
Transforming America's
Alliances

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by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If the United States hopes to preserve its vital security interests at home and abroad beyond the near term, it will almost certainly find itself relying more on allies than it does at present. Equally important, it will rely on allies for substantially *different* kinds of military capability and basing support, and a different division of military missions than exists today. Several trends argue strongly for such a conclusion:

- The world does not appear to be evolving along the path to cooperative security, but rather, is reverting to more traditional great power politics. Put another way, we seem to be witnessing a reversal of the sharp decline in competition among the great powers that followed the Soviet Union's collapse.
- The United States' unipolar moment is already fading, and this trend will very likely continue. Over the next few decades, if economic trends persist, several great regional powers, to include China and India, will likely emerge. Russia is attempting to recover to great regional power status. With economic might comes military potential. Current regional powers, such as Germany and Japan, show signs of returning, over time, to less self-restrictive—and perhaps more independent—security postures. In short, the world will likely become increasingly multipolar in terms of power distribution, with Asia likely displacing Europe as the region of greater economic strength and military potential. As it does, the United States will have to rely more on its allies to maintain favorable military balances in key regions, and in key areas (e.g., space, the infosphere). At the same time, absent the overarching (and unifying) Soviet threat that characterized the Cold War era, America will find itself relying increasingly on “*ad hoc* coalitions” or “coalitions of the willing” to support its efforts at maintaining its global position. Put another way, allies are not likely to be as reliable as they once were, nor alliances as durable.
- To be sure, it is unlikely that any of these putative great regional powers will be able to match America's military might directly. However, this may not be necessary to undermine the current favorable balances the United States enjoys in key regions around the world. There are several reasons for this:
 - Great *regional* powers will be able to focus the bulk of their military effort within their region, optimizing their forces for operations in that environment. The United States, on the other hand, as a *global* power, must diffuse its military capability over multiple regions.
 - Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical and biological weapons—and missile technology, as well as uncertainty with respect to the security of America's rapidly growing information infrastructure against information warfare, will likely demand an increasing share of US defense resources for homeland defense. All things being equal, this will leave relatively less military capability available for forward presence and power-projection operations, at the very time that great regional powers are on the rise.

- Great regional powers may ally themselves in a counter coalition that would dwarf not only the rogue state threats posed to the United States today, but even the challenge presented by Soviet Union during the Cold War.
- A military revolution now under way promises to change traditional (nonnuclear) warfare on a scale not seen since the period between the two world wars. Typically such revolutions produce a substantial decline in the value of certain defense systems. The United States, with by far the world's largest inventory of military capital stock, stands to lose most from this phenomenon.
- Moreover, the military revolution will change the character of military competitions, and will likely present new challenges to the United States that will require its allies to shoulder a greater share of the defense burden. For example, US power-projection operations will become more difficult to execute as even second-rank military powers develop and deploy anti-access, or area/theater denial capabilities, putting fixed, forward bases (and perhaps maritime forces in the littoral) at high risk of destruction. Meeting this challenge to regional military balances will require the United States to transform both its power-projection forces and its global basing structure.

The emerging changes in the geopolitical and military-technical environments will lead America to seek different qualities in its relationships with its allies. A new division of labor will have to be arrived at that takes into account changes in: ally durability and reliability; the new missions brought on by the military revolution (e.g., precision strike, space control, strategic information warfare, ballistic and cruise missile defense, power-projection in the absence of fixed forward bases); and the likely shift in principal focus from Europe to Asia.

A number of blue-ribbon defense commissions—the National Defense Panel (NDP) and the Rumsfeld Commission among them—have identified these emerging challenges, both to the US homeland and to the ability of the future American military to project power overseas. However, the United States' current defense program, as presented in the Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), does not provide the kind of strategic reappraisal of the future security environment that these emerging threats demand. Rather, the US military continues to place primary emphasis on prevailing in future Desert Storms, unlikely as they are, at the expense of transforming itself to conduct the military operations that will be key to future success.

In short, the long-term challenges facing the United States and its allies appear to be far more serious than those they confront today. As such, greater priority must be placed on transforming the US military so that it can effectively counter those future threats, even if doing so means accepting some marginal increase in risk over the near term. Conversely, if the US military is not transformed, it may lack the dominant military capabilities needed to attract and maintain critical allies 10-20 years from now, when the United States will most need them to defend its global security interests.

The preliminary assessment of future US security requirements, and the implications for alliance structures, undertaken in this paper is intended to serve as a point of departure for a more thorough assessment. However, this paper does offer some preliminary recommendations with respect to the future US alliance structure. The United States should accord high priority to:

- Maintaining its existing alliances with core great regional powers—NATO/EU (i.e., France, Germany, and Great Britain) and Japan. This will likely prove more difficult than during the Cold War, when America and its allies were bound tightly by an immediate, overarching threat.
- Cultivating relationships with the other likely rising or recovering great regional powers—China, India, and Russia—with the objective of avoiding the creation of a counter-US coalition, among some or all of these powers.
- Maintaining or cultivating relationships with key existing, and potentially rising, second-tier military powers, to include Australia, Israel, Korea, Turkey, and perhaps Singapore and Taiwan.

The United States should also effect a new division of labor for military missions between itself and its allies to better provide for both near- and long-term security. This division of labor should take into account potential changes in ally durability and reliability (i.e., the likely continuation of the shift from the rigid alliance structures that characterized the Cold War, to the ad hoc coalitions of today, to perhaps the migration toward new alliance structures tomorrow). To this end the United States should accord high priority to:

- Maintaining a dominant military capability in its core mission areas, both in the current (pre-transformation) and post-transformation periods. That is to say, the United States should avoid, if at all possible, arriving at a division of labor between itself and its allies that finds an ally having primary responsibility for a key mission area. Rather than having its allies occupy key niches, the United States should stress the layering of ally capabilities atop its own.
- Exploring the potential to reduce emphasis on transferring advanced military capabilities to allies in lieu of providing such support on a temporary, or loan, basis. Candidate capabilities would include the US global C4ISR, missile defense and high-fidelity training architectures, as well as advanced precision-strike munitions, both conventional and electronic.
- Enlisting allied support to enable the United States to free the resources needed to transform the US military. Such a transformation is necessary to ensure that US forces, working in conjunction with allied counterparts, will be capable of effectively countering the very different, and far more dangerous, military challenges likely to emerge over the long term (e.g., electronic defense, power-projection in an anti-access environment and space control). Along these lines, allies should be encouraged to assume a greater role in peacekeeping and urban control operations, and to provide ground forces for near-term regional conflicts. This need not involve a major increase in the level of resources allocated to defense by US allies.

For example, South Korea should be capable of effectively defending itself without major US ground reinforcements.

- Reducing existing US force structure and slowing traditional modernization programs to ensure that sufficient resources are available to cover the costs of transformation. Again, these changes could increase the risk to US and allied security interests in the near term. But by comparison with the Cold War and the kinds of threats likely to emerge over the long term, the risk incurred is likely to be quite modest.
- Supporting the efforts of selected allies to develop advanced military capabilities. For example, assistance might be provided to enable Australia, Israel, Japan, NATO Europe, and the Republic of Korea to develop their own anti-access forces, to include missile defense capabilities. Great Britain might be supported in its efforts to create power-projection forces that can operate effectively against anti-access forces and, along with Australia and Japan, to create forces to frustrate multi-dimensional (i.e., land-, space- and sea-based) maritime commerce raiding and blockade.
- Migrating toward a new global basing architecture as a means of: hedging against the likelihood that future alliance relationships will be less predictable than they have been over the past 50 years; countering the growing risks involved with traditional reliance on fixed, forward facilities; and recognizing that Asia, rather than Europe, will likely be the region where US security interests are at greatest risk. Existing or prospective allies whose value as providers of forward basing facilities may increase substantially include Australia, Russia, and Turkey.

In summary, if the United States is to preserve the current favorable military balance in regions around the globe in the future, it will find itself increasingly dependent upon allies for support. This *may* require a somewhat different set of alliances than exists today. However, it *will* almost certainly require a *very* different division of labor. Restructuring alliance relationships to meet these requirements will take years, perhaps a decade or more, to accomplish. Yet the geopolitical and military revolutions that will likely stress US alliance relationships and key regional military balances are already well under way. Hence it is no exaggeration to say that a strategic assessment of America's alliance relationships should be undertaken now, while the opportunity to shape the future is at its greatest.

I. INTRODUCTION

The United States has fought in five major wars during the 20th century. In each of these conflicts US forces found themselves operating as part of an alliance, or coalition. Even today, when US military superiority has reached a level rarely matched in history, the United States retains its affinity for combined military operations. Recent military actions in Bosnia, Haiti, Iraq, Somalia, and Yugoslavia all were conducted in conjunction with forces from other nations.

At the same time, America's existing alliance structure is an artifact of the Cold War. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that these alliances were entered into principally to deter or, if necessary, defeat a country that no longer exists, and to resist an ideology that has fallen into almost universal disrepute. The proximate conditions that gave rise to and sustained the current US alliance structure are no longer present. This fact, and the ongoing transformation of the international environment—geopolitically, economically and militarily—indicate that a review of America's alliance portfolio is in order.

Indeed, over time the United States will almost certainly need to adapt, and perhaps even transform, its alliance structure. It will likely need its allies to provide substantially more support than they do today, both in terms of the scale and form of military capability, and perhaps in basing support as well.

The purpose of this monograph is to examine how the United States might productively begin to reassess its alliance structures in light of the revolutionary changes underway in the world today. Specifically, the monograph focuses its principal attention on two factors: the forces shaping the new international system, as well as the emerging military revolution and its implications for post-transformational military requirements and alliance relationships.

It seems odd that the four major defense reviews conducted during the Clinton Administration have focused so little attention on the matter of US alliances. Two reviews conducted by the Pentagon, the Bottom-Up Review (1993) and the Quadrennial Defense Review (1997), offer passing references to America's alliance relationships.¹ Two independent reviews, the 1995 Commission on Roles and Missions and the 1997 National Defense Panel, also gave short shrift to the role of allies in US defense strategy.²

Instead of reviewing and perhaps re-evaluating the US network of alliances, over the past seven years, the Clinton Administration has endeavored to maintain essentially the same alliance structure that existed throughout the nearly half-century of the Cold War. Upon entering office, the administration decided to leave the US military presence in East Asia at about 100,000 personnel, roughly the same level of forces kept in that region during the Cold War. The level of

¹ Les Aspin, *Report on the Bottom-Up Review* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, October 1993); William S. Cohen, *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, May 1997).

² The Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, *Directions for Defense* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, May 1995); National Defense Panel (NDP), *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: n.p., December 1997).

forces kept in Europe was reduced substantially, reflecting the demise of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The administration has remained active in NATO affairs—committing US forces to NATO missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, and supporting NATO expansion. It is debatable whether, over the long term, these military missions in the former Yugoslavia, or even NATO expansion, will actually do more to hold the alliance together, or to pull it apart. But it would be hard to argue that the Clinton Administration has ignored alliance issues during its years in office.

Nevertheless, there is reason to be concerned about the administration's approach to alliances, especially over the long term. The administration holds that the world is in the process of not just one major perturbation in the international system, but three: a geopolitical revolution, the emergence of a global economy, and the onset of a military revolution.³ The long-term consequences of such momentous changes promise to be profound. Yet this prospect has had little, if any, observable impact on US national security strategy in general, or alliance strategy in particular.

As discussed later in this report, it seems likely that the United States' relative advantage in military *potential* will erode significantly over the next several decades, and that advances in information-related and other technologies will dramatically change the way wars are fought in the future. Given these changes, and the fact that the military threats facing the United States and its allies today are relatively modest, it seems clear that a greater share of US defense resources needs to be allocated to transforming the US military, even if that means accepting some increase in near-term risk. In terms of alliances, the prospective geopolitical, economic and military revolutions suggest that the United States will need to develop, among other things, new approaches to the division of military missions, or labor—including greater reliance on allies for certain near-term capabilities—and, over the long term, a way of hedging against the prospect that its allies may not be as reliable as they were during the Cold War, or its alliances as durable.

A WORD ABOUT STRUCTURE

The monograph continues in Chapter II with a discussion of several contending points of view on the principal forces shaping the new international order, to include the cooperative security perspective and several alternatives. Chapter III briefly examines some long-term trends that promise to exert a major influence on the United States' relative position in the international arena, to include the geopolitical revolution, changes in the global economic landscape, and the military revolution. This is followed in Chapter IV with a list of assumptions concerning the United States' long-term strategic objectives, a brief look at the alliance strategies pursued by other dominant (or near-dominant) powers, and an overview of what the United States might want of its future allies.

Chapter V offers a discussion of three key ally attributes: durability/reliability, military capability and the technology transfers that help underwrite military capability. This is followed

³ *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 1997), p. i; William S. Cohen, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1999), pp. 121-22.

in Chapter VI with an elaboration upon indirect sources of military support, to include base access and financial support. Chapter VII addresses less tangible ally attributes, such as the legitimacy they confer on US military operations. There is also a brief caveat: allies do not always represent a net increase in security. States have to beware of what is referred to as the Austria-Hungary factor, and other pitfalls of alliance relationships. The monograph concludes with a summary of findings and some recommendations.

II. THE CHANGING INTERNATIONAL ORDER

How one approaches the issue of alliances is very much a function of one's view of the principal forces at work shaping the future international system. This paper assumes that the United States will remain an active global power over the long term, and that the state will remain the principal source of power for the foreseeable future. It also assumes that the United States will seek to secure its enduring vital interests that, over the next 10-20 years, will comprise the following:

- Protecting the sovereignty of the United States and the lives and safety of Americans;
- Providing for the economic prosperity of the American people;
- Ensuring no critical region is dominated by a power or coalition of powers hostile to the United States;
- Ensuring unfettered US access to key markets, energy supplies and strategic resources; and
- Ensuring free access to the seas, airways and space and the security of vital forms of communication.⁴

The strategy the United States adopts to secure these interests—and the role alliances will play in that strategy—will stem in large part from the characteristics of an international system that is only now beginning to emerge, as well as from America's relative position in that system. A strong case can be made that the Clinton Administration's national security strategy of Engagement and Enlargement is greatly influenced by a belief that the emerging international system will be based on the principles of cooperative security.⁵ However, given the events of the past several years, these principles appear to be inadequate guides for explaining what is occurring in the international system and thus for assessing long-term US alliance needs. A critique of the cooperative security perspective follows, along with four alternative views of the principal forces shaping the international system. The purpose of this discourse is to gain an appreciation for what kind of alliance structures might be favored by the international system that succeeds the Cold War order.

COOPERATIVE SECURITY

Those who espouse cooperative security as the successor to the Cold War international system argue that an emerging global economy, combined with the trend toward democratization, have created strong incentives for the world's great powers to cooperate on matters of security in lieu

⁴ This list of vital interests was drawn from *Strategy for a New Century*, p. 5; Cohen, *Annual Report*, p. 4.

⁵ See Ashton B. Carter, William J. Perry and John D. Steinbruner, *A New Concept of Cooperative Security* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1992). As the president's National Security Strategy states, "We are working to construct new cooperative security arrangements . . ." *Strategy for a New Century*, p. 29.

of engaging in the more traditional competition for power that has characterized state behavior at least since the Treaty of Westphalia.⁶ Moreover, they argue, a corresponding global communications revolution is accelerating global economic integration.⁷ They argue that economic and information power—soft power—will displace military power as the principal arbiter of international disputes. In a sense, they extend the administration’s assumption, that the dominant motive of US domestic groups is placed on material well-being, to behavior among states. Thus states will suborn other needs in order to realize collectively the material benefits that will accrue to them from their participation in the global economy.

The cooperative security world view is quintessentially American, strongly reflecting the idealistic strain in American foreign policy. Hence cooperative security reflects its optimism about the future, the primacy of materialism as perhaps *the* motivating factor in state behavior and a strong belief in the efficacy of international legal norms and institutions to moderate friction among states in the international system.

The Clinton Administration’s tendency to emphasize near-term security issues seems well-suited to a world that is moving toward a new international regime characterized by cooperative security. The administration’s Engagement and Enlargement strategy focuses principally on the kinds of near-term challenges likely to arise from “ethnic conflict and outlaw states [that] threaten regional stability, terrorism, drugs, organized crime and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction”⁸ By contrast, little emphasis is placed on ensuring that threats to US security will not emanate from a resumption of competition among the great powers that has been a staple of the international system for over three-and-a-half centuries. In short, priority is placed on addressing near-term challenges, or on longer-term challenges that are reflective of, or at least consistent with, an international system on the path toward a regime based on cooperative security.

⁶ The Treaty, or Peace, of Westphalia in 1648 saw the emergence of the European state system.

⁷ The authors cite the driving forces behind cooperative security as “The propagation of a market economy and the promotion of political democracy.” They assert that “economic performance is probably a necessary condition for a viable political authority. . . .” They go on to declare “Some international collaboration has become a presumed requirement for operating an economy that prospers.” The global economy is, in turn, “being driven by a revolution in the processing and transmission of information.” The authors go on to argue that broad access to the information and technology that are characteristic of participation in the global economy will produce, “across wide differences in history and culture, an imperative to establish political authority more on the basis of social consensus than on coercion. . . .” Hence, legitimacy rests on economic prosperity, which rests on access to the global economy, which leads to a democratic imperative. The authors go on to state that “However strong the impulse to project a separate national or ethnic identity and however pressing domestic priorities may be, it does not appear that international detachment can be achieved or that confrontation with world standards can be sustained.” In short, the need for powers, great and small, to ride the economic and democratic wave will be compelling. This compelling need will produce the consensus required for cooperative security. Carter, Perry and Steinbruner, *Cooperative Security*, pp. 42-43.

