

## Military Planning for a Middle East Stockpiled with Nuclear Weapons

Richard Russell, Ph.D.

The media is loaded with coverage of the international crisis over Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program. The 24/7 news cycle is focused on the latest tit-for-tat in the West's ineffective diplomatic effort to get Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment and other suspected nuclear-related activities. Media coverage has also focused on the likelihood of American military action against Iran's nuclear-power infrastructure. However, the media has paid little or no attention to the longer term implications of an Iran armed with nuclear weapons.

It is easy to envision Iran working toward robust capabilities to enrich large quantities of uranium as well as producing stocks of plutonium for nuclear weapons under the guise of civilian electricity production. But the United States is reluctant to threaten or use military force to punish Iran and to disrupt its nuclear program because U.S. international political capital and military capabilities are wearing thin with operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Absent the United States, the Europeans—or the Israelis, for that matter—could not project sufficient military power to do anything more than dent Iran's geographically remote and dispersed nuclear infrastructure. In 10 to 25 years, Iran might be capable of producing large stocks of fissile material, harnessing it into warheads, and marrying the warheads to a large inventory of ballistic missiles capable of reaching most of the Middle East and swaths of southern Europe.

American military commanders and strategists have to squint and try to peer over the horizon to see the longer term security challenges posed by an Iran armed with nuclear weapons. What would the regional fallout be? How would regional states react? What would the impact of these reactions be on regional

stability? How would these changes affect American force projection capabilities? How should the United States adapt its posture and forces in the region? We can offer only speculative and tentative answers, but having a sense of the trends and directions is critical to putting the American military on the right footing today to be better prepared to face tough strategic challenges in the coming decades. We cannot turn on a dime in transforming and repositioning the American military to tackle the problems posed by a nuclear-weapons-saturated Middle East, but we could plot a smart course in that direction.

### Playing Nuclear Weapons Catch-up

Nuclear detonations, or more likely, regional suspicions that Iran is hiding a nuclear bomb in the basement would, over the long run, probably accelerate already strong security incentives for regional states to follow suit. The major regional states of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey would not want to be vulnerable to coercive Iranian political power derived from a nuclear weapons advantage. These states would want their own nuclear forces to deter Iranian threats and to ensure their national, regional, and international prestige. Moreover, they would not likely have a great deal of confidence in an American nuclear security umbrella as an alternative to their own nuclear deterrents. Riyadh, Cairo, and Istanbul would likely worry that the United States would hesitate to come to their aid in a future military contingency with a nuclear-armed Iran. Their security calculus would be similar to that of France when it acquired its nuclear "force de frappe" during the cold war in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Saudi Arabia will be engaged in a bitter political competition with

Iran for power in the Persian Gulf and would want a nuclear weapons capability to keep pace. Nuclear weapons would also bolster the Saudis' domestic prestige against militant Islamic extremists seeking to oust the royal family, and they would increase the country's political stature as the protectorate of the Sunnis against the regional Shi'a political revival led by Iran.

To support its nuclear weapons capability, Saudi Arabia would likely turn to its security partners in Pakistan and China. The Saudis procured intermediate-range ballistic missiles from the Chinese in the 1980s. These missiles had been previously armed with nuclear warheads in China's nuclear arsenal. The Chinese and Saudis claim that the missiles in Saudi Arabia are armed with conventional warheads, but no one has independently verified these claims. Nevertheless, the Saudis now have an institutional foundation in their military to support missile operations and future purchases of more modern missiles from China or Pakistan. The Saudis and Pakistanis have longstanding, close security ties, and the Saudis have long been suspected of subsidizing Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. It is entirely conceivable that Islamabad might help Riyadh obtain nuclear warheads for ballistic missiles, the ideal deterrent for an Iranian nuclear weapons arsenal.

Turkey too would be uneasy with a nuclear-armed neighbor in Iran and might pursue its own weapons. Ankara would likely fear abandonment by NATO and the United States if it were to have a crisis with a nuclear-armed Iran. The Turkish General Staff painfully remembers that NATO rebuffed Turkey when it asked for NATO protection in the run-up to the 2003 war against Iraq. The Turks, moreover, have a civilian nuclear power infrastructure and the

technological wherewithal to use it as a cover for a military program.

