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U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURE:
A NEW MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURE: A NEW MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

We must anticipate that future adversaries will learn from the past and confront us in very different ways. Only one thing is certain: the greatest danger lies in an unwillingness or an inability to change our security posture in time to meet the challenges of the next century.

National Defense Panel
1 December 1997

We must not be lulled into complacency because we have always been ready, relevant, and capable. What might be ready, relevant, and capable today, may be less so the day after tomorrow. We must anticipate change, adapt to it, and foster it. We will remain relevant only if we are willing to meet future challenges and adapt to new needs.

General Charles C. Krulak
Commandant, USMC, 1997

Introduction

The end of the Cold War has caused the United States national security community – the Departments of Defense and State and the National Security Council – to struggle to reorient itself for the threats and challenges of a very dynamic strategic future. Indeed, this is an unprecedented era. While the threat of nuclear war has been virtually eliminated, and our sole military contemporary has fallen, the world is arguably far more unstable. Long-simmering local or region disputes, that were muted by the superpowers during the Cold War, are resurfacing. In addition, the proliferation of advanced technologies to all parts of the globe make the threat of confrontation, particularly through the use of weapons of mass destruction, more profound. What is certain is that today's threats, and those that will dominate the early 21st century, are very different from those of the Cold

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War. These differences demand a visionary U.S. national security response. In my opinion, such a response does not appear in the offing.

This essay paper argues that the U.S. national security community, despite statements to the contrary, continues to be blinded by the Cold War and the structures that have become comfortable, and for which there have developed strong and vocal constituencies. Instead, the United States is missing a most fortuitous period of strategic pause, a time without a peer competitor, to posture the nation for the broad spectrum of threats that are being ushered in with the new millennium.

Drawing on the lectures, seminars, readings, research and discussions of this academic year, this essay defines a set of key assumptions that are expected to permeate the U.S. national security environment through the year 2010, and draws a set of recommendations on how the national security community should be shaped to respond. Because the issue is so broad, however, this paper will focus its analysis and conclusions on the organizational structure of U.S. national security, recognizing that the important components of doctrine, military capabilities and tools, system processes (e.g., acquisition, logistics, planning, and budgeting), and training, to mention just a few others, are also critical factors that warrant attention. As the introductory quotes attempt to illustrate, if the United States is to continue as the world's leading power, national security decisionmakers must look objectively at the future and make the adjustments necessary to remain ready, relevant, and capable. These decisions must be made now or we will face the early 21st century ill-prepared – and our continued preeminence eroded.

Assumptions

This essay is based on three fundamental assumptions about the U S national security environment through the year 2010 1) Threats to U S interests will be substantively different from those of the 1990's, 2) economic leverage will become increasingly more important as a tool of U S statecraft, and 3) the private sector will be a formidable player in 21st century international affairs

Threat Environment (2000 - 2010)

The threat environment faced by the United States in the early 21st century will be characterized by the absence of a peer economic or military competitor for at least the next twenty years ¹ And, if the Defense Department follows through on its strategy to invest \$60 billion annually in technology development², and if the dollars are invested effectively, no such competitor should emerge for perhaps the next fifty years In a military sense, it is inconceivable that any country, starting from its current disadvantage vis a vis the United States, could match our dominance in that timeframe This said, clearly the United States will be challenged during this period, but any adversary will, instead, confront the United States with asymmetrical responses to our traditional strengths These responses will likely be attacks against U S information systems and critical infrastructures, terrorism, and the use (or threat of use) of weapons of mass destruction, particularly chemical and biological attacks And, perhaps most importantly

¹ Guest Lecture to National War College *The Dilemmas and Paradoxes of the Sole Global Superpower*, 22 January 1998 lecturer not identified to preserve non-attribution policy

² Guest Lecture to National War College *Of Battlestars and Bayonets The Impact of Technology* 16 March 1998, lecturer not identified to preserve non-attribution policy

to U S national security strategists, it is probable that some of these non-traditional attacks will specifically target the U S homeland

As an extension of this threat assumption, where conventional U S forces are employed through the year 2010, the scenario will not be one of major, protracted regional conflict. Instead, the so-called "Clinton Doctrine" will prevail – peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance (e g , Bosnia, Haiti, and Somalia) and, on occasion, peacemaking, such as our 1990's engagements against a belligerent Iraq. A military structure based on major regional conflict is inconsistent with the early 21st century threat environment, such a strategy diverts valuable resources from building the capabilities and structures required to respond to the more realistic set of national security challenges.

In summary, this essay argues that when conventional U S military forces are engaged over the next ten to twelve years, it will be primarily to support peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The true threat to U S security will be from adversaries who will employ non-traditional tools and who will bring the battlespace to the United States homeland – in very discrete and damaging ways.

Economic Tool of Statecraft

A second assumption of the U S national security environment, through 2010, is that diplomacy will become an increasingly important tool of statecraft. As the sole superpower in an increasingly unstable world, the United States will continue to be called upon to lend its influence to resolve the virtual explosion of regional, ethnic, cultural, and transnational issues or disputes. As new power brokers, such as China, Russia, India, Germany, and Japan, try to emerge, the United States will be increasingly engaged across

a broad range of issues to keep these states in balance. The common linchpin that will bind all countries in the 21st century will be a global, wholly integrated, networked economy. As the sole economic power for the foreseeable future, the economic tool of statecraft will take on a vastly more prominent role in U.S. national security decisionmaking, demanding fundamental change in the 21st century U.S. national security structure.

