

## FORCES FOR PROJECTING AMERICA'S POWER

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### Power Projection Concepts

Neither "force projection" or "projection forces" appear in the *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*.<sup>1</sup> This lexical anomaly probably reflects a surfeit of claimants for the terms among the armed services and the unified and specified commands, who constitute the dictionary's editorial board. After all, if one discounts military contributions to internal defense of the United States and its possessions, all U.S. forces, whether of the active or reserve components, have been raised and trained for operations abroad, and the phrases are probably too indiscriminate for inclusion in the joint dictionary. Nonetheless, preparing U.S. military forces to influence events abroad, especially to "project power" in regions where their presence is non-existent or transient, has been a recurrent strategic concern.

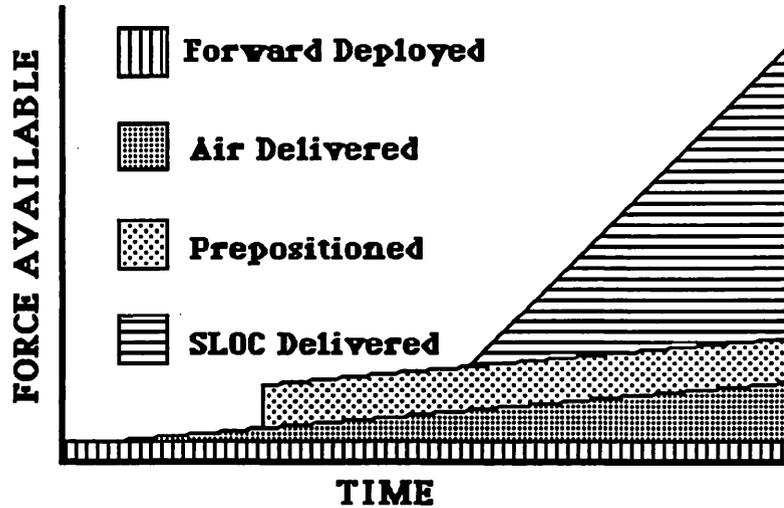
### *Strategic Zones*

In contemporary strategy, the United States guards, besides its homeland, four strategic zones: NATO's territory and sea lines of communications; Northeast Asia and the Northwest Pacific; Southwest Asia's strife-torn lands and surrounding seas; and the Caribbean and its problematic insular and littoral nations. The first two requirements stem from common political, cultural and economic interests so extensive as to have warranted forward deployment, for the past forty years, of a significant proportion of U.S. standing forces; in the current context of relaxed tensions between the United States and the U.S.S.R., and between North and South Korea, these deployments can no longer be taken for granted. The Caribbean is of importance not only because of proximity to the United States, and Cuban and Soviet activities there, but also because of the oil, coal, other raw materials, and trade goods which flow through the region, all as important to our allies as to us. "Force projection" is of less moment there, in that most of the region lies within striking range of forces stationed within the United States. In contrast, Southwest Asia is

beyond the range at which any permanently based U.S. forces can protect oil shipments to Japan, Korea, and our European allies, and the region's persistent instability has therefore engaged U.S. interests at maximum geostrategic disadvantage.

**Implementing Strategy.** For decades, the United States has sought to protect its strategic zones by containing the Soviet Union to the extent of its World War II conquests by (1) deploying forward forces to buttress coalitions, (2) holding ready strong forces within the territorial limits of the United States which are capable of rapid movement overseas in an emergency, (3) maintaining a qualitative edge over potential adversaries through superior military technologies, and (4) providing security assistance to allies and friends. Its efforts have been more successful in Europe and the northwest Pacific than elsewhere. The series of Middle Eastern crises of the 1970s, culminating in the collapse of the Shah of Iran a decade ago, refocused American strategists on the importance of maintaining freedom of the seas and the classic oceanic defiles, or choke-points, and of the advantaged central position of the arch-adversary, the U.S.S.R.

**"Power Projection"**. If those words then came more trippingly to the lips of Navy admirals or Marine generals than to those of Army or Air Force counterparts, it is not that the latter were not trying as ardently to narrow the gap between Presidential rhetoric and force capabilities. During the Reagan years, military planners of all services often reminded legislators and the public that they had to provide against "firstest with the mostest" competition in which prospective opponents could drive overland to any strategic destination, while the United States, using every means of transport at its disposal, could barely array sufficient force to contest their arrival. U.S. means included: (1) deploying forces forward, an expedient as politically onerous as it was economically burdensome; (2) posturing forces for rapid airlift to a threatened theater from the United States; (3) prepositioning materiel in an overseas theater so that relatively fast and plentiful passenger aircraft, possibly from the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) could quickly fly in personnel to man it in the event of an emergency; and (4) opening a sea line of communications (SLOC) to convey personnel, equipment, and supplies to reinforce forward forces and sustain operations. Schematically, U.S. military planners thought of their problem something like this:



Again, forward deployed forces--whether maritime or land based--are clearly advantageous, but costly. Forces delivered by air from strategic reserves in the Continental United States or other theaters are strategically crucial, in that they are usually the first arrivals after recognition of an emergency, and as such may be the first indicator of U.S. resolve to act against a developing threat. But air delivered forces are severely constrained by the kinds and amount of available airlifters, and by the requisite access for overflight or bases for enroute refueling, reception at destination, and refueling upon egress. Prepositioned forces are usually a special case of air delivered forces, those generated by marriage of units flown in without major impedimenta with such items stored in theater, provisioned by heavy or bulky supplies also stocked there. But the strategic make-weight is sealift: personnel, equipment, and supplies delivered by ships.

### Implementing Strategy

Obviously, emergencies against which to develop equipment, structure forces, and conduct training would differ depending upon the threat, preparations made in anticipation, distances which must be traversed, and competing demands for scarce resources. The budgeting guidance issued to the armed services by the Secretary of Defense over the past eight years has called upon them to structure forces to meet a war which begins in Southwest Asia, and then spreads to Europe and the Northwest Pacific. Among the upward pressures on Department of Defense expenditures during the Reagan Administration were consequent efforts to improve airlift and sealift, and to enhance strategic prepositioning.

