

## AMERICAN WAR STRATEGY: RESTORING COHERENCE AND UNITY OF EFFORT

BY

COLONEL CARL R. TROUT  
United States Army

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:

Approved for Public Release.  
Distribution is Unlimited.

USAWC CLASS OF 2010

This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.



U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle State Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved*  
*OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 25-02-2010			<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Strategy Research Project		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> American War Strategy: Restoring Coherence and Unity of Effort					<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Colonel Carl R. Trout					<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Professor Len Fullenkamp Department of National Security and Strategy					<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> U.S. Army War College 122 Forbes Avenue Carlisle, PA 17013					<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
					<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Distribution A: Unlimited						
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>						
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>  <p>The modern American approach to developing and implementing war strategy has not achieved coherence and unity of effort and has thus far proved insufficient in the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The approach suffers from insufficient interagency dialogue, excessive hierarchy, redundancy, complexity, and flawed practices. Such defects pervade grand and military strategy, and are most pronounced in the attempts to develop strategy for Afghanistan and Iraq. This multidimensional problem is compounded by the pervasive forces of the political-military-industrial complex, legislative incongruity, the mutating character of war, military transformation, and flaws in the War Powers Resolution. Why is America struggling to design effective war strategies? Should it change its approach? Can it change? If it can, in what ways should it change its approach to develop coherent war strategy to achieve unity of effort as it meets the demands of persistent conflict? This paper explores the manifold factors underpinning this issue extant in the current conflicts involving Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, now in their ninth and seventh years respectively. It contends that America can and should adjust its approach to war strategy, and concludes with proposals to do so.</p>						
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy						
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>				<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b>
<b>a. REPORT</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b>			
				UNLIMITED	38	



USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**AMERICAN WAR STRATEGY: RESTORING COHERENCE AND UNITY OF EFFORT**

by

Colonel Carl R. Trout

Professor Len Fullenkamp  
Project Adviser

This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013



## **ABSTRACT**

AUTHOR: Colonel Carl R. Trout  
TITLE: American War Strategy: Restoring Coherence and Unity of Effort  
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project  
DATE: 25 February 2010 WORD COUNT: 5,969 PAGES: 38  
KEY TERMS: National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy  
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The modern American approach to developing and implementing war strategy has not achieved coherence and unity of effort and has thus far proved insufficient in the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The approach suffers from insufficient interagency dialogue, excessive hierarchy, redundancy, complexity, and flawed practices. Such defects pervade grand and military strategy, and are most pronounced in the attempts to develop strategy for Afghanistan and Iraq. This multidimensional problem is compounded by the pervasive forces of the political-military-industrial complex, legislative incongruity, the mutating character of war, military transformation, and flaws in the War Powers Resolution.

Why is America struggling to design effective war strategies? Should it change its approach? Can it change? If it can, in what ways should it change its approach to develop coherent war strategy to achieve unity of effort as it meets the demands of persistent conflict? This paper explores the manifold factors underpinning this issue extant in the current conflicts involving Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, now in their ninth and seventh years respectively. It contends that America can and should adjust its approach to war strategy, and concludes with proposals to do so.





## AMERICAN WAR STRATEGY: RESTORING COHERENCE AND UNITY OF EFFORT

Before long I rediscovered the obvious: a journey can be charted only with a destination in mind, and *strategy* can be plotted only with goals or aims in mind.<sup>1</sup>

—General Albert C. Wedemeyer, USA, Retired

What was the original destination for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, for the “Global War on Terror (GWOT)?” How were they defined? Have they changed? Are the goals of allies and partners the same as those of the US?

The strategic success achieved in the past seems to escape today’s American strategists. The American approach to developing grand and military strategy during and following World War II proved successful. Such success has eluded the US in its attempts at war strategy for protracted conflicts involving irregular warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Afghanistan and Iraq. In these wars, the tremendous loss of blood and treasure, and elusive policy goals are a result of a strategy deficit.<sup>2</sup>

Why is America struggling to design effective war strategies? Should it change its approach? Can it change? If it can, in what ways should the US change its approach to develop coherent war strategy to achieve unity of effort as it meets the demands of persistent conflict? This paper explores the manifold factors underpinning this issue extant in the current conflicts involving Operations Enduring (OEF) and Iraqi Freedom (OIF), now in their ninth and seventh years respectively. It contends that America can and should adjust its approach to war strategy, and concludes with proposals to do so.

### Fuzzy Strategy: From the Silk Road to Mesopotamia

The Bush 43 Administration, confronted with the tragic terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, honorably, and decisively responded with courage and resolve.

However, anger and fear seemingly blighted strategic thinking and judgment during the urgency to strike back in the war initiated by al Qaeda.<sup>3</sup> As a result, dedicated efforts and noble intentions failed to deliver a coherent war strategy for Afghanistan with clearly defined campaign objectives at its onset.<sup>4</sup> For example, President Bush announced the initiation of OEF on October 7, 2001, declaring that the purpose of military strikes against al Qaeda and the Taliban were to “disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.”<sup>5</sup> While these objectives were ample to begin a military operation, what were the broader strategic goals of this war? Perhaps the GWOT began as retaliation with no strategy<sup>6</sup> – thus with no clear destination in mind.<sup>7</sup> In less than two years it would expand to include Iraq, “a war of choice, not necessity.”<sup>8</sup> The legitimacy of intervention in Afghanistan was incontestable.<sup>9</sup> In Iraq it was debatable.

Once America became engaged in war, unintended consequences, unanticipated outcomes,<sup>10</sup> and flawed assumptions harassed its war strategy. Its strategic deficiency became manifest in a multitude of complex problems in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and was recently punctuated by the debate in President Obama’s Administration to decide upon a revised strategy for Afghanistan. Therefore, the American approach to developing and implementing war strategy has not achieved coherence and unity of effort and has thus far proved insufficient in the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

#### Defining the Problem: The Underpinnings of America’s Strategic Deficiency

America’s approach to war strategy suffers from insufficient dialogue, excessive hierarchy, redundancy, complexity, and flawed practices. Such defects pervade grand and military strategy. Collectively, the current national strategies fail to achieve

coherence and unity of effort. This disunity of effort is most pronounced in the attempts to develop strategy for Afghanistan and Iraq.

This multidimensional problem is compounded by the pervasive forces of the political-military-industrial complex, legislative incongruity, the mutating character of war, military transformation, and flaws in the War Powers Resolution. For example, in 2001, the well intended, but misdirected, military transformation theory dominated thinking for designing war strategy. This placed security and national interests at greater risk. Historically, this was not always the case.

#### American Strategy: Cold War to Post Cold War

*Cold War Victory.* The blueprint for victory can be attributed to the so-called “wise men.”<sup>11</sup> They pragmatically balanced *Ends, Ways, Means, and Risk* by defining national interests, establishing clear goals, identifying credible threats, then designing and resourcing whole of government efforts to achieve policy aims at acceptable risk.<sup>12</sup> The vision and design for the Cold War strategy was articulated in National Security Council Paper NSC-68 which argued for a “rapid buildup of the political, economic, and military strength of the free world,” while rejecting isolationism.<sup>13</sup> This grand strategy’s resilience withstood the flawed war strategy for Vietnam.

