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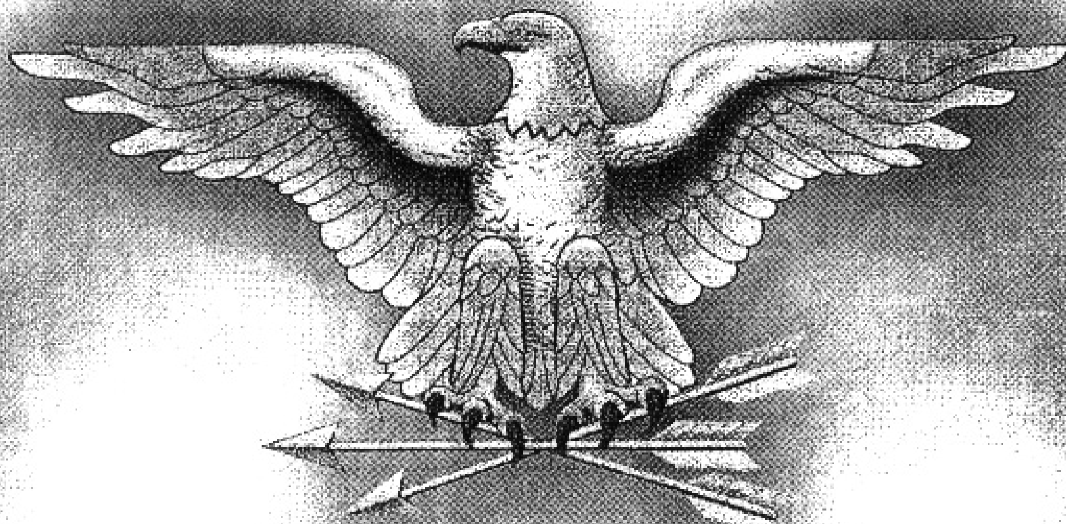
# PRESERVING PAX AMERICANA



## DEFENSE REFORM FOR THE UNIPOLAR MOMENT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# Summary

## *Preserving* Pax Americana: *Defense Reform for the Unipolar Moment*

For many years, the goal of defense reformers has been to make the Pentagon a more efficient organization. From the acquisition reforms of the 1980s to the multiple rounds of base closings through the early 1990s, the basic premise was that the American military was doing the right things but was doing them in wasteful ways, squandering taxpayer dollars in the process. This vision of defense reform is far too narrow to meet the new challenges that confront America's armed forces.

Much of the need for change in theAmerican defense posture stems from the far-reaching effects of the collapse of the Soviet empire and the coming of the "unipolar moment" of unrivaled American power. Accompanying this preeminent power has come a remarkable peace. The great nations of Western Europe—England, France, and Germany—have put an end to their traditional struggles for power, achieving unprecedented harmony and now increasing integration. Russia struggles to democratize, but Moscow's empire is smaller than it has been in four hundred years. The Middle East continues to boil, and the victory won in the 1991 Persian Gulf War has begun to fray, but the region's energy supplies flow freely around the world, largely thanks to U.S. protection. And there has been a dramatic flowering of democracy in East Asia, from Japan to Taiwan to the Philippines and onward.

Interwoven with these profound geopolitical changes are equally important changes in the technology of war-making, changes that will result not only in new kinds of weaponry but new organizations, tactics, and operational concepts. The widespread application of the microchip and other related information technologies is ushering a "revolution in military affairs." Improved accuracy, the competition between increasingly sophisticated sensors, and "stealth" technologies, the ability to strike at ever-longer ranges, and an emptier battlefield are but some of the aspects of this new paradigm of warfare.

If the Department of Defense is to be reformed to meet these new geopolitical and technological challenges, it must focus on four core missions:

- **Homeland defense.** America must defend its homeland. The new century has brought with it new challenges that will require a reassessment of an emerging global nuclear balance far more complex than the Cold War balance of terror. While reconfiguring its nuclear force, the United States must also counteract the effects of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction that may soon allow lesser states to deter U.S. conventional military action by threatening our allies or the American homeland itself.
- **Large wars.** Second, the United States must retain sufficient forces able to rapidly deploy and win multiple simultaneous large-scale wars and to be able to respond to unanticipated contingencies in regions where it does not maintain forward-based forces.
- **Constabulary duties.** Third, the Pentagon must retain forces to preserve the current peace in ways that fall short of conducting major theater campaigns. A decade's experience and the policies of two administrations have shown that such forces must be expanded to meet the needs of the new, long-term NATO mission in the Balkans, the continuing no-fly-zone and other missions in Southwest Asia, and other presence missions in vital regions of East Asia.
- **Transform U.S. armed forces.** Finally, the Defense Department must begin now to exploit the revolution in military affairs, sparked by the introduction of advanced technologies into military systems. This must be treated as a separate and critical mission worthy of a share of U.S. military force structure, defense budgets, and other resources.

Taken together, carrying out these four missions imposes upon the Pentagon a requirement for reform that rivals—if it does not exceed—that facing any other agency of the federal government. Unless the Defense Department undertakes more fundamental reform, focusing on what the military does rather than on how it does it, taking effectiveness rather than efficiency as its metric, America's position as the world's "sole superpower"—as history's sole global superpower—cannot be preserved.

# PRESERVING PAX AMERICANA

## Defense Reform for the Unipolar Moment

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For many years, the goal of defense reformers has been to make the Pentagon a more efficient organization. From the acquisition reforms of the 1980s to the multiple rounds of base closings through the early 1990s, the basic premise was that the American military was doing the right things, but it was doing them in wasteful ways—squandering taxpayer dollars in the process. This vision of defense reform is far too narrow to meet the new challenges that confront America's armed forces. Unless the Defense Department undertakes more fundamental reform, focusing on what the military does rather than on how it does it, taking effectiveness rather than efficiency as its metric, America's position as the world's "sole global superpower"—as history's sole global superpower—cannot be preserved.

