

U.S. NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY AND FORCE POSTURE FOR THE
POST-COMMUNIST ERA

Richard L. Kugler

Papers are issued by RAND as a service to its professional staff. Their purpose is to facilitate the exchange of ideas among those who share the author's research interests; Papers are not reports prepared in fulfillment of RAND's contracts or grants. Views expressed in a Paper are the author's own and are not necessarily shared by RAND or its research sponsors.

U.S. NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY AND FORCE POSTURE
FOR THE POST-COMMUNIST ERA

Speech by Richard L. Kugler

To the Senior Seminar of the Foreign Service Institute
Washington D.C.

November 14, 1991

Good morning, and thank you for that warm introduction. It's a pleasure to be here today to discuss an important topic before a distinguished audience. I have attended FSI sessions before, but I've never spoken here, so this opportunity is a new and welcome one.

I would like to begin with a few words about RAND. As most of you probably know, RAND is a non-profit corporation that conducts research and analysis on public policy issues. It is headquartered in Santa Monica, California, with a small office here in Washington D.C. Its broad approach is to apply scholarly research techniques to national policy issues, and consequently we have a somewhat more academic slant than many of the consulting firms that you deal with here in Washington. Like all good analysts, we try to be as objective and thorough as possible in ways that portray the options in an illuminating, balanced, and non-partisan fashion.

RAND originally was created by the Air Force in the late 1940's as one of our nation's first "think tanks," and today has FFRDC relationships with the Air Force, Army, and OSD/JCS. We currently have some 1000 people and a budget of about \$100 million. Roughly 75 percent of RAND's work is for the Defense Department on national security issues, and the remainder is mostly work on social issues in both domestic and international settings. Our defense studies cover the spectrum from policy and strategy to highly technical work on weapon systems and support structures.

I joined RAND in 1988, coming from DoD. I do most of my work for RAND's National Defense Research Institute, the FFRDC that supports OSD and JCS, and I primarily focus on the relationship between strategy and force posture. Consequently, the topic today is near and dear to my interests. Over the past year, I've helped write studies on the future U.S. military presence in Europe and NATO's future military strategy, and I will draw on some of this material here. I stress, however, that the views presented here are entirely my own, and not those of either RAND or DoD.

RECENT U.S. POLICY AND STRATEGY DECISIONS

I intend to offer some comments on how the United States should think about the challenging national security agenda ahead. I will especially focus on the vitally important relationship between strategy and force structure. Let me begin with where we currently stand, and then address where we've got to go.

I've been told that you received a full day of briefings from the Pentagon yesterday, so I will not cover the details of current U.S. policy and strategy. Suffice to say that during 1990, a great deal of effort was devoted to forging an intelligent position on U.S. national security policy, strategy, forces, and defense budgets for the post-Cold War era. This effort gave rise to three important decisions, all of which projected an image of continuity in the years ahead:

- The first decision, presented at President Bush's speech at Aspen in August 1990, was to adopt a prudent national security policy aimed at creating a stable international order through continued U.S. engagement overseas, alliance relationships, and military strength. Stressing that the world is still a dangerous place, President Bush endorsed four concepts for our future defense strategy: nuclear deterrence, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution.

- The second decision was to adopt the DoD "base force," a posture about 25 percent smaller than today's but still sufficiently large and prepared to meet the military challenges ahead. The base force is to include a post-START nuclear posture of about 550 ICBMs, 200 strategic bombers, and 18 Trident submarines, and eventually a limited SDI system. The conventional posture, which I will focus on today, is to include active forces of 15 Army and Marine divisions, 15 USAF tactical fighter wings, and 13 carriers and 450 major ships. Backing up these active units are to be 7 reserve component divisions and 11 fighter wings.
- The third decision was Secretary of Defense Cheney's defense budget, calling for military spending to remain constant at about \$290 billion for the next five years. Since this spending level is in current dollars, Cheney's budget envisions "real" cuts of about 3 percent annually, but nothing more. In other words, the Pentagon's budget is to decline gradually in real terms, but we are to continue spending large sums of money for national defense in the years ahead.

In my view, these decisions were soundly taken, resonated well, and at the time seemed likely to provide a widely accepted basis for planning. The dramatic events of 1991, however, have overturned some of the assumptions on which these decisions were based, thereby rendering the administration's policy partly outdated almost before it had lifted off the launching pad.