But much more has been involved than budgeting. As in other eras, strategy was given form and substance by the President and the Congress through:<sup>2</sup>

(1) *Reorganization.* Setting up a new command apparatus to signify to prospective foes, and to Congress and the American people, watchfulness, and intent to use force if necessary. President Carter established the Joint Caribbean Task Force at Key West to meet anxieties generated by "discovery" of Soviet troops in Cuba in 1979, and set up the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to act on his Persian Gulf pronouncement. President Reagan embodied his endorsement of that Carter Doctrine on the Persian Gulf by establishment of the U.S. Central Command, and he brought the United States Transportation Command into being to unify the planning and concert the operations of the Air Force's Military Airlift Command, the Army's Military Traffic Management Command, the Navy's Military Sealift Command, and the Joint Deployment Agency. More recently, Congress established the U.S. Special Operations Command and a new Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, and called for a cabinet-level committee within the National Security Council to oversee interagency preparations for low intensity conflict.

(2) *Diplomacy.* Initiating action to alter strategic relationships by forming new alliances, revising old ones, or negotiating arms control agreements. U.S. diplomats have faced daunting tasks in providing for bases for U.S. forces overseas, for access to ports and airfields to support movement of U.S. strategic reserves, and for agreements constraining proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons, as well as for eliciting other forms of cooperation from allies and friends in the interests of mutual security.

(3) *Restructuring.* Directing alterations of force structure, as in the case of the Army's forming light infantry divisions more amenable to intercontinental air delivery, or the augmentation of the Special Operations Forces of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

(4) *Reassignment.* Changing the disposition of U.S. forces, such as moving the 7th Fleet to the Indian Ocean, or otherwise changing the composition of forward deployed forces in Southwest Asia. Alternatively, assigning new missions: the Strategic Air Command has begun serious efforts to equip and train itself for conventional operations, including reconnaissance, anti-ship missile operations, sea and land mining, and land interdiction and strike missions.

## Strategic Lessons from the Persian Gulf

What should events in Southwest Asia have taught American strategists? Four lessons seem salient:

### *International interdependence.*

The Persian Gulf is a paradigm of the multi-polar world. While the United States could tolerate interruption of Gulf oil shipments, its allies could not. In their interests more than its own, the United States provided not only forces, but essential common ground for cooperation among nations of the region with themselves, Europeans, and others. Absent U.S. action, the Iran-Iraq war would almost surely have spread, and shipments of oil almost certainly would have been impaired. It is significant too that, since there were ample suppliers of arms and munitions other than the Soviet Union and the United States, neither was able to influence decisively the course of the conflict. The most exotic and dangerous weapons in use by either antagonist originated with neither of the two superpowers. China and Brazil became prominent as purveyors of armor, guided missiles and other advanced military materiel.

### *The importance of unified action by U.S. armed forces.*

Thirty years ago, in the context of the 1958 reorganization of the Defense Department, President Eisenhower stated that "strategic and tactical planning must be completely unified, combat forces organized into unified commands, each equipped with the most efficient weapon systems that sciences can develop, singly led and prepared to fight as one, regardless of Service." One of the incidents often cited by proponents of the Nichols-Goldwater Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was the failure of joint interoperability at Desert One, the aborted Iran hostage rescue mission. The Nichols-Goldwater legislation inserted the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff into the chain of command over the unified and specified commanders-in-chief, subordinated the Joint Staff in Washington to him, enjoined simple, clear lines of command responsibility, and provided theater commanders new authority over their service components. Nonetheless, when the United States began employing forces to assure freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf, Admiral Crowe, the Chairman, encountered objections from the Navy to subordinating elements of the Pacific Fleet operating there to the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Central Command, although that region had long been assigned to CINCCENT for eliciting

cooperation from allies, and planning and conducting U.S. operations, and he already had under his command Air Force, Army, and Marine Corps elements as well as U.S. Navy ships. In retrospect, the Chairman was eminently correct: our projected forces needed more unification, not less.

*Special Operations require special people, equipment, and training.*

The failures which led to Desert One were many, but salient among them was an attempt to conduct an intricate raid with forces poorly prepared for the job: fleet helicopters committed to a long overland night flight to a rough landing strip crowded with Air Force fixed wing aircraft, Army troops, and equipment assembled for such purposes for the first time. The new United States Special Operations Command, also set up by Nichols-Goldwater, is a Congressional remedy for perceived service shortsightedness, an effort to raise the equipping and training of Special Operations Forces to the same status and priority for resources the services accord forces for more conventional missions. USCINCSOC, as the new commander is labeled, is unique: he is the only commander of a unified or specified command with his own budgetary authority, and a dedicated Assistant Secretary of Defense to act as his advocate in Washington. Should a President ever decide to undertake an application of military force like that directed by President Carter, USCINCSOC is responsible for turning out forces able to do the job.

*U.S. forces need new alternatives to bases overseas.*

Neither President Carter nor President Reagan was able to obtain bases for U.S. forces in Southwest Asia, and the U.S. Central Command continues to be headquartered in Tampa, Florida. Probably the aura of success surrounding recent CENTCOM operations in the Persian Gulf militates against resolving its grave difficulties of remoteness from the region. Some forces assigned to CENTCOM had to operate in the Gulf from adapted oil company platforms, with equipment awkward for their tasks. For example, lacking robotic aircraft, they remained dependent for nighttime surveillance of a suspected Iranian minelayer upon relatively short-ranged manned rotary-wing aircraft flying from barges. Yet a captured U.S. pilot being paraded in Tehran could have severely degraded prospects for CENTCOM's success, and the region's chances for peace. CENTCOM forces did not appear to have been "equipped with the most efficient weapon systems that science can develop..", as called for by President Eisenhower. USCINCENT and USCINCSOC, who

provided the forces in question, have a clear Congressional mandate to ameliorate such shortcomings.

