggests much less interest in causes so described than before 1988. It may become less dangerous to confront states that still espouse some Marxist norms, assuming a less adventurous USSR. However, there should be far fewer incentives and opportunities for such confrontations. The extent to which the United States will actually engage in defense of "freedom" more broadly defined than before—meaning the defense of a threatened democratic state, of national self-determination of oppressed populations, or of human rights—is too scenario-dependent to specify.

Defending regional or global "stability" will remain an objective, if somewhat harder to define and articulate in the absence of a global system of states propounding Communism or associated with the USSR. "Stability" can also be defined as prevention or avoidance of conflicts that could embroil large or important countries or nuclear powers. Opportunities for U.S. military action in defense of this objective seem certain to arise. Yet because modern war has become prohibitively destructive, expensive, and often inconclusive, justifications for long-term military action have become increasingly difficult to identify and express clearly and convincingly. Therefore, collective action in pursuit of stability could become more of a norm in the next century than in the present one, absent some clearly evident, easily justifiable, specifically American purpose.

Honoring existing treaty obligations remains a requirement to the extent that mutual defense treaties designed to confront a global Communist threat or forestall foreign invasion of non-Communist states by Communist powers retain relevance.

Influencing external events should depend more on economic considerations and diplomatic skills in an increasingly interdependent world than on the ability to apply force. Nevertheless, in many parts of the world the visible ability to assist militarily and to punish if necessary remains a useful way to assure that Americans and American interests are respected.

III. GRAND STRATEGY

Militarily, the objectives listed in Sec. II can be pursued by U.S. forces alone or in cooperation with allies, friendly countries, or clients in distress. None of these objectives, except the protection of U.S. territory and protecting the lives and property of American citizens, requires unilateral action by U.S. armed forces. The other objectives can be credibly pursued by nonmilitary means, or in cooperation with other parties. Possible U.S. grand strategies in the new multipolar world span the range from global watchdog to a fortress America with a limited global reach and a few external bastions and outposts. This range of possibilities suggests four notional strategic approaches:

1. The Only Global Power.
2. Collective Security.
3. Arsenal of Democracy.
4. Disengagement.

In all these approaches, the United States retains nuclear weapons, the capacity to defend national territory, and some capability to punish adversaries by conventional means anywhere on earth.

These strategies identify clear alternative approaches that we could plan for now. They are not mutually exclusive because individual components of one strategy could form subcomponents of another one, and one strategy could evolve into another over time. Table 1 presents an outline of the basic characteristics of these strategies.

ONLY GLOBAL POWER

At the moment, the United States is the only remaining global military power. Although other countries have limited capacities for power projection beyond their frontiers, none besides the United States can promptly project and sustain substantial forces at intercontinental distances. Even the USSR has little capacity to inject and sustain a serious force if a considerable distance from Soviet borders, especially if that force is to be opposed. Britain strained every sinew for a limited operation in the Falklands; France maintains light forces and aircraft carriers largely to assure some ability to protect its vestigial Pacific Colonial Empire and to support friendly regimes in

Table 1

STRATEGIES COMPARED

Characteristic	Only Global Power	Collective Security	Arsenal of Democracy	Disengagement
← Healthy mobilization base, rescue missions, and limited ability to inflict global punishment →				
Intervention forces	Unilateral intervention capability	Primarily combat support	Support capabilities only	Almost none
Honor alliance commitments by:	Declining overseas deployed ground and air force units	Return capability only	← Strategic and naval only (no stationed forces) →	
Forces for medium sized contingencies	Ascribed concurrently to Allied defense and medium sized wars	← Rely on mobilization base →		
U.S. role	Combat divisions	Small active combat and support forces for cooperative operations	Support only, stress on high-tech	Virtually no ground and tactical air forces for overseas operations
Readiness for major war	Ready with a few months' warning	Longer mobilization	← Very long mobilization →	
Strategic nuclear forces	← Smaller, but still robust →			
Likelihood of U.S. involvement	medium	medium	low	very low
Investment priorities	Lower across the board investment; more lift, consumables, and light forces	Lift consumables, ready light forces	Lift consumables, precision guided munitions, surveillance electronics	R&D, mobilization base

its former colonies by being able to intervene to the limited extent required to sustain combat in most of West Africa.

