A New Strategy and Fewer Forces: The Pacific Dimension

Executive Summary

James A. Winnefeld, Jonathan D. Pollack,
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John Y. Schrader, Michael D. Swaine

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PREFACE

The research documented in this two-volume report was undertaken for the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs). Its objectives are

- To identify a range of force posture alternatives that might shape or respond to the Pacific Rim security environment over the next 10 to 15 years.
- To assess those alternatives against an appropriate set of criteria, including the objectives set out in the 1990 DoD *Strategic Framework* report, and a range of plausible responses to each posture by the major states in the region.

This research has been conducted in parallel with related research for USCINCPAC that examines the performance of alternative force postures in a range of possible future contingencies. The intended audience for both projects is officials in the Department of Defense charged with translating the national strategy for the Asian Pacific region into discrete policies, programs, and operational plans. Thus, the projects can be viewed as analytic extensions of the *Strategic Framework* report forwarded to the Congress in April 1990.

To keep this study unclassified, the authors have restricted its scope or dealt with contingencies in ways that differ from current policies and planning. In some cases this approach would require adjustments to present policy; in other cases actions proposed in this report may already be the subject of current planning. We believe these potential shortcomings are acceptable to gain the wider audience that an unclassified document permits.

The report is in two volumes: R-4089/1-USDP is the executive summary and R-4089/2-USDP contains the detailed analysis. These documents have been developed by the staff of the RAND Strategy Assessment Center (RSAC) under the direction of Dr. Charles Kelley. The RSAC is part of RAND's National Defense Research Institute (NDRI), a federally funded research and development center supported by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. The report reflects information available through December 1991.

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Many individuals have contributed to the shaping and conduct of this research. Within RAND, numerous colleagues enhanced our understanding of the Pacific Rim and the way U.S. strategy interacts with the regional environment. They include Paul Davis, Francis Fukuyama, Norman Levin, David Ochmanek, Kongdan Oh, William Schwabe, and George Tanham. We are especially grateful to the formal reviewers of this document (Fukuyama, Schwabe, and Tanham). We have also benefited greatly from suggestions by RAND consultants Paul Bracken and Rodney McDaniel.

Numerous officials within the Department of Defense were consulted and briefed during the course of our work. The relevant offices included the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs; the research and analysis staff of USCINCPAC; the Strategy Division (J-5) of the Joint Staff of the JCS; the Washington liaison office for COMUSFORKOREA; the Plans and Operations Staff of the Air Staff; the U.S. Army's Plans and Operations staff; and the Strategic Plans and Policy Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. We have chosen to thank them collectively, even though our debts are very much to specific individuals.

During the course of our work, several members of the project team visited states within the region; we are grateful for the candid insights of both scholars and government officials, which we have incorporated in our study on a not-for-attribution basis.

Our many thanks are also due to Jennifer Taw, who helped smooth the rough edges on preliminary manuscripts in Santa Monica. The authors bear full responsibility for errors of omission and commission.

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A NEW STRATEGY AND FEWER FORCES: THE PACIFIC DIMENSION

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ANALYSIS

This two-volume report addresses how the United States should reposture its forces, adjust its policies, and change its military operations in the Asia Pacific region, all in the context of reduced resources and increased burden-sharing by allies and security partners. We employ the DoD *Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim* as a point of departure in analyzing the changing regional environment and the role that U.S. forces might play in it.

The core of this report is an assessment of six alternative U.S. regional force postures that might develop over the next 15 years. Each posture is examined in three dimensions:

- Regional responses to the posture, in terms of its ability to reassure security partners or deter potential opponents, and in terms of its domestic impact within regional states.
- Performance in hypothetical contingencies in the event deterrence fails.
- Comparative cost.

The study also assesses 12 policy and program initiatives that might give the United States additional leverage in the face of declining forces and a diminished regional security role. The report concludes with 14 policy and program recommendations that might improve the match between regional security requirements and available U.S. forces. We first identify the major factors likely to shape the regional environment over the next 15 years and outline the uncertainties and their implications for U.S. regional strategy and force posture.

ASSESSING THE ASIA PACIFIC FUTURE

Asia and the Pacific have entered a period of fluidity, uncertainty, and potential realignment. The central directions of regional politics and security seem less predictable now than at any point since the formative period of U.S. Asian strategy, which began with the onset of the Korean War. All along the Pacific Rim, leaders are assessing the potential for change. Although the region is not experiencing a political transformation as profound as the one under way in Europe, the

magnitude and complexity of change remain very great, with major implications for long-term American political and security interests.

In the midst of this complexity, the United States must identify appropriate guideposts to supplant earlier policy formulations. Many of the pivotal factors that once animated U.S. regional strategy no longer carry the same weight. For example, even though the former Soviet Union retains sizable military capabilities that can still pose a threat to forward-deployed American forces and to Japan, it is now a much diminished power, absorbed principally by its own political and economic upheavals.

Regional security partners, having achieved political stability and rapid growth under a U.S. security umbrella that also extended informally to other states, envision their future security requirements in new terms. The United States still looms large in the calculations of all regional states, but their expectations for American policy have changed. The United States retains vital security obligations and political relationships across the Pacific basin, but the terms of those ties are different, and military power is only one component in a larger U.S. regional strategy.

The United States believes that its regional allies and friends are capable of assuming more responsibility for their own defense, either with their own resources or in concert with their neighbors. Part of this belief is driven by U.S. budgetary limitations. America is no longer prepared to assume a disproportionate burden in upholding security throughout the region. It must perforce be more selective in the deployment of a smaller array of military forces. Nevertheless, America seems very likely to maintain a comprehensive political, economic, and security role that no other major power can play. The United States alone seems able to restrain any single state or coalition of states from exercising outright domination over others. It can balance, and hopefully inhibit, any tendencies toward heightened arms rivalries that could make the region more prone to conflict. The challenge for the United States is to define a strategic concept and associated force postures appropriate to Asia's future and to U.S. interests.

No single factor is driving the direction of change in Asia and the Pacific, although several predominate. The report identifies five factors that will shape Asia's future and America's role in it: (1) the implosion of Soviet power and its political and security consequences, (2) the development of Japan as a global economic and technological power, (3) the primacy of economics in both domestic and international contexts, (4) the highly unsettled political and economic futures

of the Asian communist regimes, and (5) the reconfiguration of America's regional alliance relationships in the context of rapid domestic political change. We briefly examine each factor below.