## Looking Ahead: 2000 and Beyond

### *Strategic Requirements*

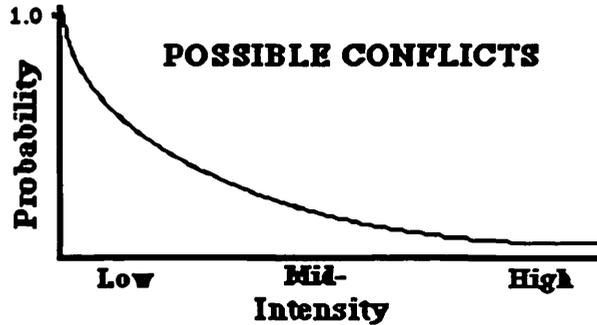
The Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, in its report of January, 1988, Discriminate Deterrence,<sup>3</sup> foresaw no diminution in need for projection forces: " The decades ahead are likely to bring drastic changes: China, perhaps Japan and other countries, will become major military powers. Lesser powers will acquire advanced weaponry, diminishing the relative advantages of both U.S. and Soviet forces. Arms agreements may have sizable impact on nuclear and conventional forces. Major U.S. interests will continue to be threatened at fronts much closer to our adversaries than to the United States. Our ability to deter aggression at these distant places will be impaired by uncertainty about allies and friends granting us access to bases and overflight rights, or joining us in defense preparations to respond to ambiguous warning signals. Our difficulties of access may worsen as a result of Third World conflicts that jeopardize U.S. bases or lead to Soviet expansion in areas previously free of Soviet forces. Military technology will change substantially in the next 20 years...If Soviet military research continues to exceed our own, it will erode the qualitative edge on which we have long relied..."

The Commission's Regional Conflict Working Group characterized the future as follows:

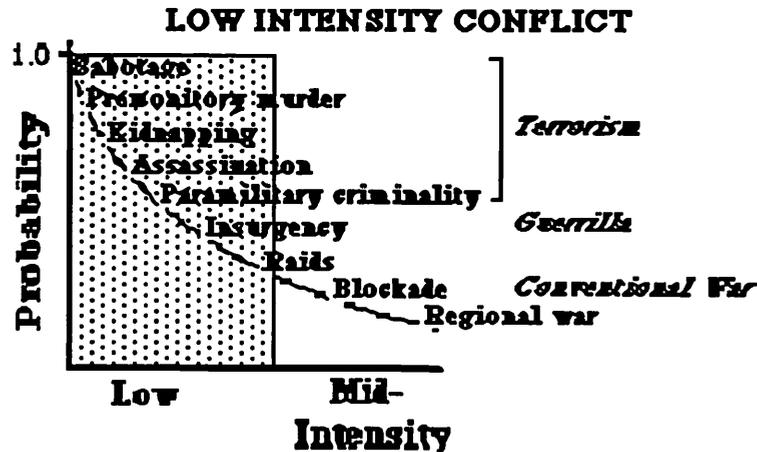
"By the first decade of the next century, we must anticipate a world in which groups hostile to the United States--governments and non-governmental political or criminal organizations--will have access to both weapons of devastating power and reliable means to deliver them. The United States and its traditional allies of the Northern Hemisphere could possibly be attacked, and must certainly expect to be threatened, by diverse nations and groups who, compared with the current set of such foes, will be both more numerous and more dangerous...a world in which trained terrorists and subversive abound, some operating in league with drug cartels, and irresponsible governments and radical political groups possess deadly weaponry. These trends in the Third World portend for future presidents of the United States problems of national security more diverse, urgent, and potentially destructive than those faced by their predecessors...Moreover, presidents in the

first decade of the next century will have to deal with these involvements without many of the overseas bases that have underwritten the strategy of the United States in the Third World for most of the 20th Century."

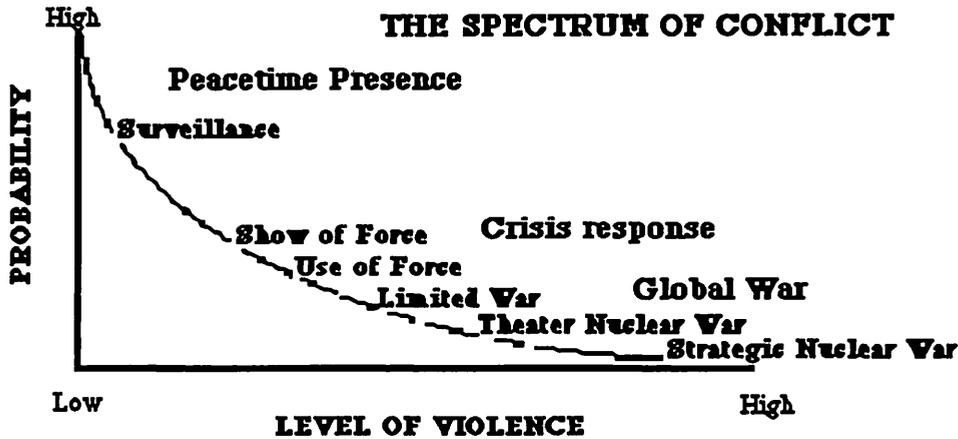
Useful for considering future conflict is the following depiction of a continuum of possible wars, or war-like uses of violence, in which US interests might be involved:



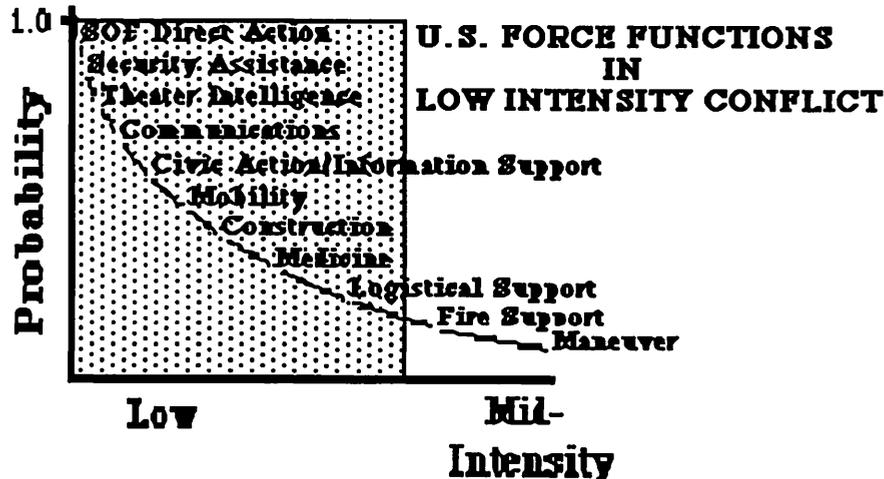
In this paradigm, "low intensity conflict" occupies the left sector, where probability of occurrence is high, but intensity, referring to weapons employed, casualties, and damage, relatively low. "Low intensity conflict" then is high-probability conflict, and includes both terrorism and guerrilla warfare, as the following diagram suggests:



Using such a construct, a military planner could visualize what sort of forces his service might need to achieve national objectives. There are two contextual imperatives: (1) strategic or national intelligence, which provides a means of assessing threats, of anticipating their actualization, essential for deciding if, when, where, and how to commit U.S. forces; (2) mobile forces, especially naval forces which can collect intelligence and convey to potential adversaries our potential for using force should our interests so require. Admiral James Watkins, the former Chief of Naval Operations, used this diagram to describe naval contributions to low intensity conflict :



But if the fundamental goal of the United States in low intensity conflict would be to help others to defend themselves, then our own forces would avoid direct action except in those rare circumstances where speed, surprise, or lack of alternative dictates the use of our own Special Operations Forces. Rather than engagement (fire support or maneuver), the force functions most likely to be needed otherwise are security assistance, intelligence, and communications. On the following diagram are portrayed U.S. force functions in the order in which they are likely to come into play inside a country afflicted with low intensity conflict:



Adroit use of U.S. forces capable of performing the cited non-combatant functions in Third World countries might obviate the need to proceed beyond logistical support of indigenous forces to use of U.S. General Purpose Forces for fire support or maneuver--including force projection by forcible entry--and concomitant mid-intensity warfare. But the most probable, and hence, most critical, functions are the first three cited: Direct Action by Special Operations Forces, Security Assistance, and Intelligence.

**Direct Action.** U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) stand ready for instant employment to protect American lives and property wherever they are threatened abroad by saboteurs or terrorists. The likelihood is that somewhere, even now, some member of SOF is at hazard somewhere, protecting a U.S. official. Were another U.S. diplomat to be taken hostage, or another civil airliner hijacked, projection of U.S. SOF would be one option that the President would have at his disposal.

**Security Assistance.** The security assistance programs of the United States--referring to funds, goods, or services this country sends overseas to bolster the security of a friend or ally--have underwritten American foreign policy for 40 years, and are regarded worldwide as tangible evidence of American commitment to national independence and peaceful development. The needs of the recipients of our aid have changed less over time than we who have given it. In the years since the wars in Southeast Asia, the government of the United States has adopted legislation, policy, and procedures that have severely limited the flexibility and utility of its security assistance. While U.S. military aid served Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson as a mainstay of policy, Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan were increasingly constrained in its use. The United States government is likely to suffer grievous setbacks unless future Administrations are provided with improved means for protecting U.S. interests. Current security assistance programs, variously legislated as Economic Support, Military Assistance, Foreign Military Sales Credits, or International Military Education and Training, are seriously underfunded for pursuing an integrated, long-term strategy, and too micromanaged by Congress to enable any Administration to deal with crises. Absent President Bush's proposing reform --the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy has recommended to him twelve basic revisions to current law and regulation-- and favorable Congressional action thereon, security assistance is not likely to be as an important strategic instrument.

Mobilizing U.S. ingenuity and technology to assist others dealing with conflict will require setting aside the notion that security assistance is some sort of U.S. domestic job-support program, or a way of disposing of surplus or obsolescent U.S. equipment, or of reducing the unit price of new equipment for a U.S. service because of larger buys to accommodate a foreign user. U.S. military materiel and doctrine is not readily adaptable to the needs of the armed forces of most friends and allies. To the contrary, they often require different equipment from that used by U.S. forces, and different tactics. If the United States is to help more effectively in the future, American industry may be only marginally involved;

indeed, one U.S. purpose ought to be using its assistance as an incentive to encourage other friends and allies to manufacture and provide relevant equipment. Moreover, any future U.S. security assistance program should have a strong thrust toward endowing the aid recipient with self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

**Intelligence.** One senior U.S. diplomat recently remarked that as in real estate, in low intensity conflict there are only three things that matter. In real estate, these are location, location, and location. In low intensity conflict, they are intelligence, intelligence, and intelligence. The cornerstone for U.S. dealings with regional conflict in the Third World is ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate information that enables U.S. planners to anticipate not only threatened violence, but also political and economic trends with long-term portents of violence, to devise effective counters, and to assure discriminate responses by allies or our own forces. As a direct function of U.S. technological leads in sensors, platforms, and advanced means of interpretation and dissemination, intelligence is at present the greatest comparative advantage of the United States, and probably will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Intelligence is the single most efficacious military source of power and influence worldwide. Such successes as the United States has enjoyed in forestalling terrorist acts abroad or in dealing with insurgency, either through a friend or ally or on its own, must be attributed, in large measure, to U.S. intelligence--information collected or corroborated through the various methods employed by our intelligence community and correlated with existing data and analyses; the whole assessed by experts; and facts and judgments disseminated to those who need to know for diplomatic, operational, or planning purposes. The key presidential decisions concerning any U.S. response to conflict--whether it is in the U.S. interest to act, and if so when and how--depend crucially upon the cogency of his intelligence. Moreover, should the President decide to act, the adequacy of U.S. intelligence will influence, often crucially, how much support he will be able to muster among leaders of American opinion, members of Congress, the public, or allies and friends abroad for his initial commitments and for continuing understanding and support in a protracted struggle.