The ability to conduct sustained military operations over great distances for long periods does not assure success in war against a patient, skillful, and determined enemy, especially if the war is domestically so unpopular that it proves impossible to escalate, as the Korean and Vietnam conflicts demonstrated. Nevertheless, effective forces in being and their occasional demonstration somewhere give most potential adversaries pause and affects their decisionmaking.

Under most plausible scenarios, global power in the Gorbachev and post-Gorbachev world requires smaller deployed ready forces than in earlier periods in both the strategic and conventional realms. Whatever future form the Western Alliance takes, it will have fewer forces at lower levels of readiness and should enjoy improved warning. Reduced threat perceptions will reflect political changes in Eastern Europe and unilateral Soviet withdrawals, CFE-related force reductions and verification mechanisms, and the advance of technology. In all foreseeable circumstances Europe should have U.S. forces of some kind, although Army combat forces located in Europe may eventually become vestigial. The principal strategic role for U.S. forces in Europe will be to make the U.S link credible. Aside from the nuclear assurance, that means perhaps a deployed corps of two divisions and enough infrastructure to assure that sufficient combat forces can return rapidly. That would require the maintenance of some heavy ready divisions in the United States, suitable transport, continued command of the sea lanes, air superiority over the approaches to Europe, and possibly forward storage of some divisional heavy equipment. A small deployable force in place, the ability to reinforce in time, plus some nuclear delivery and local power projection should provide a suitable makeweight against an ill-behaved resurgent Russia of whatever stripe and assurance against the ghosts of the German past for those who fear the size and power of a unified Germany. Those U.S. capabilities could also represent an earnest of willing cooperation with operations outside Europe of collective European interest, such as the Persian Gulf naval operations.

The most important strategic question affecting Army force planning with respect to forces in and for Europe is the *geographic extent and nature of the military obligations the United States assumes following German unification.* First, that means how much of German territory remains to be defended by Allied forces. If residual NATO force dispositions are confined to what is now Federal Republic territory, some strategy must evolve that permits the defense of all German territory, and for Allied assistance with that

task in the event of war or crisis. Further, political rhetoric about "emerging democracies" in Eastern Europe or continued commitment to the defense of "Europe" indicates some implicit future obligation to consider operations in Eastern Europe. Although superficially attractive in the sense that "the West" or "our side" seems to have gained some territory, the diplomatic and military implications are actually very unsettling if we have more territory to defend, in more unstable times with far fewer forces, against more but ambiguous threats. The likeliest threats are, after all, not the Red Army bent on restoring Godless Communism in Helpless Hungary as much as the Turks growling at the Bulgarian treatment of its Turkish minority, Serb-Albanian disagreements over independence for Kosovo, or Soviet-Romanian arguments about Moldavia.

The U.S. interest in such imbroglios is hard to identify and deliberate use of U.S. forces in any of them hard to imagine. Yet the very presence of U.S. forces, unless clearly circumscribed by an agreed purpose that translates into military missions, becomes a factor in these disputes, with dangers for escalation and inadvertent involvement. In other words, we must sort out what follows forward defense strategy and determine what role U.S. forces are expected to play in that context. For planning purposes in this strategy, it may be best to continue planning against the declining major threat to Western Europe, represented by a Russia that will, in all foreseeable circumstances, retain the ability to generate the largest national forces in Europe.

If we do that, defining the role for U.S. forces requires identifying and shaping the mechanism that links U.S. forces to Europe. In the short term, Foreign Minister Genscher's solution—no NATO forces forward of the frontiers of the former FRG after unification—may be sufficient, because that formula clearly implies that U.S. and other Allied forces exist for the defense of former NATO territory. Yet it is hard to imagine that formulas for Allied force disposition, which Germans found convenient during transition to unification, would be immutable. Whatever transformation the Alliance makes or whatever follow-on organization subsumes its functions will need to be clear about what territories and air space the remaining nonnational forces on the territories of European states are supposed to defend, and what they are supposed to defend against.

Beyond mission, sizing U.S. forces in Europe depends on when the Russians go home and whether they all go home. If the German peace process brings on a long-term, substantial Soviet presence in Germany and perhaps Poland, such as the 195,000 man force in Central Europe currently agreed to as the first CFE outcome, then the U.S. counterpart may be of the same size or larger. If, however, the Soviets are serious about having all Soviet troops not now on Soviet soil back in the USSR in five or six years,

then the U.S ground forces could be reduced in this strategy to the combat equivalent of about one corps plus infrastructure.