Far more than any other agency of the U.S. government, the Pentagon faces new realities that challenge its past purposes and fundamental organizational precepts. The collapse of the Soviet empire raises basic questions about America's purpose in the world: should we continue to guarantee the general peace throughout the world, or should we seek a more restrained role, sharing the costs of security and the responsibilities of leadership? Having "contained" communism, should we now seek to expand the realm of liberal, democratic capitalism and our principles of individual political rights? Should U.S. troops be organized and trained solely for the purposes of fighting other powerful adversaries in large-scale wars, or should they be dispatched hither and yon on constabulary missions, policing the American security perimeter? And how should the Defense Department transform itself to exploit the so-called "revolution in military affairs," exploring the promise of information technologies and other technologies that are profoundly altering every aspect of human life?

These are questions that demand new forms of reform that go far beyond what most other government agencies must account for. For example, when Social Security reformers advocate partial privatization, they speak of marginal changes involving a tiny percentage of the program. Education reformers who argue for school-choice projects seek to offer an adjunct to the current school system, a competitive spur to better public education. The Defense Department, however, in seeking new methods, must reorient itself in more profound ways. To accommodate itself to the challenge of a rising China, for example, the Pentagon must replace a century's focus on Europe with a new focus on East Asia. This focus on a new theater will demand weapons systems and units that can operate over far greater ranges, without the support of a dense web of bases and supplies; simply getting to the battlefield will be as great a task as fighting once there. To deal with the lengthening list of peacekeeping duties, U.S. forces must learn to conduct

constabulary operations without sacrificing the ability to fight large-scale, high-technology wars when necessary. And new technologies are already calling into question the value of the major weapons systems of the twentieth century: heavy armored ground forces, air forces composed solely of manned tactical aircraft, aircraft carriers, and the like. To make matters worse, the Pentagon must sort through all these profound changes at the same time if it is to continue to provide the security for American geopolitical leadership.

## The Demands of *Pax Americana*

Much of the need for change in the American defense posture stems from the far-reaching effects of the collapse of the Soviet empire and the coming of what essayist Charles Krauthammer declared the "unipolar moment" of unrivaled American power. Indeed, by every measure—political, economic, military, cultural, ideological—of national power, the United States stands alone, not only in the world today but arguably in human history. America exercises geopolitical leadership in every region of the globe, and almost all the other great and wealthy powers are our very close allies. Economic globalization is mostly a code word for "Americanization" and dynamic, open markets. Despite growing problems and emerging challenges, U.S. conventional military forces now dominate those of any adversary, and again our allies account for the next-most-modern military forces. For better or worse, American culture, especially American popular culture, is pervasive; teenagers in Tehran wear their baseball caps backward. And American principles of inalienable individual political rights continue to find increasing acceptance.

Accompanying this preeminent power has come a remarkable peace. The great nations of Western Europe—England, France, and Germany—have put an end to their traditional struggles for power, achieving unprecedented harmony and now increasing integration. Russia struggles to democratize, but Moscow's empire is smaller than it has been in four hundred years. The Middle East continues to boil, and the victory won in the 1991 Persian Gulf War has begun to fray, but the region's energy supplies flow freely around the world, largely thanks to U.S. protection. And there has been a dramatic flowering of democracy in East Asia, from Japan to Taiwan to the Philippines and onward. Even Indonesia, not merely an East Asian nation but a largely Muslim country, has thrust up the first tender shoots of democracy amidst chaos.

Nevertheless, there are those who chafe at American power and are not contented by the American peace. Regional rogues probe for weaknesses in the American security perimeter and, if given the opportunity, will gobble up their neighbors as Saddam Hussein did to Kuwait in 1990, or simply slaughter them, as Slobodan Milosevic did intermittently for more than a decade. Those who recognize the folly of confronting U.S. conventional forces seek alternatives in terror—such as the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers complex in Saudi Arabia or the recent attack on the USS *Cole*—or in weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. And a rising China remains a deeply dissatisfied power, for all its desire to trade with the United States. Beijing sees not a *Pax Americana* but "hegemonism" and "the practice of power politics," with echoes of "economic colonialism."

Though today's rogues and tomorrow's potential rivals do not yet pose the sort or size of threat that the Soviet Union did, the defense of the American peace is more complex. For one, each of these adversaries and emerging challengers follows its own agenda; events in the Balkans are not connected to those in Beijing; Kim Jong-Il and Osama bin Laden do not synchronize their terror attacks. The Cold War was a global struggle waged in many theaters; today's adversaries may be just regional powers, but they are scattered throughout the globe. By containing the Soviet empire, we secured our interests and principles in a "wholesale" fashion; in the post-Soviet world, we practice "retail" security, countering each challenge separately.

The focus of American security concerns is also shifting. The Soviets were more than willing to make mischief anywhere and everywhere, from Vietnam to Africa to the Caribbean, but the central front of the Cold War was in Europe, where NATO and Warsaw Pact forces eyeballed each other across the Fulda Gap on the German plain. The budding strategic competition with China takes place in East Asia, with the Taiwan Strait perhaps emerging as the Fulda Gap of tomorrow.

## The Challenges of Transformation

Interwoven with these profound geopolitical changes are equally profound changes in the technology of war-making, changes that will result not only in new kinds of weaponry but new organizations, tactics, and operational concepts. The widespread application of the microchip and other related information technologies ushers in a "revolution in military affairs." Improved accuracy, the competition between increasingly sophisticated sensors and "stealth" technologies, the ability to strike at ever-longer ranges, and an emptier battlefield are but some of the aspects of this new paradigm of warfare. While U.S. armed forces have been pioneers of many of these emerging military capabilities, the rapid spread of the basic technologies, along with economic globalization and the proliferation of t

ditional weaponry, is creating opportunities for potential American adversaries.