Regional suspicions that Saudi Arabia and Turkey were tilting toward nuclear weapons programs to counterbalance Iran's would send shivers down the spines of military planners and strategists in Iraq and Egypt. In 25 years, Iraq might not be in the chaos it is in today. And, even if Iraq emerges as a stable, democratic, and moderate state, Iraqi strategists would be sorely tempted to resurrect Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons aspirations if faced with a nuclear-armed Iran.

Iranian nuclear weapons would threaten Egypt too. Cairo has long seen its prestige and power slip in the region, and Iranian nuclear weapons might be the last straw that pushes the Egyptians to drop their diplomatic push for a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East and embark on a quest for nuclear weapons. Egypt might even leverage the weapons for political legitimacy at home and abroad to counterbalance Israeli capabilities and to keep pace with the growing Iranian, Saudi, and Turkish rivalry for power in the region. Like Turkey, Egypt has a civilian nuclear power infrastructure that it could use as cover for a military program. The Egyptians also could turn to the North Koreans, with whom Cairo has long cooperated on ballistic missiles, for nuclear-weapons-related assistance.

Syria also has pressing security needs for nuclear weapons. Regionally isolated and vulnerable to international pressure as well as internal political pressure, the Syrian regime fears Israeli conventional and nuclear weapons capabilities and might calculate that Syrian nuclear weapons would deter both conventional and nuclear Israeli power. The Syrian regime might also calculate that while a clandestine nuclear weapons program would run the risk of provoking an Israeli preemptive attack, in the longer run the risks of not having nuclear weapons would be even greater. Damascus could develop deeper and closer security cooperation with Tehran and receive Iranian technological assistance, fissile materials, and even Iranian missiles armed with nuclear warheads. Tehran might see nuclear weapons transfers to Damascus as a means to put pressure on Israel and distract attention from Iran.<sup>2</sup>

The regional states—Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, and Syria—could also look for international shortcuts to nuclear weapons technologies. In the past, large nuclear energy programs were seen as technological prerequisites and necessary political cover for military nuclear weapons programs. However, the history of Libya's cooperation with Pakistan's A. Q. Khan network shows otherwise. That network was providing off-the-shelf uranium enrichment capabilities and nuclear weapons designs. Future networks could set up similar operations to give Middle Eastern states shortcuts to producing nuclear weapons stockpiles that are difficult to detect.

### **A Regional Nuclear War?**

How would the Middle East be affected by numerous states armed with nuclear weapons? The good news is that some international security experts argue that the spread of such weapons would actually stabilize the region. In fact, they argue that international relations would be enhanced if nuclear weapons proliferated slowly, if states had time to become accustomed to them, and if nuclear arsenals were immune from preemptive strikes. They argue that nuclear deterrence is easy to understand and to put into practice: statesmen would realize that the costs of going to war with nuclear weapons would be prohibitive, which would reduce the risk of war between states to nearly zero. To support their argument, these analysts cite the fact that two nuclear-armed states have never waged war against one another.<sup>3</sup>

The bad news is that these experts probably are dead wrong. The theory is appealing, but theory rarely, if ever, conforms to reality. States armed with nuclear weapons in the Middle East might well wage war against one another under a variety of strategic circumstances. Iran might undertake conventional military operations against neighboring states calculating that its nuclear deterrent would prevent a retaliatory American or Arab Gulf state response. Saudi Arabia, in turn, fearing its conventional forces are inferior, could resort to the tactical use of nuclear weapons to blunt Iranian conventional assaults in the Gulf, much as NATO had planned to do against Warsaw Pact forces in cold-war Europe. Egypt had no nuclear weapons in 1973,

but this did not stop it from attacking Israeli forces in the Sinai. Along with other Arab states, Egypt could use conventional forces in saber rattling against Israel, and conventional clashes could erupt into a general war. Right now, American forces cannot deter a Syria without nuclear weapons from sponsoring jihadist operations against U.S. forces in Iraq. A Syria armed with a nuclear deterrent might be emboldened to undertake even more aggressive sponsorship of guerrilla war against U.S. and Israeli forces, and this could tip a crisis into open warfare.