⁸ *Strategy for a New Century*, p. i. See also *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, DC: The White House, October 1998), p. 1. Again the administration cites as the principal challenges “Outlaw states and ethnic conflicts [that] threaten regional stability and economic progress in many important areas of the world. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime are global concerns that transcend national borders.” The major challenge, consistent with cooperative security, is accelerating globalization—“the process of accelerating economic, technological, cultural and political integration.”

Given cooperative security's view that the great powers' interests are converging at the altar of the global economy, emerging and potential threats are viewed not in terms of the United States' interests alone, but as "global concerns that transcend national borders . . ."⁹ The great powers underwriting cooperative security will, therefore, have a common interest in policing these rogue states and criminal elements, with the United States—the "indispensable nation"—in the lead.¹⁰ Aside from policing the world community's criminal element, as personified in the term rogue states, US military forces will be employed to minister to the needy: victims of natural disasters and human rights violations.¹¹ Most recently, President Clinton has used the language of cooperative security to justify and explain the US-led NATO military intervention in Kosovo. Some have characterized these views as representing a Clinton Doctrine for guiding US security policy.¹²

In a world order based on cooperative security and dominated by American power, alliances would be less important than they are today. After all, what need is there for alliances in a world in which all the great powers are in agreement? Against whom would the United States ally? Assuming a great power condominium, one would expect collective security institutions with broad memberships to supplant alliances. The consensus among the great powers that enables decisive action and that was so lacking during the period of the League of Nations and, more recently, the Cold War-era United Nations, would be realized.

To be sure, an international system based on cooperative security has great appeal. It is a future the United States should aspire to realize. But is a new international order based on its precepts something the United States is *likely* to witness? Perhaps more to the point, should not the United States, even as it attempts to realize such a happy state of affairs, also take prudent steps to ensure that if a more traditional future is in the offing, that America is well positioned to secure its interests, in part through an effective network of alliances?

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ That the United States will lead these global posses on American terms seems self-evident to the Clinton Administration. As Secretary of State Albright put it, "If we have to use force, it is because we are America." R.C. Longworth, "The Start of the American Century" *Chicago Tribune* (April 12, 1998), p. 1. The authors of *Cooperative Security* see other states consenting to the continued primacy of US military power. Carter, Perry and Steinbruner, *Cooperative Security*, pp. 24-30.

¹¹ Michael Mandelbaum, "Foreign Policy as Social Work," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 1996), p. 17. Mandelbaum states that "Whereas previous administrations had been concerned with the powerful and potentially dangerous members of the international community, which constitutes its core, the Clinton administration turned its attention to the international periphery. In these peripheral areas the administration was preoccupied not with relations with neighboring countries, the usual subject of foreign policy, but rather with the social, political, and economic conditions within borders."

¹² On two separate occasions in June 1999, President Clinton outlined the so-called Clinton Doctrine. In an interview, the president stated, "[W]hile there may be a great deal of ethnic and religious conflict in the world—some of it might break out into wars—that whether within or beyond the borders of a country, if the world community has the power to stop it, we ought to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing." Interview, President Clinton with Wolf Blitzer, CNN Late Edition, June 20, 1999. Speaking to US troops, the President declared, "[I]f we can do this here [in Kosovo] . . . we can then say to the people of the world, whether you live in Africa, or Central Europe, or any other place, if somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them *en masse* because of their race, their ethnic background, or their religion, and it's within our power to stop it, we will stop it." Speech, President Clinton to KFOR Troops in Macedonia, June 22, 1999. For critiques of the Clinton Doctrine, see Robert A Manning and Patrick Clawson, "The Clinton Doctrine," *The Wall Street Journal* (December 29, 1997), p. 10; Michael Kelly, "A Perfectly Clintonian Doctrine," *The Washington Post* (June 30, 1999), p. 31.

The prospects for cooperative security appeared most promising during America's unipolar moment in the early 1990s. In the wake of the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union after forty years of Cold War and the United States' surprisingly rapid and decisive victory over the Iraqi military, many of the barriers blocking the movement toward an international regime based on cooperative security seemed to have eroded dramatically, if not vanished entirely. There existed an unprecedented degree of consensus among the UN Security Council's permanent members. Talk of the "end of history" and the triumph of liberal democracy was very much in vogue.¹³

As America approaches the beginning of a new century, however, much of the optimism of the early 1990s has given way to a realization that, although the world is in the midst of profound changes, it will still be characterized by traditional great power rivalries. The United States' ability to maintain favorable military balances in key regions around the world will be key to preserving its current dominant position. Allies will play a central role in America's effort to secure such balances. Evidence that the international system is reverting to traditional norms of great power competition is significant. Examples include:

- The growing friction between the United States and China over a range of issues including: Chinese attempts to intimidate Taiwan, technology transfers, Chinese espionage against the United States, alleged Chinese attempts to influence the US presidential elections, and Chinese human rights violations.
- The escalation of the military competition on the Asian subcontinent, in large part as a consequence of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan.
- The growing estrangement of Russia from Europe in general and the United States in particular.
- The end of the short-lived consensus among the great powers comprising the United Nations' Security Council.
- The persistence of rogue states like Iraq, Libya and North Korea despite US efforts to organize the international community to isolate, if not eliminate, them.

The attitudes of other great powers towards the United States are more reflective of historical patterns of relations between states than of an irresistible urge toward a great power condominium based on the precepts of cooperative security. There is little evidence that these attitudes derive from some notion of universal values, economic gain, or recognition of the United States' status as the world's "indispensable" nation. As Donald Kagan has noted, historically economic self-interest has only been one factor among several—including fear and honor—in determining whether states engaged in military competitions, to include going to war.¹⁴ Economic interest has not been the driving force motivating state behavior in many recent

¹³ See, for example, Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (NY: The Free Press, 1992).

¹⁴ See Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* (NY: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 6-9. Kagan characterizes honor as a motivating factor in terms of "deference, esteem, just due, regard, respect, or prestige."

instances. For example, the principal causes animating the arms race between India and Pakistan, Chinese behavior over Taiwan, or Russia's angst over NATO's attack on Yugoslavia are not economic in nature.

The United States also is experiencing the resentment that traditionally accrues to hegemonic powers. Evoking the imagery of cooperative security, Strobe Talbott, the Deputy Secretary of State, has remarked:

In a fashion and to an extent that is unique in the history of Great Powers, the United States defines its strength—indeed, its very greatness—not in terms of its ability to achieve or maintain dominance over others, but in terms of its ability to work *with* others in the interests of the international community as a whole American foreign policy is consciously intended to advance universal values.”¹⁵

Yet the experience of the last few years indicates that America's definitions of what constitutes “universal values” and the “interests of the international community” are far from universally shared by the international community. Moreover, the United States is increasingly viewed as failing to live up to Talbott's declaration: it is seen not so much as working with others as acting unilaterally, or pressuring others to follow its lead. As one Chinese scholar observed, “The suspicion is that there is a kind of international conspiracy against us, led by the United States.” An Indian scholar echoes the sentiment in declaring that “Power, hubris and greed are the sins of . . . Western hegemony led by the United States.”¹⁶ Former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov has suggested that China, India, and Russia form a strategic triangle to counterbalance the United States.¹⁷ This hardly augurs well for the establishment of an international system based on cooperative security.

Even more disturbing, traces of this resentment can be found among America's allies. Ambassador Hisashi Owada, one of Japan's most distinguished diplomats has observed that after World War II, the United States pursued a policy of “unilateral globalism.” Now, he argues, America is pursuing a policy of “global unilateralism.”¹⁸ A British diplomat wryly noted that “One reads about the world's desire for American leadership only in the United States. Everywhere else one reads about American arrogance and unilateralism.”¹⁹ One increasingly finds that America's allies are “quietly resentful of America's penchant for cloaking unilateral action in the rhetoric of multilateralism.”²⁰ Today, in stark contrast to the time of the Gulf War, America's European allies openly reject the policy of dual containment in the Persian Gulf. They have proven increasingly unwilling to enforce the UNSCOM inspection regime against

¹⁵ Samuel Huntington “The Lonely Superpower,” *Foreign Affairs* (March 1999), p. 38.

¹⁶ Longworth, “American Century,” p. 1.

¹⁷ Huntington, “Lonely Superpower,” p. 44.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Stephen M. Walt, “The Ties That Fray,” *The National Interest* (Winter 1998/99), p. 5.

Iraq. In December 1998, France joined Russia and China in opposing what one observer called the “Anglo-Saxon posse” and its attack on Iraq in Operation Desert Fox.²¹

Examining these, and other, factors one scholar of alliance relationships has concluded “Americans and Europeans should no longer base their foreign and military policies on a presumption of military cooperation.”²² Henry Kissinger, in assessing the recent US-led NATO bombing campaign in Yugoslavia, Operation Allied Force, expresses concern over a renewed European determination to augment their military forces.

[T]he first joint military operation of the Atlantic Alliance, carried out with extraordinary political cohesion and blessed both with apparent success and involving no allied casualties, has evoked calls for greater European independence, expressed with a vehemence and at a level never heard before. . . . The timing of this sudden quest for autonomy is puzzling, even jarring. . . . When all the allied leaders agree on the significance of their actions, the *sole remaining European motive for developing a capacity to act autonomously is to escape American tutelage and increase European bargaining power.*²³ [Emphasis added.]

Before closing this discussion of the cooperative security perspective, it is important to note that, while the Clinton Administration has certainly been influenced by this perspective more than previous administrations, the true extent of that influence is unclear. The use of the rhetoric of cooperative security, in and of itself does not prove that the administration’s policies have been driven primarily by this theory. The *language* of cooperative security might also be used by realists (described in the next section) and others as a way putting a friendly gloss on more traditional policies. Likewise, the cooperative security perspective is not the only theory consistent with the near-term emphasis of the Clinton Administration’s national security policies.

In any case, the cooperative security perspective appears to offer a vision of the international system that, when viewed against the behavior of that system in recent years, is quite myopic and, dare we say, increasingly irrelevant as a guide to the formulation of US national security strategy. But if cooperative security offers a less than satisfactory guide to the policymaker, what vision of the future international system does? Several alternatives present themselves for consideration.

Figure 1: Alliance Implications of Cooperative Security

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characteristics: Alliances lose much of their meaning in a world in which economic (and other forms of “soft”) power displace military power. Collective security institutions with broad |
|--|

²¹ Unlike Operation Desert Storm where several Arab states fought alongside US forces, no Arab government endorsed Operation Desert Fox.

²² Walt, “The Ties That Fray,” p. 3. Walt states that the three unifying forces that bind allies together are either gone or eroding: The Soviet threat exists no more; the US economic stake in Europe is declining; and the generation of American and European elites who forged the idea of an Atlantic Community are fading from the scene.

²³ Henry Kissinger, “The End of NATO as We Know It?” *The Washington Post* (August 15, 1999), p. B07.

membership will eventually supplant alliances.

- **Key assumption:** Advantages of global economy offer unprecedented incentives for great power cooperation. Global communications networks act to accelerate process of economic integration.
- **Candidate great power allies:** Not especially relevant as great power competition is greatly abated by incentives to cooperate.
- **Issue:** Is this desirable future system a valid alliance planning consideration given recent developments more reflective of the “realist” view of the international system?

THE REALIST PERSPECTIVE: FORWARD TO THE PAST

The realists argue that the international system will continue to be characterized by anarchy (i.e., the absence of an entity that imposes a global order). Consequently, individual states will seek to accrue power individually, and collectively, through alliances, to provide for their security as they have for hundreds of years. Hence, maintaining a favorable balance of power will remain an important objective of states.

The growing resentment of the United States, even among some of its allies, is congruent with the realist view. In the bipolar international system that characterized the Cold War, many major powers welcomed US leadership and protection to offset its rival superpower, the Soviet Union. However, as the world’s sole superpower today, the United States represents a potential threat to others. This has created anxiety among America’s allies and other powers. Yet, at the same time, the United States’ dominant position also makes it an attractive alliance partner.

With the demise of the superpower threat resident in the Soviet Union, US alliance partners have been deprived of a common overarching threat. For them, security interests are now more regional. Security problems are more specialized. In Europe, for example, Spain and France are far more concerned over the Maghreb than is Germany. Germany is much more focused on security issues in Central Europe than is Turkey, whose attention is principally directed toward the Middle East, Central Asia, and Greece. The divergence in security focus is even greater when one looks across regions.

Only the United States has both global interests and the capability to project substantial military power to nearly any point in the world. Only the United States has the ability to tip the balance of power decisively in favor of a local ally. While the United States may not be the indispensable nation, it is, at least for the present, the irresistible ally, the object of a bandwagon effect.²⁴ Of course, an important issue with respect to long-term US alliance relationships

²⁴ Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power,” *International Security* (Spring 1985), pp. 3-41. Walt defines bandwagoning as a state “allying with the state that poses the greatest threat.” Although the United States today poses, on paper, the greatest military threat to its allies, the United States remains (as it did when Walt wrote in 1985) “*geographically* isolated but *politically* popular.” As Samuel Huntington observed, “. . . US influence also flows from its structural position in world politics. The United States benefits from being

concerns the United States' ability to preserve its dominant military position. We will discuss this issue presently.

Although all realists agree that great power competition is and will continue to be the central driver of international politics and security, realists can and often do disagree on many other important attributes of the international system. Among other things, realists may differ over which countries are most likely to remain or emerge as great powers, and when the competition among great powers is likely to become most intense. During the Cold War, for example, most realists thought that the near-term competition with the Soviet Union was so intense that the United States needed to focus primarily on the maintenance of near-term capabilities. Similarly, today some realists believe that the near-term challenges posed by China, and to a lesser extent Russia, require the United States continue to focus primarily on near-term capabilities. Conversely, other realists believe—as is argued in this report—that one or more formidable (as compared to today's regional rogue states such as Iraq and North Korea) great regional power competitors are likely to emerge, but probably not for 10-20 years, and therefore greater emphasis should be placed on transforming the US military to meet or, better still, dissuade future threats, even if doing so means accepting some increased risk in the near term.

geographically distant from most major areas of world conflict, from having a past relatively free of overseas imperialism, from espousing an economic and political philosophy that is anti-statist and, hence, less likely to be threatening to other peoples, from being involved in a historically unique, diversified network of alliances and from having a sense, stronger in the past than more recently, of identification with universal international institutions.” Samuel P. Huntington, “The US—Decline or Renewal?” *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1988/89), p. 91. Put another way, American power is trusted power. Walt also notes that “especially weak states will be more likely to bandwagon,” and that weaker states “are more likely to bandwagon when allies are simply unavailable.” Given the US military's current dominance in almost every measure of military capability, and that the United States does not fit well the definition of a threat, it is attractive for weaker states to bandwagon with the United States.

Figure 2: Alliance Implications of the Realist System

- **Characteristics:**
 - Open system with high degrees of freedom of movement and association.
 - Possible continued US benign primacy (economic and military) could extend bandwagon effect (i.e., tendency to associate with, rather than challenge, a hegemonic power).
 - Possible erosion of primacy (rise of great power challengers) if US actions appear too aggressive/threatening and/or as other powers rise in relative prominence.
 - Erosion of primacy could increase balancing incentives of other powers, while reducing incentives to bandwagon with the United States. Result would be reduction of US influence with its allies.
- **Key assumption:** Great power rivalries and the accumulation of power are characteristic of the international system.
- **Candidate great power allies:** China, EU/Germany, India, Japan, Russia
- **Issue:** What prospective great power coalitions would yield the greatest competitive advantage for the United States?

ZONE OF PEACE/ZONE OF TURMOIL

The Zone of Peace/Zone of Turmoil vision of the emerging international system offers one realist school perspective. It argues that the international system will be ordered principally between have and have not states. The haves will comprise those states that have stable, democratic governments, free market economies and policies that favor the status quo or that are hostile to illegitimate attempts (e.g., aggression, coercion) to change the status quo. The have nots will comprise a motley collection of rising revisionist powers and unstable states.

The Zone of Peace might comprise an array of great powers—most likely the European Union, Japan and the United States—together with similar, albeit lesser states (e.g., Brazil, Canada, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan,). The Zone of Turmoil might be populated by a cluster of have not states far more formidable than the isolated rogue states that populate the cooperative security world. In this system, the global economy does not erase economic disparity, nor does it eliminate the desire of rising powers for a more suitable place in the sun. China and India are possible candidates for the Zone of Turmoil, as is Russia.

The Zone of Peace/Zone of Turmoil model assumes that like will seek out like. In this case, it holds that stable, wealthy democratic regimes, while they may not necessarily be allies, are highly unlikely to go to war with one another. Less stable, less economically blessed states, on

the other hand, may find themselves at war with each other (with Zone of Peace states perhaps intervening), or competing against the Zone of Peace.