Outside Europe a declining but still significant military presence will be required for Northeast Asia. The uneven Soviet drawdown in Asia apparently emphasizes demilitarization of the China-Soviet frontier, leaving the bulk of active units, many aircraft, and large if less active naval forces in the Maritime Province, Kamchatka, and Sakhalin. Until these forces are further reduced in size or readiness, or removed, China has put the era of political turmoil behind her, the future of North Korea is clearer, and Japan and the USSR have settled their territorial disputes, Japan and Korea may continue to welcome and help sustain what this strategy requires: a continued visible U.S. presence in Japan and Korea, from all services.

Armored forces in the United States earmarked for return to Europe could also be available for medium war contingencies such as protracted engagements in the Middle East. They would obviously be available for training and defense of the Continental United States to the extent that there is any need for them in that role. The longer warning expected for Europe, the reduced likelihood of Soviet engagement in third world conflicts, and the limited requirements expected for defense of the United States suggest reduced risk in planning for the availability of these forces for all those purposes. In this strategy the heavy ready forces in Europe and for Europe could be much reduced in favor of investment in lift; consumables; command, control, communications, and intelligence; equipment prepositioning; and the varieties of light forces necessary for prompt reaction and for sustaining combat at a distance.

Reduced requirements for Europe permit sizing intervention forces for various tasks ranging from small-scale rescue operations through cooperation with allies or host nations in limited duration conflicts to what now seems the worst likely major contingency, protracted conflict with a medium-sized enemy overseas. Whatever form that takes, some combination of forces spanning the spectrum from the Delta Force and Ranger Battalions and light infantry through several divisions capable of seizing and holding terrain, plus their lift and supplies, would be required to sustain this strategy, along with reserves and a mobilization base.

Other services could supply much of the resources necessary to react at a distance. Simple punishment and prompt warning to potential adversaries in the form of target destruction are more easily and cheaply performed by aircraft or warships on station or near a prospective target. Ground forces come into play if called for by allies or

international authority, terrain or facilities need to be seized or held, or persons or installations have to be rescued.

COLLECTIVE SECURITY

Collective Security is another term for a global interdependence strategic model. In this approach multinational action—either private, regional, or global—takes precedence over national initiatives without eliminating them. This model assumes a virtual end to the global strategic contest with the Soviet Union, and a refocus of *international* attention on the environment, human rights, population, health, education, disarmament, and resource questions, all problems and issues that often juxtapose the interests of developed countries with those of the third world. Few of these issues imply the use of force, and, to the extent that they do, few justify the use of national forces in preference to collective action. Quick reaction requirements such as prospective nuclear weapon acquisition by a rogue state or movement or the more egregious forms of terrorism are the only currently imaginable exceptions. Classical forms of gunboat diplomacy against small countries that fail to pay their debts to U.S. financial institutions seem unlikely, as do banana wars on behalf of commercial interests.

Security related issues affecting the international community or regional bodies might relate to multilateral arms control (nuclear and other weapon nonproliferation questions), the uses of space, and the equitable sharing of communication bands. Most forms of international coercion, interference, or intervention would be short of military action and in most cases be confined to public exposure and political, diplomatic, and economic pressure.

Imaginable forms of intervention would represent the interests of several parties and would reflect enforcement of collectively agreed upon principles or norms: separating belligerents; assuring the availability of some critical resource; preserving the national integrity of some member state in civil strife; partitioning resources, such as water rights; saving some minority peoples from butchery; saving some shielded rain forest or species from exploitation or the North Pole or Antarctica from development; and preventing some unstable government or movement from acquiring a nuclear capability.

Primary international attention to global issues does not remove the historical causes of strife between antagonistic groups, whether political factions, mass movements and governments, nations, religions, sects, or tribes. Even Western Europe continues to be plagued by revolutionary Basque separatists and intransigent Irish nationalists. A look at the Middle East suggests bloodier and more immediate opportunities for conflict. And

for the next decade, various forms of militant Islam; Turkic nationalisms directed at Russians, Chinese, Iranians, and Arabs; territorial questions and attempts at national fragmentation in Africa; confrontations in Northeast and Southwest Asia; and ideology or religion-based social protest movements in Latin America imply armed conflict of the more classical variety. So do territorial disputes in Eastern Europe.