Private Sector Influence

The third assumption, expanded private sector engagement in international affairs, is more difficult to articulate, but, nevertheless, an emerging issue that will cause strategists to rethink the national security landscape. The emergence of huge multinational commercial enterprises has just recently started to appear on the “radar screen” of some strategists – and the trend of mega international mergers and corporate consolidations across the global market place will continue as economic globalization expands. It is probable that at least some of these highly competitive commercial organizations, with connections at the highest levels of key governments, many controlling indispensable “niches” within the global economic engine (e.g., Microsoft with its dominance of the computer operating system market, used as an example only), would exert increasing influence in the conduct of world affairs. U.S. strategists must begin now to address a more aggressive private sector and, I contend, these steps include making structural changes in the U.S. national security framework.

These three assumptions, whether taken separately or, more appropriately, as a whole, point to an urgent need for change within the U.S. national security structure. A

failure to act aggressively now will result in inadequate means to achieve the desired ends of the early 21st century

Key U.S. National Security Structural Changes

Again, with the focus of this essay paper on the structural components of U S national security, tied to the assumptions outlined above, three adjustments are critical 1) Major emphasis must be placed on homeland defense, 2) the U S diplomatic capability must be reengineered, and 3) increased attention must be paid to the global commercial sector

Homeland Defense

I consider homeland defense as first among equals when it comes to changes in the U S national security structure to address 2005 - 2010 threats As the National Defense Panel stated in its recent report, “we must anticipate that future adversaries will learn from the past and confront us in very different ways”³ In this context, I take strong exception with the experts represented in our Course 5 panel discussion on Future Strategic Alternatives⁴ who argued, essentially, that homeland defense is a “bumper sticker” issue with little substance While I agree that the threats posed by state-sponsored or rogue terrorism, the use of chemical or biological weapons, or offensive information operations attacks will likely be rendered irrelevant through technology, the technological capabilities

³ Report of the National Defense Panel, *Transforming Defense National Security in the 21st Century*, December 1997 page 1 of Executive Summary

⁴ Panel Discussion to the National War College *Future Strategic Alternatives* 16 April 1998, panel members not identified to preserve non-attribution policy

to make this a reality will not be available for at least the next decade. The problem is that an enormous vulnerability exists now, and will continue for the next ten to twelve years. During this period any potential U S adversary would know full well what these vulnerabilities are and of the constraints that would be faced by the United States if it contemplated retaliation (e g , determining who conducted the attack)

Attacks against the U S mainland are a vulnerability that the U S public has not been made sufficiently aware of, and, when conducted, such attacks will cause enormous damage to the psyche of the American people. As a nation, we have not faced the stress of being a country under siege, much less from an adversary less “powerful” than ourselves. From a national security strategy sense, a prudent but cautious message should be passed to the American public about the homeland defense threat so as to build awareness and to begin a public dialog on how best to respond. From a perspective of national security structure, several key steps can and should be taken. First, I strongly endorse the National Defense Panel recommendation for an Americas Command within the Defense Department Unified Command Structure. The tools, doctrine, training and force structure required to deter and / or counter an attack on the U S homeland would be much different from those posed by conventional military threats away from our shores. A portion of the U S military force structure should be redeployed to address the threat. Key to their mission would be dedicated indications and warning, protection of critical U S infrastructures, developing expertise in dealing with the broad range of non-traditional threats, integrating and training the national guard and reserve into the homeland defense doctrine, particularly as it relates to consequence management, and, perhaps most important, being a force-in-ready to respond immediately and decisively to a

warning notice or attack. I would argue that the troops required to stand-up an Americas Command could be drawn from the European theater where the risk of major regional conflict is very low, and will remain low for the next ten to twelve years.

Knowing that the United States homeland is increasingly vulnerable, as reaffirmed by Attorney General Janet Reno and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Louis Freeh in recent congressional testimony,⁵ and that an attack against the U S homeland is more probable within the next decade, it would be inexcusable if the active U S military were ill-prepared to respond with a force specifically trained and equipped against the threat. The American people expect no less, defense of the United States and its citizens is at the very core of the military's mission.

The role of guard and reserve forces must also be changed to address homeland defense. Both should be given specific authorities, particularly in consequence management – the reserve components to augment the new Americas Command, available for deployment anywhere within the United States as directed, and the national guard with missions tied specifically to their individual states. In either case, both the guard and reserve should have their roles formally written into the operations plans⁶ of the Americas Command to ensure common training, education, doctrine, and equipping – to provide a seamless transition to action when required.

A third component of homeland defense is implementation of a ballistic missile defense system. While I consider the threat of such an attack on the U S homeland to be

⁵ Attorney General and FBI Director testimony to a joint Senate Intelligence Committee and Judiciary subcommittee hearing on technology and terrorism, April 22, 1998.