- The Persian Gulf war in early 1991 called attention to the enduring dangers overseas, but also inflicted a decisive defeat on our most powerful potential adversary in Southwest Asia.
- The failed coup in the USSR last August, and the subsequent events in that country, evidently have ended communist rule there and may have ended the USSR's days as a nation-state.

Both Iraq and the USSR had figured importantly in President Bush's call for continued vigilance, but today it is hard to portray them as serious military threats in any immediate sense. The net effect of their demise is that the whole relationship between policy, strategy, and force posture will have to be re-examined over the next two years, amidst far more serious and skeptical probing than took place in 1990. In particular, the following questions are likely to be asked, even by people who previously would have been prone to take Bush and Cheney at their word:

"Granted that Bush's policy made sense while the USSR was still under communist rule, now that our key adversaries have been vanquished, do we truly need to remain as internationally engaged as he called for in 1990? Why can't we withdraw, shuck off our expensive international burdens to a far greater degree, and focus more heavily on our domestic troubles?"

"Is the base force still valid? Will a smaller posture suffice, and how should it be constructed?"

"Can further defense budget cuts be imposed? If so, how far can we cut? Indeed, why can't we reduce by a great amount?"

The administration's FY93 budget has passed through Congress relatively unscathed, but the FY94 and FY95 budgets almost certainly will encounter far tougher sledding. The Defense Department and executive branch thus face a tough debate ahead, conducted amidst an atmosphere in which it will be hard to justify a continuing strong U.S. defense establishment on the basis of a readily identifiable and militarily powerful adversary. To some degree, the national security community is a victim of its own success, and it will now have to base its rationale and its claim to resources on other arguments. A year ago, DoD faced the prospect of coming to grips with the post-Cold War era. Now it must deal with the post-communist era, in which the need for a strong force posture will be all the less apparent to the man in Peoria, and to all those who believe that better uses can be found for scarce fiscal revenues.

The impending debate ahead does not necessarily mean that wholesale spending cutbacks are inevitable, or that the United States will disengage from overseas and revert to a policy of isolationism. But it does mean that a stiff challenge to President Bush's policy of peaceful engagement lurks around the corner. Both to prepare for this debate and to figure out the new policy directions that should be taken, the national security community will have to devote an intense effort over the coming months to retool intellectually once again.

The prospect of completely rethinking U.S. national security policy admittedly is an unwelcome one. My own sense is that most participants are already exhausted by the debates and studies of the past year and have little energy left over to repeat the exercise again. What has happened is a little like playing four quarters of tough football in a driving rain, only to be called upon to go out and play a second game immediately afterwards. Unlike baseball, football doesn't lend itself well to double-headers, and neither does strategic analysis.

Yet the job will have to be done. To do otherwise would be to leave the nation without coherent and up-to-date analysis at a time when profoundly important decisions will be taken. Unfortunately, much of the analytical framework created in 1990 will no longer suffice; the changes needed are more profound than just sanding off the edges of current policy and marginally reshaping it. We will need a whole new theory of U.S. policy, strategy, and forces for the post-communist era, and there isn't a lot of time available to create it. So like it or not, we've got to pull up our socks and get working.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

To me, the issue turns on how we will come to define our future military and national security "requirements": i.e., how much force we will need as a function of realistic aspirations. Indeed, it is very important that the executive branch frame the issue in these terms, and not allow the debate to be cast in terms of "how low can we go." If the debate is framed in terms of defining how much can be cast off, then the U.S. government will find itself on a slippery slope, with no logical

stopping point short of a wholesale disarmament of the sort that occurred immediately after World War II. The only bulwark against this kind of precipitous drawdown is the creation of a credible theory of requirements for the future.

Fortunately, the Bush administration has recognized the need to talk in terms of future security needs growing out of our international involvements. Not everyone agrees with this approach, however. In some quarters, the feeling exists that we can somehow insulate our defense posture from arguments about external requirements, that we can define a posture that makes sense in itself because it leaves the United States with a feeling of being adequately armed come what may. The problem with this approach is that it provides no objective yardsticks to gauge adequacy. What the Pentagon judges to be adequate may well seem excessive to some, and in the absence of international standards, there would be no way to judge who is correct. In the end, the U.S. defense posture would be left wholly vulnerable to domestic politics, undisciplined by any formal analysis.