*The Post-Cold War World and America’s Response.* Inherently, during peace and conflict, the evolving political-strategic environment, new technologies, and tactical innovations cause change in the character of war.<sup>14</sup> In the aftermath of the Cold War, the strategic environment transformed with newly independent nation states freed from the former Soviet Union, an increase in failed states, the ascendancy of non-state actors, and expanding global modernization. In recognition of the evolving strategic landscape, the US sought to adjust its grand and military strategy to meet anticipated

challenges.<sup>15</sup> Policy-makers interpreted this “interwar” period as offering greater stability which encouraged “wishful thinking” reflected in the 1993 Defense guidance describing a “democratic ‘zone of peace.’”<sup>16</sup> Leaders viewed this as a “strategic pause,” and assumed US military dominance of potential threats allowed divestiture from defense<sup>17</sup> yielding a “peace dividend.”<sup>18</sup> The argument advanced held that the “peace dividend” should resource domestic policy aims and that the military should “transform” for the future.<sup>19</sup> The military drawdown proceeded and transformation began, each predicated upon these assumptions.

Jeremi Suri argues that the Bush 41 and Clinton Administration’s efforts to craft grand strategy fell short – Bush “had process without purpose,” Clinton “had purpose without process.”<sup>20</sup> Henceforth, did the lack of an existential threat and a feeling of superiority encourage the application of the military in areas not germane to traditional interests? Perhaps there was no “peace dividend” as one reflects on the 1990s (hindsight acknowledged). As the size of the military steadily declined, the operational employment of the force continued to rise. Therefore, as the demand for the force increased, its supply markedly decreased. Hence, the “strategic pause” discerned by the national security intelligentsia became a contingency surge for the joint force involving operations in northern/southern Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kuwait, and Kosovo.<sup>21</sup> Was the perceived “strategic pause” in actuality a strategic shift to persistent employment of indefinite duration? Persistent employment signaled a changing character of warfare that was seemingly not so apparent to some.

*American Strategy Today.* The US faces evolving threats and emerging opportunities, yet lacks an inclusive and integrated approach to ensure strategic

decisions are advised by an appraisal of how the nation can best secure its interests.<sup>22</sup> Today, no one has “primary responsibility for long-term strategic planning in the national security domain.”<sup>23</sup> Strategic planning outside the National Security Council (NSC) is inclined to be limited to the view of individual departments or influenced by partisan politics.<sup>24</sup> This was underscored by Colin Powell, who, prior to his departure as Secretary of State, privately informed the President that “the national security decision-making process was broken.”<sup>25</sup>

While the effort to define a clear national vision and purpose following 9/11 was essential, it must be accompanied with a strategic path including all instruments of power to achieve desired aims.<sup>26</sup> Further complicating the issue: processes to match resources to national security requirements are suspect, and are mostly still those used during the Cold War.<sup>27</sup> This presents difficulty in allocating sufficient means to accomplish strategic objectives.<sup>28</sup>

#### The Political-Military-Industrial Complex: Indispensable but Disruptive

America’s military supremacy is a product of its people, economic power, and the military-industrial complex. The latter, President Eisenhower recognized as essential, but, in his farewell address, cautioned, “we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.”<sup>29</sup> He foresaw the potential corruptive power and its threat to the nation’s democratic system.<sup>30</sup> In actuality, it is a political-military-industrial complex.

Congress and its constituents have vested interests in both the defense industry and the military. Millions of jobs rely upon defense contracts and the constellation of military bases across the US. When programs or contracts no longer have strategic value, politics may dictate their continuation. Likewise, when a base no longer makes

strategic sense or is not cost effective, politics may prevent its closure. As the military shifted the preponderance of its force to the continental US and became reliant on force projection, it has not geographically postured the force in a strategically sound manner<sup>31</sup> (despite improvements made by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission). For example, the Army has several divisions and brigades positioned in the interior of the US: Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Texas.<sup>32</sup> This increases the response times for these units to deploy to a crisis abroad.<sup>33</sup> It makes more strategic sense to position them coastally. Politics dictates otherwise.<sup>34</sup> A counter point is such basing would be more vulnerable, but how likely is a strike of catastrophic proportion? While war and strategy are subordinate to policy, policy does not naturally or inherently behave strategically.

#### American Strategy Formulation – The Incongruence of Legislation and Practice

The legislative requirements and practice of developing strategies have followed a pattern of dissonance and noncompliance. The National Security Act of 1947, the Goldwater-Nichols Act, and subsequent National Defense Authorization Acts prescribe the current mandates for national strategies. These requirements address purpose, timing, frequency, and content.

*National Security Strategy (NSS)*. Title 50, US Code, now requires the President to submit a “national security strategy report,” commonly referred to as the NSS, to Congress annually during the submission of the budget or “not later than 150 days” following an administration taking office.<sup>35</sup> The NSS includes “interests, goals, and objectives, defense capabilities required, and the use of political, economic, and military elements of national power.”<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the NSS constitutes America’s grand strategy

aimed at guiding and incorporating all instruments of national power.<sup>37</sup> President Bush published the last NSS in March 2006.

*Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and National Defense Strategy (NDS).*

Title 10, US Code, now requires the Secretary of Defense to complete a QDR and report the results to Congress every four years.<sup>38</sup> The purpose of the QDR is to “delineate a National Defense Strategy consistent with the most recent NSS.”<sup>39</sup> The QDR is required quadrennially with the results reported to Congress in the following year “not later than the date the President submits the budget to Congress.”<sup>40</sup> The QDR report includes a “discussion of the NDS, national security interests, threats, assumptions, force structure, capabilities, strategic objectives, and risk.”<sup>41</sup>

In 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld published a separate NDS (not mandated) in addition to the QDR; a first of its kind. Why was it necessary? If the mandate is fulfilled, defense strategy results from the QDR and should be published in its report. Secretary Gates published another NDS in 2008, and followed it with the latest QDR report in February, 2010.

*National Military Strategy (NMS).* Title 10, US Code, now requires the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) to review the NMS biennially to ensure it supports the most recent NSS and QDR, and report the results to Congress by February 15 of even numbered years.<sup>42</sup> The NMS report includes: “a description of the strategic environment, threats, national military objectives, concepts, assessment of capabilities, and assessment of risk.”<sup>43</sup> General Richard Myers, former CJCS, published the last NMS in 2004.

*Dissonance, Noncompliance, and Redundancy.* Logically, the purpose and timing of each strategy should be established based upon the hierarchy of the NSS, QDR, and NMS.<sup>44</sup> However, the prescribed timing of the NSS, QDR, and NMS are not coherently aligned. Specifically, the cycle requiring the NSS annually, the QDR quadrennially, and the NMS biennially is disjointed and now the additive NDS is wedged in. Failure to follow the established cycle further challenges synchronization amongst the strategies.

Administrations have frequently failed to meet the legislative requirements for submission of the NSS.<sup>45</sup> The Reagan Administration submitted two, the Bush 41 Administration three, the Clinton Administration seven, and the Bush 43 Administration two.<sup>46</sup> Bush 43's strategy formulation practice was uneven. It published the 2001 QDR Report prior to its 2002 NSS, followed by the 2004 NMS, which preceded the 2005 NDS, followed by the next QDR in February 2006, then released the 2006 NSS one month later.<sup>47</sup> Did this promote coherence and unity of effort?