In this world, the potential exists for a latter-day Cold War of sorts. One important benefit that such an international system would offer to the United States is the possibility of powerful (and familiar) allies. Another benefit is that the Zone of Turmoil is characterized by an odd collection of antagonists who would be united only in their desire to upset the status quo. A Zone of Turmoil alliance might most resemble the highly dysfunctional Axis alliance of World War II.²⁵

Figure 3: Alliance Implications of the Zone of Peace vs. Zone of Turmoil

- **Characteristics:**
 - Cold War redux? Stable, status quo great powers (Germany, Japan, and the United States) and unstable, revisionist and/or rising great powers (China, India, and perhaps Russia). Potential exists for an Axis-like (i.e., dysfunctional) competitor alliance with major fault lines.
 - Similar alignments in Third World, with Zone of Peace including the Four Tigers and similar states.
- **Key assumption:** Global economy does not erase economic disparity. As in the past, rising (or recovering) states seek their rightful place in the sun.
- **Candidate great power allies:** EU/Germany, Japan
- **Issue:** Does an asymmetric dysfunctional alliance mix offer the United States competitive advantages for exploitation?

RICH MILLIONS VERSUS POOR BILLIONS

Rich Millions versus Poor Billions is another variation of the realist perspective that also can be viewed as cooperative security gone bad.²⁶ In this case, a growing global economy lifts all boats in the sea of prosperity, albeit very unevenly. The international system is characterized by competition between a relatively few wealthy states (comprising the rich millions) and a far larger number of economically disadvantaged states (comprising the poor billions). The conflict is generally along north-south, or developed-undeveloped lines. A great power condominium exists that, similar to the cooperative security perspective, is held together by a commitment to

²⁵ The Axis comprised Germany, Italy and Japan. The alliance was dysfunctional in the sense that its members often seemed to work at cross purposes. For example, Italy invaded Greece in November 1940 without notifying its ally, Germany. The Germans eventually found themselves invading Greece and Yugoslavia to rescue their Italian allies six months later, delaying—perhaps fatally—the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile Japan signed a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union shortly before Germany's attack. This allowed the Soviet Union to redeploy forces from the east to stem the German assault in the west.

²⁶ For an elaboration on this perspective, see Clem Sunter, *The World and South Africa in the 1990s* (No publishing site or date, Human and Rousseau Tafelberg), pp. 19-82.

the status quo based on common economic benefit. Thanks to the global communications revolution, the have not states can more fully comprehend their relative deprivation than ever before. This produces tensions between the two worlds, ranging from have not charges of neo-colonial exploitation by have powers, to large-scale migration from relatively poor states to those with advanced economies.

The increased rate of technology diffusion following the collapse of the Soviet Empire and abetted by the growing global economy could enable disadvantaged states to pose significant military challenges to the have states. These challenges would exploit two trends in warfare: the death of distance (i.e., barriers to the extended-range application of military power) and the concentration of ever greater destructive power in the hands of minor powers and even small groups. The development of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the acquisition of ballistic and cruise missiles and the creation of an arsenal of electronic weapons designed to wage information warfare would likely characterize the have not threat.

Under these circumstances the international system might resemble somewhat the Concert of Europe during the century of relative peace that spanned the Napoleonic Wars and World War I. Although the great powers still had their rivalries during that period, and a few minor wars to boot, significant military efforts went into creating and securing empires in the face of hostility from the indigenous populations. In the case of the rich millions against the poor billions, great power rivalry would be less strident than in a pure realist world, but be far greater than that portrayed in an international system characterized by cooperative security. The reason, of course, is that the danger posed by the lesser (both in terms of military strength and economic prowess) powers would be substantially greater than envisioned in either international system.

This school of thought makes the bold assumption that all the great powers view themselves as haves, to include China, India, and Russia. It also assumes that the great powers arrive at some consensus with respect to how the threat from have not states will be resolved. In these aspects it is consistent with the cooperative security vision of the international system. However, unlike cooperative security, Rich Millions/Poor Billions does not envision rogue states (and even groups) as vestiges of an international system passing from the scene. Rather, they are seen as growing in numbers and increasing their access to military capabilities that could enable them to threaten in a substantial way the vital interests of advanced states.

Assuming relatively high levels of cooperation among the have states in their competition with many have not regimes, one would suspect that the United States would be able to expand upon its current core alliance structure, which comprises most of the world's have states. Such an Upscale Alliance might include rising great powers such as China and India, in addition to Germany/EU and Japan.

It is not clear, however, why the world should organize itself according to this form of economic determinism, any more than that offered by cooperative security. While the logic of a Rich Millions/Poor Billions model of a future international system may provide some explanation of the future behavior of states, it is not likely to prove comprehensive.

Figure 4: Alliance Implications of the Rich Millions vs. Poor Billions

- **Characteristics:**
 - Great power condominium—perhaps comparable to the Holy Alliance—arrayed against a range of rogue states and nonstate actors that have been left behind by the global economic boom, but not by the military revolution.
 - Could find the United States and its allies confronting the Maghreb, former Soviet republics (including Russia itself), South and Southeast Asian minor powers, networked functional agenda (e.g., ethnic, religious, environmental) nonstate forces.
- **Key assumption:** All great powers will have a compelling stake in the status quo.
- **Candidate great power allies:** The have great powers (i.e., the EU/Germany, Japan) and perhaps some rising have not great powers as well (e.g., Brazil, China, India).
- **Issue:** Will open society great powers (i.e., the United States) be at the greatest competitive disadvantage against irregular forces exploiting the military revolution to conduct homeland attacks?

A CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS

The preceding discussion focuses on a future international system that emerges from the quest by states and groups to accumulate power, and the affects of an emerging global economy. However, a case has been made by Samuel Huntington that cultural differences will be the dominant force in a new geopolitical regime.²⁷ Competition and conflict, according to his view, will occur primarily along the fault lines between the world’s major civilizations—such as in the Balkans, for example.

According to Huntington, there are reasons why the international system will be organized principally around competitions between civilizations.²⁸ These reasons are summarized as:

- Differences among civilizations are basic, the product of centuries. These differences, over the centuries, “have generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts.”
- In part because of the global communications revolution, contacts between civilizations are greatly intensifying, highlighting their basic differences in ways that could produce friction between states.

²⁷ This perspective was first advanced in Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993), pp. 22-49. It is further developed in Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

²⁸ Huntington identifies the Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and, possibly, African civilizations as the major civilizations. Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations?”, p. 25.

- The “process of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities,” leading them to seek refuge in those things that unite their civilization, such as religion.
- There is a backlash of sorts to the dominance of Western culture in general, and US culture in particular. “A de-Westernization and indigenization of elites is occurring in many non-Western countries at the same time that Western, usually American, cultures, styles, and habits become more popular among the mass of the people.”
- Intraregional trade is increasing, reinforcing “civilization-consciousness.”²⁹

This vision of the emerging international system may have important implications for America’s long-term alliance strategy. It suggests that those US allies that are part of the Western civilization (e.g., Australia, the NATO states) will likely prove durable in the years to come. Disturbingly, given the likely continued growth of East Asia in US security calculations, less confidence could be attached to the bilateral alliance relationships the United States has fostered with Japan and Korea, which lie outside of Western civilization.

Huntington argues that the Clash of Civilizations will have important ramifications for alliance relationships, including the formation of counter-coalitions against the United States. He notes, for example, that “France, Russia, and China may well have common interests in challenging US hegemony, but their very different cultures are likely to make it difficult for them to organize an effective coalition.”³⁰

Yet Huntington himself seems unsure of his argument for cultural determinism. He now emphasizes the realist balance of power perspective, even to the point of it superceding his contention that civilizations will be the principal ordering mechanism in a new world order. For example, he states that the interplay of culture *and* power will “decisively mold patterns of alliance and antagonism among states in the coming years.” Thus the United States may find common cause with non-Western “secondary regional powers” such as, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine that seek to balance dominant cultural powers like Brazil, Iran, and Russia respectively.³¹

In raising the issue of cross-cultural alliances for balance of power purposes, Huntington both adds a layer of complexity and increases the uncertainty for those undertaking a strategic review of the US alliance portfolio. He also raises serious doubts concerning the validity of his thesis

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 25, 27.

³⁰ Of course, the problem is that a coalition does not necessarily have to be very effective, merely effective enough. The dysfunctional Axis coalition during World War II was a model of inefficiency, but it came uncomfortably close to achieving its goals. See Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (NY: W.W. Norton, 1995), pp. 319-21.

³¹ Huntington, “Lonely Superpower,” pp. 46-47.

that conflicts *between* civilizations will be more frequent than conflicts *within* them, as a consequence of individual loyalties shifting from the level of nation-states toward civilizations.³²

If there are to be cross-civilization alliances, where will the greatest affinities exist? For example, Russia is the principal member of the Orthodox civilization, but it is not clear if Russia tilts toward the Western civilization or toward more oriental (e.g., Confucian, Hindu and Japanese) cultures. For alliance crafting purposes, might one expect certain cultures to ally more readily with some rather than others? For example, would states from the Latin American culture be more likely to ally with the Western culture than, say, with the Hindu or Sinic? Aside from their own culture, would states from the Islamic culture be more prone to ally with China (the Sinic culture), Japan or some other culture?³³ Or, as Huntington seems to indicate in his recent writings, is culture but one of several important factors that add richness and complexity to a realist model of the international order?

Figure 5: Alliance Implications of the Clash of Civilizations

- **Characteristics:**
 - Alliances form along cultural lines. NATO/AUSMIN³⁴ are in place as the Western cultural alliances.
 - Offers perhaps the most formidable anti-US coalition if Confucian cultures link (China, Japan), and/or if one or both of them link with Islamic powers (i.e., Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan).
- **Key assumption:** Cultural affinity increasingly drives the international system. There is no global culture stimulated by the information/communications revolution.
- **Issue:** Can the US retain its three cross-cultural East Asian (Japan, Korea, Taiwan) allies?
- **Issue:** Is Russia part of the Western culture and thus a potential (likely?) US ally?

SUMMARY: RETURN OF REALISM

Someone once said, “Predicting is difficult, especially about the future.” The brief survey of prospective new international orders above finds each providing interesting insights, but little in

³² For a critique of Huntington’s thesis, see Stephen M. Walt, “Building Up New Bogeysmen,” *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1997), pp. 177-89.

³³ Huntington states that “Balance of power considerations will at times lead to cross-civilizational alliances, as they did when Francis I joined with the Ottomans against the Hapsburgs.” Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 128. In Huntington’s more recent writings, he suggests that, despite what he argues is a growing trend toward individual allegiance to one’s civilization, second-rank powers within civilizations will seek extra-civilization alliance partners to balance the primary power within their own civilization. Huntington, “Lonely Superpower,” pp. 46-47. Yet, Huntington also states that “Countries tend to bandwagon with countries of similar culture and to balance against countries with which they lack cultural commonality.” Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 155.

³⁴ AUSMIN stands for Australia-United States Ministerial, which represents the alliance between the United States and Australia.

the way of details. What can be said with some confidence is that the bipolar international system that characterized the Cold War has passed into history, and with it, some of the ties that bind America and its allies together. The unipolar moment that gave rise to the concept of a new international order based on cooperative security also is fading. With the passing of the Soviet threat, security interests are increasingly regional and coalitions increasingly ad hoc. Moreover, while significant new players may emerge, states will most likely remain the dominant players in the international system over the next several score of years.

No model for the new international order emerges as compelling. Each has its own shortcomings. The realist viewpoint seems most persuasive. Yet it tells us little more than that states will be motivated principally by considerations of acquiring and balancing power. It is not clear, however, what forces will shape and give form to a new international order. Economics, culture, nationalism, ideology, and religion, along with matters pertaining to national fears and honor, promise to exert influence in the future as they have in the past. But at present, it is not possible to say which will emerge as the dominant force shaping the international order, as ideology was during the Cold War, and nationalism was for much of the century that preceded it.

Any near-term strategic review of the US alliance structure thus proceeds under considerable political uncertainty. However, to the extent that US alliance planning assumes a future international order based on cooperative security, it will likely yield a seriously flawed alliance strategy. Alliance relationships will not fade in importance owing to the rise in influence of multinational institutions predicted by cooperative security. Rather, well-crafted alliances will become increasingly vital to the United States as the international system moves toward a multipolar distribution of power, and the effects of an emerging military revolution begin to be felt.

III. THE CHANGING SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

A RELATIVE DECLINE OF US POWER?

An important argument for reviewing the US alliance posture concerns the prospective decline of America's relative power over the next quarter century. Not only has America's uni-polar moment passed, but the unipolar-multipolar hybrid that now exists will, over the next several decades, probably give way to an increasingly multipolar system, although America will almost certainly remain first among equals. If so, the United States will find itself in a position somewhat comparable to that of Great Britain in the latter half of the 19th century. Then Britain was faced with a relative decline in its economic dominance that had sustained the *Pax Britannica*. Rising powers in the form of Germany, Japan and the United States challenged London's interests in key regions. The empire became increasingly difficult to maintain. Britain, which had remained aloof from the alliance maneuverings of the great powers on the Continent, in short order found alliances an essential element in shoring up its eroding position.³⁵

What rising great powers might the United States encounter over the next two decades or so? Europe, for one. By 2025, if one assumes an economically integrated European Union (a major assumption indeed!), it is projected to have an economy 20 percent greater than that of the United States.³⁶ China's GDP may grow to exceed half that of the United States, something that no other power has achieved for nearly a century.³⁷ Japan will almost certainly remain a major economic power. Over the next quarter century, some projections see India emerging as the world's most populous state, with the largest middle class and with a GDP that could rank behind only that of the European Union, the United States, and China. In short, the world will likely become increasingly multipolar economically, with the United States' relative share of the global economy slipping somewhat in relation to that of rising regional great powers. This, of course, has significant implications for the relative military potential of these states, the military balance of power and US calculations with respect to its long-term alliance posture.

Future US alliance relationships also may be shaped by the perturbations created from discontinuous shifts in economic power that may accompany the information revolution and the rising global economy. States that are particularly adept at exploiting the information and biotechnology revolutions may experience rapid economic growth, perhaps reminiscent of the way in which Great Britain's rise to global power status can be linked, at least in part, to being

³⁵ For a comprehensive view of Britain's dilemma during the turn of the century, and its response, see Aaron L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

³⁶ *The World in 2025: Towards a New Global Age* (Paris: Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development), p. 92.

³⁷ Some methodologies, notably those employing the purchasing power parity (PPP) standard, conjure up scenarios in which China's GDP actually approaches America's. However, more conventional measures indicate a substantially more modest rate of Chinese economic growth. See Murray Weidenbaum, "China's New Economic Scenario, The Future of Sino-American Relations," *Orbis* (Spring 1999), pp. 223-24.

among the first and best at exploiting the industrial revolution.³⁸ Neither the information nor the biotechnology revolutions are much dependent for their implementation upon industrial age economic measures of merit (e.g., coal reserves, steel production, a large blue collar work force); rather, they depend much more upon human intelligence. Consequently, the potential of even relatively small states, such as Israel, Singapore and Taiwan—that are poor in material resources, but potentially rich in human resources—to increase substantially their economic power (and their value as allies) cannot be discounted.

NEW SOURCES OF GEOPOLITICAL COMPETITION

At the same time the United States experiences a relative decline in power, it also may find itself with additional interests to defend in at least two new regions. Just as the race for colonies over a century ago led to increased competition between imperial powers, the race to exploit the economic potential of space may bring the United States into competition with other states. Competition might occur over access to key orbits or bandwidth, both for military and commercial purposes.³⁹ We may witness the weaponization of space.⁴⁰ If so, the struggle to gain an advantage in space would likely intensify greatly. While the United States currently dominates in space, that position seems likely to erode over time. The US (and global) space architectures will increasingly be driven by the private sector and dominated by commercial—not security—concerns. The commercial sector will both shape the US space architecture and offer other states and groups access to space, both for commercial purposes and for support of military operations.⁴¹ The continued growth of other states' national satellite systems will provide still another source of access for the world's militaries.

The boom in energy development that is now under way in Central Asia may find it becoming a major source of oil and gas for the global economy. If so, the United States may have a strong interest in the area's stability and in the independence of its constituent states. Central Asia may well become the focus of increased geopolitical competition. It is possible that Russia, or more likely China—and perhaps even India—could emerge as prospective threats.⁴² Iran and Turkey would likely exert significant influence on the region as well. Yet, absent allies in the region (and perhaps even with them), projecting and sustaining significant US military forces (as

³⁸ Britain's relative share of world manufacturing output leaped from 4.3 percent in 1800, to 9.5 percent in 1830, to 19.9 percent in 1860. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (NY: Random House, 1987), p. 149.

³⁹ Frank G. Klotz, *Space, Commerce, and National Security* (NY: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1998), pp. 16-17, 41-43.

⁴⁰ The US Commission on National Security in the 21st Century concludes that "The US use of space for military purposes will expand, but other countries will also learn to exploit space for both commercial and military purposes. Many other countries will learn to launch satellites to communicate and spy. Weapons will likely be put into space. Space will also become permanently manned." The US Commission on National Security in the 21st Century, *New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: n.p., September 15, 1999), p. 6.