⁶ Guest Lecture to the National War College, *A Congressional Perspective on U S National Security Strategy*, 14 April 1998. lecturer not identified to preserve non-attribution policy.

low in the next ten to twelve years, the number of nations (even non-state actors) that will have the capability in the post-2010 timeframe will grow considerably – witness the most recent DoD acknowledgment of professional hackers stealing military satellite software from Defense Department information systems and “threatening to sell [the information] to terrorists”⁷ Ballistic missile defense should have a high priority in the U S national security strategy process so that aggressive research and development can begin immediately Today’s investments are essential to the nation’s ability to field a system when the threat will be more formidable

Fourth, and the last comment on structuring U S national security to address homeland defense, is the role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Domestic law enforcement is rightly the responsibility of the FBI and local authorities In a homeland defense context, however, the scope is broader than enforcing the law and, I argue, beyond the law enforcement communities current capability At issue is warning which, I contend, is a mission that is counter to the FBI’s culture Success within the FBI is based in investigations conducted, evidence seized and analyzed, and criminal convictions Missions such as national warning and infrastructure protection, while they have been performed by the Bureau for years, do not gain the stature, importance and, hence, the sense of urgency within the FBI that are required to effectively address the homeland defense threat, at least in the near term⁸ Admittedly, it is difficult to argue that domestic warning and internal protection should the responsibility of the Department of Defense,

⁷ Associated Press report *Hackers steal Pentagon software, threaten sale* Baltimore Sun, page 3A, April 23 1998

⁸ Lecture to National War College elective on Terrorism and National Security The Transmillennial Threat (Course 5984) March 25, 1998 lecturer not identified to preserve non-attribution policy

but at least in the near term strategists need to recognize that only DoD is capable of effectively conducting these missions. Since this essay is concerned with the relative near term, I think that an effective national security structure should acknowledge a prominent role for DoD, probably spearheaded by the Americas Command, in domestic warning and critical infrastructure protection. However, DoD should partner, in an integrated and aggressive way, with the FBI to build the required capability in the Bureau so that the warning and protection missions can be fully transferred by 2010. At the same time, steps must be taken within the Bureau to fundamentally change its internal culture to validate these missions.

Revitalizing U S Diplomacy

The diplomatic corps of the U S State Department has been decimated since the end of the Cold War. Once funded at level roughly eight percent of the U S Defense budget, today it is barely two percent – this at a time when there are dozens of newly independent countries requiring diplomatic presence. Additionally, because these new members of the international community are undergoing wholesale redevelopment, and the United States is more often than not the preferred source for information, expertise, and support, the demands for qualified diplomatic personnel working these new relationships are very real. With the sharp decline in Foreign Service manning caused by declining budgets over the 1990's, the added burden of staffing these new diplomatic locations has caused the overall experience and quality of personnel to fall to dangerously low levels.

Accepting the assumption that economic factors will become an increasingly important tool of statecraft as we move into the 21st century, the argument is easily made that the framework under which this tool is exerted will be through the diplomatic process. At a minimum, the economic components at State Department headquarters and of the embassy staffs must be expanded and the quality of those staffs raised. As the world becomes more diverse and fragmented, and the complexity of international issues and relationships continue to expand, it is imperative that the Foreign Service keep pace. I judge this to be a serious national security issue, and one that only the president can and should take on. The State Department has no constituency to reverse the trend on its own.

Working the Global Commercial Sector

If left to their own interests and devices, mega multinational commercial enterprises will increasingly dominate the international landscape. The United States must be proactive in developing structures to engage the commercial sector – both as partners and, potentially, as adversaries. This calls for an increasing role for the Department of Commerce in the U.S. national security structure, to be the principal conduit and arbiter with the international commercial sector. It also calls for an increased responsibility for the U.S. diplomatic community to integrate with this sector as part of its in-country embassy activities. And, in an admittedly more difficult arena, due to political and legal sensitivities, the role of the U.S. intelligence community must be expanded to monitor “aggressive” commercial entities – an awkward process if a firm is partially U.S. owned.

The U S national security community must take a visionary look at the potential for dominate international commercial actors as a threat to future U S national security

Conclusion

The underlying thesis of this essay is that the current U S national security strategy decision process is one tied to supporting the capabilities and structures with which we are most comfortable – essentially validating what works today. This paper identifies a set of assumptions that point the need for “new think” in how the U S national security community should be structured to effectively engage our strategic future. The paper consciously focuses on the relative near-term (to 2010) because, I believe, it is the period when the nation is most vulnerable. Little has been done to prepare for this period because our attention has been absorbed with the unsettling dynamics of the immediate post-Cold War. The structural issues of establishing a framework for effective homeland defense to counter non-traditional threats, bolstering the U S Foreign Service, and developing a capability to counter an aggressive international commercial sector are key to protecting our national interests in the near term. Each, however, requires immediate attention so that the capabilities and / or organizational structures can be built and deployed before an event occurs. Indeed, the point made by General Krulak in the opening of this paper is tight on the mark. The United States will remain relevant only if we as a nation are willing to meet future challenges and adapt to new needs.