Sitting on hair triggers in the narrow geographic confines of the Middle East, states armed with nuclear weapons would be under strong incentives to use them or lose them and to fire nuclear ballistic missiles in a crisis. At the height of a regional crisis, Iran, for example, might launch huge salvos of ballistic missiles armed with nuclear weapons against Israel in order to overwhelm Israeli ballistic missile defenses, decapitate the Israeli civilian and military leadership, and reduce the chances of Israeli nuclear retaliation. During the cold war, the United States and the Soviet Union had about 30 minutes of breathing time from the launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles to their impact. That was 30 potential minutes of precious time to determine whether warnings of launches were real. In the Middle East, there would be only a handful of such warning minutes, and regimes would feel even more vulnerable than the United States and the Soviet Union did during the cold war. Many nation-states in the Middle East resemble city-states more than industrialized nations; they have much less time to hide their leaders from enemy attack and fewer places to hide them.

Nuclear-armed states in the Middle East could also transfer nuclear weapons to terrorist groups. Iran is the top concern on this score. Over the past two decades, Tehran has nurtured Hezbollah with arms, training, logistics, ideological support, and money to enable it to serve as an appendage of Iranian foreign policy. Iranian support helped Hezbollah destroy the U.S. Marine barracks in Lebanon in the early 1980s and kill about 250 Marines.<sup>4</sup> According to a former director of the FBI, senior Iranian

government officials ordered Saudi Hezbollah to bomb Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, in 1996.<sup>5</sup> The explosion killed 19 U.S. airmen. Iran has used Hezbollah to do its dirty work and maintain “plausible deniability” to reduce the chances of American retaliatory actions. The strategy worked because the United States has yet to retaliate militarily against Iran. Calculating that its nuclear weapons would deter conventional retaliation against it, a nuclear-armed Iran would be emboldened to sponsor even more aggressive and devastating attacks to push American forces out of the Middle East.

A Middle East loaded with states armed with nuclear weapons also would increase the odds of “loose nukes.” We worry today—and probably not enough—about Russia losing control of its nuclear weapons, but nuclear worries about Russia today might pale in comparison to those about the Middle East tomorrow.

Saudi Arabia already has a slow-boiling insurgency on its hands with Al-Qaeda, which might someday manage to take over a Saudi nuclear weapons depot. The Saudi regime in the future might have to face a civil war with Iranian- or even Iraqi-inspired Shi’ites in eastern Saudi Arabia. The Saudi royal family could even fall victim to internal power struggles between warring Saudi princes, and control of the Saudi nuclear arsenal might determine the winner.<sup>6</sup> Militant Islamists inside Egypt’s military ranks assassinated President Anwar Sadat. Egyptian Islamic extremists might again organize within Egypt’s military to take over Egyptian nuclear weapons stocks or to topple the regime itself. The Iranian revolution in 1979 blindsided the United States and converted a security partner into a bitter foe virtually overnight. A similar watershed event could occur in Egypt or Saudi Arabia in the next 25 years. In short, in the Middle East of the future, numerous nuclear weapons stores will sit atop potentially explosive political powder kegs like the one that exists in Pakistan today.

### The Risk to U.S. Forces

The United States relies on large airbases to surge air expeditionary power into the Middle East in times

of crisis. American airpower is fast to deploy and has the immediate impact of reassuring our partners and deterring our adversaries in the region. For example, when the United States dispatched air forces to Saudi Arabia quickly in the wake of Iraq’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the deployment reassured the Saudis and might have deterred Saddam Hussein from using his ground forces to rush farther south, into Saudi Arabia. American airpower also was essential in providing air defense of the kingdom and protecting the build-up of coalition ground forces there for the campaign to liberate Kuwait in 1991.

Air, sea, and land access points for American force projection into the Middle East would all be vulnerable to the threat or actual use of nuclear weapons. Iran, for example, could threaten to attack Egypt and the well-known major airbases in the Arab Gulf states to deter the United States from surging air expeditionary forces into the region. For land forces deployment, the United States relies on port facilities in eastern Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. Iran could threaten to attack those ports with nuclear missiles, thereby deterring the United States from landing its ground forces to bolster the defenses of regional security partners.

American military planners might counter that Iran would never threaten to use, or actually use, its nuclear weapons against our forces because the United States would retaliate in kind with devastating consequences. But the Iranians, for their part, might believe that the United States, which takes great pains to minimize civilian casualties in war, would not engage in nuclear retaliation because of the horrendous number of Iranian civilian casualties that would ensue. Additionally, a future American commander-in-chief might make the political judgment that it would be prudent statesmanship to withhold nuclear retaliation in order to reestablish the international taboo against using nuclear weapons. The president might instead order limited conventional retaliation on the regime officials who ordered the nuclear strikes against American forces rather than massive conventional or nuclear assaults on innocent

civilians who bear no responsibility for nuclear strikes.