#### *Prospects for forward deployments*

Forward deployed land and air forces in NATO Europe and in Korea will probably encounter intense political pressures for withdrawal. Objections to their being there will be

include environmental concern over maneuver damage and noise pollution, cultural and racial chauvinism, conviction that international tensions or political divisions would disappear upon their eviction, and hope that their departure would increase chances of avoiding the casualties and damage of war of any intensity. Withdrawals accommodating such pressures could become necessary to preserve a capacity to reinforce in the event of renewed international tensions. If so, force projection from the United States may become newly prominent in U.S. strategy for protecting NATO Europe and the Northwest Pacific.

The so-called Third World will present other problems, and other possibilities, chiefly in the realm of "low intensity conflict". Over the past forty years U.S. bases abroad have been reduced in numbers four-fold, largely reflecting closure or abandonment of bases in the Third World. As recognizably American military installations abroad have diminished in number, constraints have multiplied on U.S. access to foreign airspace for overflight, or airfields or ports for transiting forces. These trends will probably continue. The current U.S. basing agreement with the Philippines expires in 1991, and thereafter U.S. forces at Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay will be subject to removal upon one year's notice. The Panama Canal Treaty, which entered into force in 1979, mandates closing of all U.S. military bases in Panama by the end of 1999. While there is a possibility in either of these cases that negotiations ad interim could extend U.S. tenancy, or lead to opening comparable U.S. installations elsewhere, the United States can not count on such favorable outcomes, and must be prepared in the future to support national strategy with fewer, or perhaps none, such footholds.

The United States will undoubtedly have to place increasingly reliance on the range and striking power of units of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps. The sea services are well practiced in configuring, training, deploying, and sustaining task-oriented forces for overseas missions. Navy and Marine projection forces, however, will be strained to meet their worldwide responsibilities, including continuing to pose the principal counter to Soviet naval power, and providing best prospects for forcible entry in most regions. For military missions in low intensity conflict, especially those of long duration, it will remain important for the United States to be able to draw upon U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force capabilities as well. Use of land and air forces forces will require overseas basing in some form, or changing these forces to adapt to the new strategic circumstance.

### **Alternatives to present structure**

The difficulties encountered by Presidents Carter and Reagan in the past decade foreshadow those their successors will almost certainly face. It is important, therefore, that the United States now begin seriously to develop, by exploiting all the ingenuity of its military planners, and its scientists and engineers, alternative ways of performing the functions for which U.S. forces have heretofore depended upon terrestrial facilities in the Third World: support of forward deployed forces, staging and sustainment of reinforcements, command control, communications, and intelligence. The United States should look now for alternatives in how and from where its forces operate.

#### *Restructuring land and air forces for Third World missions.*

Through the Unified Command Plan, U.S. strategists carve up the world beyond U.S. borders into "Theaters", fiefdoms for regional CINCs, who are expected to provide ports, airfields, maintenance, supply, and personnel depots, and intratheater transportation for forces projected from U.S. strategic reserves. Much more subtle support arrangements will be needed. Few foreign nations will be willing to accept the apparent surrender of sovereignty associated with turning over to United States forces ports, airfields, or other territory. U.S. overseas bases will provide a focus for xenophobes, nationalists, and religious fundamentalists. The inflationary impact of American dollars on weak economies, the cultural impact of American servicemen on traditional societies, the fear of AIDS, and the inevitable charges by the domestic opposition that a cooperating government has become a Yankee "puppet", will combine to make granting base rights or even temporary access a politically risky undertaking for any government. Moreover, any U.S. military unit, whether on a U.S. overseas base, or simply operating temporarily on the territory of another nation, becomes a magnet for saboteurs, terrorists, and political demonstrators of all stripes.

**Units should be echeloned rearward.** Current assumptions for organizing and equipping U.S. Army and Air Force units for operations overseas are that the entire outfit will be transported overseas as an entity. Severance with the base of origin is expected to be virtually complete. Overseas, the Theater Commander is expected to provide the unit support, especially in furnishing expendable supplies, food and spare parts. But otherwise, the unit is expected to bring the wherewithal for self-sufficiency. All these

notions are invalid in any nation afflicted by low intensity conflict. There, the fewer U.S. personnel deployed forward, the better. Theater infrastructure is likely to be minimal to non-existent. The logistic and security burdens imposed on the host nation and the gaining CINC by each deployed U.S. serviceman or servicewoman argue for restricting numbers to those essential to performing the mission. The unit itself should be configured so that it can operate in echelons, with that portion of the unit sent forward into the country of interest severely constrained in manning and equipment to the minimum necessary, and the remainder positioned on board a ship operating in nearby international waters, or retained in CONUS. Echeloning dictates dedicated communications capabilities for the transmittal of voice, imagery, and data among the several echelons, and may entail exceptional transportation support, e.g., helicopter service between ship and shore echelons, or regular intercontinental airlift between overseas and CONUS echelons.

The relatively new technologies which make possible audio and visual conferencing centered on high-resolution digital images of maps, documents or other imagery, are particularly relevant to the concept of echelonment rearward. Fully-integrated multi-point image communications systems, which operate over narrow band-width communications channels (e.g., voice-grade telephone lines), make feasible staff reductions in headquarters, and relocation to CONUS or other secure locations the majority of personnel and equipment which might be deployed for higher intensity warfare.

**New forms of temporary shelter.** If recent experience is any guide to the future, the Administration will have to run the Military Construction hurdles in Congress if it expects to do much for the projected force beyond using local buildings, or erecting tents. U.S. temporary construction techniques leave much to be desired. The sandbag, that bane of the World War I doughboy, is still used in profusion to protect personnel and facilities, despite its propensity to sag and deteriorate, and its vulnerability to modern ordnance. Concertina barbwire still delineates secured areas, more of an irritant than a barrier. Canvas tents have major drawbacks in most of the world: hot, dank, vulnerable to insects and reptiles, susceptible to wind and solar damage, mildew, and rot, expensive to repair or replace.