The Implosion of Soviet Power

In a remarkably short period, the former Soviet state's credibility and capabilities as a major power have declined precipitously. Although various republics of the postcommunist era retain major military capabilities that still warrant close scrutiny, the capacity of a truncated, highly unstable post-Soviet system to challenge American power in Asia or elsewhere appears increasingly questionable. The sources of this decline are political, economic, and institutional. Domestic imperatives—that is, the resolution of economic and national sovereignty problems—will continue to preoccupy leaders throughout the republics. In a highly resource-constrained environment, Russia will remain wary of Third World involvements that seem marginal to its core political and security interests. Efforts to turn back the clock seem unlikely.

Barring an extraordinary reversal of the economic and political directions of the former Soviet Union or the ascendance of authoritarian leaders hostile to democratization, the former USSR is unlikely to prove a destabilizing force in the Pacific during the 1990s. Russia and the other republics will continue to seek ways to adapt to regional politics and economics; they will also seek more constructive collaboration with the United States, thereby lowering past levels of military confrontation. But any security or diplomatic breakthroughs (e.g., on the Korean peninsula) are likely to occur on a case-by-case basis, rather than by grand design. Russia still hopes to achieve fuller integration with the Pacific Rim, but outside the military arena its ability to achieve genuine power and presence remains limited. The transition to a more balanced role will prove halting, uneven, and opportunistic, with the new republics as a whole very likely to remain circumspect in the exercise of power. Under these circumstances, the United States will be freer to concentrate on the larger challenges that it seems likely to confront along the Pacific Rim.

Japan as a Major Power

Japan looms very large on Asia's changing geopolitical map. Anxieties about Japanese power envelop much of the Pacific Rim; this may be the only question on which all of Japan's neighbors can agree. With the United States no longer preoccupied with Soviet expansion,

many Asians anticipate a steady, inexorable withdrawal of American military power from the region, with Japan poised to unobtrusively reclaim the mantle of its earlier Pacific empire. The United States must counteract this perception, suggesting that the U.S. military presence is a vital and continuing part of a broader American regional strategy.

The continued, though somewhat frayed, consonance of American and Japanese interests may not remain clear-cut in the future. Japan's role in the Persian Gulf crisis illustrates some of the looming uncertainties. The challenge to the American and Japanese leaderships in the 1990s will be to devise a strategic concept appropriate to new international circumstances. This concept must have the consent of both parties and it must win broad support along the Pacific Rim. Absent broad regional endorsement of a new framework, the U.S.–Japan relationship could overwhelm the highly diversified ties that the United States seeks to maintain in East Asia and the Pacific.

Japan's longer-term security calculations will depend on the durability of its relations with the United States. To Washington, Tokyo is both political-military partner and economic rival; the relative balance between the two views could well turn on the specific challenges of regional security and bilateral economic ties. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union's military power posed a global as well as regional challenge, providing a clear basis for heightened U.S.–Japan political and security cooperation. Absent an appropriate redefinition of the relationship, the prospects for sustaining equivalent cooperation in the future are much less certain. In a more fluid world, however, with ever more blurry distinctions between ally and adversary, Japan could conceive of its economic and security policy options in more diversified terms. Yet its neighbors remain acutely sensitive to every Japanese step toward international activism, however small, and this should not escape America's notice. For all the differences and grievances between Washington and Tokyo, the United States remains to many Japanese their only friend in a world of hostile states.

The Primacy of Economics

The most remarkable dimension of the Pacific Rim's emergence has been its economic performance. Although there have been variations from case to case, the prevailing pattern has entailed rapid export-led growth, ultimately including capital-intensive industrial development and innovation and production in high technology.

For the United States, the implications of Asia's economic and technological dynamism loom very large. Five of America's ten largest overseas trading partners are Asian states. Two-way trade with Japan is approximately three times that of Germany, America's second-largest overseas partner. The relevant statistics are impressive and seemingly endless. Inevitably, these and other changes in trading patterns have spawned complex political and economic responses across the Pacific and in the entire international system. To many observers, economic strength represents the true underpinning of the emerging regional order, with ideology or military capabilities less important as instruments of influence and national power.

Even in an era of greatly increased economic interdependence, however, many manifestations of the Pacific Rim's economic growth remain highly nationalistic. Leaders throughout the region, for example, voice mounting concerns that a much diminished U.S. military presence will increase the chances for Japanese economic and political domination. To Southeast Asian states in particular, the coincidence of a diminished American political and security presence and a steadily growing Japanese economic and military capability is an ominous portent. The continuing challenge for U.S. policy, therefore, will be to sustain credible engagement that reassures smaller regional powers but does not undermine the even more consequential Japanese-American relationship. A robust and vibrant American economic role will be essential to maintaining a comprehensive U.S. profile in the region, but it cannot stand alone. Long-term American influence will derive from a complex mix of economic, political, and security roles. An imbalance in one dimension could stimulate negative consequences in the others. The future American stake in the Pacific will depend on maintaining sufficient credibility among all three dimensions of national power, judiciously combining the roles of political balancer, security partner, and economic competitor.

The Future of the Asian Leninist States

During the 1950s and 1960s, China, North Korea, and Vietnam dominated U.S. regional threat assessments. Buffeted by economic and political change in the 1970s and 1980s, at the outset of the 1990s those states now face a difficult time of leadership succession, and this against a backdrop of a world transformed by new economic and political power relationships. Of the three, U.S. relations with China pose the central challenge.

Although neither Washington nor Beijing would welcome a severe downgrading of relations, the limits of their ties now seem clearer.

The Chinese appear increasingly discomfited by a world in which the United States is the lone superpower. Even after a leadership transition in China and some rationalization of its internal policies, Chinese and American policy could easily continue to take divergent paths. There are many possible scenarios involving China's role and ambitions in the world with a new leadership in charge, and the uncertainties and risks are more apparent than the opportunities.

On the Korean peninsula, Pyongyang's political position has been severely degraded at the same time that Seoul is making an entrance on the world political and economic stage as an increasingly powerful regional actor worthy of cultivation by the great powers. Two large possibilities loom over the peninsula's future. The first is reunification: should this occur, it would work a profound change in the political and security landscape of East Asia, compelling complex policy adjustments from all the major powers. Second, and perhaps more ominous, is the possibility of a North Korean nuclear capability, with very large implications for future U.S. policy as well as responses from Seoul and Tokyo.

Decades of war and economic mismanagement have left Vietnam impoverished and exhausted. But any projections of political and security configurations in Southeast Asia must consider the possible futures of Vietnam. Depending on the outcome of ongoing debates within its leadership, Vietnam may eventually find itself able to improve relations with its neighbors. This potential, in turn, will influence the longer-term patterns of alignment in Southeast Asia, perhaps testing ASEAN's capacity to remain an effective instrument of intraregional policy formulation.