The state of national strategies remains out of alignment. As of February 2010, the NSS was published in 2006, the QDR in 2010, the NDS in 2008, and the NMS in 2004. The NSS, NDS, and NMS are from the previous Administration. Are they still active or irrelevant? Perhaps the 2008 NDS is both a bridging strategy and a de facto NMS with the continuity of Secretary Gates?

When excessive gaps exist between strategies, currency, and relevancy becomes suspect. Nested national strategies provide a foundation for the development of a war strategy. Another observation is that the annual requirement for an NSS is too



frequent because the environment is typically not shifting dramatically enough to merit a new strategy each year.<sup>48</sup> What then are realistic and feasible timings and frequency?

The NSS consistently does not assign responsibilities; hence, the absence of a clear lead agency best fit for purpose inhibits unity of effort, lends to redundancy, and may inefficiently apply resources.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, national strategies do not prioritize the established objectives.<sup>50</sup> Responsibility, authority, and priority are commonly missing elements within national strategies.<sup>51</sup>

Each combatant command publishes a theater or functional strategy in addition to the NSS, QDR Report, NDS, and NMS. Is each layer essential, or is there redundancy? For example, the purpose and distinctions of the defense and military strategies are blurred and to a degree duplicative; each is required to discuss objectives, threats, capabilities and risk.<sup>52</sup> What is the distinction between a defense objective and a military objective? What is the utility in having both? How many layers of strategy are practical before becoming an impediment?

*The War Powers Resolution.* The tragedy of Vietnam motivated Congress to clarify constitutional war powers. In 1973, the 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress approved “H.J. Res. 542” to “insure the collective judgment of both Congress and the President” in decisions regarding war.<sup>53</sup> It requires the President to consult Congress before committing the military to hostilities and mandates consultation following commitment.<sup>54</sup> “Short of a declaration of war,” the President must report to Congress “the circumstances necessitating the introduction of US Armed Forces” and the “estimated scope and duration of the hostilities.”<sup>55</sup> The resolution is insufficient because its vague language has proven ineffective,<sup>56</sup> and it does not demand the minimum elements of a strategy<sup>57</sup>

for committing the military to hostilities.<sup>58</sup> Application of the military, short of a declaration of war, is the historical norm.<sup>59</sup> Understandably, some operations involving hostile action do not require a new strategy.<sup>60</sup> Operation El Dorado Canyon is such an example.<sup>61</sup>

### Modern Military Transformation: A Strategic Dysfunction

History illustrates that successful military revolutions occur when a specific problem is identified in strategic context and solved.<sup>62</sup> Fred Kagan argues that the military following Vietnam transformed with significant success.<sup>63</sup> The transformation of the 1970s identified specific threats and the problems with confronting them, and then developed doctrinal, organizational, and technical solutions that included transition to the All-Volunteer Force and the threat of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>64</sup> Today, the total All-Volunteer Force<sup>65</sup> with its integral reserves<sup>66</sup> is a proven strategic innovation enabling America to conduct two wars simultaneously with no return to the draft.<sup>67</sup> It has proven resilient in both conventional and irregular warfare.

Threat based defense planning is historically valid because adversaries reside at the heart of strategic problems. However, military leaders in the 1990s made inadequate attempts to identify likely problems and threats that could require specific force capabilities.<sup>68</sup> The absence of a credible or visible threat tends to promote complacency instead of focus.<sup>69</sup> As a result, greater reliance is placed on assumptions and hypotheses.

The prevailing attitude following the Cold War concluded that the military must transform from the industrial to the information age to remain relevant.<sup>70</sup> As a result, in the 1990s the military embarked on transformation aimed at leveraging the so-called “information revolution in military affairs” with the assumption that it could gain

overwhelming advantages and markedly decrease its vulnerability.<sup>71</sup> A prime example, the “Dominant Battlespace Awareness” study in 1995 neglected consideration of the human element and was flawed by its myopic view of war as a “targeting drill.”<sup>72</sup> Subsequently, transformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century adopted a capabilities based approach that replaced the proven threat based methodology.<sup>73</sup> Arguably, a strategy driven approach to transformation would have been more appropriate.

During his first campaign, President George W. Bush, trumpeted his vision for a transformed military – lighter, with enhanced mobility, and lethality that would focus exclusively on warfare (Balkan-like stability operations were to be avoided.)<sup>74</sup> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld embraced technology and established the “Office of Force Transformation” with the aim to focus on “network-centric warfare.”<sup>75</sup> He rejected the two major theater war strategy carried forward because it relied upon significant ground forces that he did not see as necessary, thus he desired to reduce them.<sup>76</sup> The demand for land power in Afghanistan and Iraq halted this notion. Eventually, President Bush and Rumsfeld asserted that operations in Afghanistan confirmed what they saw as a “new American way of war.”<sup>77</sup>

As the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq became mired in protracted counterinsurgencies, the confidence in information technology driven transformation endured.<sup>78</sup> On the battlefield, the harsh realities of irregular warfare blunted the assumed dominance of digitized information superiority and standoff engagement. Technological superiority alone was insufficient to “intimidate opponents from warrior cultures.”<sup>79</sup> Hence, ground and special operations forces became consumed in two irregular campaigns of indefinite duration not anticipated prior to 9/11.<sup>80</sup> In war,

transformation theory proved to be no substitute for strategy. Unfortunately, America paid dearly in blood and treasure before making a course correction.

### American War Strategy Post 9/11 – Disunity of Purpose and Effort

The strategic shock of 9/11 is understandable. Secretary of State Colin Powell learned of the attacks while away in Peru and began thinking through the crisis while returning to Washington.<sup>81</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld found it unsurprising that there was no contingency plan for Afghanistan.<sup>82</sup> Deliberations at the NSC included mentions of Iraq,<sup>83</sup> and even suggestions of intervention beyond Afghanistan.<sup>84</sup>

Strategic leaders in the Bush Administration were unacquainted with Afghanistan which led to questionable assumptions that influenced the intervention.<sup>85</sup> The Administration was uncertain as to defining the campaign's objectives; for example, "to destroy al Qaeda, to remove the Taliban Government, or to occupy the country to stabilize and reconstruct it."<sup>86</sup> "Colin Powell said, 'If we make overthrowing the Taliban government the goal, then we'd need a new campaign plan.'"<sup>87</sup> With the Taliban's refusal to meet Washington's demands the Administration committed to a policy of regime change.<sup>88</sup> What would be the strategy beyond the opening retaliation and the campaign plan to support it? Hence, the initial invasion of Afghanistan lacked a coherent war strategy. The difficulties and issues that followed are not surprising. Success at the beginning of the campaign fed irrational optimism.<sup>89</sup>

Afghanistan was believed to be won. However, early success does not guarantee lasting success. Perhaps events on the ground were not understood in the historical and cultural context of Afghanistan and its region? What then was the true character of this war? Was it prudent to assume that Afghanistan would break from its established pattern of warfare just because the Taliban and al Qaeda had been driven

across the Durand Line?<sup>90</sup> While policy is supreme, it does not inherently understand “the nature and character of war.”<sup>91</sup>