Four related concepts should bear upon future decisions concerning facilities for the forward echelon. (1) Physical security should be a primary consideration. We ought to provide for rapidly erectable, strong fortifications, barriers, and bunkers. Projectile-proof mats and rigid composites, plus hollow, stackable forms to be loaded with soil on-site, using portable machinery, are indicated. (2) Shipping containers ought to double as

shelters. Containers of commercial-standard size could ease deployment and obviate much on-site construction. (3) For large shelters like hangers, rapidly erectable, transportable buildings should be used. (4) Designs for indigenous materials should also be available.

**Unit security requires new doctrine and materiel.** In many situations, the forward echelon will find itself secured by host nation guards, and operating amid the comings and goings of indigenous employees, curious visitors, children, and domestic animals of all descriptions. In such circumstances, the U.S. commander will find pistols, rifles, and machine guns of little use against security problems presented by thieves, prostitutes, and drug peddlers. In most cases, he will not be able to rely on use of deadly force. Low intensity conflict requires new security concepts, and new materiel. One proposal of merit -- an adaptation of a demonstrated technology -- would require all personnel authorized in or near the unit's vital areas to carry coded identity tags which could be remotely and continuously interrogated, so that the commander would have 24 hour-per-day accountability for all U.S. personnel, and for foreigners with authorized access. His outer security would rest less on perimeter fences than on sensors capable of detecting any unauthorized intruder within his security zone, and of providing close-up visual inspection, coupled with means for deterring or stopping any intruder intent on harm.

**Basing forces at sea.** Most areas of the Third World where U.S. forces are likely to be deployed are accessible by sea and can be supported from sea-based platforms. Sea-based options can also ameliorate many of the political, economic, and security problems associated with stationing U.S. forces in a Third World country, or even exercising transient rights there. Operating in international waters, or in a nation's territorial sea, but outside the view of the population, U.S. sea-based units would be politically, economically, and culturally less intrusive. Sea-based platforms would also be inherently more secure than land bases from attacks by saboteurs, terrorists, paramilitary criminals, or guerrillas. (But, as Iranian guerrilla-launch attacks and minings made evident, naval combatants may have to be deployed to secure unarmed, or lightly armed platforms.) Sea-based options can also significantly reduce the time and money required to establish a secure operating area overseas, in that we can prepare for such operations in advance, and deploy platforms only when the situation requires. Lastly, sea-based assets are fully recoverable.

One option the United States could pursue would be to augment the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps with additional amphibious and fleet mobile logistics ships, and to

strengthen their ability to sustain forces at sea with minimal dependence on forward bases for long periods of time. Another option would be to look for cost-effective sea-basing alternatives developed expressly to support U.S. air and land operations. There are five promising concepts: The first entails configuring a specific type land or air unit, for example a helicopter maintenance unit, to fit into shelters identical in shape to standard shipping containers. These could then readily be deployed on chartered, container-carrying merchant ships. The unit would be self sufficient within its containers, in that it could perform its mission wholly from them, whether on ship or shore, without external power or plumbing. The second is new construction of very fast container ships (fifty knots or more)--a commercially attractive prospect for the faltering U.S. merchant marine. A third, Deployable Waterfront Facilities (DWFs), is under investigation by the U.S. Navy for a variety of peacetime and contingency port functions: berthing, cargo throughput, and other support for sea-borne forces. The fourth, studied in depth by the Navy a decade or so ago, is a module-assembled island-size base on a floating ocean-going platform. The fifth, also studied years ago, is a "super ship", a huge, mobile airfield-at-sea capable of supporting operations of the largest U.S. aircraft.

**A new mix of aircraft.** One important function of overseas bases is to support U.S. air operations. For low intensity conflict, intelligence collection and airlift are the most important such operations. While space-based platforms have redoubtable intelligence capabilities, they are unlikely to be able to substitute for air-breathing collectors in all respects, and will not be relevant for hauling freight or passengers. Sometimes, but not always, military airlift operations can be conducted through commercial facilities, or through the air bases of allies and friends, as routine undertakings. Some airlift operations, however, especially those in support of Special Operations Forces or Special Activities, will have to be conducted direct from U.S. bases. And virtually all intelligence collectors prefer to operate from U.S. bases. This suggests aircraft for SOF and intelligence quite different from those presently available or contemplated. It also suggests that the services should reconsider those inter-service agreements which led to dividing intelligence collection among the aircraft flown by the various U.S. armed services.

*Intelligence.* Some of the intelligence systems most valuable in contemporary are available only on short range, limited endurance Army aircraft. Yet the United States will often require very long legged intelligence collectors. There are several technologies promising long-endurance, atmospheric platforms that should be pursued.

Capabilities for continuous, wide-area surveillance will almost certainly be needed. When continuous coverage does not exist, targeted activities can be altered and phased to take place during uncovered periods. Today's surveillance platforms (fixed wing aircraft, satellites) provide only sporadic coverage, and their presence "on station" is either predictable or detectable. Additionally, manned fixed-wing aircraft, both current and future, require substantial land- or carrier- based support.

One developmental program of promise aims at lighter-than-air ships that could provide long-endurance, atmospheric platforms. An airship incorporating modern technology could provide a critically needed long-endurance surveillance platform to support U.S. interests in many regions of the world. Airships could operate independently of foreign bases, either in international airspace or in national airspace with the consent and protection of the supported country. Recent Navy, Air Force and Department of Defense Science Boards have independently concluded that airships (lighter-than-air technology) have the potential to be the most, and possibly only, cost effective platform to provide sustainable, continuous airborne surveillance. Mission needs range from surveillance of allied air space and terrain, to CONUS defense against cruise missiles.

An airship could be designed to serve as "mother-ships" for Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs), known also as Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPVs). These robot aircraft could cooperate with the airship for close, discriminating sensor-work close to the surface, and for extending the range of the airship's sensors. They could even provide it with standoff offensive and defensive weapons capability.