In particular, do we seriously believe that the expensive base force can withstand scrutiny as a worthy public good in itself, divorced from any coherent theory as to why we need it? And if the base force can't withstand scrutiny, why would a significantly smaller posture do any better? At what point would a national consensus emerge that we are adequately armed at an acceptable price? Especially with domestic economic troubles growing and fear of the international environment rapidly fading, it's doubtful that the political consensus would settle at a point anywhere near what the Defense Department, from its vantagepoint, believes to be adequate.

Because the United States regularly spent about 4.5-6.5 percent of its GNP on defense during the Cold War, perhaps the judgment has taken hold that the American people will tolerate about 4.0-4.5 percent for the coming era regardless of whether there's a compelling security need. If so, fine: we would have a new "great equation" that would leave everyone satisfied. Nonetheless, it's worthwhile to remember that even during the Cold War, most West European nations were willing to spend

only about 3.5 percent of GNP on national defense. They are likely now to reduce spending to about 2.5 percent. If the United States was to embrace this lower standard of acceptability, our defense budget would plummet to \$200-230 billion. And if we took a cue from the Japanese, with their preference for the 1 percent standard, our budget would drop to \$100 billion or below.

The simple fact is that while democracies may appreciate military forces as much as anyone, they typically aren't willing to open their pocketbooks to pay for them in absence of a compelling international need. The American people behaved exactly this way immediately after World War II. Is there any reason to believe that they would behave differently now? Indeed, if the Defense Department isn't capable of spelling out exactly why it needs powerful forces and large budgets, why should they?

To say that we need a theory of requirements, however, is not to imply that it will be easily created. The core problem is that the international system is still in the early transitional stage of a profound transformation. We know that the old bipolar era of ideological conflict has ended, but we do not know exactly what is coming. Will the new era be one of multipolarity? Or unipolarity? Or depolarity? Or harmony? Or what? Who will be our adversaries? Indeed, who will be our friends? Will there be, as Churchill said, no permanent friends, just permanent interests? Who knows?

That we are resorting to such lame phrases as the "post-Cold War era" and the "post-communist era" is a reflection of the disturbing fact that we don't have a sufficiently clear vision of the future to name it. Because so much is in flux, the structural features of the new system aren't yet identifiable, and thus it is especially difficult to pinpoint fault lines and emerging threats to our interests. Are there, in fact, problems ahead? The answer is hard to know only partly because of the fog of uncertainty blanketing the future. Further contributing to the problem is the conceptual blinders that analysts bring to their craft. Unfortunately, the art of international crystal-balling leaves us prone

to foreseeing harmony rather than conflict even when the real trends are in the opposite direction. Maybe this tendency occurs because the causes of confrontation are often so deep-seated, so subtle, and seemingly so irrational that they are hard to discern for the outside observer. In any event, over the course of history, even skilled analysts often have grossly failed to foresee that war was taking shape. After all, Metternich failed to see that he was laying the groundwork for World War I, as did Bismarck. If these notoriously far-sighted statesmen were blind to the Frankenstein's monster that was being created, why should we be any better?

As a result, today it's genuinely hard to figure out exactly why we will need military forces designed to help guard against future problems that we can't yet foresee with sufficient clarity and certainty to spell out precisely. Partly for this reason, the administration thus far has resorted to using vague abstractions and generalizations to support its assertion that our security requirements are still imposing. Included in the rhetoric are such lofty but airy concepts as: the need to protect our "interests," the need for "order," the fear of "instability," and the importance of preserving a "balance of power." Missing from the lexicon is only "equilibrium," another concept hallowed in international relations textbooks but mystifying to the students who read these books.

I didn't mean to be overly critical here, but I am concerned about whether these general concepts will continue to serve as sufficient justification for our defense posture. Because these concepts have genuine political meaning to professional diplomats, they might appeal to Metternich and Henry Kissinger. However, they are far less likely to go down well in Peoria, where the pocketbookets are to be opened. A year ago, these concepts were acceptable vocabulary for defense strategy because they were loosely disguised code words for the Soviet Union and Iraq: red-blooded adversaries that we were reluctant to finger publicly. But with those adversaries now dispatched, these concepts are rapidly losing their anchor in reality. Perhaps they still imply something specific to State Department officials, but it is becoming

hard to ascertain exactly what they mean for something as tangible as defense planning.