⁴¹ Katherine McIntire Peters, "Space Wars," *Government Executive* (April 1998).

⁴² China's demand for energy is projected to double over the next several decades. Oil pipelines from Central Asia (and Russia) could end up providing much of Beijing's economic lifeblood. Chinese efforts to secure such important energy sources could become a vital interest. It could also bring China into competition with other powers having interests in that region.

currently configured, and as currently envisioned) into that region would present major challenges.

THE MILITARY REVOLUTION

The consequences of an emerging military revolution must be considered along with the political and economic forces driving the future competitive environment.⁴³ Military revolutions have occurred periodically for centuries. Often they are stimulated by major surges in technology that facilitate a discontinuous leap in military effectiveness over a relatively short period of time. The last military revolution in conventional forces occurred between the world wars, when mechanized armored forces came of age on land, aircraft carriers supplanted the battleship at sea and strategic aerial bombardment was established as a new way of war. In mid-century the world witnessed the introduction of nuclear weapons, once again leading strategists to rethink in fundamental ways, the calculus of war.

These transformations of war typically displace, or even render obsolete, some formerly dominant weapons and forces central to the previous military regime. Thus the tank consigned the horse cavalry to the pages of history, while the world's major navies ceased producing battleships following the carrier's rise to primacy.

Just as dramatic technological advances in mechanization, aviation and radio stimulated a transformation in the character of conflict between the two world wars, today the United States is confronted by the challenge of interpreting and exploiting the impact of a revolution in information and information-related technologies. They offer advanced military organizations like the US military the potential to know much more about their adversaries than they ever have before, assuming they can achieve information dominance over them. This capability implies being able to locate, identify and track a far greater number of enemy forces and supporting elements, over a far greater area and for far longer periods of time, than has ever before been possible. It also confers great importance on denying the enemy similar information concerning friendly forces, through such means as stealthy systems and dispersed operations supported by extended networks of systems and forces. Moreover, the military revolution also is characterized by the advent of precision weapons capable of engaging their targets with far greater lethality, precision and discrimination, over a broad geographic area, and in far less time than is possible with non-precision, or dumb munitions.⁴⁴

⁴³ For a more detailed treatment of the military revolution, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Military-Technical Revolution: A Preliminary Assessment* (Unpublished paper, Office of Net Assessment, Department of Defense), July 1992; Andrew F. Krepinevich, "Keeping Pace With the Military Technological Revolution," *Issues in Science and Technology* (Summer 1994), pp. 23-29; Andrew F. Krepinevich, "Cavalry to Computers: The Pattern of Military Revolutions," *The National Interest* (Fall 1994), pp. 30-42; Andrew F. Krepinevich, "The Military Revolution: Restructuring Defense for the 21st Century," Testimony, Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Acquisition and Technology, May 5, 1995; and Michael G. Vickers, *Warfare in 2020: A Primer* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, October 1996).

⁴⁴ For example, in 1943, the US Eighth Air Force struck over fifty strategic targets in Germany. By 1991, however, during the Persian Gulf War, coalition air forces (overwhelmingly dominated by US air forces) struck over three times as many targets in the first day of the war—a two-orders-of-magnitude increase in conventional strategic strike capability. Thomas A. Keaney and Eliot A. Cohen, *Gulf War Air Power Survey: Planning and Command and Control*, Volume 1 (Washington, DC: HQ US Air Force, 1993), p. 189.

Military revolutions have a way of transforming existing military operations and of also creating new forms of military operations. For example, the naval revolution of the late 19th century saw battle fleet operations oriented on sea control change dramatically, as metal-hulled, steam-propelled ships armed with long-range rifled guns supplanted the wooden sailing ships-of-the-line armed with short-range, smooth-bore cannons. The development of long-range submarines and extended-range torpedoes led to the advent of the strategic submarine blockade—an entirely new form of military operation.

Owing to the unusually high level of geopolitical and military-technical uncertainty, it is difficult to predict with high confidence the character of the military competition a decade or two into the future. Simply put, the United States cannot know with precision which state (or coalition) will pose the next major challenge to its security, when that challenge will occur or how it will manifest itself. Similarly, the United States does not know when key military technology breakthroughs will occur, who will effect these breakthroughs, how they will be applied to military systems and doctrine, and what form they will take. For example, in the early 1920s it was not possible to know with a high degree of confidence how rapid advances in emerging technologies pertaining to mechanization, aviation and radio would play out two decades later. Nor was it yet clear which paths military organizations would take to exploit them (i.e., that Germany would pursue blitzkrieg, the United States and Japan carrier aviation, Great Britain and the United States strategic aerial bombardment, etc.).

It is possible, however, to narrow the range of uncertainty somewhat by examining major geopolitical, military-technical, economic, and demographic trends with an eye toward identifying key areas of future competition. Although not elaborated upon here, such an exercise yields a competitive environment characterized by the challenges briefly described below.⁴⁵

Homeland Defense

The proliferation of ballistic and cruise missile technology, combined with the concentration of great destructive power (i.e., chemical and biological agents) in the hands of small groups and individuals will place the US homeland under perhaps the greatest threat of major attack in nearly two centuries. The challenge will be heightened further by the relatively high uncertainty surrounding the national information infrastructure's vulnerability to electronic attack.⁴⁶

Power Projection

The US military's century-old reliance on access to fixed, advanced bases when deploying and sustaining military forces overseas will come under unprecedented risk. Unlike during the Cold War, with the advent of ad hoc coalitions, it cannot be assumed that prospective allies will provide base access. America's forces may also find themselves operating in areas (e.g., the

⁴⁵ For an elaboration on this topic, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, "The Quadrennial Defense Review and Military Transformation," *National Security Studies Quarterly* (Winter 1997), pp. 31-32; NDP, *Transforming Defense*, pp. 23-42; and Andrew F. Krepinevich, "Emerging Threats, Revolutionary Capabilities, and Military Transformation," Testimony, Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, March 5, 1999.

⁴⁶ For an overview of the homeland defense issue, see Fred C. Iklé, *Defending the US Homeland* (Washington, DC: CSIS, January 1999).

Spratlys, South Asia) where no major basing structure exists. Also of great concern is the rapidly growing access of military organizations to space for reconnaissance and targeting purposes, combined with the proliferation of missile and WMD technology. This could allow even rogue state militaries to hold key forward ports, air bases and supply centers at risk.⁴⁷ Owing to the expansion of NATO further to the east and the development of major energy reserves in Central Asia, the US military also may need to project power far inland, in the absence of major base access or base availability.

America's maritime forces will probably play an increasingly important role in supporting power-projection operations in the absence of forward bases. In so doing, the US Navy will likely find itself operating in the littoral, radically shrinking an adversary's search requirements, and prospectively paving the way toward predominantly land- and space-based sea denial operations against maritime forces.⁴⁸ Traditional forms of over-the-beach amphibious assault will become progressively more difficult in such an environment.⁴⁹

Space

The coming decade will almost certainly see the growth of national satellite architectures, as well as the commercialization of space. Two principal consequences will arise from this phenomenon. First, it will force the United States to consider how it will defend a rapidly growing economic asset. Second, it will end the near-monopoly in exploiting space for military purposes that the United States enjoyed during the Persian Gulf War. In times of crisis and war, there will be a competition to control space or at least to deny its use to one's adversary.

Sea Control, Sea Denial and Commerce Raiding

The diffusion of the capability to monitor relatively large, soft, fixed targets at great distances, and to hold them at risk will influence the military competition at sea as well as on land. This will be particularly true as militaries acquire the ability to track and engage, at extended range, relatively slow-moving maritime vessels (i.e., surface combatants and merchant vessels) operating in restricted waters (e.g., in straits, the approaches to major ports). Consequently, militaries will confront the challenge of land- and space-based maritime commerce raiding. Such raids would likely focus on strategic cargoes (e.g., oil supertankers) as they approach key predetermined maritime bottlenecks.

Applied on a larger scale, it becomes possible to conceive of blockades against major ports and airfields by one power against another within a region. These blockades could be undertaken, for example, by China against Taiwan, by Japan, or Korea, or India against Sri Lanka, or by Iran

⁴⁷ See Andrew F. Krepinevich, "The Future of Tactical Aviation: A Strategic Perspective," Testimony, Senate Armed Services AirLand Subcommittee, March 10, 1999.

⁴⁸ For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, *A New Navy for a New Era* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, May 1996), pp. 7-13.

⁴⁹ For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, "Competing for the Future: Searching for Major Ellis," *Marine Corps Gazette* (November 1996), pp. 28-37.

with respect to maritime traffic attempting to exit or enter the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz, or by Russia against the Baltic States.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping operations are likely to change substantially as a consequence of demographic trends and technology diffusion. The preponderance of peacekeeping operations are conducted in the Third World, which in many areas is experiencing rapid population growth. It seems likely, therefore, that future peacekeeping operations will increasingly find US forces seeking to exercise control over urban terrain, to include megacities and areas of urban sprawl.⁵⁰ There will probably be more Beiruts, Belfasts, Groznys, Mogadishus, Port au Princes, and Sarajevos in future peacekeeping operations and less rice paddies, jungles, deserts, and mountains. Irregular forces will prove more intractable as they bottom feed off advanced technology diffusion. For example, they may radically improve their ability to coordinate dispersed operations using cellular phones, email and faxes. They may possess chemical and biological weapons, which they may use to hold both US forces and the noncombatant population at risk. Advanced mines and man-portable air defense weapons could threaten US force mobility. Together, the effect of these trends will be to stress enduring US weaknesses by creating a competitive environment requiring manpower-intensive operations over a protracted period with the prospect of incurring substantial casualties.

Urban Eviction

Urban defense may also be a fallback strategy of enemy regular forces if the United States military develops the ability to project power in the absence of forward base access. This would conform to the thinking of senior US ground force commanders, who view future land warfare as becoming nonlinear in form. Urban eviction operations also would dilute America's competitive advantage in technology, while exploiting the United States' alleged aversion to manpower-intensive operations. Thus, both urban control and urban eviction operations could be high on America's list of desirable allied support capabilities.

Strategic Strike and the Nuclear Shadow

Strategic strike operations have traditionally had the objective of destroying or neutralizing an adversary's forces and/or economic support structure (e.g., industry, communications, transportation) to the point where his willingness to continue the war is overcome. The emerging changes in economies and in warfare will likely effect a major discontinuity in strategic strike operations. Economies are becoming more information intensive, while national economic systems are becoming more integrated into the global economy. Thus the target base (or set) against which strategic strike forces are directed could be changing dramatically.

Perhaps even more important, the means for conducting such strikes are undergoing a transformation. Until recently, strategic strike campaigns involved either protracted employment of traditional dumb munitions, as during World War II, the Korean War and for most of the

⁵⁰ NDP, *Transforming Defense*, p. 14.

Vietnam War or the prospective use of nuclear weapons. Over the last decade, however, precision conventional munitions have increasingly displaced dumb bombs in strategic strike operations. Moreover, with the transformation of advanced industrial-based economies to industrial-information hybrids and the growing reliance of militaries on information support systems, there will arise a growing array of means for conducting electronic attacks against them. In short, the old strategic strike dyad of nuclear weapons and dumb bombs will be replaced with a new triad of nuclear, precision, and electronic strike.⁵¹

This will lead to two major changes in the competitive environment over the next two decades. First, the rise of far more effective useable (nonnuclear) means for conducting strategic strike operations among advanced militaries will increase the incentives for states with less advanced militaries to acquire nuclear weapons. As this occurs, a nuclear shadow will spread over the military competition. This may trump, or limit, the utility of precision and electronic strikes. Put another way, the rise of potentially highly effective nonnuclear means for strategic strike may find their use deterred by the threat of nuclear retaliation. If the 20th century was an age of total war, the coming era may be one of highly limited wars, where the homelands of even rogue states are accorded sanctuary status from strategic attack.

We also could witness the rise of ambiguous strategic strikes, manifested in one of three ways. First, broad-based no fingerprint electronic attacks (e.g., computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, etc.) could be mounted against a state's information infrastructure by another state.⁵² The attacker might even disperse his electronic strike force to other countries before executing his attacks. Second, an attacker could coordinate the infiltration of irregular forces carrying chemical or biological agents into the adversary's homeland. Strategic strikes could then originate from *within* the defender's homeland. Third, to the extent that space architectures become a critical component of a state's military capability and economic viability, it is possible to envision nonlethal strategic strike operations being conducted, literally, in a vacuum. Although the risks for an attacker in conducting these sorts of strategic strikes may be considerably less than more direct forms of attack, it is not clear that, even under these circumstances, states will want to run even a slight risk of retaliation. Ironically, this could leave the strategic strike field dominated by small, radical groups such as terrorists and separatists.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ALLIANCE STRATEGY

Over the next several decades the United States will remain the world's only global power, but within an increasingly multipolar world comprised of rising great regional powers and formidable second-tier powers. Although their power will be less than America's, the regional great powers will benefit from a key asymmetrical advantage: while the United States will have

⁵¹ For a more complete discussion of this issue, see (forthcoming) Andrew F. Krepinevich and Robert L. Martinage, *The Transformation of Strategic Strike Operations* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2000).

⁵² A computer virus is an executable code that, when run, infects or attaches itself to another executable code in a computer in an effort to reproduce itself. A Trojan Horse is a program that performs some undesired, yet intended, action while, or in addition to, pretending to do something else. An example is a disk defragger that erases files rather than reorganizing them. A worm is a self-propagating virus.

to diffuse its power in addressing global interests, the great regional powers will be able to focus the bulk of their power to enhance their position within their respective regions. For the United States, this implies over time a greater need to acquire or maintain regional allies, of both the first- and second-tier, to sustain current favorable military power balances in key regions.

During this period the military competition seems almost certain to expand dramatically into space and cyberspace. In many instances, existing missions also will undergo dramatic changes (e.g., achieving air superiority against missile forces, effecting ground and area control against extended-range, precision-strike forces; counterblockade operations against land- and space-based maritime blockade forces, etc.).⁵³ There will likely emerge military competitions to gain an information advantage for the purpose of defending the national information infrastructure (and to hold the enemy's at risk), to support the conduct of long-range precision strikes (LRPS) and, correspondingly, to degrade the enemy's capability for LRPS, and to enable highly dispersed operations.

There may also emerge a highly intense, extremely time-sensitive competition in the development of new chemical and biological agents and their corresponding antidotes. Developing sophisticated forms of detection and concealment for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will likely be a critical part of this competition. Indeed, whether it is obtaining, ordering and moving information, engaging in a move-countermove competition or translating rapid advances in technologies into military capabilities, the military competition will, in many respects, be increasingly time-based. (A summary of the key trends and their prospective consequences is presented in Figure 6 below.)

Moreover, as its homeland comes under substantially greater threat of attack, the United States will likely find itself devoting a greater share of its military resources to defending the nation. This will leave relatively fewer resources for projecting US military power and a greater need for allies to take up the slack. America's inclination to send forces overseas may decrease dramatically as the costs of defending against attacks on the US homeland increase.

The emergence of new challenges to US security and new forms of military capability implies a new division of labor among America and its allies. Determining such a new apportioning of alliance burdens will require a major reevaluation of America's existing—and prospective— allies.

Figure 6: Key Trends and Emerging Challenges of the RMA

Broad Trends	Emerging Challenges
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⁵³ See, for example, the scenarios depicted in Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Conflict Environment of 2016: A Scenario-Based Approach* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, October 1996).

Precision	Projecting Power in the Absence of Forward Bases
Range	
Architecture Integration	Projecting Power Far Inland in the Absence of Forward Bases
Speed	New Forms of Air Superiority, Command of the Sea, and Land Control
Automation	
Information Storage and Processing Power	Urban Control and Eviction
Miniaturization	Space Control
Technology (including WMD and Biotechnology)	Homeland Defense
Diffusion	Information Dominance
Nonlethal Weaponry	

The United States enters this new era with a formidable pair of great power alliances—NATO and Japan—essentially the coalition that won the Cold War. This alliance structure comprises the world’s three richest (if one equates NATO with the EU), most technically advanced states. America also has alliances or close relationships with several second-tier powers, such as Israel, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. The United States would do well to maintain these alliances over the long-term. If this proves possible, it would leave China, India and perhaps Brazil and Russia as potential great power challengers. A counter-coalition comprising all, or even some, of these powers seems very unlikely. Were one to occur, however, the United States could confront a threat far more formidable than that posed by the Soviet Union and China during the Cold War. Thus maintaining good relations with these latent great regional powers emerges as a major challenge for US statecraft.

WHAT HAS NOT (YET) CHANGED

While major changes are under way in global geopolitical, economic and military regimes that promise to alter the way in which the United States values its alliance relationships, at present these relationships still retain many of their Cold War era characteristics. For example:

- The United States continues to dominate in its relationships with its allies. Even Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan remain reluctant to undertake significant military commitments or operations in the absence of US participation.
- The great democratic powers of Europe and East Asia—Germany and Japan, respectively—remain marked by their defeat in World War II. Both have seemingly embraced strategic

cultures that place substantial limitations on their ability to generate and project certain forms of military capability. This state of affairs, however, may be changing.