UAV themselves could also ease requirements for overseas bases and aid projection forces. The theoretical cost-effectiveness of robotic aircraft for missions in which manned aircraft would be exposed to unacceptable risk has been clear for several decades. Unfortunately, the practical difficulties of developing robotic aircraft which were functional, reliable, and affordable have thus far proved to be greater than their proponents had expected.

However, between now and the first decade of the next century, successful, cost-effective UAV will almost certainly become available. It now appears possible to build robots which can be launched from and recovered onto a ship at sea, and which can be controlled during flights of long duration from a center located continents away.

*Airlift.* In many countries the sinews of nationhood include a fleet of rickety, but still-serviceable C-47 (DC-3) aircraft, built in the United States three or four decades ago. Crisis creates urgencies for use of air transportation--those old two-engined, unpressurized C-47's constitute strategic airlift. But there is no American-manufactured aircraft which is a modern equivalent of the C-47 in versatility of operations, simplicity of maintenance, ease of manning, or cost of operation. The current U.S. Air Force counterpart, the C-130, is much too complicated and demanding for most countries, a potential millstone around their neck. In Central America, the C-130 could land on only 30 or so airfields of the entire region; the C-47 on more than 10 times that number. The C-17's ability to land on fields comparable to those on which the C-130 can land will not help. At issue here is real mobility: the United States may be able to project forces over intercontinental distances, but if it cannot concentrate them at the point of decision, or support its own or allied forces operating within the overseas theater, transoceanic capability is more a snare and a delusion than a strategic asset.

No U.S. manufacturer builds a rough field short-takeoff-and-land (STOL) aircraft because no service has recognized a requirement for one, and offered to buy. Competing demands for funds, and the lack of a constituency for so modest an airlifter within the Air Force, all but assure that there will be no domestic "Third World airlifter" to offer conflict-beleaguered friends anywhere. But foreign manufacturers do make transports which come close to filling the need. What the Administration ought to do is to direct DoD to purchase at least two squadrons of an appropriate foreign aircraft equipped with the latest U.S.-made avionics, ordnance and fire control devices, sensor suites, refueling gear, and other ancillary equipment, for issue to units of the U.S. Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve. This will insure that the U.S. has a training base and a logistic infrastructure for the aircraft. At the same time, the Administration should initiate action to make the same aircraft, minus some or all of the high-technology appliques in the U.S. version, available for the U.S. Security Assistance program. Both moves will require soliciting the understanding and support of Congress. But they ought to be saleable in that they will help U.S. project force abroad, and help others help themselves.

### **Space platforms**

Space programs of the United States have heretofore aimed at versatile, very durable, long-lived satellites. These performers have also been very expensive, large, and heavy, requiring special, powerful booster-rockets to attain orbit. It now appears possible to consider a new

ordinary missile booster, but somewhat less mission-capable and long-lived. One characteristic of these especially attractive for low intensity conflict is low-cost, transportable ground stations. The Commission on Integrated Long-term Strategy has endorsed Light Satellites as a way to improve the redundancy and robustness of U.S. space systems against the prospect of conflict in space, and to improve U.S. capabilities to provide what most nations require most: better intelligence, and secure communications for disseminating same.

## **Special Operations Forces and Low Intensity Conflict**

### *SOF: Asset for Any Possible Conflict*

Special Operations Forces (SOF) have missions across the entire spectrum of war. Both U.S. SOF and their Soviet counterparts were conceived for the apocalyptic contingencies of World War III. Much of the capabilities with which the U.S. endows SOF have little or nothing to do with combatting terrorists, or training Third World forces to cope with guerrillas. Most of the money which has been spent to procure materiel for SOF has purchased elaborate transportation means for projecting them into a defended objective area or extracting them once their mission were completed. The main strategic contribution of SOF has been to lend an unconventional dimension to deterrence, and in particular to pose a threat of exploiting Soviet vulnerabilities to nationalist dissidence. To be sure, they are manned by the sort of individuals one would want for any dangerous, chancy, unstructured operation. And SOF have shown that they can be effective individually and collectively in "low intensity conflict." But they are much more than forces for combatting terrorists or guerrillas.

The British have pointed out how useful it is for a nation possessing nuclear weapons to remind itself in its strategic doctrine that there are forms of conflict for which the possession of nuclear weapons is simply irrelevant -- a number of possible cases of recourse to violence for political purposes which are unlikely to be deterred by a nuclear arsenal, nor resolved by its use, and for which other kinds of force must be readied. Whether or not those who teach strategy at the Soviet war colleges point out that supporting international lawlessness, terrorism, and insurgency is a low risk, low cost way of achieving the stated objectives of Leninism, recent Soviet strategy in the Third World would certainly suggest that such is the case. But the Soviets have not made extensive use of their "special operations forces" outside their borders (with the significant exception of

of their "special operations forces" outside their borders (with the significant exception of Afghanistan). Rather, they have pursued their ends indirectly, through training, aid, and advice for Third World proxies, avoiding the employment of elite combat forces. One telling fact about the Soviet role in Central America has been that two-thirds of the Russians in Nicaragua have served in a military field-hospital: they appeared before a people sensitive to foreign domination as benefactors.

However Nichols-Goldwater may have advanced the fortunes of U.S. Special Operations Forces, the law has thus far done little to enhance overall U.S. readiness for low intensity conflict. The newly-created Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has a legislated charter to concern himself with low intensity conflict, but virtually every other DoD official of comparable rank has overlapping responsibilities, and low intensity conflict should be the concern of a number of Cabinet Officers other than the Secretary of Defense. The mandated Deputy National Security Adviser for Low Intensity Conflict might be in a better position to deal with the interagency issues which low intensity conflict presents, but the Reagan Administration never acted on the sense of Congress in that respect, nor upon the proposed Low Intensity Conflict Board within the National Security Council to formulate relevant policy. The Bush Administration faces unresolved tough questions, including what strategy to pursue, how to organize to implement it, how and for what to obtain funding, to what ends diplomatic action, and what forces where. To be sure, better Special Operation Forces will help the U.S. posture for low intensity conflict, but Special Operations are not coextensive with low intensity conflict, and making special operation forces a better competitor for defense resources may make other worthy claimants for resources, in the budget shouldering which lies ahead, less likely to receive the support they deserve.