Reshaping U.S. Security Arrangements: The Effects of Domestic Political Change

As the United States seeks to fashion new mechanisms for security consultation and cooperation, the policy predispositions of new generations of regional leadership will prove a pivotal variable. The degree to which regional elites demonstrate political acumen and internal cohesion will undoubtedly affect each state's capacity to conceptualize and manage its larger security requirements.

The Philippines presents an especially salient and inauspicious example in its recent refusal to continue U.S. basing arrangements. Although disputes between Manila and Washington had already degraded the long-term value of the bases to American defense planners, the final outcome demonstrated the inability of Filipino leaders

to undertake reasoned deliberations of their long-term stake in close relations with the United States.

In other cases, democratization and enhanced nationalism have had a much healthier impact, manifesting national aspirations to a fuller say in the country's future policy directions. For example, the assumption of increased command responsibilities by South Korean military leaders reflects an intention and ability to work collaboratively with senior American officers to reshape the modalities of the U.S.–South Korea alliance.

The United States must prepare to face much greater concern about sovereignty and accountability in relation to its military presence in various national settings. It must expect demands for fuller disclosure of U.S. weapon capabilities (including the nuclear dimension), sensitivities over American control of real estate, concerns about the environmental effects of U.S. military activities, and lingering fears in some countries that the U.S. presence could introduce out-of-area security problems to locations otherwise not subject to them.

The larger challenges for various regional states, however, concern their relations with one another. This is particularly relevant to Southeast Asia. In Northeast Asia, longstanding bilateral alliances and a still-dominant U.S. presence restrain impulses in Korea and Japan that could undermine their relations with one another. But among the ASEAN states, highly complex and ambiguous patterns are at work. American forward-deployed power in Southeast Asia remains very limited. In tacit recognition of this fact, various ASEAN members in the late 1980s unobtrusively initiated major new arms acquisition programs that will enable them to pursue more fully their own security objectives in the 1990s. At the same time, different ASEAN members are tentatively expanding their defense cooperation, including intelligence sharing, joint exercises, and increased use of one another's military facilities.

In a basic sense, however, the strategic perspectives of the ASEAN states remain sharply divided between Indonesia's maritime orientation, with its greater long-term concerns about Chinese power, and the more continental perspectives of Thailand and Singapore, which find expression in different perceptions of external threat. At the same time, the disparities in the size, capabilities, and internal situations of various ASEAN states impart quite different security needs. In a post–Cold War environment, with fading concerns about Vietnamese expansion, these differences in perspective will pose a continuing challenge to the capacity of the ASEAN states to artfully mute their differences and devise a broader concept of regional inte-

gration. This is the complex web in which the United States must seek a security role commensurate with its capabilities and appropriate to future regional realities.

TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The Pacific has entered an era that promises uncertainty as well as great opportunity. The United States retains a large stake in this future, and it seeks to be fully engaged with regional states in the process of change. But four major policy factors are redefining the potential dimensions and scope of the U.S. regional security role: (1) the perception of threat has been radically altered, (2) U.S. defense resources are contracting, (3) the United States is expecting increasingly prosperous allies to pull more of their own weight, and (4) the security outlook in less stable regions appears more threatening, thus warranting an enhanced commitment of U.S. military attention and resources to other areas. The Gulf War and its aftermath vividly capture the last factor. Development of viable long-term security arrangements for the Persian Gulf will directly impinge upon the deployment of U.S. Pacific-based forces. At the same time, the enhanced importance of prepositioning of equipment and materiel for such contingencies underscores heightened U.S. expectations of its regional allies. In the context of a greatly heightened U.S. emphasis on regional military contingencies, therefore, U.S. political and military understandings in emergencies become more rather than less important, emphasizing the inclusive, integrated character of future U.S. regional defense policies.

These observations illustrate the complex demands imposed by the new strategic realities. Most states in Asia and the Pacific want the United States to assume a leading role, but in a collaborative context. Even as President Bush has noted "a disproportionate [American] responsibility for the kind of military action in pursuit of freedom and against aggression," this responsibility cannot be pursued unilaterally. The United States alone has the capability to bring power to bear at great distance, but this ability also depends on understandings and bargains reached with regional allies and security partners. There is an urgent need for a new strategic vocabulary and corollary ideas and practices appropriate to a world without a single central threat, where highly varied regional threats seem likely to preoccupy American defense planners, and where political and security interactions will prove increasingly complex and multifaceted.

One possible strategic concept for the future U.S. regional security role would be a policy of "proportional engagement." We believe this

concept accords well with the emergent U.S. regional defense strategy, first articulated by President Bush in his Aspen speech of August 1990. This concept is not focused exclusively on a narrow range of existing threats, but instead seeks to allow for a more diverse range of possibilities (including new forms of security cooperation) that cannot be foreseen at present. Thus it incorporates a wide spectrum of U.S. roles, interests, and capabilities relevant to the challenges and opportunities that could influence longer-term U.S. policy choices. This strategy seeks to encompass (1) a capability to respond to specific military threats that may persist or could emerge in the future, (2) the enhancement of working partnerships with Pacific Rim states that would permit policy coordination across a broad range of political, economic, and security scenarios, (3) embedding available U.S. military capabilities within a broader array of policy instruments, (4) channeling U.S. defense resources into those areas where the United States possesses capabilities not available to its regional security partners, (5) wherever possible, achieving "fungibility" of forces across the full range of circumstances where important U.S. interests could be engaged, and (6) imparting flexibility in planning for the uncertainties and unknowns that could affect longer-term U.S. regional security requirements.

In its most elemental sense, proportional engagement assumes a future where the capacity to adapt and respond—including to radical or discontinuous scenarios that are not now readily predictable—will be crucial. Regional states are seeking to secure their own interests and plan for the longer term; they expect the same from the United States. The United States cannot anticipate all potential political and security alignments that will shape Asia's future. But the United States must be able to impart now that it is committing resources for the longer term. This commitment should be based on an intrinsic stake in the region's future, not driven disproportionately by any present or prospective threat.

Absent such a commitment, the United States cannot expect to be fully credible in influencing the perceptions and longer-term calculations of the states of the region. Proportional engagement, therefore, is a means to an end. The lack of specificity in this concept is deliberate. The United States knows that the Pacific matters deeply to long-term American interests, and that military power will be part of this calculus. Proportional engagement is intended to underscore America's commitment to the region without overcommitting to a specific course of action; in essence, it is the ticket of admission to participate in the Pacific's future.