With Afghanistan unfinished, the strategic main effort would shift to Iraq. Less than three months after 9/11, President Bush inquired about the war plan for Iraq with Secretary Rumsfeld.<sup>92</sup> Rumsfeld acknowledged and replied that the military’s planning was “woefully broken,” too complicated, and too slow; he described war plans as outdated and based on questionable assumptions.<sup>93</sup> The President directed Rumsfeld to undertake this effort with utmost secrecy.<sup>94</sup>

Secretary Rumsfeld requested a briefing on the contingency plan for Iraq, OPLAN 1003-98,<sup>95</sup> which had been developed under General Anthony Zinni, former commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM). Thus, planning for war with Iraq began shortly after invading Afghanistan and before concluding the campaign.<sup>96</sup> Thomas Ricks observed, “It wasn’t a good way to go into a war.”<sup>97</sup> A second war it would become. But how would the feasibility of a multi-theater war be evaluated?<sup>98</sup>

Secretary Rumsfeld concluded that success in Afghanistan confirmed transformation.<sup>99</sup> He would proceed to shape the plan for war in Iraq based upon views held before OEF started, but they had not really been validated.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, misinterpretation of what was happening in Afghanistan likely clouded judgment regarding the possibilities involved with intervention in Iraq. Such would become manifest as transformation theory replaced lucid strategic thinking.

Upon review of the plan, Rumsfeld questioned the validity of the size of the force envisioned (nearly half a million troops) as the product of outdated thinking.<sup>101</sup> He declared that the campaign should not require more than “125,000” troops.<sup>102</sup> General

Tommy Franks briefed a revised version in early December 2001; Rumsfeld wanted the force reduced further.<sup>103</sup> As planning progressed, Rumsfeld and Franks monopolized Iraq strategy formulation largely excluding the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).<sup>104</sup> Not only were the JCS shut out, so was virtually the rest of government.

General Zinni based the force on the estimate of what it would take to stabilize a post-Saddam Iraq (assessing that it required more troops to “secure the peace” than to remove the regime)<sup>105</sup> which was informed by assumptions and insights from the 1999 Desert Crossing Seminar.<sup>106</sup> Unwisely, this work had been tossed aside.<sup>107</sup> General Franks focused on calculating the force necessary to win the battles and to collapse the regime, deferring post-battle security requirements for later.<sup>108</sup>

Historically, establishing peace and stability is manpower-intensive; “speed does not substitute for mass” (Iraq’s estimated population was 24 million),<sup>109</sup> nor will technology. Commensurate with disregard for post-conflict security was the political-military plan for regime change. There was insufficient thinking and planning applied as to how to replace Saddam’s regime; this would prove damaging during the perceived post-hostilities phase.<sup>110</sup> The assumptions were optimistic. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice recalled, “It was expected that after combat ‘the institutions would hold, everything from ministries to police forces.’”<sup>111</sup> It would be the Joint Staff that proposed a postwar concept.<sup>112</sup>

The lack of an integrated and comprehensive interagency planning effort combined with flawed assumptions severely impacted the development of a strategy for Iraq. A review of the planning assumptions (listed in Figure 1) from August 15, 2002, reveals three astonishing examples: “DoS will promote creation of a broad-based,

credible provisional government – prior to D-Day; co-opted Iraqi units will occupy garrisons and will not fight either US forces or other Iraqi units; and Iraq regime has WMD capability.”<sup>113</sup> Why did CENTCOM assume State was working to promote a provisional government? Why was State not included in planning and asked what it could and should do? Why did it not consider the possibility that some Iraqis may form a guerrilla resistance consistent with its history?<sup>114</sup> Remarkably, CENTCOM did not consider Iraqi WMD a fact. Lastly, what were the implications and the branch plans if these assumptions proved false?

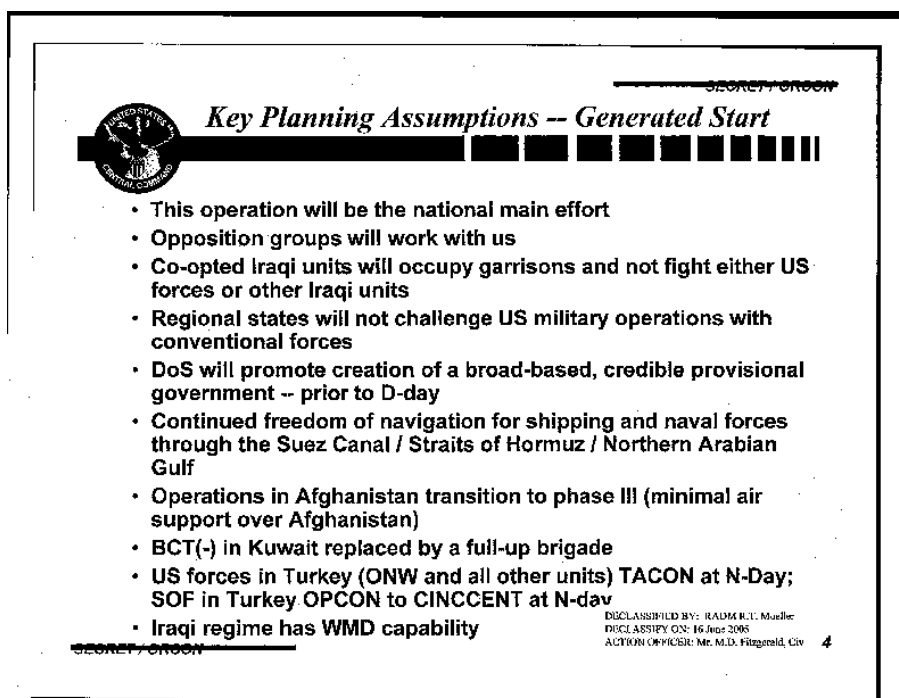


Figure 1: USCENTCOM briefing 15 August 2002<sup>115</sup>

When CENTCOM hosted the Desert Crossing Seminar to explore how to address regime change in Iraq, it included participants from the NSC, State, CIA, and Defense.<sup>116</sup> The seminar considered responsibilities, threats, opportunities, challenges, and risk.<sup>117</sup> Strategy formulation for Iraq could have been better served by the insights and assumptions gleaned from the seminar. Four trenchant examples stand out: “a

change in regime does not guarantee stability; Iraq may fragment along religious and/or ethnic lines; ignoring interagency coordinating mechanisms can lead to aborted, prolonged or failed missions; and Iran possesses the ability to raise the costs and consequences of intervention.”<sup>118</sup> Apparently, these were discarded.

For the central policy objective to remove Saddam’s regime and replace it with a democratic government;<sup>119</sup> the Administration was unable to design a coherent strategy to achieve this goal at an acceptable cost. The campaign was based on unrealistic assumptions regarding post-regime transition<sup>120</sup> and lacked a comprehensive civil-military approach with sufficient means to accomplish the desired outcome – an “ends means mismatch.”<sup>121</sup>

Did the Administration understand the problem of regime change? Arguably Secretary of State Colin Powell did. Prior to deciding on war, Powell sagely articulated the implications, consequences, and risks of removing Saddam’s regime.<sup>122</sup> Euphoria from early promise in Afghanistan likely promoted overconfidence for those contemplating invading Iraq other than Powell.