The Iranian regime might judge also that its “brave and courageous” use of nuclear weapons would polish its revolutionary credentials at home and win wide Muslim favor in the Middle East. The regime might also anticipate that nuclear strikes would terrify the American public, which, in turn, would demand that the president immediately withdraw military forces from the Middle East to reduce their vulnerability to more devastating casualties.

Americans were once enamored of the Air Force’s “Shock and Awe” strategy, and mistakenly believed that it could, by itself, overwhelm the Nation’s adversaries and force them to capitulate politically. Iran and its Arab neighbors might follow suit and come to believe that they could exercise their own versions of “Shock and Awe,” whereby early, fast, and concentrated use of nuclear weapons against American forces destroyed those forces, shocked the American body politic, and compelled American public opinion to call for the quick withdrawal of U.S. forces. Many Middle Eastern observers judge that the United States “cut and ran” in Lebanon in the 1980s and in Somalia in the 1990s, and that it is on the verge of doing so again in Iraq because of mounting American casualties. Middle Eastern adversaries might conclude that inflicting casualties on the Americans with nuclear weapons would hasten the complete withdrawal of American power from the region. In reality, such attacks probably would work the other way and spark American public bloodlust against Iran. However, how we see ourselves is not how the Iranian clerics see us or how they read our strategic behavior.

### Hedging against Nuclear-Armed Enemies

A Middle East populated with several states armed with nuclear weapons would pose formidable challenges to American force projection capabilities. The United States over the past 25 years has surged forces—largely unfettered by enemy operations—into the Middle East for a variety of military contingencies. However, in the future, a region replete with nuclear weapons could prevent the United States from

deploying forces en masse into the Middle East, especially into the Persian Gulf, in the same way it has in the past. What might American forces do differently to prepare for a Middle East stockpiled with nuclear weapons some 25 years down the road?

American military command centers and headquarters in the Middle East would be weak links and centers of gravity vulnerable to enemy attacks with nuclear missiles. U.S. command centers are in fixed locations, and in an era of off-the-shelf global positioning systems, at readily identifiable coordinates. Enemy nuclear missiles would not have to be very accurate to hit command center and headquarters targets. If the Iranians, for example, were to conclude that the political and military advantages of nuclear weapons strikes outweighed the potential costs, they would likely see the cities of Doha, Qatar, and Manama, Bahrain, as prime targets.

American military planners might reply that their forward headquarters are hardened against attack. But would that hardening stand up to the demands of a real war? The Iranians could use missile barges to weaken, exhaust, and then overwhelm American land- and sea-based missile defenses around command nodes. If only a handful of nuclear weapons got through, they would probably disrupt U.S. command and control. Even if these hardened facilities survived, imagine the cities of Doha and Manama in radioactive ruin. How long could hardened command-center operations run without food, water, electricity, and sanitation? How would American forces eventually rescue personnel from command centers in a deadly radioactive environment? These questions are too demanding to answer here, but they loom just over the horizon.

To reduce their vulnerability to nuclear weapons, U.S. strategists will have to surge forces into the region in a geographically dispersed fashion. U.S. forces must acquire the capability to project power not from large troop concentrations analogous to “footprints,” but from a far greater number of smaller, highly mobile “raindrop” force packages deployed over a wider swath and variety of geography. These raindrop forces would have to be networked and

synchronized to move into battle with the speed and intensity of a torrential rainstorm.

The time between the insertion of forces and the kickoff of operations against an adversary would have to be greatly compressed, or better yet, conducted at a rolling start to minimize the enemy’s reaction time and to disrupt his command, control, and operations. American forces in a Middle East full of nuclear weapons would not have months to marshal in the desert sands, assemble at lines of departure, and then move out against an adversary as in the 1990-91 Gulf war. Even an air and land campaign like the one against Iraq in 2003, with its rolling start, would have too lengthy and lethargic a deployment timeline and be too heavily concentrated in Kuwait to be a model for a campaign against a nuclear-armed Middle Eastern state. Enemy strategists in the Middle East might take a lesson from Saddam’s failure to disrupt coalition military preparations in Saudi Arabia in 1990-91 or in Kuwait in 2003 and resolve that “if the Americans come, hit them hard, hit them fast, and hit them early, and kill a lot of them so American public opinion will pull them back home.”