Toward this end, the United States needs to clarify political and security expectations with respect to U.S. views of its regional partners, regional partners' views of the United States, and regional states' views of one another. This analytic task has begun with the concepts outlined in the DoD *Strategic Framework*. To consider these issues further, we need to turn attention to various possible force mixes and levels, and how they will interact with future security requirements.

SIX FORCE POSTURES

In this report we evaluate six alternative representative U.S. force postures for the Asia Pacific region. The postures are neither predictions nor objectives. Rather, they reflect six possible alternative states of the world, defined in U.S. Pacific force posture terms, that span the range of potential regional security and U.S. policy environments. One of the postures (Posture B) reflects existing U.S. policy, as embodied in the force levels specified in the East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI). The other postures do not reflect current U.S. policy, and should therefore be viewed as analytic devices.

The postures are based on decrements and other variations to the 1990 Future Year Defense Plan (FYDP). Few observers project a larger force structure over the next decade. The appendix provides an overview of the postures.

Posture A: The Cold War Force. A projection of the PACOM forces, *as they existed in July 1990,* into the future, allowing for the personnel reductions announced by Secretary of Defense Cheney in the spring of 1990 (Phase I of the DoD *Strategic Framework*). Deployment and rotation patterns remain unchanged. Although this posture no longer reflects U.S. policy, it is employed in this study as the "baseline case" for analytic purposes.

Posture B: The Base Force. A 15 percent force reduction from Posture A. This force roughly approximates the current FYDP base force. Its deployment and rotation patterns approximate current practice. In keeping with the DoD *Strategic Framework,* some deployed naval and air forces are retained to offset larger decreases in deployed ground forces. As noted above, this posture reflects existing U.S. policy, as represented by the EASI force levels.

Posture C: Reduced Base Access Force. This force is similar to Posture B in size but assumes an extensive withdrawal from foreign bases. The force relies almost entirely on bases in U.S. sovereign or controlled territory.

Posture D: Pacific Swing Force. This force is comparable to the Posture B force, but it assumes a long-term commitment of U.S. military forces to the Persian Gulf. USPACOM forces supporting USCINCENT are smaller than USPACOM forces deployed to USCENTCOM in support of Desert Storm, but larger than the commitments undertaken in 1990 prior to Operation Desert Shield.

Posture E: Lower Budget Force. This force is reduced by 35 percent from the Posture A force. It incorporates some of the more severe force reduction recommendations suggested by some in the Congress. While foreign base access is available to support customary force deployments and rotation patterns, the size of the reductions implies some alterations and reduction in security commitments. As with other alternative postures, deployed air and naval force levels have been maintained at levels greater than the ground component.

Posture F: Lower Budget Swing Force. This force is a combination of Postures D and E. It is a 35 percent smaller force than the baseline force of Posture A, and it is deployed to support the commitments implicit in Posture D.

To supplement the postures, we examined a large number of policy and program initiatives. These initiatives were then pruned to 12 to comprise a core set. Since the time that we began to study these initiatives, several (most prominently President Bush's September 1991 changes to U.S. theater nuclear weapons policy) have been explicitly adopted as official U.S. policy. Our purpose in examining them is to reaffirm their appropriateness in the context of ongoing changes in U.S. security strategy.

1. Adopt a "proportional engagement" strategy
2. Foster a nuclear-free Korea
3. Foster confidence-building measures (CBMs) in Korea
4. Reorient U.S. regional base and support structures
5. Revise U.S. theater nuclear weapons policy
6. Increase regional prepositioning of U.S. equipment
7. Adjust forward carrier battle group basing and deployment patterns
8. Shift some military missions to allies
9. Adjust theater command structures

10. Employ more nonforce military capabilities to substitute for forward force deployments
11. Employ innovative force deployment and substitution concepts
12. Establish a security consultation arrangement in Southeast Asia

The initiatives are not necessarily recommendations. Rather, they are options that might enhance the performance of individual postures under selected conditions, measured in terms of the regional responses they engender and whether they improve contingency performance at lower force levels.[1]

REGIONAL RESPONSES TO ALTERNATIVE FORCE POSTURES

The six postures and the policy and program initiatives provide the basis for analyzing regional responses to the future U.S. security role. The intent of the analysis is to determine how friends and potential foes might respond to variations in U.S. force postures, and to recommend specific policy and program initiatives that might facilitate U.S. policy interests and objectives by reducing any adverse effects on regional stability of a particular change in posture.

Because of the major differences in the security environment between Northeast and Southeast Asia, the response analysis addresses these regions separately. For each major state in both regions, the analysis of response includes an external dimension—How will a reduced U.S. forward military presence affect security perceptions and behavior?—and an internal dimension—What will be the domestic political consequences of varying levels of U.S. presence? The net balance of external and internal costs and benefits is variable over time, sensitive to the size and character of the U.S. presence, the pace of posture and initiative implementation, and to other developments in the region.

Northeast Asia

Despite the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Northeast Asia will continue to present a wide range of significant security concerns. Of these, the fear of a remilitarized Japan will likely prove most impor-

[1]The reader is advised to unfold the appendix for ready reference in reading the remainder of this summary.

tant over the long run, given Japan's emergence as a global economic force and its increasing desire to play a more significant political and diplomatic role in many areas crucial to Asian interests. This will be especially true if Korea is peacefully reunified and the end of communism in the former Soviet Union leads to significant reductions in Russian Far East forces and a diplomatic breakthrough in Russo-Japanese relations. Under such conditions, regional states will view the growth of Japanese power as the central security concern in Northeast Asia, supplanting the former Soviet-American rivalry and the prospect of renewed warfare in Korea as the foremost security preoccupation in the area.

In such an environment, there will be less need to maintain Cold War levels and dispositions of U.S. forces in Northeast Asia. Yet the continuation of a strong U.S.–Japan strategic alliance and the maintenance of some level of visible U.S. military presence will probably remain central to the security calculations of Asian Pacific states. In the view of many regional states, only the United States, through its continued military engagement, can serve as a check against the possibility of a remilitarized Japan and a guarantor of overall balance and stability in a rapidly changing setting.

Scenarios for Korea's future entail a diverse range of possibilities. In several such scenarios, the reunification process will prove far more tumultuous within the region than German reunification has proved in Europe. Moreover, the emergence of a unified, economically strong Korea could bring on a new era of competition to replace the tensions of the Cold War, centered on the possible advent of intense economic and diplomatic rivalry with Japan and the revival of historical suspicions of China and Russia. Instability would become all the more likely if a unified Korea saw the need to develop a nuclear weapons capability.