- Although the economies of America's great power allies have long since recovered from the effects of World War II, the United States continues to bear a greater relative burden for the collective defense. Indeed, advocates of a reduced US defense effort often point to the fact that the aggregate defense budgets of the allies remain substantially less than America's, although their overall GDP is greater.
- The division of labor between US and allied military forces remains pretty much as it was during the Cold War. Exceptions exist primarily in those areas where the United States has developed new capabilities that have gone unmatched by its allies (e.g., stealth air forces, precision-strike force elements and space satellite constellations).
- The trend toward divergence between US military forces and those of its allies, which arguably began as long ago as the 1950s, continues and, with the emerging military revolution, seems likely to accelerate in the absence of major changes in the US and/or allied defense programs.

These characteristics are important as they form the baseline, or starting point, against which any strategic review of the US alliance structure must take place.

IV. DOMINANT POWERS AND THEIR ALLIES

The profound changes under way in the geopolitical system, the rise of a global economy and potential shift in relative economic power relationships and the prospect of a military revolution described in Chapter III will almost certainly alter the relative value of the United States' allies—both existing and prospective. Hence America must review its alliance relationships to determine what alliances best support a US strategy for sustaining its current position in the face of the new political, economic and military regimes that are now beginning to emerge.

Linking strategy with alliance crafting is a chicken-egg proposition: any strategy the United States might adopt would have to consider the matter of alliance structures, and crafting future alliance structures would similarly be dependent upon the strategy chosen. For example, a defense strategy that relied on forward-deployed forces would probably be more dependent upon allies for base access than one that relied principally on expeditionary forces. If the strategy emphasized maritime and aerospace forces to perform the expeditionary function, allies with substantial land forces might be desirable. A defense posture that placed heavy reliance on pre-emptive attacks might well be hamstrung by allies, due to possible security compromises and the drag effect that alliance consultations often induce during crises. In short, grand strategy matters when alliance issues are on the table—but the United States lacks a forward-looking grand strategy.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

Absent such a strategy to inform a review of alliance structures, this paper imposes several assumptions. It assumes that the United States will remain an active global power, concerned principally with the security and prosperity of US citizens and with maintaining its current advantageous position as a means for ensuring its long-term security interests. It also assumes that America will have enduring vital interests in preventing a hostile power from dominating Central and Western Europe; the energy belt running from the Persian Gulf to Central Asia, East Asia, and Central America and the Caribbean. The United States' vital interests also will encompass freedom of the seas and freedom of access to space and the electromagnetic spectrum.

It also is assumed that the United States will seek to join with states in alliances to improve its competitive position in the global security environment (i.e., that the urge toward isolationism and neo-isolationism that characterized the United States' first 150 years no longer holds sway). Finally, the assumption is made that, consistent with its history, the United States will not adopt a defense posture that relies upon preventive war or pre-emptive attack in dealing with great power rivals.

Over time, the United States will likely require a greater level of allied support to maintain its position as a global power. Today one can see the potential for rising powers, whose long-term disposition—friendly or antagonistic—remains unclear. Great Britain found itself in a similar situation in the late 19th century, when Germany, Japan, and the United States were experiencing rapid economic growth. As the United States was a generally friendly rising power to Britain

around the turn of the century, so too may be the European Union to the United States in a decade or two.⁵⁴ Great Britain was able to arrange understandings with Japan to help protect its interests in the Far East. Hopefully, the same will prove true with respect to the United States and China. But the future cannot be predicted with confidence. Hence the question at the core of this paper: Where might the United States want allies over the longer term and for what purpose?

The answer to this question will come, in part, from the states that arise to challenge US interests. A century ago, Germany, once unified, rose quickly to great power status and threatened to surpass Britain as Europe's preeminent state. Similarly, China, if it can remain unified, may challenge the United States' influence in East Asia over time. Russia possesses enormous potential but is wracked by instability. India's relative strength may grow in time, as may that of certain states in the Islamic world, to include Pakistan (the first Islamic state to possess nuclear weapons), Indonesia and Iran.

This is not to say that China, India, Russia, and the major Islamic powers will emerge as threats to the United States—indeed, they could be ally candidates in an international regime where the realist perspective dominates.⁵⁵ If politics makes for strange bedfellows, the same would have to be said for international politics and alliances. In just this century, we have witnessed such odd couples as Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, Soviet Russia and the United States, and Great Britain and Imperial Japan. Nevertheless, these states do not at present possess the attributes discussed below that would make them likely candidates for a durable alliance relationship.

For planning purposes, this paper assumes a unipolar-multipolar hybrid international system prevailing over the short- to mid-term future (i.e., over the next 10-15 years), but on the path toward long-term multipolarity. This seems appropriate given the discussion in Chapter II. Thus US strategy would center on how best to extend the unipolar-multipolar epoch while positioning itself for the multipolar era to follow.

DOMINANT POWERS AND ALLIANCES: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the absence of a US strategy oriented on sustaining its current dominant position, there may be some profit in examining the historical record of how earlier dominant powers strove to maintain their advantage. There have been such powers during the course of history but not many. Even fewer are those who managed to preserve their dominant position for an extended period. A brief summary of their military postures and the role played by allies is provided in Figure 7.

⁵⁴ To extend the analogy, the assumption here is that the constituent states of the European Union will merge more tightly in the coming decades, as the German and Italian states coalesced into Germany and Italy, respectively, in the late 19th century.

⁵⁵ Nevertheless, concerns over such a coalition are being voiced even today by foreign policy elites. See Tyler Marshall, "Anti-NATO Axis Could Pose Threat, Experts Say," *Los Angeles Times* (September 27, 1999), p. 1.

Figure 7: Sustaining Dominance⁵⁶

Dominant Power	Force Posture	Force Deployment	Role of Allies
Athens Peloponnesian War Era 431-404 BC	Maritime	Expeditionary	Clearly Subordinate Critical to Balance of Power
Imperial Rome First Century AD	Primarily Land	Forward- Deployed Along Frontiers	Clearly Subordinate Layering Force
Napoleonic France 1801-1815	Land	Expeditionary	Reluctant, Defeated Powers
Great Britain 1815-1890	Maritime	Forward Deployed Naval Force Homeland Defense Imperial Defense Land Force	Critical to Balance of Power on the Continent Providers of Land Forces to Preserve the Balance of Power

What are we to make of these dominant powers' efforts to preserve their position? What lessons, if any, do they offer for US planners with respect to long-term alliance relationships?

Athens relied heavily on its naval power to impress, control and protect its allies. These allies were critical in extending Athenian power and influence. Athens used the financial support provided by its allies to augment its fleet, which grew in strength relative to its allies and eventually came to dominate them. During the Peloponnesian War against Sparta and its allies, Athens avoided direct confrontation with Sparta's land forces and instead mounted a series of expeditions that exploited the mobility of its naval forces in an attempt to gain an advantage. Following a plague and a disastrous expedition to Sicily, Athens lost many of its tribute-paying allies and with them the war.⁵⁷

Allies proved important during the wars that established Rome as the dominant Mediterranean power. During the Second Punic War (218-201 BC), Hannibal, Carthage's brilliant general, tried to win the war by depriving Rome of the resources and manpower provided by its

⁵⁶ The author is indebted to Eliot A. Cohen for inspiring this perspective and to Michael G. Vickers for his assistance in its development.

⁵⁷ For a detailed treatment of the Peloponnesian War, see Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (NY: The Free Press, 1996).

confederacy, based in Italy.⁵⁸ Rome had developed an alliance structure comprising the Latins and non-Latin tribes in Italy that together contributed more than half of the Roman military's manpower. Rome treated its allies relatively well—as long as they accepted Rome's dominance and provided its required levy of men on demand. Although Hannibal won an impressive string of victories, Rome managed to retain over half its allies and win the war. Following that war Rome maintained its dominant position by isolating Carthage, leaving it without allies, and eventually destroying it in the Third Punic War (151-146 BC). As one scholar observed,

The military power that Rome carefully constructed through alliances gave it the power to defeat its most formidable enemies. That power continued to grow and expand until it enabled the Romans to dominate the ancient Mediterranean world.⁵⁹

Having established its empire, Rome maintained it for several centuries. Legions were deployed forward, along the empire's frontiers. Allies were relied upon, as in the earlier period of expansion, to augment the Roman forces as needed. But they were clearly subordinate to Rome during the empire's heyday.

France's dominance during the Age of Napoleon did not emphasize alliances nearly so much as was the case with Athens and Rome. Indeed, Napoleon established French primacy in a series of wars conducted against a succession of coalitions arrayed against him. Sustaining France's dominance, however, led Napoleon to rely increasingly on allies, both to make up for what the accumulated weight of casualties had done to France's manpower base and to help control his ever-expanding empire. France's allies during the height of Napoleon's power—Austria, Denmark, Norway and Prussia—were neither reliable nor durable. They resented French dominance and the Continental System France had imposed banning trade with Great Britain. Following Napoleon's disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812, these allies quickly defected to yet another coalition that produced the collapse of French dominance on the Continent.

The *Pax Britannica* that marked Great Britain's long period of dominance was characterized by shifting alliance structures and the supremacy of the Royal Navy. During this period of British industrial primacy, London's principal objective was to maintain a favorable balance of power on the Continent so as to protect and extend its advantageous position. So long as a hegemonic power did not emerge in Europe and the Royal Navy commanded the seas, Great Britain could develop its trade and empire with little fear of disruption. British strategy was "relentlessly pragmatic . . . When it came to the big issues of the nineteenth century—intervention or nonintervention, defense of the *status quo* or cooperating with change—British leaders refused to be bound by dogma."⁶⁰ Coalitions were entered into and dissolved based on the security

⁵⁸ Alvin H. Bernstein, "Strategy of a Warrior State: Rome Against Carthage, 264-201 BC," in *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin H. Bernstein, eds. (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 67. Bernstein argues that "Hannibal viewed this alliance structure and the military power it placed at Rome's disposal as his enemy's central strength. In prosecuting the Second Punic War, his strategy aimed, above all, at undermining that power by attacking and destroying the alliances upon which it rested."

⁵⁹ Bernstein, "Strategy of a Warrior State," p. 65.

⁶⁰ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 98.

challenge at hand. Britain, which maintained a relatively small army for purposes of homeland defense and imperial policing, often relied upon its allies to provide the majority of land forces in the event of a major war.

The United States' current situation, viewed from a long-term perspective, seems most closely akin to that of Great Britain during the *Pax Britannica*. It occupies the dominant position in an international system that will quite likely become increasingly multipolar. Like London, Washington is not inclined to wage preventive wars, unlike Rome and Napoleonic France.

Also like Britain, the United States has favored alliances of the willing with other powers. There is little, if any, of the intimidation characteristic of Athens, Rome and France toward their allies. To be sure, two of America's most important allies, Germany and Japan, were defeated by the United States in World War II. However, today they are clearly independent states that, like other major powers (e.g., France, Great Britain), are willing American allies. As Britain subsidized the militaries of its allies for much of the *Pax Britannica* period, so too has America subsidized its allies' militaries in various ways over the last century.

The United States would do well to consider emulating Great Britain's strategy for extending its dominance in other ways. For one, American decisionmakers should consider, for the purposes of crafting a long-term strategy with respect to alliances, adopting a more flexible and open-minded approach. To be sure, allies should not be jettisoned capriciously, nor new arrangements entered into cavalierly. However, as will be discussed presently, it would be a mistake to assume that America's Cold War alliance structure will sustain itself through the transformation to a more multipolar international order, or that it is in the United States' interest that it do so. While idealism has its place, America's alliance crafting should be characterized by the relentless pragmatism that marked Great Britain's subordination of other priorities in favor of employing alliances to maintain favorable military balances in key regions.

If rising great regional powers are likely to diminish America's relative power, and if a greater proportionate share of US defense resources will have to be allocated to defending the homeland, then Washington should consider asking its allies to assume greater responsibilities in important areas of military capability over time. For example, the United States might consider placing relatively less emphasis on expeditionary land forces than called for in current plans, an option that will be addressed presently.

Finally, the United States may face, as did Britain, the need to recalibrate its alliance relationships as a consequence of an ongoing military revolution. A century ago the Royal Navy was confronted with the radical shift in naval warfare as metal-hulled ships, steam propulsion, long-range guns, and extended-range submarines and torpedoes transformed war at sea. Today's military revolution is occurring on a far broader scale. Like Britain, the United States will now have to consider a new military division of labor between itself and its allies to account for the new kinds of military capabilities and operations that will emerge from this period of great change. This issue is discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

WHAT WILL THE UNITED STATES WANT OF ITS ALLIES?

Having outlined key emerging trends and some basic assumptions, it is appropriate to ask: What constitutes an ally? How elastic is the term “alliance?”⁶¹

The discussion that follows defines an alliance as a commitment between two or more states for the employment (or non-employment) of military force against third parties for the purpose of furthering their respective interests. Thus, alliances have three characteristics. They involve some form of agreement between two or more states, are oriented around common national security interests and involve a commitment to take military action under certain circumstances.⁶²

What is it that the United States wants from its allies as it prepares to meet the challenges of the more challenging security environment that is likely to emerge over the next several decades? A general list of desirable traits would include the following:

- Reliability and durability;
- A willingness to provide access to key locations under the ally’s control (e.g., forward bases and associated facilities; overflight rights; the use of important straits);
- An ability to augment significantly US military power;
- Access to an ally’s military technology;
- A willingness to share equitably the financial burden associated with providing military forces for collective defense;
- An understanding not to undermine the United States’ freedom of action to execute unilateral military operations in defense of its vital interests;
- A source of legitimacy for US military action; and
- An ability to avoid the Austria-Hungary Syndrome (i.e., having allies that actually produce a net *decrease* in US security).

⁶¹ Attempts have been made by scholars to differentiate between the various types and levels of cooperation among states. Thus *alignments* have been defined as an array of states oriented for or against a cause. Ententes are understandings or agreements between states based on conventions or declarations. (Ententes may be viewed as low commitment alliances, or informal alliances.) Coalitions are a temporary coming together of states in pursuit of common aims. See Roger V. Dingman, “Theories of and Approaches to Alliance Politics,” in Paul Gordon Lauren, ed. *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1979), pp. 248-49; and Michael Don Ward, *Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics* (Boulder, CO: University of Denver Monograph Series, 1982), p. 2.

⁶² Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 4, 8, 11-12; Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 1, 12; and Stephen M. Walt “Why Alliances Endure or Collapse,” *Survival* (Spring 1997), p. 157.

The following three chapters offer an elaboration on these characteristics from the United States' perspective, given the aforementioned assumptions outlining the emerging international order and America's long-term security objectives.

V. RELIABILITY, DURABILITY, AND A NEW DIVISION OF LABOR

RELIABILITY AND DURABILITY

Naturally, the United States wants its allies to be there when it needs them—it wants its allies to be reliable. Moreover, uncertainty with respect to the long-term posture of the international system makes it important that allies be durable as well. Ally durability is an important factor on a range of critical issues; for example, in deciding whether to invest in major basing facilities in the ally's homeland, transfer critical technology to the ally or rely on an ally's military forces for important capabilities not sufficiently resident in the US military.

The problem, of course, is that in an era of great change, it is difficult to determine those states that would make good long-term alliance partners. The current international system is in such a high state of flux that the United States cannot count on the static, enduring alliance structures that characterized the Cold War era prevailing in the new international regime as well. Durable, reliable allies are likely to be those that have enduring interests common to those of the United States, stable political regimes and a strong cultural (i.e., Western) affinity.⁶³

If cultural factors take root as the driving force in a new international order, the United States would also have to worry about the durability of its bilateral alliance relationships in East Asia with Japan, South Korea and (informally) Taiwan. Furthermore, doubts have been voiced for decades over the durability of US relations with regimes of questionable long-term stability, such as those in Egypt, the Gulf States, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. At present, concerns are even being voiced over NATO's durability.⁶⁴

⁶³ Examples of common enduring interests might include: the preservation of democratic regimes, free market economies, open trade, and effecting change in the international system in accordance with accepted norms (e.g., through nonviolent, noncoercive means). The issue of cultural affinity promises to become increasingly murky for the United States as a consequence of demographic changes now under way. The United States will likely see its Hispanic population increase substantially in both absolute and relative terms in the coming years, and its Asian-American population as well. The percentage of US citizens of European extraction is projected to decline from 80 percent in 1980 to 64 percent in 2020. The percentages of Hispanics and Asian-Americans are expected to increase over the same period, from 6 to 15 percent in the case of the former, and 2 to 7 percent with respect to the latter. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1994* (Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, 1994). Cited in Stephen M. Walt, "The Ties That Fray: Why Europe and America are Drifting Apart," *The National Interest* (Winter 1998/99), p. 7.

⁶⁴ Operation Allied Force was seen as a critical test of the alliance's durability. Although the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav government ceded to NATO's demands, the jury is still out on whether the operation strengthened or weakened the alliance. See Kissinger, "The End of NATO?" p. B07. Others point to long-term systemic trends in arguing that the alliance is not likely to endure, at least not in its present form. See Walt, "The Ties That Fray," pp. 3-11.