While the Pentagon has enthusiastically adopted the rhetoric of transformation—"preparing now to meet the challenges of an uncertain future" was one of the three principles of the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)—and taken some small, halting steps toward a process of experimentation, there has been little measurable change in defense programs, budgets, and plans, let alone any changes in U.S. force structure or doctrine. There has been no serious effort to link the process of transformation to a larger strategic framework. Indeed, the 1997 National Defense Panel (NDP), a companion effort to the QDR that advocated the cause of transformation, argued that the United States, lacking a "peer" superpower competitor, could afford a period of "strategic pause" while exploring the promise of the revolution in military affairs. Even to its congressional sponsors, the NDP's approach seemed naively dismissive of the role of America as the guarantor of today's peace and security.

Absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—a twenty-first century Pearl Harbor—the process of transformation is likely to be a long one. Domestic politics and industrial policy will shape the pace and content of transformation as much as will the requirements of current missions that today require large, combat-ready forces. A decision to suspend or terminate aircraft-carrier production, for example, or one of the three main tactical aircraft programs now on the Pentagon's books, would cause great upheaval. Thus, reform through transformation must consist of knowing when to halt production of current-generation weapons and to shift to radically new designs. It must also recognize that new weapons have a life measured in many decades (a carrier can remain in service for as many as fifty years). Any thoroughgoing process of transformation must include the calculation of a transition period, during which U.S. forces operate a mixture of current weaponry as well as those with more radical designs, without sacrificing American military preeminence.

## Four Missions of Reform

If the Defense Department is to be reformed to meet the new geopolitical and technological challenges to the *Pax Americana*, it must focus on four core missions:

**Homeland defense.** America must defend its homeland. During the Cold War, nuclear deterrence still was the key element in homeland defense; it remains essential. But the new century has brought with it new challenges that will require a reassessment of the emerging global nuclear balance rather than a too-narrow focus on the bilateral balance with Russia. While reconfiguring its nuclear force, the United States must also counteract the effects of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction that may soon allow lesser states to deter U.S. conventional military action by threatening our allies or the American homeland itself. Of all the new and current missions for U.S. armed forces, this must have priority.

**Large wars.** Second, the United States must retain sufficient forces able to rapidly deploy and win multiple simultaneous large-scale wars and to be able to respond to unanticipated contingencies in regions where it does not maintain forward-based forces. This most closely resembles the traditional "two-war" standard that has been the basis of U.S. force planning over the past decade. Yet this standard needs to be updated to account for new realities and potential new conflicts.

**Constabulary duties.** Third, the Pentagon must retain forces to preserve the current peace in ways that fall short of conducting major theater campaigns. A decade's experience and the policies of two administrations have shown that such forces must be expanded to meet the needs of the new, long-term NATO mission in the Balkans, the continuing no-fly-zone and other missions in Southwest Asia, and other presence missions in vital regions of East Asia. These duties are today's most frequent missions, requiring forces configured for combat but capable of long-term, independent constabulary missions.

**Transform U.S. armed forces.** Finally, the Defense Department must begin now to exploit the revolution in military affairs, sparked by the introduction of advanced technologies into military systems. This must be treated as a separate and critical mission worthy of a share of U.S. military force structure, defense budgets, and other resources.

Today's armed forces are ill-prepared to execute these four missions. Over the past decade, the American homeland has become increasingly vulnerable: efforts to design and build effective missile defenses have been poorly managed and underfunded, and the Clinton administration has proposed deep reductions in U.S. nuclear forces without undertaking an analysis of the changing global balance of forces. The ability to conduct two major conventional conflicts has been eroded. While, broadly speaking, the United States now maintains sufficient active and reserve forces to meet the traditional two-war standard, this is true only in the abstract, under the most favorable geopolitical circumstances. The Joint

Chiefs of Staff (JCS) have admitted repeatedly in congressional testimony that they lack the forces necessary to meet the two-war benchmark as expressed in the war plans of the regional commanders-in-chief. During the air war over Kosovo, the JCS determined that the risk in meeting this standard was "unacceptable," meaning that the ability to fight and win two such wars in rapid succession was in doubt. Moreover, the Iraq and North Korea scenarios that form the canonical understanding of the two-war measure make no provision for emerging potential theater conflicts, such as the defense of Taiwan. The inability to meet the two-war standard is, in large part, related to the requirement for constabulary missions; unless this requirement is better understood—and after a decade's experience of these post-Cold War missions, there is ample data to analyze—America's ability to fight major wars will be jeopardized. The short shrift given the transformation process almost ensures that this ability will be in doubt for the foreseeable future, as well.

To meet the requirements of these four missions, the United States must undertake a two-stage process of reform. The immediate task is to rebuild today's force, ensuring that it is equal to the tasks before it: shaping the international environment to preserve the current peace and winning multiple, simultaneous theater wars. And these forces must be large enough to accomplish these tasks without running the "high" or "unacceptable" risks they face now. The second task of reform is to embark upon the path of transformation. As suggested earlier, this itself will be a two-stage effort; for the next decade or more, the armed forces will continue to operate many of the same systems now in service, organize themselves in traditional units, and employ current concepts of operation. This transition period, however, must be a first step toward a more substantial reform, one that is built upon a global system of missile defenses, maintains control of the new "international commons" of space and cyberspace, and creates new kinds of conventional forces.

## Reform for Today, Reform for Tomorrow

Executing these four missions successfully will require an immediate reinvestment to improve the capabilities and readiness of current U.S. forces and to preserve the basic compact between the American people and those who serve in the military. It will also require painful investment choices, producing only those weapons systems needed to maintain the superiority of American forces today but avoiding those that will delay or even preclude the broader reforms and changes required to transform those forces for tomorrow.