For U.S. allies like Japan and South Korea, such uncertainties clearly argue in favor of continued close political and military links with the United States, including a long-term U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia. Even for states whose views of the United States are currently more complex or even oppositional (i.e., North Korea, China, and the former Soviet Union), the Japan factor, growing internal problems, and the likelihood of significant changes in the overall regional environment all underscore the need to avoid sudden, destabilizing external shifts, including shifts in military force levels. China and Russia in particular may increasingly recognize the positive role played by U.S. regional forces.

However, the ability of Japan and South Korea to support a continued U.S. military presence is challenged by internal political forces. Significant segments of the public in both countries (but particularly in South Korea) are becoming more restive over a highly visible U.S. presence and the continuation of a predominant U.S. security role. This problem will be partially alleviated by President Bush's September 1991 decision to remove all land-based and sea-based short-range nuclear weapons from overseas U.S. military facilities, which effectively eliminates the nuclear issue as a major source of public criticism. But concerns will remain about the future size and role of the U.S. military presence. Moreover, the increasingly serious bilateral economic conflicts between the United States and its major Asian trading partners, along with apparent inconsistencies in U.S. policy, further complicate this situation. The challenge facing the United States, therefore, is to make it easier for regional allies and friends to deal with their domestic critics, but to do so without jeopardizing needed military capabilities and security arrangements in the region.

Declines in the U.S. force posture to the base force (Posture B) and Pacific swing force (Posture D) levels appear consistent with the internal and external requirements and expectations faced by Japan and South Korea in the near term. But there will probably be growing internal pressures for further U.S. reductions over the medium to long term, particularly if the Russian and North Korean threats decline significantly or disappear. This likelihood strongly suggests the use of compensating initiatives designed to lessen public criticism, or the eventual implementation of greater overall reductions in force levels.

The postures that posit a minimal forward-deployed presence in Northeast Asia (Postures E and F) or the virtual withdrawal of all forward-deployed U.S. forces in the western Pacific (Posture C) would greatly reduce South Korean and Japanese domestic criticism of the U.S. presence. However, the internal political advantages of these shifts would not outweigh the security disadvantages brought on by a dramatic reduction of a high-profile, forward-deployed U.S. presence. Such changes would call into question the seriousness of America's overall commitment to regional security as well as its ability to intervene effectively in a crisis, possibly prompting destabilizing responses from both South Korea and Japan, particularly under Posture C.

A range of compensating initiatives could significantly reduce both South Korean and (especially) Japanese anxieties and avoid the most extreme adverse reactions (such as a Korean conflict), especially if the

postures were implemented gradually over the medium to long term. But even under such conditions, and assuming a generally benign regional security environment, there would be challenges to a successful implementation of all three force reduction postures with accompanying initiatives. Moreover, successful implementation would still not eliminate other risks, such as an accelerated arms race in Northeast Asia and a more assertive Chinese foreign policy. Even with compensating initiatives, Posture C would be particularly unpalatable to Tokyo and Seoul, possibly leading to strategic realignments contrary to U.S. interests. Postures E and F would be less destabilizing.

The former Soviet Union, though beset by enormous and growing internal difficulties, might be tempted to try to take advantage of any sizable reduction in U.S. presence, as in Postures C, E, or F. However, instead of obtaining an opportunity for a political breakthrough in the Asia Pacific region, Russia would most likely be forced to contend with major regional instabilities that would undermine its initiatives. Although Russian diplomatic options may be enhanced in such an environment, its actual leverage in dealing with regional states would likely be very low, particularly if Russia itself implements major force reductions in Northeast Asia and its economy remains weak.

Indeed, it appears very likely that economic constraints alone will compel the former Soviet Union to reduce its military forces facing Japan; such a trend could further accelerate if Russo-Japanese economic and diplomatic ties expand significantly. The magnitude and speed of such reductions will probably be greater if the United States acts independently to make additional reductions in its forward-deployed forces in the western Pacific. Russian reformers will probably seek to use U.S. force drawdowns or changes in U.S. strategy to press for more substantial decreases in its own Far Eastern forces, in order to free resources for use in the crisis-ridden civilian economy. The effect would be to further diminish the role of the defense establishment in Russian Far East policymaking.

Assuming a continuation of current internal political trends, the Russian republic might eventually alter the longstanding Soviet opposition to the presence of U.S. forces, and may even openly recognize the value to the region of some level of forward U.S. presence, particularly in Japan. Such a development would mean revision or even abandonment of the past Soviet strategy of pressuring for continued U.S. force reductions in Asia and the Pacific through self-serving proposals for demilitarization and arms control agreements, nuclear-free zones, confidence-building measures, and arms freezes between U.S.

and Soviet forces. However, given the exceptional fluidity in Russian internal politics, conclusive judgments about the prospects for such change are not possible.

Overall, Russian military attitudes and behavior in Asia and the Pacific will almost certainly become more passive and nonthreatening. Economic and diplomatic issues will come increasingly to the fore, and any provocative Russian military actions would probably be taken only in response to unexpected moves by other states. As a result, the Russian factor in Northeast Asian security calculations will likely diminish during the next 10 to 15 years, unless the notion of a multilateral security arrangement in the region gains more widespread acceptance. Even in that situation, the Russian role might be collaborative rather than competitive with the United States.

This positive assessment will probably prevail under most of the possible regional futures sketched above. However, a very different set of motives and perceptions could emerge if authoritarian rule resurfaced in Russia during the next 10 to 15 years. Such a turn of events might translate into attempts to improve the former Soviet Union's deteriorating strategic position and a more militant Russian stance toward the Asia Pacific region. This would undoubtedly intensify both Japanese and South Korean security concerns. But such a conjunction of events seems improbable.

China sees security advantages in a continued U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia (though it does not say so publicly), because its real long-term worry is Japan. Thus, its evaluation of the U.S. force presence would largely hinge on what the level and rate of change of U.S. forces imply for future Japanese behavior. Already worried by Japan's growing military capabilities and its increasingly independent diplomatic policy, the Chinese would respond strongly to any attempt by Tokyo to develop independent or offensive military forces as a result of Postures C, E, or F, possibly resorting to an array of actions destabilizing to the region (including Southeast Asia). Moreover, the chances for such an adverse response could increase as a result of China's internal political struggle. New instability and uncertainty in the region could encourage hardline factions in China to push for a more assertive foreign policy line, with Japan the most probable target, or to support Pyongyang in an escalating confrontation with Seoul. Under such conditions, China might respond far more negatively to the presence of U.S. forces.