In these circumstances, the United States would continue to field forces capable of defending the Continental United States, meeting our remaining treaty commitments, and protecting American citizens and facilities abroad. In Europe and Northeast Asia, U.S. forces would decline in numbers at about the same rate and for the same reasons as expected under the *Only Superpower* strategy. The difference with respect to Europe is that the ground force arrangements would stress return capability (maintaining lines of communication and stored equipment) in preference to active units.

The pursuit of such other national interests as free trade, open skies, nuclear nonproliferation, and access to geostationary parking spaces would be left to diplomacy. Defense of "freedom," human rights, and regional stability would be left primarily to collective action by regional or international bodies, where the United States would play an important but not always a leading role. That would be a useful way to avoid becoming embroiled in regional, local, internal, religious, or tribal conflicts, where the identifiable and particular American interest was tangential, but the United States could not entirely stand aside. Freedom of navigation would presumably also continue to be something we would fight for, if necessary.

The major difference between this and the previous scenario is that the United States would not maintain the full panoply of intervention forces. Instead (in addition to declining numbers in Europe and for Northeast Asia) the United States would field light battalions, marines, air squadrons, limited combat units or combat service units as required, in support of limited operations mandated by particular friendly countries, alliances, regional organizations, or the UN. In none of these cases would the United States be required to do much of the fighting on the ground. The ability to inflict conventional punishment at a distance by strategic bombers and naval forces would be retained.

ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

This strategy is a modified and updated version of the Nixon Doctrine, where the United States concentrates resources on support functions, in this case on logistics and electronic warfare. The United States modernizes and keeps ready these most expensive

and complex elements of warfare for its own forces and makes them available when necessary to third parties—whether allies, client states, or UN and regional forces. Otherwise, the United States relies on an efficient mobilization base to generate such large combat units as might be necessary in the unlikely contingency of a major war. More precisely, this strategy leaves most forms of regional combat, especially ground combat, to local forces. The United States helps only those regional states that have some hope of succeeding militarily and politically and that are willing to pay the lion's share of the butcher bill. The United States concentrates resources on achieving information dominance and on supplying lift, consumables, and sea and airborne fire support to allied, regional, or UN operations when called on. The remaining U.S. nonnuclear strategic strike capabilities are also confined to air and naval units armed with precision guided munitions (PGMs).

This strategy assumes an increasingly self-absorbed Soviet Union and more and more capable and confident European, Japanese, and South Korean forces, and governments in those areas that are content with a U.S. role largely confined to reinsurance. It calculates that forward based naval assets and nuclear-capable aircraft plus U.S. strategic forces are adequate for the 1990s, to assure allies and potential adversaries alike of U.S. reliability *in extremis*. It also assumes that all forces in Europe are reconfigured more defensively and that warning time has been increased to the point that no major state fears a sudden attack from any neighbor, because the forces necessary to sustain such an attack and actually occupy territory would take too long to generate. Remaining overseas-deployed U.S. ground combat forces are reduced and withdrawn to U.S. territory for training, general reserve, and mobilization base missions.

This strategy also assumes that there are no identifiable incentives for the United States alone to confront regional powers in other areas. The likeliest military contingencies, third-world blowups, would be addressed regionally as necessary, by local forces with or without forces from outside a particular region, as in the *Collective Security* strategy. For example, renewal of strife between India and Pakistan, Israel and the Arabs, or Iraq and Iran would be addressed by close monitoring, intelligence sharing and denial, consultation with governments concerned, with allies and with other regional states, and in the UN Security Council with a view to ending combat and separating belligerents, quickly if possible. To the extent these or other regional events involved an external interest of sufficient weight to warrant the involvement of outside powers, such as hypothetical Iraqi threats to seize, blow up, or otherwise damage Saudi and Kuwaiti oil fields unless they joined Iraq against some current enemy (Syria, Israel, Iran), the United

States would support European efforts to inhibit Iraqi action or to protect the fields. Military support would be confined to planning, transport, reconnaissance, intelligence, target acquisition, naval gunfire or minesweeping, naval- or land-based close air support, and other air operations. European inability or unwillingness to act in concert in this case would reduce U.S. options to diplomatic pressure, the threat of conventional strategic assets, using strategic or sea-based aircraft against Iraqi military targets, or relying on surrogates.