These reforms must begin with a reevaluation of U.S. nuclear posture. Conventional wisdom about strategic forces in the post-Cold War world is captured in a comment made by the late Les Aspin, the Clinton administration's first defense secretary. Aspin wrote that the collapse of the Soviet Union "literally reversed U.S. interests in nuclear weapons" and "today, if offered the magic wand to eradicate the existence and knowledge of nuclear weapons, we would very likely accept it." Because of America's conventional superiority—and the horrors of nuclear Armageddon—this sentiment is understandable. But the end of the Soviet empire has not severed the link between conventional military power and nuclear power; indeed, it is precisely because we hold such conventional-force superiority that smaller adversarial states, looking for an equalizing advantage, are determined to acquire strategic arsenals of their own. Deterring the increasing number of nuclear states will require a reliable and dominant U.S. nuclear arsenal.

While the formal U.S. nuclear posture remained relatively conservative through the 1994 Nuclear Posture Review and the 1997 QDR, and senior Pentagon officials testify to the continu ing need for deterrent nuclear forces, the Clint administration has taken repeated steps to un dermine the readiness and effectiveness of those forces. It has virtually ceased development of safer and more effective nuclear weapons, brought underground testing to a complete halt, and allowed the Department of Energy's weapons complex and associated scientific expertise to atrophy. The administration's stewardship of the nation's nuclear deterrent has been described aptly by Congress as "erosion by design." By contrast, the administration has put its faith in traditional, Cold War-style arms control measures, notably the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and new proposals for a third round of strategic arms reductions with Russia.

Indeed, of all the elements of U.S. military force posture, perhaps none is more in need of fresh thinking than America's nuclear forces. Nuclear weapons remain a critical component of military power, yet it is far from certain that the current U.S. nuclear arsenal is well suited to the needs of the emerging post-Cold War world. Today's strategic calculus encompasses far more factors than just the balance of terror between the United States and Russia. Nuclear force planning and related arms control policies must take into account a larger set of variables than in the past, including the growing number of small nuclear arsenals—from North Korea and Paki stan to, perhaps soon, Iraq and Iran—and modernized and expanded Chinese nucle

force. What should finally drive the size and composition of our nuclear forces is not numerical parity with Russian capabilities but maintaining American strategic superiority—and, with that superiority, a capability to deter possible hostile coalitions of nuclear powers. U.S. nuclear superiority is nothing to be ashamed of; rather, it will be an essential element in preserving American leadership in a more complex and chaotic world.

A second component in reforming the posture of U.S. forces today is to retain the capability to fight and decisively win nearly simultaneous major-theater wars. Indeed, this has been the one constant of U.S. defense planning for the past decade; it has become so familiar that it has also become contemptible—too often it is taken as indicative of a stodgy Pentagon conservatism. Yet its enduring value is that the two-war standard is based upon two important truths about the world today. First, the Cold War standoff between America and its allies and the Soviet Union that made for caution and discouraged direct aggression against the major security interests of either side no longer exists. Second, high-technology conventional warfare remains a viable way for dissatisfied states to seek major changes in the international order. Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait reflected both truths. The invasion would have been highly unlikely, if not impossible, within the context of the Cold War; and Iraq's army overran Kuwait in a matter of hours, a blitzkrieg that would have made Saddam Hussein the arbiter of world energy prices. These two truths in turn revealed a third: maintaining or restoring a favorable order in vital regions in Europe, the Middle East, or East Asia places a unique responsibility on U.S. armed forces.

Alas, formal Pentagon thinking about this requirement was frozen in the early 1990s as well. The experience of the Kosovo campaign—which imposed a theater-war-sized burden on the U.S. Air Force—suggests that, if anything, the two-war force-sizing standard is too low. Further, the obsession with the canonical scenarios of Iraq and Korea has stifled a broader approach to major-war requirements. Current analyses are both too optimistic and pessimistic, by turns. While the studies of the requirements to defeat a second Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia likely overestimate the necessary forces, the analysis of a North Korean attack on South Korea may well underestimate the difficulties of such a war. Moreover, past analyses have tended to define victory very narrowly—excluding the option of changing the regime in Baghdad or Pyongyang—and discounted any need for post-combat stability operations. Finally, new conflicts that would require very different kinds of forces, such as the defense of Taiwan, have had next to no analysis at all.

The Defense Department has been even slower to react to the realities of multiple and enduring peacekeeping, peacemaking, and other constabulary or "imperial policing" missions. The 1997 defense review paid lip service to such missions, which it dubbed "smaller-scale contingencies," recognizing that they would be the frequent and unavoidable diet for U.S. armed forces for many years to come: "Based on recent projections, the demand for [smaller-scale contingency] operations is expected to remain high over the next 15 to 20 years." At the same time, the QDR failed to allocate any forces to these missions, continuing the fiction that, for force-planning purposes, constabulary operations could be considered "lesser included cases" of theater-war requirements. The shortcomings of this approach were underscored by the experience of Operation "Allied Force," the 1999 war over Kosovo. Recognizing that the forces engaged there would not be able to withdraw, reconstitute, and redeploy to another operation—and because the operation involved such a large portion of the Air Force fleet—the Joint Chiefs arrived at their "unacceptable" risk evaluation.

Any serious reform of U.S. military force posture for the post-Cold War world must take into account the genuine needs of these constabulary missions. The problem cannot be solved by simply withdrawing from them, as some have proposed; ending the no-fly-zone operations over Iraq would hand Saddam Hussein a huge victory, and withdrawing from the NATO missions in the Balkans would not only jeopardize the Atlantic alliance but raise doubts about American leadership in Europe. Indeed, in every corner of the globe, our allies and adversaries wonder whether the United States will continue to shoulder the burdens of providing security guarantees and the mantle of leadership. Given the experience of the past decade, we can no longer pretend that these missions will soon be completed.

The difficulties of reforming and repairing the health of today's armed services pale in comparison to the need to transform them to meet the emerging strategic and technological world. It is no exaggeration to insist that the failure to remake U.S. military forces to meet these challenges will place the current *Pax Americana* at grave risk.