Absent more specific information, in a nutshell, it's impossible to determine whether these concepts levy a requirement for the base force, or something more, or something less. Judged by the flinty-eyed standards that budget analysts normally employ to separate the good, the bad, and the ugly, they aren't sufficiently persuasive to justify any painfully expensive commitment of resources. Something more intellectually compelling is needed: a set of more specific arguments about military requirements that bridges the analytical gap between abstract foreign policy visions and concrete force posture choices.

PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEFENSE PLANNING

I have no magical solutions for determining how we are going to identify specific requirements in a period that, at least for the moment, defies specificity. I do think, however, that we had best begin thinking about this task. To this end, I would like to lay out six principles that apply to assessing our military requirements ahead:

First, I believe that we need to address requirements in "proactive" terms, not passively. That is, we shouldn't be asking what requirements the emerging international system will impose on us. Instead, we should be asking how we intend to act to shape the future international system's evolution, and what this agenda for assertive behavior means for the military forces that will be needed. An activist perspective doesn't necessarily mean that our total force requirements will be higher than dictated by a passive agenda, but it does guarantee that the force requirements ultimately endorsed will have greater credibility, appeal, and staying power.

Second, we truly need to re-learn the art of thinking in terms of military strategy. Over the past forty years, the international security order was so fixed and constant that we came to think primarily in narrow, technical, engineering, and programmatic terms. This especially was the case after NATO's strategy debates had been settled by the late 1960's. Because the old planning regime has been swept away

so totally, we no longer will enjoy the luxury of taking so much for granted.

Strategy deals with the relationship between end and means. It provides guidelines on how courses of action are to be pursued using military forces to achieve our foreign policy and security goals. During the Cold War's first two decades, a variety of rich strategy concepts were created, including deterrence, forward defense, flexible response, and the like. These concepts are still with us, but many have questionable relevance to the era ahead. A new strategy, with equivalently rich terminology, will have to be created. Until one is created, we will have military forces in search of a rationale even if we are successful in identifying the international problems confronting us.

Third, it is fundamentally important that we not fall victim to the naive hope that history has come to an end, and that because communism is dead, international conflict has become a thing of the past. Because of our own psychological nature, the end of history thesis appeals to Americans, who have never displayed enthusiasm for messy, prolonged, and recurring international involvements. After all, our nation was partly created by immigrants who were trying to escape Europe's dreary political struggles, and after both World Wars I and II, we succumbed to the emotional desire to wipe our hands of the whole mess. The Cold War taught us a different lesson, but for valid reasons, many observers are concerned that we will now revert back to our old patterns.

Absent some moral purpose, an ongoing policy of realpolitik undergirded by military power simply does not appeal to our instincts, or to our sense of how our national energies should be spent. As a nation, we vastly would prefer to devote our resources to building our own country rather than shoring up a shaky international structure. To be sure, this approach reflects an admirable sense of priorities, but it is not one that accords with the realities of living in the modern world, even in the post-communist era.

Whenever I am confronted with the "end of history" argument, I am reminded of the British writer who produced a book arguing a similar thesis several decades ago. His argument was that Europe had reached such an advanced stage of responsible government, civilized standards, and economic partnership that warfare no longer was possible there. He was feted not only in his own country, but all over the continent. The year was 1910, four years before Europe plunged into its most devastating war ever.

History by no means predetermines the future, but neither is it a record of dead events with no implications for the years ahead. For powerful reasons that tend to endure, history shows a recurrent cycle of social conflict, often changing shape and color, but remaining ever-present as western civilization has moved from one era to the next. This theme certainly is prevalent not only in the disciplines of history and political science, but also in sociology, social-psychology, and psychology. Freud, for example, wrote a powerful book called "Civilization and Its Discontents" which echoed this view. So it's not just conservatives like Hobbes and Burke who had a skeptical view of human nature. So did Locke, a liberal whose support for democracy stemmed not from his faith in human nature, but rather from his concern about the ever-existing capacity of humans to oppress each other.