In Beijing's view, current or slightly reduced levels of U.S. presence (Postures A, B, and D) based on U.S. security arrangements with

Tokyo would make any future Japanese threat to China more manageable and thus lower the likelihood of adverse Chinese responses. China is not likely to welcome the prospect of a single superpower in the Asia Pacific region, but it will probably prefer to face a relatively benign U.S. "threat" instead of an uncertain and potentially much more worrisome Japanese challenge.

Beijing's plans for military development also influence regional perceptions of the U.S. presence. China is seeking to achieve a modest power projection capability by upgrading its air and naval forces. Chinese security concerns have shifted from territorial defense against a Soviet invasion to the greater likelihood of involvement in low-intensity, limited local wars, demanding small, rapidly deployable, and highly trained forces. This shift has prompted serious concerns in Southeast Asia (see below). It has also raised some fears in Taiwan. If China's relations with Taiwan deteriorate, or if a more militant foreign policy line emerges in Beijing, the Chinese may be tempted to use their improved power projection capabilities to threaten the island. Such a decision would thereby alter China's tacit support for the U.S. military presence in the western Pacific.

Yet it is by no means certain that the rise of hard-liners or the development of a limited power projection capability would cause a major shift in current Chinese estimates of the U.S. presence. Instead, Beijing's continued high priority on social order and economic development, and the widespread recognition within China of the value of maintaining cooperative relations with neighboring states, could sustain the stabilizing value that Beijing attaches to the U.S. military presence.

Indeed, a more rigid, hardline government in China may prove short-lived. The passing of the aged powerholders currently in control of the Chinese political regime may inaugurate a political and economic transition to a more open (and perhaps more decentralized) system. In this case, as in the former Soviet Union, Chinese attention will most likely be drawn inward as leaders attempt to cope with major social, political, and economic problems. Under such a scenario, China will be even less likely to engage in provocative external behavior. On the contrary, Beijing will probably seek to expand its ties with the West and otherwise act to ensure the maintenance of a benign regional environment. And, in this case, China will have even greater reason to recognize the positive role played by U.S. military forces.

Southeast Asia

In Southeast Asia, the U.S. forward presence is less of an issue. There are few U.S. bases in the region, and the only external security threats are minor. Nevertheless, most Southeast Asian nations want the U.S. presence (with as few visible bases as possible), to head off potential longer-term threats from China and Japan and to maintain domestic and intraregional political and economic stability. Threats from the former USSR and India, although of some concern, are not viewed as credible in the near term.

The U.S. presence also serves to restrain centrifugal forces within ASEAN, which stem largely from continental-versus-maritime security orientations, and it reduces incentives for Indonesia or Thailand to contemplate asserting hegemonic influence. It also inhibits Vietnamese behavior that could undermine regional peace and stability. Moreover, Southeast Asian security perceptions are heavily influenced by events in Northeast Asia. If the latter is stable and the U.S. plays a stabilizing role, most major Southeast Asian security problems are diminished substantially. For this reason, most Southeast Asian countries will probably continue to support a strong U.S.–Japan alliance and a visible U.S. force presence in Northeast Asia.

However, the duration, form, and location of the U.S. presence in Southeast Asia is a subject of continuing controversy. This reflects the varying effects of major social and political trends linked to increased nationalist sentiments, religious tensions (including those associated with Islamic majorities in such states as Indonesia), the general reduction of superpower contention in the area, varying medium- and long-term geostrategic perspectives, and continued desires within ASEAN for a neutral, nonnuclear region free from outside political and military interference.

Although the ASEAN states recognize the importance of the Philippines bases to regional security, most of them will probably continue to regard the U.S. base presence as a bilateral issue, to be resolved by Manila and Washington. Most states would like the Subic naval base to remain, to avoid the problem of locating a U.S. presence elsewhere in the region. Since the bases are to be closed, most ASEAN states will want the process to be gradual. This will give time to wean the Philippines economy from U.S. military support, allow for the possible construction of alternative facilities, and permit ASEAN states to build up their own maritime capabilities to cope with potential contingencies.

The September 1991 rejection by the Filipino senate of the proposed U.S.–Philippines base treaty and the Aquino government's decision not to hold a national referendum to overturn the senate's action virtually assures that most U.S. forces will be withdrawn from the Philippines within a few years. Despite private U.S. assurances that maximum efforts will be made to carry out the withdrawal in a nondisruptive manner, such a development will almost certainly force an acceleration of the above adjustment process. This could increase regional anxieties.

The negative impact of these developments would be magnified if few compensating initiatives were implemented during the withdrawal period, the U.S.–Japan relationship worsened considerably, and China and India became more assertive toward the region. Such a worst-case scenario, however, is highly unlikely; thus a rapid closure of U.S. bases in the Philippines, while certainly not beneficial to regional stability and U.S. interests, will probably not produce catastrophic consequences. Indeed, the worst consequences of an accelerated U.S. withdrawal may take place within the Philippines.

The elimination of U.S. bases in Southeast Asia could produce much greater instability, however, if combined with major reductions in or the elimination of the U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia (Postures E, F, or C). Such an overall shift could greatly aggravate existing security divisions within ASEAN and prompt accelerated air and naval buildups and heightened fears of Japanese and Chinese interference in the region. The use of selected policy and program initiatives, gradually and systematically implemented in coordination with a long-term U.S. withdrawal, would reduce the likelihood of many of the more extreme consequences, while not eliminating all instability. But even under conditions of strong U.S. support and encouragement, and with the use of compensating policy and program initiatives, any expansion of Japanese military activities to compensate for the removal of U.S. bases from the western Pacific would be particularly unsettling to other states of the region.

The postures that posit a residual U.S. presence in Southeast Asia (Postures B and D) or that maintain current levels of presence (Posture A) would likely lead to minimal regional instability, particularly if accompanied by specific compensating initiatives. (Posture A, which posits the continuation of the 1990 U.S. military presence to at least the year 2000, is no longer a relevant possibility; as noted previously, we are employing it as a "baseline case" for analytic purposes.)

Were a Posture A scenario to persist, even in the near term, the effect would be to intensify public criticism of the continued U.S. presence,

not only in the Philippines but in Indonesia and perhaps Malaysia. The security benefits of a continued high-visibility U.S. military presence might be eroded significantly as a result of such criticism, especially if the United States were ultimately forced to take precipitate actions to reduce or alter its posture.