The process of transformation must begin with a serious effort to build a network of global missile defenses capable of protecting the United States, its allies, and forward-deployed military forces against the kind of limited strikes that are within the grasp of "rogue" states and

other adversaries. Such missile defenses—which will serve to prevent the United States from being deterred from performing its function as global superpower—must be a layered system of land-, sea-, air-, and space-based components.

It must be recognized that, while many of the required technologies to construct such a system have been understood for some time, the time needed to develop and deploy such a robust and global network will be measured in decades. Likewise, the costs of such a robust system will run into the hundreds of billions of dollars, far exceeding the cost estimates for the Pentagon's current missile defense design. But since the capabilities of this current system fall so far short of the strategic need, many of its elements represent unwise investments. Indeed, the Clinton administration's poor management of missile defense projects, combined with its fetishistic devotion to a strict construction of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, have meant that the past decade's efforts have been almost a waste. Particularly damaging was the decision in 1993 to terminate the "Brilliant Pebbles" program. This legacy of the original Reagan-era "Star Wars" effort had matured to the point where it was becoming feasible to develop a space-based interceptor capable of destroying ballistic missiles in the early or middle portion of flight, far preferable to systems that attempt to hit individual warheads surrounded by clusters of decoys on their final course toward their targets, as the current system does.

Reorienting missile defense programs in a way that will produce both a strategically and technologically effective solution will require focusing on a longer-term effort. While current "theater" and "national" missile defense programs can play a role in this larger architecture, far greater emphasis must go to space-based capabilities, both for reconnaissance and targeting as well as actual interception. Furthermore, these disparate elements must be linked together by a worldwide command and control network.

In this era of *Pax Americana*, it is we and our allies who have become the primary objects of deterrence, and it is states like Iraq, Iran, and North Korea who most wish to develop deterrent capabilities. Projecting conventional military forces or simply asserting political influence abroad, particularly in times of crisis, will be far more complex and constrained when the American homeland or the territory of our friends and allies is subject to devastating attack by otherwise weak but aggressive regimes capable of cobbling together a miniscule ballistic missile force. Reordering Pentagon priorities to build an effective, robust, layered, and global system of missile defenses is a prerequisite for maintaining American preeminence.

Now, no system of missile defenses can be fully effective without placing sensors and weapons in space. While this might appear to open a new potential theater of warfare, space, in fact, has been militarized for the better part of four decades. Weather, communications, navigation, and reconnaissance satellites are increasingly essential elements in U.S. military power; indeed, American forces are uniquely dependent upon space. The 1997 report of the NDP agreed: "Unrestricted use of space has become a major strategic interest of the United States."

Given the tremendous advantages derived from America's dominance of space, it is shortsighted to expect our future adversaries to refrain from attempting to offset or disable these capabilities. And with the burgeoning of space know-how and technology around the world, our rivals will also seek to acquire similar capabilities. Moreover, "space commerce" is a growing part of the global economy; in 1996, commercial launches exceeded military launches in the United States, and commercial revenues exceeded government expenditures on space. Today, more than 1,100 commercial companies across more than fifty countries are developing, building, and operating space systems. Many these commercial space systems have direct military applications, including information from global positioning system constellations and highly accurate imaging satellites. Thus, the U.S. Space Command has concluded that in the coming decades, "the space 'playing field' is leveling rapidly, so U.S. forces will be increasingly vulnerable. Though adversaries will benefit greatly from space, losing the use of space may be more devastating to the United States. It would be intolerable for U.S. forces . . . to be deprived of capabilities in space."

Thus, assuring "space control" will become a dominant element in the process of reforming and transforming U.S. military forces for the future. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to create an independent service within the Defense Department—call it "U.S. Space Forces"—to develop the systems, doctrines, and units required to carry out this mission. While Space Command, which is a "unified" command similar to U.S. Central Command or U.S. Pacific Command, has done an excellent job in developing the requirements for achieving space control, it is dependent upon the other services, and particularly the air force, to allocate the resources and manpower and develop the systems forecast by the command's plans. The result is that space requirements have taken a back seat to the mor pressing needs of the traditional services. U space capabilities have atrophied over the pa

decade and, as the SPACECOM long-range plan dryly admits: "When we match the reality of space dependence against resource trends, we find a problem."

Similarly, the challenge of controlling "cyberspace" is in many ways analogous to the challenge of space control. As with space, access to and use of cyberspace and the Internet are emerging elements in global commerce, politics, and power. Any nation wishing to assert itself globally in the twenty-first century must take account of this other new "global commons."

The Internet is already playing an increasingly important role in warfare and human political conflict. From the early use of the Internet by Zapatista insurgents in Mexico to the war in Kosovo, communication by computer has added a new dimension to warfare. In addition, the use of the Internet to spread computer viruses reveals how it may be possible to disrupt the normal functions of commercial and even military computer networks. Any nation that cannot secure the access of its citizens to these systems will sacrifice an element of its sovereignty and its power.

Taken together, the prospects for space war or "cyberspace war" represent the truly revolutionary potential inherent in the notion of military transformation. These future forms of warfare are technologically immature, to be sure. Yet it is also clear that for U.S. armed forces to remain globally preeminent and avoid an Achilles' heel in the exercise of their power, they must be sure that these potential forms of warfare favor America just as today's air, land, and sea warfare reflect U.S. military dominance.

Yet the most difficult challenges of military transformation lie in the dramatic changes presaged in the conduct of high-technology conventional warfare. For the better part of two decades, astute observers of military matters have forecast a revolution in military affairs brought about by the widespread application of information technologies and other advanced technologies to weaponry. Indeed, it was the theorists of the Soviet officer corps who best understood—and greatly feared—the effects of the advanced systems first fielded by the United States in the 1980s. Although U.S. armed forces have pioneered this revolution and still enjoy a large advantage in these technologies, the worldwide information revolution, fueled largely by civilian and business applications, is narrowing that advantage. At the same time, the process of transformation among the U.S. armed services has been stifled by the compounded effects of reduced U.S. defense spending on research and development and the high pace of current operations. Until the Pentagon treats transformation as an enduring mission worthy of a constant allocation of dollars and forces, its promise will be unrealized and today's combat dominance enjoyed by U.S. forces will erode.