None of this, of course, means that the gloom and doom school is automatically correct, but it does suggest that we shouldn't be surprised or dismayed if international harmony remains a goal to be achieved rather than a newly minted condition of nature. The communist era, I believe, will prove to be merely one stage of history's on-going saga, rather than history's grand culmination. Since Napoleon's time, we have been through a two-century period in which modernization caused a profound upheaval by first bringing virulent nationalism and then a lengthy clash between democracy and totalitarianism. In World War II, democracy defeated fascism, and in the Cold War, it defeated communism. This victory, however, does not mean that human strife has permanently ended, or that the political age of Aquarius has arrived. As likely as not, we are entering some new

era in which the organizing principle for conflict has not yet been crystallized, but will eventually become apparent. At a minimum, we should be alert to this possibility.

Fourth, I believe that we need to have a long-term perspective. Partly because long-range planning is a genuinely difficult and thankless task, our national security agencies typically think in terms of only a few years. The Pentagon, for example, is a noted leader in long-range planning, but its horizon typically is only 5-10 years. Yet history suggests that security systems normally last 25-40 years. This certainly was the case for the Cold War, and it was true for the Concert of Europe (1815-1854) and the Balance of Power system of the late 1800's. Moreover, history also shows that poorly conceived decisions made early in a new era often have laid the foundations for disaster much later on. For this reason, we need to think hard about how the decisions we are taking today will affect international trends not only for the next few years, but for the coming decades. This perspective, I believe, induces a healthy sense of caution and conservatism, and an awareness that although our military requirements may not seem obvious in the short-run, they acquire greater meaning over the long term.

Fifth, we should remember exactly why we won the Cold War. We triumphed because we and our allies showed sustained commitment to a worthy purpose. We embraced a visionary goal and then patiently worked hard to achieve it. Our instruments of victory were national constancy, coalition planning, and intelligent management of NATO's force posture and strategy. Indeed, the great lesson of the Cold War is not that communism was defeated, but rather that a unified western community of nations was built. It was the strength of this community that caused communism's failure to expand in Europe and its ultimate downfall.

Clearly the years ahead will call for something different than a literal repeat of NATO's policies and programs for the Cold War. U.S. policy and the NATO alliance will need to mutate a great deal. But the positive lessons of the past are likely to carry over to the future in different form. In all likelihood, the future can best be managed by

showing similar sustained commitment to purpose, not only in our diplomacy but also in our assessment of military requirements.

Sixth, I believe that we need to articulate a coherent strategic concept for guiding our defense strategy, an intellectual construct of the sort that James Schlesinger created in the mid-1970's. At the time, as you recall, the United States was impaled on the post-Vietnam syndrome and detente, thereby leaving its defense planning in a downward-spiralling stall pattern. Acting as the new Secretary of Defense, Schlesinger strode on the scene with a powerful set of specific arguments which called for enduring national resolve even in an ambiguous age of detente. Urging the United States to settle down for the long haul, he unambiguously made clear that we would need a sound defense strategy and strong military forces to deal with the uncertain times ahead.

Schlesinger's message was not welcome in many quarters, but it had its desired effects. I recall reading a left-wing journal at the time, that assayed Schlesinger's first posture statement. It scathingly criticized the allegedly imperialist assumptions underlying Schlesinger's analysis, but it also ruefully acknowledged that if his assumptions were taken as valid, then his strategy, posture, and budget made sense. People of different political persuasions had a similar reaction. Washington settled into a period of greater consensus for a renewed defense program anchored on international constancy. Credibility-building persuasiveness like this is what a coherent strategic concept can bring.

Just as Schlesinger's stance was built on a mutually reinforcing combination of political and military arguments, the strategic concept needed today must include classical military assessments of force requirements, but also persuasive analyses of how defense strength contributes to our political agenda abroad. These analyses, moreover, must be specific and focused, not vague and abstract. To me, the U.S. government would be best off by portraying the international system as standing at a crossroads today, capable of moving toward enduring

stability and progress, but also capable of plunging into an abyss. The stance taken by the United States, in turn, would be portrayed as key to determining which way the system goes. The goal of our policy--and therefore our military strategy and forces--would be to push the international system down the path of stability and community-building, and to set up barriers and roadblocks against travel in the other direction.