On March 19, 2003, President Bush announced that the US led coalition had begun operations to “disarm Iraq, free its people, and to defend the world from grave danger.”<sup>123</sup> Had the plausibility of unintended consequences been fully considered? Would Iran counter US forces in Iraq via proxies?<sup>124</sup> Could invading Iraq embolden Iran to pursue a nuclear weapons program? Thus could it be that a war to disarm one regime became the catalyst for arming another? Did this starve the Afghan theater of vital resources and allow al Qaeda and the Taliban to reconstitute as some have argued?



## Back to Strategic Fundamentals

America's flawed approach to war strategy must change if it is to achieve unity of purpose and effort that delivers successful campaign outcomes, accomplishes desired strategic objectives, and secures a sustainable peace. It must return to time honored strategic fundamentals. In doing so, the political purpose war serves must be emphasized. That is, the essence of war is armed conflict between states or groups for the purpose of political aims.<sup>125</sup> It follows that wars are fought to attain a peace that is desirable.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, the counsel and wisdom of two distinguished grand strategists is in order.

*General Albert C. Wedemeyer.* The acclaimed architect of the Victory Plan for WW II, understood and appreciated Clausewitz. Wedemeyer astutely comprehended that clearly defined policy was a prerequisite for effective strategy.<sup>127</sup> He recognized that war originates from political impasse and thus must be pursued with the supreme political aim in sight and terminated with a sustainable peace.<sup>128</sup> It follows that policy defines the national objective, that strategy depends on policy, and that military campaigns and missions depend upon strategy.<sup>129</sup> Therefore, policy should be based on lucid thinking and discourse in order to shape realistic strategy and not be driven by emotive impulse.

Wedemeyer's approach to strategy relied upon all instruments of national power. His incisive description of strategy serves as exemplar even for today's world. He defined strategy as: "The art and science of developing and employing all political, economic, and psycho-social resources of a nation together with its armed forces in the ongoing struggle to ensure security and well-being of the people."<sup>130</sup> Moreover, he firmly held that the creative, integrated, and responsive application of all instruments of

power would markedly reduce the required employment of the military in armed conflict.<sup>131</sup> However, when conflict is unavoidable, the same comprehensive approach improves the probability of achieving war aims and the durability of the peace that follows. The initial efforts at war strategy for Iraq were dominated by Defense, largely excluded other agencies, and were essentially the antithesis of the Wedemeyer approach.

Wedemeyer observed that most of America's strategic leaders were singularly fixated on defeating the enemy;<sup>132</sup> arguably such was again the case with Afghanistan and Iraq. Astutely, he recognized the importance of considering the post-conflict conditions. Beyond winning, he believed it was vital to comprehend what the US desired the world to look like following war, the type of peace it would commit to, and he understood the criticality of strategic assumptions.<sup>133</sup> Thus, he discerned that the nation's security depended on the domestic and global conditions created by the war.<sup>134</sup>

Wedemeyer's wisdom proved to be a national asset. He charted the course for victory by elucidating the objectives beyond the defeat of the Axis.<sup>135</sup> To do so, he crafted three key strategic questions: "What were our country's true interests? How could those interests best be protected and advanced? What kind of world did we wish to emerge from the cataclysm of another terrible war?"<sup>136</sup> These questions remain valid. Wedemeyer's approach should be incorporated into the design of future war strategies.

*President Dwight D. Eisenhower.* President Eisenhower understood from his experience as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe that fostering teamwork was essential to maintaining an alliance and unity of effort. He learned that building mutual trust and confidence was imperative.<sup>137</sup> He brought this hard earned wisdom to the

presidency and applied it. Recently, Michelle Flournoy, and Shawn Brimley highlighted Eisenhower's approach in "Project Solarium" as exemplar to inspire, inform, and suggest reform to strategic planning.<sup>138</sup>

Eisenhower entered office as the nation was stalemated in the Korean War, and faced a volatile and uncertain future in how to deal with the Soviets with no prevailing strategic view on how to proceed.<sup>139</sup> He and his advisors debated strategy for dealing with the Soviets in the White House Solarium in 1953.<sup>140</sup> Eisenhower decided that a full range of options must be developed, compared, and dissenting opinions heard.<sup>141</sup> He demanded comprehensive planning that included participants from all agencies.<sup>142</sup>

The project assembled teams at the National War College and tasked them with developing a set of feasible options.<sup>143</sup> President Eisenhower required each team to brief the NSC, the JCS, and the Service Secretaries by articulating ends, resources required, methods, impact on international relations, and risk.<sup>144</sup> In doing so, he welcomed his advisors to challenge his thinking and assumptions, he valued debate and multiple points of view, he demanded inclusion of all stakeholders, and expected an integrated effort.<sup>145</sup> As a result, he ensured that the sharp differences between the principals, the services, and the Solarium teams were not diluted and reduced to a consensus, thus preserving all views to inform his decisions.<sup>146</sup>

"Project Solarium" demonstrated that effective grand strategy requires integrated, inclusive, and holistic interagency collaboration to achieve unity of purpose and effort.<sup>147</sup> It generated comprehensive options, and provides a prime example of how to design grand strategy. It offers equal utility in the design of war strategy.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The principal issue with the formulation of American war strategy has been a departure from its proven strategic fundamentals. Foremost, was an absence of a comprehensive approach that includes all instruments of power and encourages intense discourse and debate. A discourse that yields a clear destination in mind - the *Ends*, for which coherent *Ways* and *Means* can be discerned and balanced with *Risk* to achieve them. This requires careful attention in limited wars where leaders must temper desires and calibrate their ends within reach of the means they are willing to commit,<sup>148</sup> as in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Open dialogue that allows the expression and consideration of contrarian views is imperative to collaboration. Voices with unpopular assessments must not be muffled. Ultimately, the Commander in Chief must decide upon the policy and the strategic direction. In doing so, the President demands a balanced and inclusive appraisal from all principals. Advice must not be confined to a single agency dominated view.

Such debate demands that strategic problems be defined and framed in proper context. Colin Gray argues that all wars “should be understood with reference to seven contexts: “political, social-cultural, economic, technological, military-strategic, geographical, and historical.”<sup>149</sup> This is essential in framing the problem. Failure to understand a problem reduces the chance of developing a solution. Possibly, in the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, cultural and historical understanding is more important than technology for both strategist and warrior to persevere through the ubiquitous “fog of war?”<sup>150</sup> The sage advice of Michael Pearlman also applies, “the indeterminate will of the enemy may determine the length, intensity, and cost of the conflict.”<sup>151</sup>

Secretary Gates made a deliberate effort to return to a comprehensive approach demonstrated by the debate that informed President Bush's decision to implement the surge strategy in Iraq. Then recently, he encouraged an inclusive and collaborative approach to inform President Obama's revised strategy for Afghanistan. In the 2010 QDR Report, Secretary Gates vigorously promotes a comprehensive approach.<sup>152</sup>

The legislative mandates for national strategies have excessive and duplicative requirements and are not enforced. For example, the provision of an NSS annually is unrealistic. The QDR, NDS, and NMS duplicate effort. Therefore, legislative reform is in order and Congress must begin enforcing requirements.