In broad terms, the transformation of conventional combat forces is creating new capabilities in five areas: improved situational awareness and information sharing, the range and endurance of platforms and weapons, precision and miniaturization, speed and "stealth" characteristics, and automation and simulation. These characteristics will be combined in a variety of ways to produce new kinds of forces. New classes of commercial and military sensors—on land, on and under the sea, in the air, and in space—will be linked together to form dense networks that can be rapidly reconfigured to provide future commanders with an unprecedented understanding of the battlefield. Communications networks will be equally if not more ubiquitous and dense, capable of carrying vast amounts of information securely to provide widely dispersed and diverse units with a common picture of the battlefield. Conversely, stealth techniques and deceptive "information operations" will be applied more broadly, creating "hider-finder" games of cat-and-mouse between sophisticated military forces. The proliferation of ballistic and cruise missiles and long-range, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) will make it much easier to project military power. Munitions will become ever more accurate and new methods of attack—electronic, "non-lethal," or even biological—will be more widely available. Low-cost, long-endurance UAVs or even unattended "missiles in a box" will allow not only for long-range power projection but sustainment. Simulation technologies will vastly improve military training and planning.

It will require several decades for the process of transformation to unfold fully, but the art of warfare will be radically different as a result. Air combat may no longer be primarily fought by pilots manning tactical aircraft, sweeping the skies of opposing fighters, but a regime dominated by long-range, stealthy, unmanned aircraft. On land, the clash of massive, combined-arms armored forces may be replaced by the dashes of lighter, stealthier, and information-intensive units augmented by fleets of robots. Control of the sea may be determined not by fleets of aircraft carriers and other surface combatants, but by land- and space-based systems, forcing fleets to maneuver and fight underwater. Whatever the ultimate shape and direction of this revolution in military affairs, the implications for continued American military preeminence will be profound.

## Internal Pentagon Reforms

In addition to reorienting defense programs and service structures and units, achieving true reform will require the Pentagon to change its bureaucratic ways. However, these kinds of reforms will be built upon principles quite different from long-held reformist notions of the past; indeed, they will often be in conflict with them.

Consider, for example, the cherished impulse toward "jointness" and the condemnation of "interservice rivalries." While today's emerging technologies will make it easier for units of the individual services to work in closer coordination in combat and in training, the effects of revolutionary change are so profound that they will also transgress traditional definitions of service roles and missions. Consider the future of sea control. Although this has always been a job for the navy, employing surface warships and submarines, targeting surface forces from space, and striking them at long range with land-based forces might well make it a job for other services. The answers to these questions are best found by letting the services compete for these missions, rather than prematurely forcing a joint-service approach.

Though a full discussion of these issues would require a study all of its own, the reduced importance of the civilian secretaries of the military departments and the service chiefs of staff is increasingly inappropriate to the demands of a rapidly changing technological, strategic, and geopolitical landscape. The centralization of power under the Office of the Secretary of Defense and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Joint Staff, and the increased budgetary and institutional roles of the theater commanders-in-chief—products of Cold War-era defense reforms and especially the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986—have created a process of defense decision-making that often elevates immediate concerns above long-term needs. In an era of uncertainty and transformation, it is more important to foster competing points of view about how to apply new technologies and ideas to enduring missions and strategic requirements. In reality, "jointness" has too often become a prescription for a lowest-common-denominator approach. Recent calls for a "Goldwater-Nichols II" set of reforms—if meant to enforce ever-greater jointness—might well exacerbate these problems rather than solve them.

A second issue that has become a staple of the defense reform agenda since 1988 has been the effort to reduce the Defense Department's infrastructure through the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process. Since the end of the Cold War, there have been four rounds of base closures, and it remains an article of faith that the U.S. military establishment retains excess infrastructure. Though this may be true in the crudest terms, by far the largest problem of defense infrastructure is a matter of shape rather than size: the Cold War-basing structure is poorly positioned and its facilities are inadequate to the demands of today's requirements for global power projection. Consider just two examples. In Europe, U.S. bases are primarily in Germany and England, far from the focus of current operations in the Balkans. During the air war for Kosovo, the regional basing structure was overwhelmed by the influx of aircraft. Likewise, in East Asia, which is almost certain to be the primary theater of strategic competition in the twenty-first century, the United States has given up its facilities in Southeast Asia, and its bases in Korea and Japan are relics of wars fought fifty years ago. A task like the defense of Taiwan would be rendered immeasurably more difficult by the lack of bases in the region.

Further, the base-closure process in the United States has been almost exclusively regarded as an efficiency measure, with little thought given to the rapidly changing strategic landscape and the evolving needs of U.S. forces. For example, in the early 1990s, the air force was lauded for making aggressive base-closure decisions tha were intended to free up funds for its moderniz tion programs. However, in its rush to rid itself "excess" infrastructure, it eliminated one of its two bases for initial pilot training. When, by the end of the decade, the air force found itself with a serious and growing shortage of trained pilots, it found it lacked sufficient training infrastructure to remedy its problem; even had the service been able to recruit enough prospective pilots, it could not have trained them. Any future infrastructure reductions should be better considered in light of shifting needs, especially with regard to preserving training areas and retaining those facilities needed to help project forces around the world, and with less pressure on simply reducing costs. Given that it takes many years for base closings to produce any real savings, and indeed the process of closure and environmental restoration actually increases costs initially, the actual efficiencies from base closings are marginal to the overall defense budget. Finally, it must be remembered that the process of base closure complicates the politics of defense. After the 1995 round of BRAC, President Clinton was widely regarded as having manipulated the process for political advantage, and the atmosphere in Congress, where the political risks of base closings are most acute, was poisoned and remains so. Those who advocate infrastructure reductions must judge whether the political cost is worth the savings and whethe other substantial reforms are more compellin

Any thoughtful reform of internal Defen

Department practices also would consider the closely related questions of professional military education and civil-military relations, both of which require reexamination in light of new realities. With the end of the Vietnam War and the advent of an all-volunteer force (the largest and most professional standing army ever maintained by the United States in peacetime), America entered into a new relationship with its soldiers, sailors, pilots, and marines. While a full discussion of the armed forces in American society is beyond the scope of this essay, suffice it to say that this arrangement made clear that the long-held American ideal of the citizen-soldier no longer applied. Yes, reservists and National Guardsmen were ready to supplement active-duty forces in times of great crisis, but the link between the military and society at large, often refreshed during the period of conscription, was largely severed. And in the case of America's elite class, the tie was lost entirely.