What we would be trying to avoid is the emergence of an unstable multipolar balance of power system that could genuinely threaten peace. I think it important that we talk more openly, directly, and candidly about our very real fears in this regard. Until now, we've been so concerned about offending allies and former adversaries that we've relied on vague ellipticisms and euphemisms that simply do not carry the weight of powerfully convincing arguments. If we expect Congress and the American people to support a sizable defense force posture and budget, then we've got to spell out exactly what this effort will help prevent from occurring, including:

- The withdrawal of the United States from overseas involvements and a resultant fracturing of the western alliance, including our relationships with both Western Europe and Japan.
- A resurgent Germany and Japan guided by national visions, and driven by newly created security requirements to pursue independent military postures of their own, including nuclear armaments.
- Serious tensions between Germany and Russia, and between Japan and China, leading to military competition and potentially a political clash in both cases.
- Chaos of such dimensions in Eastern Europe and the USSR that it produces nationalistic, authoritarian, and aggressive governments, coupled with a still-powerful Soviet (or Russian) nuclear and conventional capability.

- Festering instability in the Middle East brought about by intensified frictions between the western community and Islamic nations.
- A set of interlocking diplomatic and economic relationships that creates a 1914-like system, beyond our control, in which small crises easily can escalate into large confrontations.

There are plenty of genuinely scary reasons here for concluding that we will need to remain militarily strong, but they have not been spelled out in enough graphic detail to make them vividly real. As an example, the administration has not yet openly acknowledged that:

- We intend to continue providing Germany extended nuclear deterrence coverage because we do not want to create reasons for that nation to go nuclear.
- As long as we have nuclear commitments in Europe, we will need sufficient U.S. forces there to preserve a dominant influence in NATO's command structure and to ensure that NATO always has viable conventional options, even against a resurgent Soviet conventional attack.

This nuclear connection lies at the core of our desire to keep 150,000 troops in Europe and to retain NATO's integrated military command structure with a U.S. general as SACEUR. Fear that we will wind up with still-existing nuclear commitments but lacking control over conventional war plans and crisis management policies is a powerful but latent reason why the Pentagon does not want to reduce well below 150,000. To date, however, the U.S. government has been reluctant to air this uncomfortable topic, with the result being rapidly declining public support for DoD's future plans. Absent this information, the idea of keeping lots of U.S. forces in Europe comes across as an anachronism rather than a prudent expression of the national interest.

Yes, we need to be discrete about how we discuss other nations as well as our own unflattering fears and instincts. But we should not be so restrained that we leave our national security policy lacking the persuasive arguments needed to carry the day in the domestic arena. As Schlesinger showed, concrete arguments are the key to a credible strategic concept.

FUTURE U.S. STRATEGY AND FORCE POSTURE CHOICES

In the end, decisions about our conventional posture will probably come down to assessments of exactly how many forces are needed to provide a credible forward presence and crisis-response capability. As in years past, these assessments will turn heavily on quantitative analyses of the contingencies ahead, including the size and timing of adversary force buildups and allied contributions. My understanding is that the Pentagon presently is conducting analyses of future scenarios in Europe, the Persian Gulf, and the Far East. The European scenarios include potential conflicts with the USSR, but are not limited to this category. This effort should continue, and when the results are available, they probably will help buttress the case for a still-powerful conventional force posture.

To many, a core issue is whether the Pentagon's contingencies themselves will be sufficiently credible to be taken seriously. But to me, that is not really the issue in judging how defense planning should be conducted. Especially to the outside observer, war never seems like a rational choice in advance, and with Soviet communism now dead, war in Europe seems especially improbable. Yet World War I was a low probability event, and both the Korean War and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait caught us by surprise. As for whether Europe is permanently free from war, the answer is that we already have a war taking place in Yugoslavia, and the disturbing noises coming from the USSR suggest that civil war might be in the offing there. Contingency analysis can not be held accountable for a lack of clairvoyance, but it is needed as a device for making practical programmatic decisions which ensure that when the unexpected does occur, our forces are broadly adequate to the task.