#### *Low Intensity Conflict: Indirect Action*

The United States should not commit its forces to combat in any conflict unless it can do so decisively, swiftly, and with discrimination. Where there are treaty obligations to an ally, combined U.S./allied forces might be positioned to exploit comparative advantages and to deter aggression--as has been the case in South Korea. But overall, U.S. strategy should emphasize using U.S. forces to complement its security assistance, exploiting their potential for helping friendly forces engaged in low intensity conflict with training, intelligence, communications, transportation, construction, medicine, logistics, and management.

The American view of war, which has served us well for more than 200 years, has led the U.S. armed services to design units, equipment, and doctrine for projecting force to engage and defeat a foreign force in combat operations. Future conflict portends operations short of war, indirect undertakings involving military support for objectives fundamentally political, economic, or psychological in nature. Yet none of the U.S. armed services have yet considered such missions sufficiently in developing doctrine, training programs, force structure, or materiel-- although hopeful beginnings have been made.<sup>4</sup>

U.S. force structure, equipment, and doctrine, designed for accustomed combatant missions, are not well-suited to pursuing non-combat roles in assisting any Third World nation. Usually, the presence of any foreign military force stirs nationalist abhorrence, and in some places, U.S. military forces will operate encumbered by historical burdens, so that their mere presence creates political problems for a host nation. U.S. General Purpose Forces are usually too heavily or inappropriately equipped, and too elaborately manned, for probable missions--prepared as they are for the exigencies of high intensity conflict. Often they are not well-trained for other missions. Often, military roles will be best performed by specially trained individuals or detachments as small and unobtrusive as feasible.

The foregoing statements frequently strike U.S. military officers, doctrinally conditioned to believe in the primacy of the combat function, as startlingly novel. These concepts assign priority to such military functions as training, intelligence, communications, mobility, construction, medicine, and logistical support ahead of fire support or maneuver-- but this inversion is commonplace in the writings of the theorists of unconventional warfare worldwide.

However, as the instances of Grenada, Tripoli, and the Persian Gulf underscore, there will be times in regional conflict when a President decides to commit U.S. forces to combat. Such a decision will be made normally only *in extremis*, to deal with circumstances beyond other means. The criteria for decision ought to include: can U.S. forces succeed rapidly, with minimum cost and minimum damage? To ensure that the answer is affirmative, the United States must continue to develop the forces, doctrine, and tactical equipment capable of rapid, decisive, and efficiently discriminate force projection anywhere.

The development of such military forces and capabilities is the responsibility of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The newly created Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations

and Low Intensity Conflict, and the Special Operations Command have been assigned particular roles in readying SOF. The regional CINCs, who plan for and direct employment of U.S. forces, have been given new strategic authority and influence over Service procurement and force structure. In short, Nichols-Goldwater provided organizations and individuals within the U.S. government able to bring before the National Command Authorities the issues that need to be resolved to insure the President's having forces capable of supporting U.S. strategy.

### **Proposals for the Administration**

For the foreseeable future, the United States will face requirements, stemming from its overarching objectives of peace and security, to project its power and influence with military forces. While the United States can prepare for the future from a position of strength, much of our national potential for dealing effectively with likely challenges is as yet unrealized. Traditional services roles and missions have obtruded, and the government as a whole has not been mobilized. Portended conflict threatens all Americans, and can be met effectively only with a response from the whole government, through all of its several departments and agencies.

The United States is not now well-postured for the more probable forms of conflict, and the nation needs to contemplate a new concerted effort. What is needed is a major bipartisan effort to enlighten public understanding of, and to win support for, new concepts for bringing U.S. military power to bear abroad. Management can not be relegated to the Department of Defense; nor can it be regarded simply as one aspect of peacetime foreign relations and assigned to the Department of State. Rather, it requires drawing on all elements of our national strength, concerted by the President and the National Security Council, developed in conjunction with the Congress, and resting ultimately upon support of an informed people.

The resources required will be much less quantitatively than the 1980-1984 defense rebuilding, but qualitatively, perhaps more demanding. The key resource will be people: cadres to create intelligence, transfer technical skills, plan development projects, shape technology, and train future leaders of countries quite different from our own. Even were the United States to start tomorrow, with very strong backing, it would be years before all the people, with the proper training, were available.

There remains the question of funding. Without adequate funds, any strategy will lack substance. The reforms proposed above are not expensive compared with other undertakings of the U.S. government, and the payoff appears to be highly significant. The Administration could act with confidence of not impairing other facets of our national strategy.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>JCS Pub 1, 1 June 1987

<sup>2</sup>See the author's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 28 January 1987.

<sup>3</sup> For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. G.P.O., Washington, D.C. 20402. See also Sources of Change in the Future Security Environment, a paper by the Commission's Future Environment Working Group, submitted to the Commission in April, 1988; Commitment to Freedom - Security Assistance as a U.S. Policy Instrument in the Third World, a paper by the Regional Conflict Working Group, submitted to the Commission in May 1988; and Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict, report by the Regional Conflict Working Group to the Commission, June 1988. These last three papers each bear this notation:

"The Report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, Discriminate Deterrence, was published in January 1988 and is available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 for \$6.50.

"Working Group reports and other separate papers which were prepared in support of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy are being printed in limited numbers by the Department of Defense. There are no restrictions on further reproduction of these Working Group reports and other papers."

<sup>4</sup> For example, see Headquarters, Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, FM 100-20, AFM 2-XY, Final Draft, 24 June 1988.

<sup>5</sup>Notional figures presented to the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy for buying what U.S. departments and agencies have not yet provided for, called for outlays of \$12 billion per year (an amount equivalent to about 4 percent of the current DoD budget). See Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict, *op.cit.*, pp. 86-87.

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