The NSS should only be required every four years and it should be submitted to Congress no later than 180 days upon the President assuming office. Strategic validity should be emphasized over frequency. Secondly, the QDR should begin once an administration takes office (or at the beginning of a second term) with its report issued with the President's budget submission the following year. A synchronized QDR would align resources for and provide refinement of the NMS. Moreover, the collective influence of the QDR and NMS offers the best prospect of keeping the political-military-industrial complex in check by establishing strategic requirements. Thirdly, the NDS and NMS are redundant. They should be consolidated into a comprehensive NMS.

The NMS should be constructed in concert with the NSS and published simultaneously with it. This follows similar logic in developing and publishing the Guidance for the Employment of the Force and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan concurrently. Designing the NSS and NMS collaboratively would be hard, but doable,<sup>153</sup> and would promote unity of purpose and effort. This would facilitate integration of the

military with the other instruments of power. A nested NSS and NMS would stand a better chance of providing coherent grand strategy to guide the formulation of war strategy when the prospects of armed conflict arise.

The War Powers Resolution is insufficient. It should be amended to require provision of a war strategy inclusive of all instruments of power as a component of the consultation between the President and Congress. At a minimum, it should require a statement of the national interests involved, assessment of the enemy, the strategic objectives, the desired termination criteria upon which hostilities will conclude, the estimated force required, interagency support, allies and partners committed, and an assessment of the risk.

The military must shift from a technology driven transformation to a strategy driven modernization that emphasizes the human component as the joint force's center of gravity, but enabled by technology. The distinction is that strategy should drive requirements for the size, composition, and capabilities of the joint force. A strategic approach must consider actual or potential enemies and threats. Hence, threat evaluation is integral to grand, military, and war strategy.

Future policy considering regime change in limited wars must proceed with extreme caution.<sup>154</sup> Regime change has proved daunting when not involving total war. In the strategic calculus, the criticality of the interests involved must be carefully weighed against the feasibility, cost, time, and risk.<sup>155</sup> Only a comprehensive approach can succeed and the military component is unlikely decisive. There is a stark distinction between removing a dictator and replacing an entire government. The degree of difficulty of the latter is arguably exponentially greater. Therefore, the pertinent strategic

question is – how can the national interests be protected with a policy other than regime change?

The military's inherent purpose is to provide for the "Common Defense" and to "Secure the Blessings of Liberty."<sup>156</sup> This is articulated in the Preamble to the Constitution and is immutable. National strategy is inherently caught in a tug of war between the President, the Congress, the military, and the people they serve.<sup>157</sup> Michael Pearlman observes, "political pluralism makes strategy even harder."<sup>158</sup> When the President and Congress choose to commit the military to armed conflict, no legislative mandate guarantees a coherent strategy. However, implementing the proposals herein would establish a framework to guide future leaders. The practice of strategic fundamentals would improve America's approach to design coherent war strategies that achieve unity of purpose and effort across the spectrum of conflict to deliver victory. The American people deserve it.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Albert C. Wedermeyer, "Memorandum on a National Strategy Council," *Military Planning in the Twentieth Century*. Proceedings of the Eleventh Military History Symposium 1984, USAF Academy (Washington D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1986), 409.

<sup>2</sup> Colin S. Gray, *National Security Dilemmas: Challenges & Opportunities* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2009), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick W. Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy* (New York, New York: Encounter Books, 2006), 290.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 289, 290.

<sup>5</sup> About.com, Middle East Issues, <http://middleeast.about.com/od/afghanistan/qt/me081007b.htm>, (accessed December 8, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 174, 175.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 195. On 4 October, President Bush asked, “Who will run the country?’ No one had a real answer, but Rice was beginning to understand that that was the critical question. Where were they headed?”

<sup>8</sup> Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq* (New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), Foreword.

<sup>9</sup> Woodward, *Bush At War*, 176. NATO issued a resolution “invoking Article 5, declaring that the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001, were an attack on all NATO countries.”

<sup>10</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims on War, Peace, and Strategy* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007), 16.

<sup>11</sup> Jeremi Suri, “Clear Skies over the Hudson: The Promise and Failure of American Grand Strategy from the End of the Cold War to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks,” University of Wisconsin-Madison: 29 May 2009, 4.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/cwr/82209.htm> (accessed January 11, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> United States Joint Forces Command, *The Joint Operating Environment 2009 Update: Challenges and Implications for the Joint Force* (Norfolk, VA: USJFCOM, 2009), 3.

<sup>15</sup> Suri, “Clear Skies over the Hudson: The Promise and Failure of American Grand Strategy from the End of the Cold War to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks,” 20.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 176.

<sup>18</sup> Suri, “Clear Skies over the Hudson: The Promise and Failure of American Grand Strategy from the End of the Cold War to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks,” 6.

<sup>19</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 176.

<sup>20</sup> Suri, “Clear Skies over the Hudson: The Promise and Failure of American Grand Strategy from the End of the Cold War to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks,” 20.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Donnelly and Frederick W. Kagan, *GROUND TRUTH: The Future of U.S. Land Power* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute Press, 2008), 8.

<sup>22</sup> Michele A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, “Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 41, (2d Quarter 2006), 86.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



<sup>25</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 39.

<sup>26</sup> Flournoy and Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," 80.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> For background see President Eisenhower's farewell address to the nation, *National Archives*, <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=90&page=transcript> (accessed January 11, 2010). In 1961, days before departing office, President Eisenhower addressed the nation. An illuminating excerpt from his address follows: "A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction. Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. The conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence-economic, political, even spiritual-is felt in every city, every city, every state house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society."

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 284-285.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 284-285.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>35</sup> Title 50, U.S. Code, Chapter 15, Subchapter I, Section 404a, <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/50C15.txt> (accessed January 18, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Catherine Dale, Report for Congress, *National Security Strategy: Legislative Mandates, Execution to Date, and Considerations for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, May 2008), CRS-3, 4.

<sup>38</sup> Title 10, U.S. Code, Subtitle A, Part I, Chapter 2, Sec 118, <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/10C2.txt> (accessed January 18, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Title 10, US Code, Subtitle A, Part I, Chapter 5, Section 153, (d) (2) <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/10C5.txt> (accessed January 18, 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Dale, *National Security Strategy: Legislative Mandates, Execution to Date, and Considerations for Congress*, CRS-16, 17.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., CRS-16.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., CRS-4.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., CRS-16, 17.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., CRS-16.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., CRS-18.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., CRS-2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., CRS-17, 18.

<sup>53</sup> The War Powers Resolution of 1973, Public Law 93-148, 93d Congress, H.J. Resolution 542, November 7, 1973 at [http://www.policyalmanac.org/world/archive/war\\_powers\\_resolution.shtml](http://www.policyalmanac.org/world/archive/war_powers_resolution.shtml) (accessed February 22, 2010). The requirements are incorporated into Title 50 U.S. Code Chapter 33.