Figure 8: Durability and Reliability of US Allies

Category	Allies	Characteristics
American “Commonwealth”	Canada Great Britain Australia	Strong common enduring interests Stable regimes High cultural affinity
“Western” Alliance	NATO allies save Great Britain and Canada ⁶⁵	Strong common enduring interests Stable regimes Strong cultural affinity
“Balance of Power”	Japan Republic of Korea Taiwan Turkey	Strong common enduring interests Stable/fairly stable regimes Modest cultural affinity
“Peripheral I”	Rio Pact (Central and South American States)	Some common enduring interests Less stable regimes Growing cultural affinity due to changes in US demographics
“Peripheral II”	Saudi Arabia Gulf States Kuwait	Some common enduring interests Less stable regimes Modest cultural affinity

Figure 8 provides a somewhat subjective ranking of the United States’ existing allies, as well as those states where close defense relationships exist, in descending order based on their estimated durability and reliability. Thus the American Commonwealth comprises those states with stable regimes and with which the United States has strong common enduring interests and a high cultural affinity. Alliance partners that would seem almost as reliable as Commonwealth allies are the other members of NATO, save perhaps Turkey. They are the western allies. They are followed by the Cold War era balance of power allies—states where either the regimes and/or the cultural affinity they share with the United States are not quite as strong as those of the western alliance pillars. Next come America’s defense relationships with states that might be described as being within its sphere of influence. They have been grouped into two categories.

⁶⁵ Again, the reader is reminded that this list is somewhat subjective. Italy, for example, could be viewed as a major NATO ally. Its regimes, however, have hardly been stable. Yet its democratic form of government has endured. One might argue that its overall reliability within the alliance would be superior to that of France, but perhaps its durability is not. Obviously, given the regionalization of security interests, one also must consider the circumstances under which reliability is determined. Finally, the United States should consider the potential effects of intra-alliance security competitions on ally durability and reliability.

The first comprises the United States' Latin American Rio Pact allies. They are followed by those Persian Gulf states whose vast energy resources make them important to the global economy

SHARING THE FINANCIAL BURDEN

Although the United States is far wealthier than any of its allies, the latter have generally provided relatively more of their contribution to the common defense in the form of host-nation support.⁶⁶ Examples of such host-nation support include forward bases (which involve clear opportunity costs for the ally), support personnel and financial subsidies (such as those provided by allies in lieu of participation in the Gulf War).⁶⁷

Support of this type has been most pronounced among what might be termed America's rich but weak allies. Two examples of rich but weak allies are Germany and Japan, whose militaries were disarmed at the end of World War II. As time passed, they recovered economically but remained relatively weak militarily, arguably as a consequence of a political culture that eschewed the development of a military force capable of projecting substantial power beyond their borders.

Examples of a second cluster of rich but weak allies (the term "allies" is used somewhat expansively here) would include countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. These countries are rich by virtue of their access to huge oil reserves. They are weak militarily not so much by choice, but as a consequence of the limited pool of skilled labor available for military service. To varying degrees, these countries have provided substantial subsidies to the United States in several forms, which include buying US weapon systems, constructing major military bases that can (and have) been used by US forces and through outright payments, most notably in the case of the Gulf War.⁶⁸ A third tier of potential rich but weak allies exists among those states of Central Asia that will benefit from the development of their energy resources. These countries include Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan.⁶⁹

This form of burdensharing by rich but weak allies seems likely to decline, perhaps precipitously, over the next decade or so. Both Germany and Japan show signs of becoming more active politically and militarily in issues affecting their security. In Operation Allied Force, for example, the German air force (*Luftwaffe*) was committed to battle for the first time since 1945. Japan has similarly expanded its range of acceptable military operations and commitments in recent years.⁷⁰ To be sure, neither Germany nor Japan are likely to cast off their self-imposed

⁶⁶ Obviously, there are exceptions. Israel (arguably a US ally) and Turkey come to mind.

⁶⁷ During the Gulf War the United States incurred costs amounting to \$61.1 billion. Allied contributions offset roughly \$54 billion of these costs. Over 99 percent of the contributions provided to America came from rich but weak allies. Department of Defense, *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 1993* (Washington, DC: Office of the Comptroller, March 1992), Tables 8-1 and 8-3.

⁶⁸ One of the beneficial byproducts of an ally's buying US weapon systems is to lower the unit costs of those systems for purchases made by the American military.

⁶⁹ "A Caspian Gamble," *The Economist* (February 7, 1998), p. 4.

⁷⁰ See, for example, the National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review, 1997-1998* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 1998), pp. 50-56.

restrictions on developing a major power-projection capability any time soon. Yet it seems far more likely that this trend will continue, and perhaps accelerate, over the next two decades than that it will abate or reverse itself.

Several trends indicate that Germany and Japan may not provide the level of financial contribution that they have in the past. The US basing structure in Germany has been reduced substantially since the end of the Cold War. As noted above, fixed forward bases are likely to decline in value, perhaps dramatically. With respect to Japan, should the North Korean regime dissolve, the domestic pressure to reduce or eliminate the US basing infrastructure in Japan would likely increase substantially. Assuming that East Asia takes on relatively greater importance than Europe in US security calculations, bases on the Continent may also decline in relative value.⁷¹ Moreover, with the graying of the German and Japanese populations, increased demands will be placed on their treasuries to provide social services for a much larger (both in absolute and relative terms) elderly population, quite possibly placing added stress on funding support for forward-deployed American forces.⁷²

As for the rich but weak oil kingdoms, it seems unwise to assume that the current regimes will be in place twenty years hence. To be sure, forecasting the imminent demise of these monarchies has been ongoing since the Shah of Iran was toppled over twenty years ago. All the same, the United States would be wise to hedge against the regime transition of these allies. If a countertrend exists that could forestall rich but weak allies being placed on the endangered species list, it is the rise of small, technologically advanced states riding the wave of the information revolution, such as Israel and Singapore, and the emergence of the Central Asian energy states.

AUGMENTATION OF US MILITARY POWER

Alliance members pool their military forces to increase their overall military capabilities. In addition to issues of reliability and durability, the United States must also view existing and prospective allies with an eye toward how they will contribute to meeting future military requirements. This is particularly important during military revolutions, which can produce major discontinuities in military competitions.

There exists, however, a disconnect between new military challenges that are emerging on the one hand, and the growing gap between US military capabilities and those of its principal allies on the other. This trend, referred to here as divergence, has persisted over the last four decades. In the late 1950s, the United States began fielding land-based ICBMs and ballistic missile submarines. By the early 1970s, the US Air Force was employing significant numbers of precision-guided weapons in the Vietnam War. This was followed by the introduction of stealth aircraft in the 1980s. America's allies, with very few exceptions, failed to match the US military's development of new capabilities, both in form and scale. Thus by the time of the Gulf

⁷¹ This could change if a great power threat to the European Union were to emerge or if Central Asia become a focal point for great power competition.

⁷² *American Security in the 21st Century*, pp. 60, 80.

War, only the United States had the ability to employ a significant combination of stealth, precision weapons, space, and advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities against Iraq.⁷³

During this period, some of America’s major allies, notably France and Great Britain, failed to keep pace in terms of their power-projection capabilities.⁷⁴ They now possess only a small fraction of the US air and sea lift capability to move and sustain large forces at great distances from their shores. The United States also possesses the only long-range bomber force among the three powers. No country has anything approaching the US Navy’s Nimitz-class aircraft carriers that dominate the seas. The United States not only dominates in traditional forms of power projection but in emerging military capabilities as well. America’s military satellite constellation dwarfs that of its major allies, as does its commercial satellite architectures (See Figure 9).

Figure 9: US and Allied Commercial and Military Satellites⁷⁵

Nation/Organization	Total Number of Satellites (incl. Commercial and Government)	Number of Government-owned Military/Intel Satellites
United States	715	~ 75 (comsat, imint, GPS, +)
France	30	~ 2 (comsat, one imint)
United Kingdom	18	~ 2 (both comsats)
Germany	15	None
Japan	65	None

Source: John Pike, Interview, Summer 1998; and “USAF Space Almanac,” *Air Force Magazine* (August 1999), pp. 26-48.

The story is much the same with respect to precision-guided munitions (PGMs), a critical component along with satellites, of what has emerged as a new form of military operation: long-range precision strike. Whereas the United States has a wide array of precision weapons, its major allies typically maintain only one kind of PGM for any given mission. Aside from its superior variety of PGMs, the United States’ inventory of these munitions dwarfs that of the combined PGM arsenals of France, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan.

⁷³ “Platform Envy,” *The Economist* (December 12, 1998), p. 24.

⁷⁴ Germany and Japan disbanded these forces at the end of World War II and have only recently begun to debate seriously the need to reintroduce them.

⁷⁵ Understandably, the exact number of intelligence-gathering satellites are closely guarded secrets of the United States and its allies. Consequently, definitive numbers are difficult to come by. Furthermore, it is important to note that many nations’ militaries use large numbers of commercial satellites for purposes of communications, mapping, weather forecasting, etc.

The Case of Kosovo

The divergence of US and allied military capabilities in space, precision strike, power projection, and in the ability to integrate these and other capabilities into large, complex operations has been highlighted in recent years. It was on display most recently during NATO's just-completed Operation Allied Force (OAF) against Yugoslavia, on the very doorstep of America's European allies.

During the 78-day operation, roughly two-thirds of NATO air sorties flown were American.⁷⁶ The United States provided most of the command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) aircraft and a clear majority of the aircraft involved in strike operations.⁷⁷ According to a US intelligence source, every strike sortie carried out by a non-US NATO aircraft required an average of three American support planes to suppress Yugoslav air defenses, provide refueling and coordinate the overall air strike package.⁷⁸ European aircraft shortcomings (e.g., lack of night vision capability, absence of laser-guided weapon systems) were so glaring that they were often relegated to flying mop up missions.⁷⁹

Germany's foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, observed "The Kosovo war was mainly an experience of Europe's own insufficiency and weakness; we as Europeans never could have coped with the Balkan wars that were caused by [Yugoslav President Slobodan] Milosevic without the help of the United States." German General Klaus von Naumann, recently retired head of NATO's military committee, declared that the day is fast approaching when the United States and its NATO allies "will not even be able to fight on the same battlefield." US Air Force Lieutenant General Michael Smith, who orchestrated the NATO air campaign, spoke of the danger of European air forces becoming "second- and third-team members."⁸⁰

Perhaps revealingly, the United States will provide only 7,000 troops—or 14 percent—of the 50,000 troop peacekeeping force in Kosovo. The mission promises to be manpower intensive, and relatively low-tech. Could this portend the future division of labor between the United States and its allies? If divergence continues, could the Europeans find themselves playing the role of America's Gurkhas? Would such an arrangement be desirable for the United States? Put another way, should the military division of labor between the United States military and those of its NATO allies orient the latter's forces toward relatively low-end, manpower-intensive operations like peacekeeping and urban control and eviction operations, while the United States

⁷⁶ Steven Kosiak, "Total Cost of Allied Force Air Campaign: A Preliminary Estimate," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments*, June 10, 1999, p. 4.

⁷⁷ William Drozdiak, "War Showed US-Allied Inequality," *The Washington Post*, June 28, 1999, p. 1; J. A. C. Lewis, "Building a European Force," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, June 23, 1999, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁸ Carla Anne Robbins, "Display of US Might Makes Allies, Adversaries Doubt Their Relevance," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 6, 1999, p. 1.

⁷⁹ Drozdiak, "Allied Inequality," p. 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

maintains dominance in, and primary responsibility for, high-tech, complex operations like missile defense, long-range precision strike and space control?⁸¹

The European Allies' Catch-22

To be sure, in the future there will almost certainly be a continued need for more traditional forms of military operations involving, for example, large numbers of ground combat forces. Given the US proficiency in advanced weaponry, its possession of the world's most capital-intensive military and supposed aversion to suffering casualties, the division of labor described above might prove beneficial. But it is not at all clear that America's major European allies, each of which has a military that was once dominant in its own right, will accept being consigned solely, or even primarily, to subordinate operations. Moreover, if the United States finds itself over time in an increasingly multipolar international system, its need for allies with high-end capabilities will probably increase as well. Thus an alliance posture in which America's allies focus exclusively on more traditional and low-end operations may be neither possible nor desirable.

In fact, the Europeans seem to aspire to close much of the divergence gap with the US military. As one German foreign policy expert put it, "For Europe, . . . [Kosovo] brought a crushing realization of the asymmetry of military power between it and the United States, and the need to do something about that." Thus "There has to be a new division of labor, new synergies, new European thinking, but politically it will not be easy."⁸² And there is the rub. The NATO allies want to stand on more of an equal military footing with the United States, but are they willing to pay for it? It is far from clear that they are.

A New Division of Labor

The level of military effort and technology exchange between the United States and its allies will have to be worked out as part of a new division of labor. As in the past, the United States should identify those missions for which it must maintain primary responsibility, and those it may safely entrust to its allies. Furthermore, America also must determine which of its advanced military capabilities it is willing to share and with whom. The objective is for alliance members to develop those capabilities that might best serve common long-term security interests. But what are these capabilities? Here one might begin with an examination of the US military's prospective long-term mission requirements. From these it may be determined what it must be able to do, and what it might look to outsource to its allies.

Prospective US military core missions might include:

- Global C4ISR;

⁸¹ Recent US Army war games have found German and Turk forces conducting urban eviction operations as part of a theater campaign involving NATO power-projection forces.

⁸² Roger Cohen, "Uncomfortable With Dependence On US, Europe Aims For New Parity," *The New York Times*, June 15, 1999, p. 1.

- Extended-duration forward presence/power projection;
- Flexible strategic strike (i.e., nuclear, precision and electronic);
- High-fidelity training/simulation; and
- Systems/architecture integration.

Other important missions could be considered for alliance outsourcing. Examples include establishing capabilities for area/theater denial (i.e., anti-access forces), protracted peacekeeping and urban control/eviction operations.⁸³

For obvious reasons, the United States should avoid outsourcing its core mission requirements. To do so would restrict its freedom to act independently when necessary. If core missions must be shared, every effort should be made to do so with highly reliable and durable allies. This is also true with respect to more discrete niche missions capabilities such as naval minesweeping.

Rather than encouraging allies to develop niche mission capabilities, or outsourcing core missions to them, the United States should instead emphasize layering allied mission capabilities with its own. Here layering refers to allies providing capabilities similar to those already found at substantial levels within the US military. Layering can liberate resources for the US military to ensure that it has adequate capability *across* its core mission areas.

But how is this to be done with respect to emerging missions—such as long-range precision strike and projecting power against anti-access forces—that require advanced military capabilities, when America’s allies are, by and large, falling further behind the US military? The question is made more difficult as the US military services are struggling to transform themselves in response to the military revolution. Transforming across Services (joint military transformation) promises to highly difficult. Combined transformation—transformation involving the US and allied militaries—promises to be still more difficult.⁸⁴

⁸³ The reader will recall that anti-access forces, as referred to in this paper, are a combination of traditional (e.g., anti-ship mines, submarines, anti-ship cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction) and emerging capabilities (UAVs, UCAVs, satellite architectures, stealthy platforms, distributed C4ISR links) that can severely challenge, if not frustrate entirely, traditional power-projection operations. Traditional power-projection operations are those whose full expression is found in the late Cold War, early post-Cold War US military: operations heavily dependent upon access to large, fixed, forward bases; large in-theater logistics infrastructures; heavy mechanized land forces; short-range tactical air forces; and large surface combatants centered on carrier battle groups.

⁸⁴ Military transformations have traditionally been effected through a single Service. There have been cases, however, such as the German military’s development of the blitzkrieg form of warfare, where several Services have been involved. In recent years, advances in technology have allowed the land, air and sea Services to develop capabilities that clearly intrude on one another’s traditional battle space (e.g., Navy long-range cruise missiles that can substitute for Army artillery or Air Force strike aircraft). Consequently, future transformations will ineluctably involve a far greater level of coordination among military services than has been the case in the past.

AUGMENTATION OPTIONS

The purpose of any defense posture is to minimize the overall risk to the national security, given the resources at hand. Alliances offer a way of augmenting these resources and the prospect of reducing overall risk. For the United States, the level of security risk is likely to increase over time with the rise of great regional powers and with the changes in the character of conflict that stem from an emerging military revolution. Thus greater emphasis needs to be placed on preparing for long-term challenges than was the case during the Cold War.

Unfortunately, the Clinton Administration's QDR defense program places its greatest priority on near-term readiness, even though long-term challenges are likely to be far more formidable. Worse still, the United States today is confronted by a mismatch between its defense posture and projected defense budgets. That is to say, the defense program is too ambitious to be sustained by projected resources. This is true whether one looks at the administration's budget projections or those of the Republican-controlled Congress.⁸⁵ Neither offers the Defense Department the prospect of significant relief with respect to its budget woes. To accommodate this mismatch, the Pentagon has typically reduced investment in future capabilities to maintain near-term readiness. To bring its defense posture into balance with its budget estimates, without further compromising its ability to prepare for emerging security challenges, the United States will need to scale back its near-term force structure. One way to do this without increasing risk or reducing commitments is to encourage allies to fill in some of the gaps created through reductions in US military capabilities.

The military division of labor between the United States and its allies should, therefore, focus on liberating resources in the near-term, while the danger is low, to allow America to better position itself for the more challenging times ahead. Naturally, ally durability and reliability also cannot be discounted in determining such a division of labor.