AN APPRAISAL OF REGIONAL RESPONSES TO U.S. FORCE POSTURE REDUCTIONS

A continued U.S. forward presence in the Asia Pacific region is needed to help sustain regional stability and to avoid unleashing regional forces that could lead to heightened tensions or even armed conflict. In terms of regional responses, however, the question of how much U.S. presence is enough cannot be determined exactly, given the enormous complexity and uncertainties of the future regional environment and the multitude of variables that will influence longer-term regional responses to changes in the U.S. force posture. Viewed in a medium- to long-term context, the optimum force posture is most likely to be somewhere between Posture B (base force) and Posture E (35 percent reduction): in other words, something close to Posture D (Pacific swing force). Of course, diminished threats to regional security or acceptance of larger risks (e.g., no multiple contingencies, betting on a quiescent Persian Gulf and North Korea) could alter the relative scope and scale of U.S. presence requirements.

Overall, except for the extremes in U.S. presence (Postures A and C), the extent of adverse regional responses to any force posture reductions will be sensitive to the effects of accompanying initiatives. The policy and program initiatives that would be most beneficial (some of which have already been undertaken) are those that reduce the visibility and intrusiveness of the U.S. military presence in regional states. But these initiatives must also provide clear indications of a continued U.S. security commitment as well as permit the reintroduction of major U.S. forces in the event of specific contingencies.

In South Korea and Japan, this calculus is central to the future need for and role of U.S. military forces. Although threats to the security of both countries could diminish in the future, strong security concerns persist in South Korea and Japan at present, demanding continued implementation of effective strategies linked to the U.S. presence. However, parts of their publics (particularly in South Korea) are becoming more restive over the visibility of the U.S. presence and a predominant U.S. security role. The challenge facing the United

States is to make it easier for regional leaders to deal with their domestic critics without jeopardizing needed military capabilities and security arrangements in the region.

FORCE POSTURE PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED CONTINGENCY SCENARIOS

Our analysis of regional responses focuses on deterrence and reassurance that contribute to regional stability. However, the United States must also maintain the capacity to act effectively if miscalculations occur and deterrence fails.

To assess the deterrence and warfighting potential of the alternative force postures, the analysis employs 11 scenarios. These scenarios are intended to be illustrative planning stimulants, not predictions. The scenarios need not be "right" in the form of the opponent faced, the circumstances and location of combat operations, and the exact character of U.S. responses, so long as the problems encountered and the range of required capabilities can shape (not define) the needed policies, plans, and programs.

For each scenario, force needs are drawn from previous analyses from a variety of sources (e.g., the annual Naval War College GLOBAL games) and from expert judgment. These force requirements are necessarily highly speculative, but they do suggest many of the needed capabilities. The force needs ("demand") associated with each scenario are compared with the "supply" provided by each alternative posture. Figure 1 outlines the scenarios and the judgments on force adequacy that result from the analysis.

The analysis shows that even the strongest posture (A) presents uncertainties in the Korean and Southwest Asian scenarios. Postures B/D (base force) reflect greater acceptance of risk but avoid the major inadequacies of Postures C, E, and F.

COSTING THE POSTURES

DoD does not cost regional force postures. There are many sound methodological, programmatic, and budgetary reasons for this lack of analysis. The report offers a combination of methodologies to provide some basis for representative comparative costing across postures. The comparative costs can be summarized as percentages of the 1990 (A) posture:

A. The 1990 force 100%
B. The 1991 FYDP base force 81–87%
C. The reduced base access force 80–86%
D. The Pacific swing (to the Gulf) force 75–87%
E. The low budget force (35 percent decrement from A) .. 64–78%
F. The low budget swing force (an amalgam of D and E) .. 65–78%

The variations in the data result from the use of different costing methodologies (e.g., bottom-up, top-down) and different readiness/deployment assumptions (e.g., day-to-day, reinforced). There are no significant savings associated with the reduced base access posture (C) compared to the base force posture (B). Real savings occur only at the Posture E and F levels, but they are gained at the expense of significant risks, a subject to which we now turn.

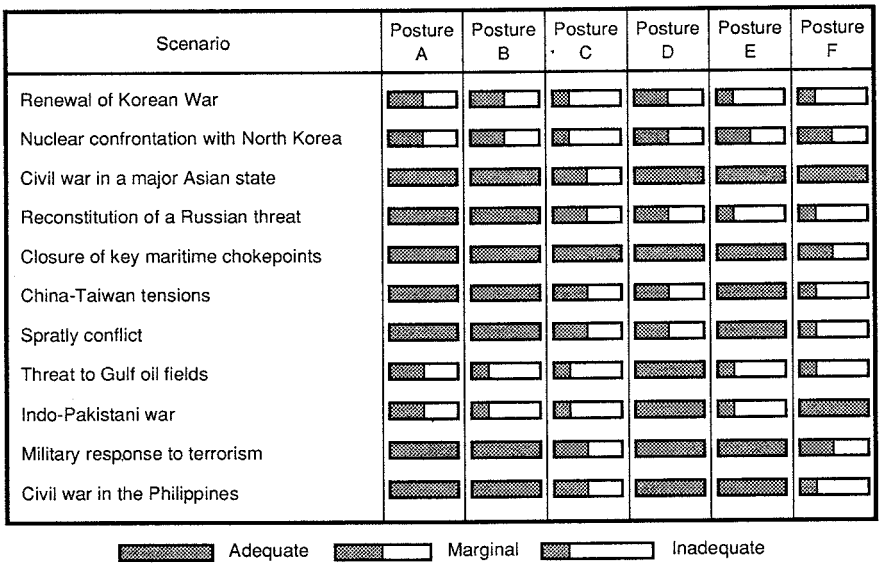


Figure 1—Adequacy of U.S. Force Commitment in Selected Scenarios

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE POSTURES

The posture assessment is based on a translation of national and regional objectives and strategies into a set of six required capabilities that serve as assessment criteria. These criteria indicate that the posture must be:

- Sufficient, in conjunction with allied forces, to deter military actions that would degrade regional stability and endanger U.S. interests.
- Sufficient, in conjunction with allied forces, to defeat military actions that would degrade regional stability or seriously jeopardize U.S. interests.
- Consistent with both global and regional political and economic realities.
- Consistent with U.S. domestic political and fiscal realities.
- Robust enough to provide a hedge against uncertainties and major failure of policy/strategy assumptions.
- Sufficient to permit the United States to retain, or regain, the political or military initiative and to assure or restore a beneficial regional equilibrium.