<sup>54</sup> Title 50 U.S. Code, Chapter 33, Sec. 1542 <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/50C33.txt> (accessed February 22, 2010)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, Sec. 1543.

<sup>56</sup> National War Powers Commission, *National War Powers Commission Report*, The Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press 2009), 6, 7.

<sup>57</sup> The author believes that a strategic concept should be required that describes the national interests that are threatened, the strategic objectives, the mission, forces required, and the associated risk.

<sup>58</sup> Michael L. Smidt, *The Proposed 2009 War Powers Consultation Act*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 19, 2009), 16, 17.

<sup>59</sup> Michael D. Pearlman, *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to Present* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1999), 11. For

example, “when America used its armed forces abroad 165 times from 1798 to 1970, Capitol Hill declared war on only 5 five occasions, usually after the army or navy was already engaged.”

<sup>60</sup> The author asserts at a minimum such action must have a clearly defined strategic purpose that supports an existing strategy.

<sup>61</sup> See Operation El Dorado Canyon at [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/el\\_dorado\\_canyon.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/el_dorado_canyon.htm). On April 16, 1986 President Reagan authorized an air raid against Libya as an act of self-defense against Libyan state sponsored terrorism under article 51 of the UN charter.

<sup>62</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 200.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 199-200.

<sup>65</sup> James Jay Carafano, Ph. D. “The Army Reserves and the Abrams Doctrine: Unfulfilled Promise, Uncertain Future,” <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/hl869.cfm> (accessed February 4, 2010). The feasibility of the All-Volunteer Force relied upon rebalancing its components. The “Total Force Concept” distributed forces and capabilities between the active, reserve, and the National Guard in a manner requiring their interdependence in extended conflict. This made reliance upon the reserves inevitable in war and is commonly described as the “Abrams Doctrine.”

<sup>66</sup> Donnelly and Kagan, *GROUND TRUTH: The Future of U.S. Land Power*, 18, 121. The repetitive employment of the reserves has resulted in the prevailing view that the National Guard has become an operational reserve.

<sup>67</sup> The All-Volunteer Force (AVF) is a major strategic success. The author concludes that that this transformation in organizational design from the 1970 has been of greater value and more successful in the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century than has the information technology efforts at transformation. While not perfect, the AVF has delivered a military superior in quality that has demonstrated its combat effectiveness and adaptability during persistent conflict. The reserves are an essential component of this success.

Perhaps the Reserves and National Guard today are truly a strategic reserve? Thus, it is essential to preserve the current dual purpose role of the Air and Army National Guard - that of a strategic reserve in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century context, not a Cold War context; then as a state militia with a homeland defense role.

It is a strategic decision to mobilize and employ reserve components to conduct and sustain a campaign. Repetitive mobilization and employment does not disqualify the strategic role the Guard serves today. Therefore, the employment of the Guard to sustain and win the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to achieve national strategic objectives is clearly strategic in purpose. When Guard units are mobilized strategic risk is assumed in the States affected.

Ultimately, the viability of the All-Volunteer Force is dependent upon the reserve components. Volunteers enable the generation and maintenance of a high quality force. The author submits that the fighting will of an all-volunteer force is greater than one of conscripts in

today's operational environment. Lastly, the author fully recognizes that the Total Force's personnel and equipment is under severe stress resulting from the continued operational demands of both wars.

<sup>68</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 200.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 212.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 281.

<sup>74</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 5.

<sup>75</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 288.

<sup>76</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 9.

<sup>77</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 288.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 288, 346, 347.

<sup>79</sup> Steven Metz, *Iraq & The Evolution of American Strategy* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, Inc., 2008), 64.

<sup>80</sup> Donnelly and Kagan, *GROUND TRUTH: The Future of U.S. Land Power*, 36-38.

<sup>81</sup> Woodward, *Bush At War*, 10-11. Secretary Powell began a strategic estimate of the situation. "Powell started to scribble notes to himself. What are my people going to be responsible for? How is the world, the US going to respond to this? What about the UN? What about NATO? How do I start calling people together?"

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 137. "Rumsfeld said, 'Look, as part of the war on terrorism, should we be getting something going in another area, other than Afghanistan, so that success or failure and progress isn't measured just by Afghanistan.'"

<sup>85</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 289.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Woodward, *Bush At War*, 149.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 192. Within the NSC, “The Principals met on Wednesday October 3. The US was embarked on regime change in Afghanistan. The transition to that policy – their realization of it – had occurred at this meeting. Everyone in the room knew they were entering a phase of peacekeeping, and nation building. Now it looked like the main US presence in Afghanistan if and when the Taliban was ousted was going to be thousands of combat troops, perhaps most of them American. Rumsfeld wanted to minimize it, Powell wanted them to face the reality of it.”

<sup>89</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 308.

<sup>90</sup> Interview of Jalaluddin Haqqani reported by Richard S. Ehrlich, “Afghanistan: An American Graveyard?,” *The Laissez Faire City Times*, October 29, 2001, quoted in Pete Blaber, *The Mission, The Men, and Me* (New York, New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2008), 224. Haqqani reportedly said in this interview on October 29, 2001, “We will retreat to the mountains and begin a long guerrilla war to reclaim our pure land from [American] infidels and free our country like we did against the Soviets.”

<sup>91</sup> Gray, *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims On War, Peace, And Strategy*, 36.

<sup>92</sup> Bob Woodward, *PLAN OF ATTACK: The Definitive Account of the Decision to Invade Iraq* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 1.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>95</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *FIASCO: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York, New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 33.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Woodward, *Bush At War*, 87-88. During crisis action planning for Afghanistan when mentions of Iraq arose, Secretary Powell contemplated, “Though the US military claims to be designed and equipped to fight two full-scale conflicts simultaneously, Powell thought the Defense Department was overestimating its ability to do two things at the same time from the same command, with the same commander and staff.”

<sup>99</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 327.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 328.

<sup>101</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 4.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>106</sup> United States Central Command, Desert Crossing Seminar (U), After Action Report (U), MacDill Air Force Base, FL, June 28-30, 1999. Declassified by BGen G.J. Trautman, Jr, USMC, Deputy J5, USCENTCOM, Declassified on 2 July 2004.

<sup>107</sup> Ricks, *FIASCO: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 87.

<sup>108</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 28.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>110</sup> *FIASCO: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 78-80.

<sup>111</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *COBRA II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq*, 142.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 140-41. The Joint Staff proposed a concept for a three-star headquarters augmented with a robust interagency team to manage the post conflict transition and work with the US Ambassador once appointed. Secretary Rumsfeld, once briefed on the concept, directed that Defense Department would lead the effort with a civilian administrator responsible for governance and a US military commander responsible for security, the State Department's role was minimized.

<sup>113</sup> The National Security Archive, George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB214/Tab%20I%20-%20page%204.pdf>, (accessed January 23, 2010.) Declassified by: RADM R.T. Moeller, Declassified on 16 June 2005.