Demand for missile defenses would increase exponentially in a nuclear Middle East. In the states that witnessed missile exchanges first-hand in the Iran-Iraq war and first Gulf war, such demand has always been keener than in the United States and Europe, where many analysts still cling to the cold war logic that missile defenses destabilize because they undermine the logic of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). MAD theorists argue that states must remain vulnerable to missile attacks in order to be deterred from launching their own attacks. They take this logic a step further and argue that a state with effective missile defenses might attack an adversary because it felt itself safe from retaliation. There is, however, little evidence that regime officials and military planners in the Middle East subscribe to the MAD theory—especially not the Iranian clerics and Revolutionary Guard commanders who would control Iran’s nuclear weapons and would likely want robust missile defenses.

Missile defense systems such as the Patriot, which Americans

consider tactical, could provide strategic defense for the small Arab Gulf states. They would, however, have to be more densely deployed than they are today, given the grave risks of even one nuclear-tipped missile penetrating defenses. Sea-borne missile defenses also would have to be deployed more thickly in the Middle East. Being highly mobile and less vulnerable to enemy missile attack than ground-based defenses, they would have an added advantage; however, naval vessels equipped with missile defenses would have to resupply, refuel, and rest outside the Persian Gulf because the port facilities American forces now use there would be vulnerable to attack.

Given the likely porousness of even densely layered ground- and sea-based missile defenses, the United States will have to devote much more attention to the military means used to destroy missiles and nuclear weapons arsenals on the ground. The U.S. Air Force will have to improve its fixed-wing and unmanned aerial vehicle capabilities substantially to detect missiles, launchers, and nuclear weapons depots. The Air Force’s inability to destroy Saddam’s missile forces on the ground in 1990-91 showed that it has a long way to go on this score. Moreover, the United States’ current inability to accurately gauge the missile orders-of-battle in the Middle East suggests that the United States has not improved its missile detection and target capabilities much since the 2003 Gulf war.

The United States also must redouble efforts to strengthen Special Operations Forces (SOF) capabilities to strike enemy missile forces on the ground and to secure or destroy nuclear weapons stockpiles. SOF units claimed kills of Iraqi missiles on the ground during the Gulf war, but extensive post-war investigations could not confirm these claims.<sup>7</sup> SOF elements should prepare for insertion into nuclear-armed countries in the Middle East in the throes of civil war and insurrection to secure, remove, or destroy nuclear weapons stocks before they fall into the hands of Al-Qaeda and like-minded insurgents. Future Egyptian or Saudi regimes, for example, might successfully acquire nuclear weapons stockpiles only to find themselves

threatened by militant insurgents and crumbling internal security forces. A future American commander-in-chief might want military options to secure or destroy Egyptian or Saudi nuclear inventories lest they fall into hostile hands. The United States today already faces the potential for such a nuclear nightmare in Pakistan, where President Musharraf's regime could one day fall victim to Islamic extremists. Egypt and Saudi Arabia might follow along the same path in 25 years.

## Humility and Warfare's Future

The above scenarios and analysis undoubtedly will strike some, if not most, readers as unrealistic. However, if one pauses to reflect on just a brief sketch of military history, several salient points come to the fore that should induce a sense of humility and caution about our ability to foresee the future of warfare clearly.

First, we can seldom predict the outbreak of war with any precision. No one was predicting war six months before Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, or before NATO began air operations against Serbia over Kosovo in 1999, or in 2006 when Israel launched a major air campaign and ground assault against Hezbollah forces in Lebanon.

Second, we can seldom anticipate the means or nature of combat with any great accuracy before the clash of arms occurs. European general staffs were not thinking about trench warfare before the outbreak of World War I, and the Japanese kamikaze attacks in the Pacific in World War II caught the U.S. Navy by surprise.