According to these criteria, Posture A (1990 force) scores high but suffers from the fatal flaw of not being in accord with U.S. domestic and some Pacific Rim realities. It is not at all clear that the current (or somewhat reduced) Asian Pacific base posture will remain viable, with increased host country opposition to U.S. bases or access in regional states. Moreover, Posture A may be unduly disturbing to China and to Russia, who might feel obliged to retain force levels and undertake a degree of modernization they might otherwise forgo.

Postures B and D score well (D being the Persian Gulf commitment version of the 1995 base force). Postures E and F (35 percent reduction from 1990 force levels) might be acceptable if the threats and regional security uncertainties diminish well below currently foreseeable levels. Posture C (withdrawal from foreign bases in the western Pacific) is not recommended under any foreseeable circumstances.

In the main report, R-4089/2-USDP, we present a variety of policy and program initiatives designed to mitigate the potential negative effects of U.S. force posture reductions. (The reader is encouraged to

consult the larger document for a more detailed presentation of these initiatives.) According to our assessment, the policy and program initiatives that would go far toward making Postures B or D the "security equivalent" of Posture A are

2,3. Confidence-building measures and nuclear arms control in Korea.

6. POMCUS or APS in Korea (with drawdown of 2nd Infantry Division), and maritime prepositioning to replace any Marine Corps units withdrawn from Okinawa.

7. Maintain carrier battle group basing overseas (increase if feasible).

11. Substitute Air Force/Army composites for naval deployments when needed.

Initiatives that have more general application include

12. A security consultation arrangement for Southeast Asia with the United States a member or observer.

4. Reorient U.S. regional base and support structures.

10. Employ more nonforce military capabilities to substitute in part for formal deployments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the main report, we present a range of policy recommendations that we believe are warranted in light of our analysis. The reader is encouraged to consult that document for fuller discussion. For present purposes, we summarize them briefly below.

The Strategic Framework and Associated Force Levels

Recommendation 1. Retain Postures B/D—at least in the mid term—as the focus for U.S. force-level, deployment, and basing decisions as they affect USPACOM. If the prospects for Asian Pacific political stability improve markedly and if the uncertainties in the regional political environment decrease, consider further decreases in posture to the D/E levels. Conversely, if stability is endangered by the emergence of a major hostile power in Asia, return to Posture A (Phase II).

Recommendation 2. Utilize "proportional engagement" as a candidate strategic concept to extend the DoD *Strategic Framework*. This

label suggests the need for involvement commensurate with the long-term U.S. stake in Asia's future. But the degree of commitment cannot be fixed; it must be tailored to resources, potential threats, and multiple roles and interests. At bottom, the United States seeks to signal to all that its power and its interests are engaged, with the scale and character of its involvement to be determined by specific circumstances and needs. The objective is not to leave regional states guessing about American intentions, but to avoid any implication that U.S. power in all forms is insufficiently committed to the region, or rigidly committed to a specific course of action. This will require a versatile and flexible force structure that is congruent with a much more unsettled, complex policy environment.

Threat Management

Recommendation 3. After consultation with the South Korean and Japanese governments, seek Chinese and Russian diplomatic support for the establishment of confidence-building measures on the Korean peninsula. If the United States and the other regional powers can press hard for a political settlement in Cambodia, similar pressure is warranted in Korea, where the vital interests of the major powers are more strongly engaged. The authors are fully aware that the South Korean government rejected such a "2 + 4" framework in the fall of 1991. We nonetheless believe there is substantial merit in proposing such a framework for confidence building and threat management. By deferring to their allies on the peninsula and not pushing more strongly for stabilizing measures, the major regional powers are pursuing the diplomatically easier path at substantial risk of a political-military explosion in Northeast Asia that would adversely affect them all (Phase II).

Base Access

Recommendation 4. Seek some U.S. role in the current Five Power Defense Agreement, perhaps initially as a "nonsignatory observer" (Phase II).

Nuclear Employment and Deployment Policies

Recommendation 5. Reappraise current U.S. policies that relate to antinuclear sentiment in the region. Such sentiment may retard future nuclear proliferation more than it hampers U.S. force posture. We believe Japan's "nuclearphobia" is of long-term benefit to the United States and the region generally (Phase III).

Role Specialization

Recommendation 6. During any U.S. force drawdown, preserve power projection capabilities at the expense of defensive capabilities (Phase II).

Force Deployments and Operations

Recommendation 7. When feasible, substitute deployable U.S. Air Force composite wing units and augmented amphibious ready group packages to replace carrier battle group deployments, should insufficient numbers of carriers be available (Phase II).

Recommendation 8. For every major Army unit withdrawn from Korea, replace it with a prepositioned set of equipment (Phase II).

Recommendation 9. If the Okinawa Marine Expeditionary Force is removed, it should be replaced (at a minimum) by an additional maritime prepositioning squadron to support a deployable CONUS-based brigade (Phase III).

Recommendation 10. Develop a new plan for regional exercises to fit changed regional circumstances and U.S. force posture. The principal U.S. objectives in the new plan would be to expand contacts with regional military leaders, gain contingent use of regional bases, and lay the basis for coordinated action if needed (Phase II).

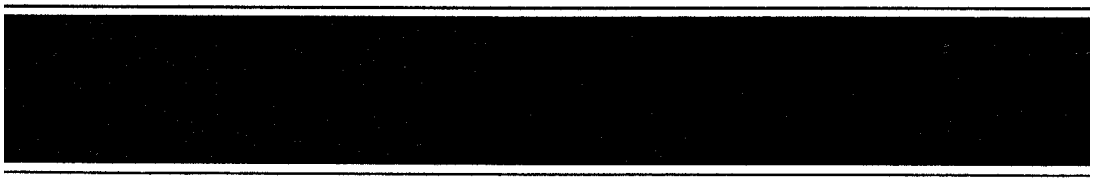
Programs

Recommendation 11. Support a major increase in the International Military Education and Training program to fully fund USCINCPAC-identified requirements (Phase II).

Recommendation 12. Undertake the necessary long-range planning to implement a distributed basing concept in Southeast Asia (Phase III).

Organizations

Recommendation 13. As forces are reduced in the Pacific, consider reorganizing the command structure in ways that provide natural focal points for regional security planning (Phase II).

Recommendation 14. Assess Desert Shield/Storm experience in combined and joint (particularly tactical air) operations for its relevance to changing USPACOM organizations and contingency plans (Phase II).

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