<sup>114</sup> Special Service Division, Army Service Forces, United States Army, "Short Guide to Iraq" (Washington, DC: War and Navy Departments, n.d.), 4. This guide was prepared for service members sent to support the British in Iraq during WW II. It trenchantly emphasizes the skill in irregular warfare indigenous to the Iraqi people. For example, "That tall man in the flowing robe you are going to see soon with the whiskers and long hair is a first-class fighting man, highly skilled in guerrilla warfare. Few fighters in any country, in fact, excel him in that kind of situation. If he is your friend he can be a staunch and valuable ally. If he should happen to be your enemy – look out! Remember Lawrence of Arabia? Well, it was with men like these that he wrote history in the First World War."

<sup>115</sup> The National Security Archive, George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB214/Tab%20I%20-%20page%204.pdf>, (accessed January 23, 2010.) Declassified by: RADM R.T. Moeller, Declassified on 16 June 2005.

<sup>116</sup> United States Central Command, Desert Crossing Seminar (U), After Action Report (U), MacDill Air Force Base, FL, June 28-30, 1999. Declassified by BGen G.J. Trautman, Jr, USMC, Deputy J5, USCENTCOM, Declassified on 2 July 2004.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. The comprehensive insights included: “likelihood that intervention will be costly in terms of casualties and resources; regime change may not enhance regional stability; the replacement regime could be problematic; Iran has substantial interest in developments in Iraq (perhaps its most bitter rival); Iran’s anti-Americanism could be enflamed by a US led intervention; Iran feels pressured and lashes out asymmetrically in moves that range from harassment of US forces to terrorist attacks; lifting sanctions on Iran may be part of a full Iraq policy; ambiguous role of Iraq opposition clouds US policy development; the US lacks sufficient information on individuals and groups within Iraq to plan for, or respond to, Saddam’s departure; Iraqi opposition weaknesses are significant; the debate reveals the paucity of information about the potential and capabilities of the external Iraqi opposition groups; a variety of power struggles might occur during the early stages of a post-Saddam crisis; active support from coalition partners is critical to mission success; differing visions of a unified Iraq complicate end-state articulation; some believe no Arab government will welcome the kind of lengthy US presence that would be required to install and sustain a democratic government; a long-term, large-scale military intervention may be at odds with many coalition partners; changes that could result from interventions at various levels will involve political and military relationships, religious and ethnic conflicts, economic relations, and differing views of social justice; mounting a large intervention will be costly.”

<sup>119</sup> Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 323.

<sup>120</sup> Metz, *Iraq & The Evolution of American Strategy*, 197.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 199.

<sup>122</sup> Woodward, *PLAN OF ATTACK: The Definitive Account of the Decision to Invade Iraq*, 270. “Powell said, ‘The US would be taking down a regime, would have to govern Iraq, and the ripple effect in the Middle East and the world could not be predicted.’”

<sup>123</sup> President Bush’s War Address, Speech Announcing Opening Stages of Iraqi Invasion, see the CBS News at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/19/iraq/main544714.shtml>, (accessed January 24, 2010).

<sup>124</sup> Kimberly Kagan, *THE SURGE: A Military History* (New York, NY: Encounter Books, 2009), 162. “Iran began preparing to combat American forces in Iraq even before the invasion of 2003. According to an August 2005 article by Michael Ware based on classified intelligence documents, the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei convened a council of war in Tehran that concluded: ‘It is necessary to adopt an active policy in order to prevent long-term and short-term dangers to Iran.’ As a result, Iranian intelligence services organized the various Iraqi resistance groups that they had been sheltering under Brigadier General Qassim Sullaimani, the current head of the Qods Force (See Michael Ware, *Talking With The Enemy*, Time Magazine Sunday, February 20, 2005 at <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1029805,00.html>, accessed on February 18, 2010) Immediately after the US invasion, thousands of members of these resistance groups, primarily from the Badr Corps, moved into Iraq and attempted to seize control of various key locations in the Shia areas.”

<sup>125</sup> Colin Gray S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century* (London, England: Phoenix, Orion Books Ltd., 2006; first published in Great Britain: Wiedenfeld & Nicholson 2005), 30.

<sup>126</sup> Gray, *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims On War, Peace, 7*

<sup>127</sup> Charles E. Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future And A Doubtful Present: Writing The Victory Plan Of 1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History 1992), 31.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 60, 61.

<sup>130</sup> Wedemeyer, "Memorandum on a National Strategy Council," 413.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. In his 1984 memorandum, Wedemeyer cogently argues for the creation of a "National Strategy Council as an official agency of the government to serve as a steadying gyroscope to the ship of state" in what he describes as "this age of perpetual crisis."

<sup>132</sup> Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future And A Doubtful Present: Writing The Victory Plan Of 1941*, 62.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>135</sup> Wedemeyer, "Memorandum on a National Strategy Council," 409.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> General of the Army, Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Problems of Combined Command*, (Washington D.C., Lecture presented at the National War College, 18 June, 1948), 5.

<sup>138</sup> Michele A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," 82.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 82, 83

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 125.

<sup>145</sup> Michele A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," 82.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 83, 84.



<sup>148</sup> Pearlman, *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to Present*, 1.

<sup>149</sup> Gray, *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims On War, Peace, And Strategy*, 3.

<sup>150</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *IMPERIAL GRUNTS: The American Military on the Ground* (New York, New York: Random House, 2005), 185.

<sup>151</sup> Pearlman, *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to Present*, 6, 24. Furthermore, Pearlman discerned the possibility that “a multimillion-dollar investment might be destroyed by a much cheaper asset.” The contemporary example is the wide-scale employment of improvised explosive devices inflicting an inordinate number of casualties and destruction of US combat vehicles, both in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<sup>152</sup> Robert M. Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington D.C.: Secretary of Defense, February 2010), i.

<sup>153</sup> The author contends that it is imperative for the whole of government to collaborate in the development of war strategy during a crisis; therefore, it is realistic to expect the whole of government to collaborate in the development of grand (NSS) and military strategy (NMS) concurrently. If it can't be done during a steady state cycle, how can it be expected during war?

<sup>154</sup> In addition to physical lines of operation, the author concludes that indigenous groups resisting operate from the advantage of interior socio-cultural-political lines; while the U.S. and its allies operate from the disadvantage of exterior socio-cultural-political lines. As a result, there is significant socio-cultural-political resistance to overcome in addition to armed resistance. This complicates a policy of regime change. Commensurately, the restraints and constraints associated with limited wars may place regime change near or beyond the margins of feasibility. A strategic estimate of each unique situation must define and frame the problem to assess the feasibility based on the available means, and more specifically, the means policy makers are willing to commit.

<sup>155</sup> The author thinks that the estimate in blood, financial costs, and time required is extremely difficult to determine with accuracy due to the uncertainty involved in war. The U.S. Government and DoD understandably do not program costs for potential future wars into the budget or Program Operating Memorandums. Therefore, decisions to go to war bring the rogue variable of financial costs with conflict. OEF and OIF funding for such costs are manifest in the series of supplemental appropriations for the campaigns. In the future, the growing national debt and inevitable reduction in discretionary spending (see the U.S. Government Accountability Office, *The Federal Government's Long-Term Fiscal Outlook Fall 2009 Update* [Washington, D.C. n.d], 5.) will likely reduce the U.S.'s capacity for wars, particularly for those that include regime change.

<sup>156</sup> US Constitution, Preamble, September 17, 1787.

<sup>157</sup> Pearlman, *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to Present*, 2.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