One Near-Term Option⁸⁶

To this end the United States might encourage allies to assume a far greater role in peacekeeping operations. Here the *Pax Britannica* experience does not hold. The United States has not been policing its empire but rather democracy's empire. Peacekeeping is a low-end, near-term mission area where a much greater role can be assumed by America's allies without issues like ally durability and reliability and military technology transfers assuming prominence. Some allies (Canada, for example) have developed a high degree of expertise in peacekeeping operations. Other allies should be encouraged to do so, perhaps on a regional basis.⁸⁷ To be sure, the United States would still participate in peacekeeping operations but in a much more

⁸⁵ For a comparison of the Clinton Administration's defense plan and Congress's budget resolution, see Steven Kosiak and Elizabeth Heeter, "Congressional Budget Resolution: Final Action," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments* (April 27, 1999).

⁸⁶ The discussion of this option and the scenario that follows is meant to be illustrative, and not necessarily prescriptive.

⁸⁷ The Australians, for example, have volunteered peacekeeping forces to quell the disturbances in East Timor.

limited and focused way than is the case today.⁸⁸ The end result might recall somewhat the Nixon Doctrine of the 1970s in which key regional allies were asked to provide the bulk of military capability in certain key mission areas.

The United States might also outsource the bulk of its mission requirements in the area of urban control, a growing challenge in peacekeeping operations, and also potentially in the case of large-scale conflict. In the latter instance, the problem of evicting regular enemy forces from urban areas (urban eviction) comes into play. Are there allies that can develop urban control capabilities for peacekeeping operations that might be adapted and augmented (with US support) to include urban eviction operations? If so, the United States could substantially lower its requirements for these kinds of forces, helping it to bring its defense posture more in line with its resources.

But this is only part of the challenge. If the United States wants to prepare for emerging challenges in such a way as to allow it to sustain its current dominance, it will have to transform its military and quite likely assist in transforming the militaries of some of its allies as well. This means America will either have to apportion substantial additional resources for defense over the near-term—a highly unlikely prospect at present—or ask its allies to assume a greater role in providing for the common defense. Assuming the latter option proves necessary, the United States might pursue an alliance strategy somewhat reminiscent of Great Britain’s a century ago by relying on its allies to provide the majority of the land forces in any near- to mid-term regional conflict. There are several reasons for placing relatively less emphasis on American land forces:

- East Asia, the likely focus of increased great power competition, is primarily a maritime and aerospace theater of operations, as opposed to Cold War Europe, which was predominantly an air-land theater.
- Arguably, it would be easier for America’s allies to augment substantially their ground forces’ effectiveness than that of their naval and air forces.
- America’s ground forces will likely have to place relatively more emphasis on homeland defense than will its air and naval forces.
- South Korea, the focal point of US regional conflict contingency considerations in East Asia, has twice the population and an economy that is an order of magnitude or more the size of North Korea’s. The Republic of Korea (ROK) Army is capable of defending the country against an attack by North Korea in the absence of major US ground reinforcements.
- The anti-access challenge is arguably the most acute for current US land forces. These forces are difficult to deploy quickly into a threatened theater of operations even in the absence of

⁸⁸ For example, under this approach, the United States would emphasize providing those capabilities that offer the greatest value-added to the overall peacekeeping operation. Examples might include C4ISR and logistics support. Correspondingly, the United States would reduce its ground force contributions from the significant levels provided in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo to token forces (say, 5 percent or less of the whole).

an anti-access threat and have few systems that allow them to operate at extended ranges. Moreover, even if deployed, US ground forces, as currently constituted, would be very difficult to sustain in combat against anti-access attacks on the major ports and air bases upon which they rely for support.

This is not to say the American military would get out of the land warfare business. The United States would, however, retain significantly smaller land forces than currently planned. For example, the US Army might be reduced from 10 divisions to eight, and the US Marine Corps by about 25,000 Marines (i.e., to the level established by the Bush Administration's so-called Base Force). This force could be expanded if a great regional power threatened to upset the military balance. Again, these reductions involve taking on some near-term risk in a resource-constrained environment to dramatically reduce risk over the long-term. Since they stand to benefit from US military transformation, America's allies should be willing to shoulder a greater responsibility for offsetting some of the increase in near-term risk. They are certainly capable of doing so, both technically and financially. The United States could use the resources liberated by such an alliance strategy to begin transforming its military to meet the new operational challenges that will characterize the military revolution (e.g., projecting land power in the absence of forward bases, homeland defense against novel forms of attack, etc.). This will yield, over time, a far more capable US military than currently envisioned.

As this transformation proceeds, the United States also should assist certain allies in developing their own anti-access capabilities, thereby enabling them to better provide for their own long-term defense.⁸⁹ Once in place, allied anti-access forces could reduce the need for US power-projection forces to assist in their defense, liberating them for other missions.⁹⁰ Drawing upon these considerations and taking into account prospective ally durability/reliability, the quality and character of their militaries and factors such as strategic culture, Figure 10 provides a somewhat subjective first look at current and prospective allies that might assume a greater role in land force operations. It also lists those allies (existing and potential) that might be good candidates for US support in developing indigenous anti-access capabilities.

⁸⁹ Australia already seems to be planning to create such an anti-access capability. See Department of Defence, *Australia's Strategic Policy* (Canberra, Australia: Defence Publishing and Visual Communications, 1997), pp. 44-45.

⁹⁰ Obviously, the degree to which US forces would be made available for other missions would depend on myriad factors to include the scale and character of the threat and the level of risk the US and its ally are willing to accept.

Figure 10: Emerging Mission Areas for US Allies

Selected Emerging Mission Areas	Strong Candidates	Likely Candidates	Possible Candidates
Forward Area Land Defense	France Germany Great Britain ROK	Turkey	Pakistan
Anti-Access Capabilities ⁹¹	Australia France Germany Great Britain Israel Italy Japan ROK	Taiwan	Turkey

This would result in a mid-term US defense posture along the lines depicted in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11: Mid-Term US Defense Posture

Dominant Power	Force Posture	Force Deployment	Role of Allies
United States	Predominantly Maritime and Aerospace	Primarily Expeditionary	Primary providers of land forces for major regional contingencies Primary providers of land forces for “policing democracy’s empire” Primary providers of local (anti-access) defenses

Longer-Term Options: One Scenario

By preparing for longer-term challenges the United States could improve the prospects for extending its dominant position. However, since strong allies will likely be of increasing importance to America, decisions must also be made as to which allies should be encouraged and supported in developing advanced military capabilities to deal with post-transformation threats. These decisions will be heavily influenced by an ally’s ability to create and sustain the advanced forces required to address these threats and the ally’s durability and reliability.

⁹¹ Canada is not listed here, as it is considered as an integral part of a joint effort with the United States to defend the North American homeland. The rate and scale of development of allied anti-access defenses would be a function of myriad factors, to include ally durability and reliability, character and proximity of potential threats (both time and distance) and financial considerations.

Moreover, in making these decisions, the particular strategic cultures of the military organizations and states involved must be taken into account. For example, it is probably unrealistic to expect Japan to develop, even with US assistance, a formidable extended-range precision-strike capability at least over the next decade or so. On the other hand, Tokyo seems far more agreeable to pursuing cooperative ventures on cruise and ballistic missile defense systems. Drawing upon these considerations, Figure 12 provides a somewhat subjective first look at the allies that might layer US military capabilities in critical emerging mission areas.

Figure 12: Post-Transformation Mission Areas for US Allies

Selected Post-Transformation Mission Areas	Strong Candidates	Potential Candidates	Possible Candidates
Power Projection (in anti-access environment)⁹²	Great Britain	France	Germany Italy Japan ROK
Extended-Range Strikes (Precision and Electronic)	Australia Great Britain	France Germany Italy Israel Japan	ROK
Ballistic and Cruise Missile Defense	Australia Canada France Great Britain Israel Italy Japan ROK	Singapore Turkey	Taiwan
Counter Maritime Blockade and Commerce Defense	Australia Great Britain Japan	France Italy	Israel ROK Singapore Taiwan

Assuming the United States' alliance with the major regional powers of Europe endures, either through NATO or in some alternative form (e.g., bilateral alliances), any major challenges to US security would likely emerge in Asia, the locus of rising (and perhaps recovering) great regional powers: China, India and Russia. One also cannot discount the potential influence of *large*

⁹² It is assumed the allies listed here will have the capacity to project significant military power outside of their region. For example, Great Britain will be able to project significant military forces to South-Central Asia, or East Asia, or elsewhere.

regional powers—Australia and Indonesia—and the more technically advanced powers—Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan—on the region’s security equation.

The United States shares common interests with those powers in the region favoring the status quo, such as Japan, Australia and the Republic of Korea. However, over the long term, a combination of rising (or recovering) powers with outstanding claims on the international order could yield a challenge by one power or a combination of great regional powers, either acting independently or as part of a coalition. This power grouping could be supplemented by alliances with lesser regional powers. Under these circumstances, the challenge to US security interests would be substantially greater than it is now and could threaten the military balance.

During the Cold War, Russia maintained an alliance of sorts with China for over a decade and also established close ties with India. However there exists a strong history of antagonism between China and both Russia and India. While one should not rule out the possibility that a China-India-Russia strategic triangle (to use former Russian Prime Minister Primakov’s term) might arise, it would have to overcome significant historical and cultural burdens. Of greater concern perhaps, (and seemingly more likely), would be a grouping of Russia and one of the other powers. Less likely, but exceedingly dangerous from a US perspective, would be the loss of Japan as an ally especially if Tokyo were to align itself with a hostile China.

Responding to a challenge posed by one or several of these powers and their allies would require the United States to orient the preponderance of its military capability toward East and/or South Asia (although the increased range of military systems would likely find any military competition spilling over into adjacent regions such as Australia, Central Asia, and the Persian Gulf as well as into space and cyberspace).

Interestingly, Great Britain faced a somewhat similar challenge a century ago with the rise of a great regional power, Wilhelmine Germany. Then Britain found it necessary to concentrate its naval power in the North Sea opposite Germany’s rapidly expanding High Seas Fleet. In order to accomplish this without severely jeopardizing its interests in other regions, London relied heavily on allies or quasi-allies to cover other key maritime zones. An alliance with Japan was formed that stabilized the British position in the Far East, and the entente with France saw the French Navy accorded primary responsibility for defense of the Mediterranean Sea. North America was left to the good will of Britain’s American cousins.

One could speculate that, faced with a major challenge to its interests in East Asia, the United States might try to effect a similar set of arrangements and division of labor. This time, however, the geography would be reversed. America’s European allies would be asked to cover the rear area of the global competition. As Japan helped secure the Far East for Britain a century ago, America’s great European allies would likely be asked to secure key maritime zones in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Correspondingly, Japan could play France’s former role—providing critical naval support within the primary theater of military competition. This would permit the United States to concentrate the greater part of its naval power in the most threatened areas.

While possible, it is more difficult to envision the allies assuming major responsibilities for long-range precision strike. One could, however, envision more advanced allies (such as Japan) eventually possessing arsenal ships in their navies.⁹³ They might also have a significant number of long-range, precision-capable, stealthy aircraft.

This division of military labor would permit the United States to concentrate on its strengths in power projection, space control and long-range precision strikes and produce an American defense posture and alliance structure along the lines depicted in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Long-Term US Defense Posture (Primary Challenge: East / South Asia)

Dominant Power	Force Posture	Force Deployment	Role of Allies
United States	Predominantly Maritime and Aerospace	Predominantly Expeditionary (see forward-basing discussion below)	Primary providers of Land Forces for Major Contingencies Primary providers of Sea Control Forces outside East/South Asia Provider of Local (Anti-Access) Defenses Limited Advanced Power-Projection Forces

The reader is cautioned that this is but one out of many possible scenarios that might be productively examined for its implications on US alliance structures. This scenario is not a prediction with respect to the character of the future security environment. Rather, it is intended to stimulate thinking about how a major challenge to US security interests some 10-20 years hence would affect the US military force posture, alliance relationships and the division of labor between American and allied forces. A thorough strategic assessment employing scenario-based planning is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it would include the examination of a *range* of scenarios and a much more detailed look at mission requirements and their implications for US and allied defense postures.⁹⁴

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

The propensity of allies to share military technology more readily among one another than with other states can be an important source of competitive advantage. For example, the United States benefited enormously from the transfer of British technology on nuclear weapons development and jet engines during the Second World War. More recently, the trend has been in

⁹³ An arsenal ship as conceived—but not built—by the US Navy is a semi-submersible barge-like platform incorporating 500 vertical launch system (VLS) tubes capable of launching long-range precision weapons such as the Tomahawk Land-Attack Cruise Missile (TLAM).

⁹⁴ For a treatment of scenario-based planning, see Peter Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View* (NY: Doubleday, 1991).

the opposite direction. The last decade has seen the United States and most of its major allies cutting their defense budgets (see Figure 14) in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union as a threat and a desire to realize what has become known as the peace dividend. Moreover, as shown in Figure 15, allied expenditures on military research and development—which underwrite the development of advanced technologies and new military capabilities—remain well below that of the United States. As recently as 1996, America’s three principal allies in Europe—Germany, Great Britain and France—*combined* were spending less than one-third the level of US defense R&D funding. While Japan has increased its defense R&D effort in recent years, it still represents less than 5 percent of US spending in that area.⁹⁵

Figure 14: Military Expenditure of Major US Allies 1950-1997 as a Percentage of GDP

Country	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1997	1998
United States	5.1	10.2	9.0	7.6	8.0	6.0	5.4	6.6	5.5	3.8	3.4	3.2
France	5.5	6.4	6.5	5.2	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.6	3.1	3.0	2.8
Germany	4.4	4.1	4.0	4.3	3.3	3.6	3.3	3.2	2.8	1.7	1.6	1.5
United Kingdom	6.6	8.2	6.5	5.9	4.8	5.0	4.7	5.1	4.0	3.0	2.7	2.7
Australia	3.0	3.8	2.7	3.4	3.5	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.2	
Japan	..	1.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: *SIPRI Yearbook* 1980, 1990, 1997; and *Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense*, March 1999, A Report to the United States Congress by the Secretary of Defense.

⁹⁵ It is important to realize that increasing military R&D investment will not necessarily yield corresponding increases in long-term military capability or effectiveness. One reason for this is that military revolutions are characterized by great uncertainty with respect to those military systems and capabilities that will dominate future conflicts and those current systems that will fade from prominence. For example, the United States did much in the years between the two world wars to develop aircraft carriers and carrier aviation. This paid major dividends when fast carrier task forces supplanted battleships and the battle line as the principal means of assuring sea control in the Pacific Ocean during World War II. Investments during the interwar years to enhance battleship capabilities provided far less return, as the United States ceased production of battleships during World War II while rapidly expanding its carrier forces. Thus, in reviewing its alliance structures, the United States should keep an eye not only on the *level* of ally military R&D, but also on its *character* or orientation. A state that invests in exploiting rapidly advancing new technologies and their associated military systems and capabilities may realize a far greater gain in military effectiveness than a competitor investing substantially greater sums in perfecting mature system capabilities. An example of this phenomenon would be the development of the German submarine force prior to World War I. The costs associated with this force were far less than those incurred by Germany in perfecting the new classes of so-called dreadnought battleships. Yet these battleships were essentially useless in supporting the principal maritime threat posed by Germany to Britain in World War I: the strategic submarine blockade. Accordingly, an ally (or prospective ally) investing heavily in UAVs and arsenal ships, for example, would be far more likely to develop a formidable new capability (e.g., long-range precision strike against mobile targets) than an ally trying to match the United States in current military capabilities (e.g., by launching its own large-deck carrier).

Figure 15: US Allies' Expenditure on Military R&D

(Figures are in US \$ millions in 1995 prices and exchange rates)

Country	1983	1986	1989	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
United States	38000	51000	51000	44000	43000	39000	37000	37000
France	5400	6200	7100	6800	6200	6000	5200	4900
United Kingdom	5500	5400	4100	3500	3800	3300	3500	3200
Germany	1700	2300	3100	2400	1900	1900	2000	2200
Japan	520	820	1100	1400	1500	1500	1600	1800

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 1998.

On the other hand, much of the information-related technology driving the military revolution is being developed in the private sector and is therefore theoretically available to any state that wishes to pay for it. Access to such dual-use technologies will not, in and of itself, allow less sophisticated militaries to close the gap with the United States. However, when combined with defense industry globalization, such access could substantially erode what had been a formidable barrier to non-US militaries' fielding of advanced military capabilities.

The development of anti-access capabilities provides a case in point. The rapid growth of commercial satellite architectures promises to reduce substantially, if not collapse altogether, the financial and technical barriers that, until recently, had restricted space reconnaissance, surveillance and communications capabilities to a few advanced military organizations. Defense industry globalization and the technology transfers that come from globalization seem likely to make high-technology, low-maintenance systems—like ballistic and low-observable cruise missiles, advanced anti-ship mines and unmanned aerial vehicles to name but a few—widely available. As noted above, these systems, when combined with space-based surveillance, will boost dramatically the military capabilities of even third-rank militaries with modest defense budgets.