Again, this strategy's emphasis on cooperation and support, (information dominance, air support, and lift) means that there would be virtually no short-term U.S. unilateral military action beyond rescue operations, or strategic conventional strikes when all else fails. All other operations would be in cooperation with, and in support of, other countries or groups of states. The United States could supply transport, equipment, consumables, and various forms of fire support to an important extent. Providing lift, munitions, and consumables also suggests improvements in weapon interoperability and reductions in vehicle size and weight. Many believe that changes to lighter and more transportable equipment will become a global trend in the wake of CFE. Some areas, such as the Middle East, may retain large inventories of heavy armored vehicles. If so, PGMs may become an increasingly important compensating factor for U.S. and European forces.

Finally, in this strategy the United States would strive to become and remain the dominant power in the global information environment. In a conflict, the United States would help cobelligerents achieve information dominance, which posits that combat success in the emerging technological environment depends on managing target acquisition (with concurrent availability of precision guidance) and on dominating information acquisition and denial, on the battlefield and in the war zone. Cooperative military operations would benefit from the products of U.S.-owned or operated intelligence systems, tactical surveillance, and target acquisition technologies. Concurrently, the adversary would suffer from whatever capabilities the United States developed to inhibit or spoof those same functions on his side.

Information dominance requires resolution of a fundamental strategic issue, the tension between cooperation and information dominance. As in the strategic nuclear realm, that resolution requires tradeoffs between offense and defense. In both cases, the choices include whether to put adversary surveillance assets at risk or to develop a regime where all surveillance assets are protected. Attempting information dominance adds the problem of managing relations with third parties that own, lease, or lend surveillance

assets or products to a belligerent with whom the United States is in dispute. To cite an extreme hypothetical example, in the abovementioned Middle East situation where Iraq had threatened Saudi and Kuwaiti oil fields, blanking out Iraqi military communications *could* mean shooting down or otherwise interfering with low orbital, space-based, or passive airborne assets being supplied by a third party with whom the United States wishes to maintain relations, such as the Soviet Union, China, Japan, Pakistan, or India. To succeed, attempts at regional or local information dominance require more system compatibility between the equipment of like-minded countries than now exists.

DISENGAGEMENT

The disengagement strategy assumes that none of the threats facing our fading alliances or other friendly states require prompt U.S. intervention on any meaningful scale. Like the other strategies, *Disengagement* assumes that the Soviet Union remains self-absorbed and that Europe, Japan, and Korea are increasingly confident of their abilities to manage their limited defense requirements. Transition to this strategy becomes more plausible if democratic revolutions finally topple the Marxist dictatorships in China and North Korea and their capital requirements for restructuring absorb the energies of Japan and South Korea. Like the other strategies, *Disengagement* assumes that economic and global issues dominate the agenda in developed countries, but that the issues dividing the third world or separating developed countries from poorer states are not sufficiently compelling to pose serious prospects of U.S. military involvement. Faceoffs between India and Pakistan, fights between Iraq and Iran, Philippine turbulence, or renewed conflict between Israel and the Arabs are assumed to be ignored, deplored, or managed by means short of involving U.S. combat forces; so far those assumptions have been borne out by experience.

This strategy also acknowledges doubts that the prospects of interrupted oil flows from the Middle East actually threaten the security of Europe or Japan, the area's principal customers, or even for that matter the United States, which remains less than 5 percent dependent on Gulf oil. First, there is no *historical* evidence of effective resource denial by one party to a dispute, especially if that resource is the denying party's sole source of revenue. Second, the scenario that actually results in complete denial of all oil from the region implies a degree of unity of purpose among normally antagonistic states that has never before been achieved and is therefore difficult to imagine. Third, this strategy assumes that both Europe and Japan are mature and conscious enough to assure alternative oil stocks and supplies and to plan for military operations in defense of their

own interests, either in concert or separately. Although no one can exclude the possibility of the USSR or China stepping in to protect a state or movement attempting to deny oil to Europe, thereby adding an implicit nuclear element to the standoff, this contingency is an unlikely one to plan against in the absence of identifiable incentives for such threats.

In short, this strategy is a modernized return to the force postures of the 1930s. Much reduced U.S. ground and air forces return to American territory or those Pacific territories still under U.S. control. A few leased spacetrack or other test or warning-related cooperative facilities abroad remain in operation. Large portions of the defense budget go to R&D and to deploying and managing the space assets and electronic envelope in which any future wars would operate. The fleet remains a large and ready force although smaller than today, and the marines become an expandable version of the small ready force they were before World War II. The Army becomes an expandable mobilization base dependent on something less than the current amount of lift to carry emergency forces, backed by adapted civil aircraft expansion. Strategic air forces, Marines, Rangers, and Delta Teams remain available to inflict swift if limited punishment and perform rescues. Contras and other, similar movements are left to build their own nations by themselves, to the extent that they can.