The natural social tension that might have arisen (and has often arisen in the past between civil authorities and professional military men) was in part subsumed in the struggle of the Cold War, which, despite a variety of domestic political squabbles, enjoyed broad public support; those in the military "guarded the frontiers of freedom," and the public recognized and usually applauded that. But with the end of the Cold War an element of this clarity has been lost. The proliferation of constabulary missions has diverted the military's focus from simply "winning the nation's wars." Although U.S. armed forces must still prepare for combat, they also must police the perimeter in an increasing variety of places where the mission is inherently ambiguous and only dimly understood by the American people. These are the necessary tasks of preserving and extending American world leadership, but they impose new and uncertain demands on people in uniform while imposing no sacrifice on American society at large. If the burdens of securing the American peace are to be borne by only a few of us while the great majority reaps the benefits, great care must be taken to define a new relationship between soldier and society.

If the Defense Department is to continue to carry out the jobs that America is assigning to it, it must reform its educational and intellectual infrastructure to accommodate these new realities. Even time-honored institutions like the service academies ought to be reevaluated; not only is an increasing percentage of academy graduates failing to make much of a military career—a very poor return on the taxpayers' dollar—but the resulting diminishing percentage of officers commissioned from the Reserve Officer Training Corps is weakening the link between the military and American civil society. Likewise, the rest of society has little interest in military affairs and few recurring thoughts for the lives of those in uniform. This has a variety of deleterious effects. Even finding sufficient numbers of civilians with the experience and expertise to properly fill the hundreds of senior management positions in the Pentagon can be difficult, as the Clinton administration discovered to its sorrow and the department's distress in the early 1990s. This will likely be the case in the next Republican administration as well.

## Defense Budget and Program Reform

Yet as important as these internal defense reforms may be—and, to be sure, they dwarf the "reform agenda" of the 1980s, with its focus on weapons acquisition reform—it is the great task of reconfiguring U.S. military forces for new missions that lies at the heart of today's agenda. The force that won the Cold War and then fought Operation Desert Storm has been ruthlessly "downsized" and fecklessly employed on a variety of new missions, but little has been done to reshape that force or prepare it for the challenges of the next decades.

Defense reviews or reforms that fail to address these first-order questions can no longer be tolerated. The gap between U.S. defense strategy and military resources has been too great for too long; there is simply no further margin for error, as the JCS acknowledged when they concluded that the Kosovo war introduced an unacceptable level of risk to America's global security interests. The gap, which the JCS estimate at $30 billion per year, the Congressional Budget Office pegs at $50 billion per year, and independent estimates calculate as high as $100 billion per year (a figure also advanced by the retiring secretary of the Air Force), defies any reasonable hope for savings from internal Pentagon efficiencies and reforms, given an annual defense expenditure of less than $300 billion.

Thus any serious program of defense reform must begin by immediately rebuilding today's force in a variety of ways. These include improving combat training; improving the quality of military family life; purchasing replacement weapons systems for those being worn out faster than anticipated; ensuring that there are enough spare parts to operate those systems now in operation; and procuring selected new systems. Beyond increased defense spending, there are many ways to spend defense dollars more effectively. Internal defense reforms should focus first on is-

sues like the better positioning of U.S. forces for new missions in new areas of operation, and on creating new kinds of units capable of executing these constabulary missions without compromising the ability of the remainder of the force to fight and win large-scale wars. The Pentagon needs more money, to be sure, but it must spend what it has more wisely.

At the same time, the Defense Department must terminate new weapons projects that have no immediate operational or strategic requirement. Each service has in its procurement pipeline a whole generation of systems first developed during the late Cold War years. Some of these, like the F-22 fighter, may not be optimal for today's new missions and may be less central to the operations of a transformed force twenty years from now, but are still needed to bridge the transition period. Conversely, some new systems—notably the "CVX" aircraft carrier, the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), and the Crusader howitzer—appear to be of only marginal value for both today and the immediate future, yet represent roadblocks to true transformation. The JSF program, for example, would not only cost more than $200 billion but also would require the U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps to devote further tens of billions in related support costs. Most profoundly, it would commit the U.S. military to concepts of operation generally similar to those of the past fifty years for another fifty years to come. Whatever the final shape of the revolution in military affairs, it is highly unlikely to be dominated by short-range tactical aircraft flying off aircraft carriers, taking off from fixed air bases close to the front lines, or taking off vertically in close support of marine operations ashore.

## Politics of Defense Reform

In one other important way the defense reforms needed for the new century will surpass past rounds of Pentagon reform and reorganization: the intensity of the political turmoil they will spark. Whereas the Goldwater-Nichols reforms required the better part of the early 1980s, to debate and bring to pass changes of the scope described here would probably take several decades. A look at the politics of defense through the 1990s makes this clear.