Third, we can rarely predict how wars will end or what their consequences for international security will be. None of the major combatants on the eve of World War I, for example, anticipated that their empires would not survive the war. The Kremlin certainly did not expect that its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan would grow to be such an enormous burden that it would contribute to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

To make the point from fresher history, military technological advances have not made American general officers immune to surprises sprung by the enemy in battle. Lieutenant General William Wal-

lace, the commander whose corps spearheaded the ground invasion that captured Baghdad in 2003, remarked of the Iraqi insurgent attacks in southern Iraq that slowed his advance, "The enemy we're fighting is a bit different than the one we war-gamed against, because of those paramilitary forces."<sup>8</sup> More recently, General James Jones, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, said of NATO operations in southern Afghanistan, "We should recognize we are a little bit surprised at the level of intensity, and that the opposition in some areas is not relying on traditional hit-and-run tactics."<sup>9</sup> These remarks by American general officers should remind their peers, successors, and subordinates that surprise will be the norm, not the exception, in combat. With that rule of thumb in mind, the common, knee-jerk wisdom that future adversaries in the Middle East would "never be so foolish as to use nuclear weapons against the United States" should look more than a little questionable.

On top of our habitual inability to foresee the outbreak, conduct, or consequences of war, we also have a poor track record of understanding the strategic mindsets of our adversaries. The United States gravely misjudged Saddam Hussein when it assumed that his military build-up along the border with Kuwait in July 1990 was to intimidate the Kuwaitis and not to invade Kuwait. Americans still have difficulty understanding Saddam's mindset in the run-up to the 2003 war. Post-war debriefings indicate that Saddam did not understand that the United States was determined to march on Baghdad and oust his regime.<sup>10</sup> Americans dismissed Osama bin Laden's public calls for jihad and the bloodletting of Americans in the late 1990s as empty rhetoric only to discover painfully otherwise in 2001. Many observers now dismiss Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's public rantings against the United States and his call to wipe Israel off the map as mere rhetoric to whip up domestic political support in Iran. However, what if Ahmadinejad means what he says? What appears illogical and irrational from an American perspective might not appear that way to our adversaries, who carry with them profoundly

different worldviews, assumptions, prejudices, and ambitions.

These reflections on military history and our necessarily limited knowledge of our adversaries' strategic thoughts should help us see that future scenarios in which nuclear weapons are used against American forces and security partners in the Middle East are not out of the realm of possibility. Such being the case, it would behoove us to begin considering our military options now, while we still have room to maneuver. **MR**

## NOTES

1. The French during the cold war opted to deploy their own nuclear deterrent force—the *Force de Frappe*, or Striking Force—because Paris was uneasy about relying on American nuclear forces under NATO's security umbrella to deter the Soviet Union and to protect French national interests. For an informative examination of the development of French nuclear doctrine, see Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 320-324.

2. For an extensive analysis of Iran's nuclear weapons aspirations and the pressure a nuclear-armed Iran will put on other regional states, especially Saudi Arabia, to move along the nuclear path, see Richard L. Russell, *Weapons Proliferation and War in the Greater Middle East: Strategic Contest* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 71-119.

3. The founder of this school of thought is Kenneth N. Waltz. See his "Nuclear Myths and Political Realities," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 3 (September 1990). Another advocate is John J. Mearsheimer, who argued that the Ukraine should not have surrendered its nuclear arsenal because it would have had a stabilizing effect on European security. See his "The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993). For a critical analysis of the stabilizing effects of nuclear weapons proliferation, see Russell, 136-150.

4. Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 40.

5. Louis J. Freeh, "Khobar Towers," *Wall Street Journal*, 23 June 2006.

6. The author is indebted to Saudi expert Simon Henderson for raising this scenario. See his *The New Pillar: Conservative Arab Gulf States and U.S. Strategy*, Policy Paper No. 58 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2003), 38.

7. Thomas A. Keaney and Eliot Cohen, *Revolution in Warfare? Air Power in the Persian Gulf* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 72-73.

8. Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, "Inside the Command," *New York Times*, 13 March 2006.

9. BBC News, "Afghan Force 'Needs More Troops,'" 7 September 2006.

10. Steve Coll, "Hussein Was Sure of Own Survival," *Washington Post*, 3 November 2003.

*Richard L. Russell is a research associate in Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, and an adjunct associate professor in the Security Studies Program (also at Georgetown). He is the author of Strategic Intelligence for the Commander-in-Chief: Diagnosing Past Failures to Face Future Challenges (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming) and Weapons Proliferation and War in the Greater Middle East: Strategic Contest (Routledge, 2005).*