IV. NUCLEAR WEAPONS

All four strategies assume a decline in the prospects for U.S. nuclear standoffs with the existing nuclear powers and some increasing danger of nuclear proliferation. They assume that the United States and the Soviet Union will retain considerable strategic arsenals after Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) II; that the United Kingdom, France, and China will remain nuclear powers, and that accretions to the nuclear club in fact or in process remain generally unacceptable.

These assumptions suggest:

- Continued need for a survivable U.S. strategic arsenal and some nuclear modernization, but declining confrontational investment directed at the USSR (assuming that the Soviet nuclear program reciprocates).
- Attention to nuclear proliferation as a global problem and incentives for international but, if necessary, unilateral action to prevent the acquisition of nuclear capabilities by unstable regional states.

The nuclear element diminishes in all scenarios over time, without becoming trivial. Emphasis on developing and being seen capable of implementing counterforce strategies against a growing and increasingly survivable adversary strategic arsenal gives way to stress on:

- Preventing the emergence of new members of the nuclear club, especially avowed new members.
- Deterring the use of nuclear weapons by other countries, including their use for political pressure.
- Assuring stability in Europe and Northeast Asia by the presence of at least some U.S. tactical nuclear assets in the short term.

The growing nuclear proliferation problem remains one of the few potential causes of conflict where U.S interests are clearly involved. Nevertheless, this problem, like other global issues, may be better managed by pressures short of war and by collective action than by American armed force. Indeed, one orthodox line of reasoning asserts that superpower nuclear reductions would, in themselves, remove much of the incentive for

further accretions to the number of avowed nuclear states. This may be so, but it is hard to demonstrate that nuclear deemphasis by current nuclear powers creates a blanket disincentive for all nuclear candidates.

The possibility of undesirable proliferation remains a force generator under all strategies in this study. Even under the *Disengagement* strategy, the United States retains the ability to destroy nuclear facilities at long range.

V. CONCLUSIONS

All strategies assume the U.S. need for a healthy mobilization base, some requirement for rescue missions, and a permanent capability to inflict punishment at a distance. To that extent all strategies described are "global power" strategies. All these strategies also assume a shift from alliance-related requirements for large and heavy overseas forces to smaller, lighter, and more mobile forces, largely based in the United States for lesser contingencies. Furthermore, these strategies assume the decreasing likelihood of *unilateral* U.S. engagement in defense of ideological abstractions and an increase in third-world conflicts involving cooperation with militarily capable third parties. The main differences among the four strategies concern intervention capabilities. These are whether to retain a full range of offensive forces to intervene unilaterally (*Only Global Power*), intervene only collectively (*Global Security*), intervene with support capabilities only (*Arsenal of Democracy*), or have virtually no intervention capability at all with ground or tactical air forces (*Disengagement*).

Strategic nuclear weapons remain necessary under all strategies, although the key strategic problem changes from force matching, target coverage, and escalation dominance to preventing nuclear blackmail, especially nonproliferation. Nonproliferation becomes a force generator under all scenarios, one justification for the retention of healthy strategic air assets, although not the only one.

All strategies assume a need to continue honoring alliance commitments, but they vary as to what that means. Only under the Global Power strategy is the United States visibly and permanently present in Europe and Northeast Asia with ground force units, although in declining strength. Even in that scenario, heavy forces in Europe are drastically reduced. Forces in the United States are also reduced and ascribed simultaneously to reinforcement of Europe, medium-sized war contingencies, training, and, to the limited extent necessary, continental defense. The other strategies eschew ready forces for medium-sized wars and rely on the mobilization base against such contingencies.

Finally these strategies imply different investment priorities. Only the Global Power strategy implies a continuing across-the-board investment in all capabilities at reduced levels, with a gradually growing expenditure for lift, in anticipation of the likeliest protracted threat, conflict with a medium-sized power prominently involving U.S. forces. Lift, consumables, and small, ready light forces are the growing items in the

Collective Security strategy. Lift, consumables, PGMs, and electronics are the principal growth items in the *Arsenal of Democracy* strategy. There the United States attempts to assure victory for the side it favors by delivering and supporting the forces of others and managing the electronic environment in the war zone. R&D and the mobilization base are the largest investment items in the *Disengagement* strategy.