After presiding over the collapse of the Soviet empire (and taking some initial steps to secure today's *Pax Americana*, such as ensuring that Germany was reunified while remaining within NATO) and winning the Persian Gulf War, George Bush lost the 1992 election to a rival who managed to turn Bush's experience in international affairs and as commander-in-chief into a liability. Bill Clinton, vowing to focus "laserlike" on the economy and domestic policy issues including health care, paid little attention to foreign affairs and seemed actively hostile to the U.S. military, advancing and then retreating on the issue of open homosexuality in the ranks. And though during the campaign he pledged to keep defense spending more or less at the levels planned for by the Bush administration, once in office Clinton quickly cut military budgets by an additional $120 billion and active-duty force levels by more than 200,000 troops.

With marginal exceptions, Congress accepted the administration's defense plans, even after Republicans won control of Congress in 1994. Many of the new members were, like Clinton, elected on domestic policy platforms; Republicans were often "cheap hawks"—their hawkishness applied to budgetary matters and federal spending—while Democrats wished to preserve what they could of social programs. As the partisan contest heated up through the Clinton years, from the government shutdown to impeachment, the argument rarely focused on defense and foreign policy. The occasional exceptions were brief debates over deployments of troops to the Balkans, the marginal increases in defense spending passed by Congress, and the like.

This past fall's presidential campaign marke a slight improvement. Along with the candidates' differences on what to do with budget surpluses, Social Security reform, and tax policy, President George W. Bush devoted constant effort to making national defense an issue. Indeed, his initial speeches and statements carried a promising note of reform, particularly in regard to military transformation. During his acceptance speech at the Philadelphia convention, however, Bush switched courses to highlight problems of current combat readiness. Vice President Gore responded by criticizing Bush's explication of the facts of the case and defending the U.S. military as "the best in the world." In short, neither candidate used his campaign to advocate vigorously for defense reform. And of course George W. Bush enters the White House after an excruciatingly close and bitterly fought contest, with Congress balanced on a knife-edge.

Thus, the ground has not been prepared for the thoroughgoing reforms suggested here—reforms that will challenge not only the American political status quo but the status quo within the Defense Department as well. To make up for the time lost during the 1990s will demand a high degree of presidential leadership and constant attention and expenditure of political capital even to initiate, let alone achieve, meaningful reform. In the context of a deeply divided federal gc ernment, this will be harder still.

## If Reform Fails

Despite the lack of attention paid to the new strategic and defense challenges of the new century, the current *Pax Americana* has proved surprisingly robust. Charles Krauthammer first wrote of the unipolar moment in the Winter 1990 edition of ***Foreign Affairs***; this "moment" is now into its second decade and third American president. Thus, by the time the Summer 1999 issue of ***International Security*** was published, William Wohlforth of Georgetown University could make a compelling case, in full-blown social-science fashion, that a unipolar world is uniquely stable, durable, and peaceful.

This does not mean, however, that today's American peace is self-policing and eternal. The demise of the Soviet superpower doppelgänger has freed regional rogues and would-be hegemons—Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gadhafi, Iranian mullahs, and Kim Jong-Il—from the constraints of the global, bipolar Cold War. And a rising China is very clearly a dissatisfied state, heightening its complaints about American "neo-interventionism," "neo-gunboat diplomacy," and "neo-economic colonialism." And, as argued earlier, the information technologies at the heart of the revolution in military affairs are increasingly widely available; they are a major force behind economic globalism. Even should the United States military broadly dominate the military revolution, so-called niche competitors will be able to develop unique kinds of new capabilities that may confound U.S. forces. In sum, the price for failing to reform the American defense establishment will be high.

The good news about the American peace is that its inherent stability and durability make its preservation and expansion a reasonable prospect. Though the Pentagon is sorely in need of funding increases, defense spending hardly needs to exceed 3.5 to 4 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. Thanks to the strength of the U.S. economy, rebuilding today's armed services and creating tomorrow's preeminent force will be relatively cheap, about two-thirds of the Cold War average. And the American peace rests upon other strong foundations, as well: our allies comprise the rest of the world's wealthiest and strongest nations, and they share the American political principles that give today's world order its unique moral force. In the end, we have the ability to preserve and extend this American peace, should we demonstrate the wit and will to remake our military establishment to meet its new missions.

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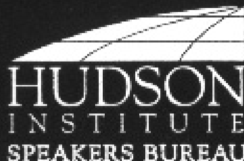


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Mr. Donnelly began his career as a journalist in 1978 at *The Journal* newspapers in the Washington, D.C. suburbs, and moved to *Army Times* in 1980. In 1985, he helped launch *Defense News*, becoming the paper's deputy editor, the number two position, in 1987. Later that year, he returned to *Army Times* as editor in chief. During his six years as editor, he reinvigorated the paper's design and news coverage, while writing major stories on Operation Just Cause in Panama, the Gulf War, and the mission to Somalia. In 1994, he became executive editor of *The National Interest.*

In 1995, he joined the professional staff of the House Committee on Armed Services and soon was named head of the policy group. His major contributions to the committee's work included overseeing committee activities concerning the operations of U.S. forces in the Balkans, leading the committee's investigation of the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia and worldwide readiness problems, and establishing a series of hearings and committee white papers on American security interests in the post-Cold War world. In addition, Donnelly drafted significant legislative initiatives to reform the Defense Department's readiness reporting system, explore the promise of the current revolution in military affairs, monitor developments in the Chinese military, understand the military and strategic effects of an expanded NATO alliance, and shape the requirements for the 1997 and 2001 Quadrennial Defense Reviews.

Donnelly is the co-author of two books. *Operation Just Cause: The Storming of Panama* has been recognized as the most complete work on the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama, praised by one reviewer as "the definitive study of modern campaign planning . . . destined to be studied at war colleges for years to come." *Clash of Chariots: A History of Armored Warfare*, was published by Berkeley Books in 1996. His articles have appeared in *The Weekly Standard, The Washington Post, The National Interest, Jane's Defence Week*, and numerous other publications.

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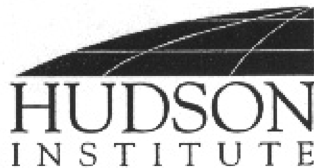


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