The mere fact that we remain concerned about future contingencies, I believe, illustrates the importance of continuing to anchor our military strategy on a capacity to perform continental missions. Unless we are prepared to let other nations defend our overseas interests, we cannot afford to shift to a purely offshore maritime strategy that would provide little more than strong naval forces. As in years past, we will continue to need an appropriately balanced mix of ground, air, and naval forces to provide a capacity for both continental and maritime missions.

How many forces will we need for the wars ahead? At the risk of oversimplification, I think that a "One War Strategy" makes sense. That is, we should always have enough active forces to promptly deploy a field army of about 10 divisions, 10-15 air wings, and 4-6 carriers to the regions where our vital interests are engaged. Why a field army? The reason is simple: this is the amount of force that we deployed to Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. It's also the force that we always planned to send to Central Europe for the early stages of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war, and that we probably will plan for any future major conflict in Europe against the USSR. There's a lesson here. We tend to fight major wars in field-army dimensions. As long as we possess this military capacity, we should be in a solid position for dealing with the major challenges ahead.

This endorsement of a "One War Strategy" is not to imply that we need no other forces in our posture. We also will need sufficient mobilizable reserves to provide insurance against two major scenarios occurring at the same time, and to provide a capacity for a larger intervention in Europe or elsewhere, should that ever prove necessary. But the centerpiece for planning our active forces, I believe, should be the constant maintenance of a highly ready, modern, sustainable, and deployable field army. Fortunately, we possessed this capability when the Persian Gulf war came along, and that is the reason we won this conflict. I don't think that we ever will want to be in a position of not being able to recreate what we deployed to the Gulf last year.

The central issue facing us is whether the base force, or some smaller posture, will be sufficient for this purpose. I don't view the base force as sacrosanct, but I do note that although the base force would provide 15 active Army and Marine divisions, not all combat divisions normally are available for deployment to any single contingency. Most often, some are not ready, others aren't properly equipped, and still others are needed elsewhere. The same constraints apply to our air and naval forces. Analysts will disagree on the exact calculation of requirements here, but there does come a point at which drawdowns can take us below the point of being able to execute this strategy. To me, the base force already is close to this threshold, so if there is room for further cutbacks, it isn't large.

Regardless of what force level is ultimately chosen, our active units will need a full complement of modern weapons and equipment. If the Gulf war taught us nothing else, it shows the immense value of technological supremacy. One major reason we scored an overwhelming victory over an ostensibly strong opponent is that our air forces were able to suppress Iraq's air defenses. Also, our capacity to fire at long ranges worked impressively, and our ground weapons were far better than the Soviet-made models owned by Iraq. Especially if we ultimately do reduce below the base force, the need for technologically sophisticated weapons will be all the stronger. The need for modern weapons, highly trained troops, staying power, and effective mobility forces will exert a powerful constraint on exactly how far the DoD budget can be safely cut.

Finally, let me offer a few words about our reserve component forces. These forces often have played a backwaters role in the public eye, but in truth, they were absolutely vital to our Cold War strategy. We invested a lot of money in them then, and with our active posture slated to be at least 25 percent smaller, they will play an important role in our strategy tomorrow. For the most part, our experience with reserve forces has been a sanguine one. In particular, our air reserves have always performed well, and our Army reserve support units played effective roles in the Gulf war.

The only area of controversy is the Army's reserve ground combat forces. The simple reality here is that even with adequate leadership, weapons, and training funds, it is very hard for a large reserve formation to master the many functions that must be performed by a ground unit in combat. As a result, we typically have viewed our ground combat reserves as units that would be available only after a period of training. This requirement accounts for the failure of some reserve brigades to deploy quickly to the Gulf. To some, this delayed deployment was a disappointment, but it did not reflect any major gap in national defense strategy. I do believe, nonetheless, that we have an important choice ahead. Either we can continue regarding these forces in their traditional roles or, if we want them to be available earlier, we can take steps to upgrade their readiness. Other reserve armies have been able to function shortly after call-up, and ours could do likewise. Achieving this capability, however, would not be cost-free, and in the era ahead, defense dollars are unlikely to be plentiful. Most probably, we are best off concentrating on keeping our active forces powerful, and not asking more of our reserves than we are willing to pay them to do. In any event, the choice boils down to a matter of priorities.

Thank you for your attention, and I would be happy to entertain any questions.