Indeed, if history is any guide, the United States will not be able to rest on its laurels with respect to its current dominant position in military-related technologies. Looking back over the last two centuries, one finds that the commercial sector has often been a key enabler of those militaries seeking to realize the enormous boost in effectiveness that characterizes periods of military revolution. The steam and internal combustion engines, railroad, telegraph, radio, and the airplane that were instrumental in earlier military revolutions were invented in the private sector and, in most instances, developed by them as well. Today, global communications (e.g., satellites, fiber optic networks), high-speed computing and advanced bio-technologies are dominated by the private sector, not the United States Government.

History also shows that those militaries that first exploit the potential of a military revolution typically find their advantage quickly matched, or offset, by their competitors. Some question whether the United States' dominant lead in such military-unique technologies like stealth aircraft and extremely quiet submarines can be matched any time soon. One suspects they will not. However, over the next two decades, if technology diffuses and America's relative

economic strength diminishes, as seems likely, the lead may narrow substantially. In the meantime, offset strategies will be developed that reduce the military effectiveness of these technologies.⁹⁶

An American Technology Strategy: One Alternative

Consequently it may be argued that over time, one of the key benefits of being an ally of the United States will decline in value. This is not to say that America's technology advantage will disappear; indeed, it may be sustained if the United States develops innovative strategies. For instance, as noted above, US funding of military-specific research, development, test and evaluation remains comparatively robust when compared either to Cold War levels or to the expenditures of other major militaries. It is, in fact, the source of concern with respect to the divergence of US and allied force capabilities. Thus the United States' current comparative advantage in military-unique technologies may not erode much, if at all. If so, the types and amounts of technology transferred by the US defense industry to foreign defense industries and militaries, the restrictions associated with those transfers and the United States' ability to thwart the efforts of others to acquire its technology secrets through espionage will likely be important factors in determining how well America sustains its military technology advantage.

Second, it may be argued that, relatively speaking, in the future possessing raw technology will count for less than it did during the Cold War or World War II. The reasons are knowledge-based. Military capability is increasingly the product of a wide array of technologies that are combined in highly complex and integrated ways—hence the terms systems integration and, with the advent of the emerging military revolution, architecture integration or the system of systems. The skills involved in effecting this value-added process are inherently human skills. Systems and architecture integration capabilities are derived from teams of individuals (e.g., aircraft design teams) and a sophisticated industrial base. It is clear that the United States has a lead in developing architecture integration skills. The United States and some of its allies (e.g., France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan) have systems integration skills. Other major powers (e.g., China, India, Russia) and some second-tier powers (e.g., Israel) also possess systems integration capabilities.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ The term "offset strategy" as used here refers to the fact that there is more to military strategy or military effectiveness than technology. To be sure, technology plays a major role in determining combat capability and overall military effectiveness. However, there are other dimensions of strategy, among them: the operational, logistical and social. For example, the United States' defeat in the Vietnam War cannot be explained by examining technology factors alone. (Indeed, such factors would lead one to believe the United States could not help but win that war.) The emerging anti-access capabilities and strategy discussed earlier in this paper make clear that some of the world's most sophisticated military equipment—stealth aircraft, digitized armor forces, nuclear-powered aircraft carriers—may be rendered ineffective by inferior technology applied through a superior operational concept. See Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1979).

⁹⁷ To be sure, a long-term trend in military operations has been toward increased integration of military systems and force elements (e.g., the combined arms of infantry, artillery and armored forces). There are, however, instances where militaries realized a major gain in competitive advantage by introducing less sophisticated systems that were employed within innovative operational concepts. The use of longbow archers to defeat mounted knights at Agincourt in 1415 is one example; the employment of submarines as a means of commerce raiding and strategic blockade during World War I is another.

Consequently, maintaining and expanding these complex integration skills will likely be critical to sustaining America's military technology advantage. Defense industry globalization may dilute this advantage by diffusing key *information* and *processes* critical to developing complex integration skills. If this occurs, then the erosion of US technological dominance may be very much a function of the recipient state's ability to absorb and apply the information obtained.

A reformed US alliance strategy must, therefore, address several major issues. First among them concerns the circumstances under which the United States would consider transferring military-unique technologies to its allies. If the United States is going to transfer key military technologies, both to enhance its value as an ally and to increase the effectiveness of allied military forces, it will want the recipient allies to be both durable and reliable. It makes little sense to effect such transfers to states where there is a substantial risk that, over time, they might retransfer these technologies to potential competitor states or even become competitors themselves. However, given a dynamic international system characterized by relatively high uncertainty, it is not clear that US alliances will retain the durability that marked these relationships during the Cold War era.

Can the United States resolve this dilemma? Are there alternatives to the transfer of such technologies? It may be possible to construct an alliance relationship that emphasizes allied access to capabilities based on proprietary US technologies on an as needed basis. Such an approach might be workable with respect to the US global C4ISR architecture, which is projected to be a highly networked system of systems. Might the United States allow allies to tap into the architecture on an as needed basis? Such architecture loaners (or perhaps rentals) would be different from Cold War era US systems transfers (e.g., selling advanced fighter aircraft). Allies could receive support from an entire systems architecture, comprising a range of integrated systems, rather than being sold individual systems. By retaining the architecture rather than transferring it, the United States may be able to mitigate some of its concerns with respect to ally reliability over the long term.

The United States might also consider temporary transfers of certain systems to allies that could boost their military capability substantially. For example, precision-guided munitions might be one candidate for transfer. They would require relatively little training yet could greatly increase the recipient ally's capabilities.⁹⁸

Another candidate for as needed support is the United States' high-fidelity training infrastructure. American training facilities could enable allied personnel to master US capabilities to be transferred or to which allied forces were going to be given temporary access. For example, allied forces might be permitted access to the Defense Department's national training centers which have proven important in developing and sustaining the US military's competitive advantage in conducting highly integrated, highly complex operations.

⁹⁸ The British, for example, have long been the recipients of advanced US munitions, to include submarine-launched ballistic missiles and, more recently, Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles (TLAMs). The United States also has transferred high-end munitions such as Stinger man-portable anti-aircraft missiles. These missiles proved extremely effective in the Afghan rebels' struggle with Soviet occupation forces in the 1980s even though they were also quite sophisticated and the rebels were not technically literate.

As with any situation involving the provision of military support, as opposed to a transfer of military capability, the United States may confront situations where an ally desires access to American capabilities to undertake military operations contrary to US interests. Put another way, the United States may confront a Suez situation in which it does not support its allies' objectives. Withholding badly needed support at a critical moment could raise strong doubts about America's reliability as an ally.⁹⁹

Essentially the United States would be offering its allies the potential to augment rapidly and substantially their military force effectiveness, not by introducing American forces, but rather by providing access to US force enablers (e.g., C4ISR architectures, the high-fidelity training infrastructure, advanced precision munitions). It provides a way for the United States to remain an attractive ally in terms of its competitive advantage in advanced military-unique technologies but mitigates the problem of transferring these technologies to allies whose long-term reliability and durability is suspect.¹⁰⁰

An Ally Technology Strategy: One Alternative

How might America's principal allies proceed? The major European NATO powers feel a sense of urgency to close the divergence gap following their Team B performance in Operation Allied Force. Yet it is far from clear that the political will exists to persist over the long term. In East Asia, Japan is expanding its military role but ever so gingerly. Given this environment, America's major allies might consider focusing their efforts more on researching, developing, testing and evaluating a select range of new capabilities but not fielding them in large numbers.

This expenditure pattern would reflect a strategy of pursuing the second-move advantage. Such a strategy might work well in this period of military revolution where uncertainty as to which new military capabilities will emerge as dominant is relatively high. Under such conditions the allies would play a waiting game, allowing the United States military's larger RDT&E programs to identify technology, system, operational, and organizational dead ends and blind alleys. Allied RDT&E could piggy back on US efforts, investing heavily only when the true path to new capabilities (e.g., missile defense; unmanned combat aerial vehicles, mobile offshore bases) has been identified or in certain niche areas important to allied interests but not adequately addressed by the United States.¹⁰¹

This approach was pursued in a manner of sorts by Germany during the interwar period after it had been effectively disarmed by the Treaty of Versailles. It was also the preferred posture of Great Britain with respect to naval developments for much of the nineteenth century. Of course, this strategy assumes that a state can rapidly exploit new military capabilities once they have

⁹⁹ The reference here is to the 1956 Suez Crisis. During the crisis, United States opposition to the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, combined with the Soviet's issuing a nuclear threat against Britain and France, contributed significantly both to France's decision to distance itself from the NATO military command structure and to pursue an independent nuclear capability. See Seymour M. Hersh, *The Samson Option* (NY: Random House, 1991), pp. 40-44; and McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival* (NY: Vintage Press, 1988), pp. 474-75.

¹⁰⁰ This does not contradict the likelihood that military-related technology will be more diffused.

¹⁰¹ Of course, this strategy can be pursued, either out of necessity or design, by potential adversaries as well as allies.

been proven effective. This implies an adaptive defense ministry, a responsive defense industrial base and access to substantially greater resources when the need arises to field new capabilities rapidly and in substantial quantities. Thus, while this strategy does not require a rich man's approach to developing new military capabilities, it hardly promises a free lunch.

Assuming America's major allies pursued such an approach, they might benefit over the near-term from selective US technology and systems/munitions transfers related to emerging dominant capabilities, as the British have, for example, with Trident submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles (TLAMs). Furthermore, given that the near-term danger to their security is low, and the US defense shield strong, America's allies can probably pursue the second-move advantage at little near-term risk to their security. Finally, the allies could avoid making many of the difficult political choices involved in boosting their defenses in the near-term.

Still, this approach has its risks for America's allies. It puts a premium on the United States remaining a reliable, durable ally for *them*.¹⁰² For those crafting an American alliance strategy, this may provide a significant degree of leverage and some risks as well.¹⁰³ The allies also must assume that if and when the time comes to transform their militaries, they can move quickly enough to outpace an emerging threat to their security. This implies a level of enduring R&D investment and long-term organizational agility that may be beyond the allies' capability, or will, to create and sustain. It also likely implies a continued heavy reliance on the United States to support their military buildup (when the time comes) with technology transfers, access to high-fidelity training architectures and advanced military equipment transfers. Finally, in the interim it consigns the allies to a series of embarrassments as they are reminded, upon the occasion of each coalition contingency, how much their military luster has faded and how dependent they are upon US military capability enablers to succeed in anything beyond modest operations.

The United States could benefit by encouraging its principal allies to pursue a strategy of the second-move advantage. So long as the US armed forces remain dominant over the near- to mid-term future, there is less need for allies to be broadly (as opposed to selectively) engaged in transforming their militaries to exploit an emerging military revolution. By deferring the broad transformation of their armed forces, the allies might also take the lead in those mission areas for which the United States has little capability, or appetite, such as those which are manpower intensive, risk substantial casualties or are protracted in nature. In return, the United States might support allied efforts to develop the capability to carry out selective post-transformation missions of the type presented in Figure 10.

In short, America's great power allies—France, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan—might represent a major store of post-transformation military *potential*, to be tapped with US support if and when a major challenge to common security interests begins to emerge. This implies that

¹⁰² There is, for example, among some the latent fear that the United States will, at some point, revert in some form to its isolationist past.

¹⁰³ The risk is that the United States might not support an ally in a conflict where American interests are not perceived to be sufficiently at stake. The risk cuts both ways. For the ally, the risk is to its security interests. For the United States, the risk is that withholding support may permanently damage the alliance relationship.

the United States will develop and maintain the ability to increase an ally's military capability more rapidly than an adversary (or adversary coalition) could offset the gain, thereby maintaining a favorable military balance in a US-led coalition. Such support could be important as regional great powers emerge and as the threat of a major attack on the American homeland increasingly taxes US defense resources.

VI. FORWARD BASING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

FORWARD BASING

As in business, a significant element of military effectiveness can be attributed to “location, location, location.” The British once dominated the globe by gaining possession of the keys that controlled the European great powers’ access to the world’s oceans.¹⁰⁴ As the United States assumed its current role as an active global power following World War II, it too discovered the value of forward bases. At war’s end, there were more than 2,000 US overseas bases. Nearly 600 of these bases survived the post-war demobilization. The number of American overseas bases grew to over 1,000 by the mid-1960s as the United States pursued its containment strategy against China and the Soviet Union. The majority of these bases were in Europe. By the Cold War’s end America had over five times as many bases in Europe as in the Pacific and no major bases in the South Asia region (see Figure 16).¹⁰⁵ Today US military access to overseas bases continues to be viewed as an unambiguous good. Nearly a decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States maintains by far the world’s most extensive network of overseas bases.

Figure 16: Number of US Overseas Base Sites by Region, 1947-1988

	1947	1949	1953	1957	1967	1975	1988
Europe	506	258	446	566	673	633	627
Pacific	343	235	291	256	271	183	121
Latin America	113	59	61	46	55	40	39
Africa/Middle East	74	28	17	15	15	9	7
South Asia	103	2	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	1,139	582	815	883	1,014	865	794

Source: James R. Blaker, *United States Overseas Basing*, p. 32.

For America’s allies, the value of their bases in supporting forward-deployed US troops has offset, to a considerable extent, the relatively modest military contributions the allies have made to the common defense. This condition will likely change dramatically and should exert a major influence on any US strategic review of its alliance relationships.

There are three reasons why US overseas bases are likely to change in value over the next decade or so. First, US access to forward bases will become more problematic as security interests

¹⁰⁴ These keys were the English Channel, Straits of Gibraltar, Suez Canal, and the North Sea. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan*, p. 138.

¹⁰⁵ James R. Blaker, *United States Overseas Basing: An Anatomy of the Dilemma* (NY: Praeger, 1990), pp. 30-33.

become more regional. Even during the Cold War, allies reserved the right to withhold base access and overflight rights. Witness, for example, France's refusal to allow US aircraft to overfly its territory during Operation El Dorado Canyon, the 1986 American strikes against Libya.

Access has become even more tenuous since the long shadow of the Soviet Union is no longer present to exert its bonding effect on America and its allies. Ad hoc coalitions have become the rule and base access can be granted or withheld on a moment's notice. Such was the case with Saudi Arabia, which in November 1998, seemed likely to grant US aircraft access to its bases for strikes against Iraq but withheld access a month later when Operation Desert Fox actually took place.¹⁰⁶ Even more recently, during Operation Allied Force, American military forces' access to forward NATO bases varied widely, even though the operation itself had been sanctioned by the alliance as a whole. Thus US aircraft operated out of bases in Italy, but were banned from doing the same by Greece, another NATO front-line state.

Second, the relative value of forward bases will change due to geographic factors. Given political and economic trends, the focus of great power competition is likely to shift from Europe to Asia. This means that the US military will likely find itself involved relatively more heavily in Asian security matters and East Asian security matters in particular. Maintaining a stable military balance in that part of the world is unlikely to depend very much upon the US basing structure in central Europe, as it did during the Cold War. Rather, bases in Asia will likely grow in relative value to bases in most other locations including Europe.

Finally, the value of certain forward bases is likely to diminish as a consequence of the diffusion of anti-access capabilities that will enable even militaries of the second-rank to hold fixed bases at risk of destruction.¹⁰⁷ The US military's traditional method of deploying air and ground forces at or through ports and airfields is almost certain to be endangered by the growing proliferation of satellite services and missile technology. Commercial and third-party satellite constellation imagery services will allow even regional rogue states to monitor US deployments and (unless one makes heroic assumptions regarding the effectiveness of missile defenses) hold them at risk through the employment of large numbers of ballistic and cruise missiles. Senior US military leaders have voiced strong concern over their ability to deal with such a contingency. General Ronald Fogleman, then Air Force Chief of Staff, observed that

Saturation ballistic missile attacks against littoral forces, ports, airfields, storage facilities, and staging areas could make it extremely costly to project US forces into a disputed theater, much less carry out operations to defeat a well-armed aggressor. *Simply the threat of such enemy*

¹⁰⁶ The Saudis permitted the US planes to overfly their airspace. However, they refused to allow US air strikes to originate off their soil.

¹⁰⁷ Anti-access capabilities are referred to by the US Air Force as theater denial capabilities and by the US Navy as area denial capabilities. For a discussion of what a future anti-access environment might look like, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Bottom-Up Review: An Assessment* (Washington, DC: Defense Budget Project, February 1994), pp. 41-44; and Vickers, *Warfare in 2020*, pp. 4-5.

*missile attacks **might deter** US and coalition partners from responding to aggression in the first instance. [emphasis added]*¹⁰⁸

The Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jay Johnson, expressed very similar concerns when he declared

Over the past ten years, it has become evident that proliferating weapon and information technologies will enable our foes to attack the ports and airfields needed for the forward deployment of our land-based forces. I anticipate that the next century will see those foes striving to target concentrations of troops and materiel ashore and attack our forces at sea and in the air. This is more than a sea-denial threat or a Navy problem. *It is an area-denial threat whose defeat or negation will become the **single most crucial element** in projecting and sustaining US military power where it is needed. [emphasis added]*¹⁰⁹

Perhaps most revealing, however, are the comments of a retired Indian brigadier, who observed that access to forward bases

is, by far the trickiest part of the American operational problem. This is the proverbial "Achilles heel." India needs to study the vulnerabilities and create cover and overt bodies to develop plans and execute operations to degrade these facilities in the run up to and after commencement of hostilities. Scope exists for low cost options to significantly reduce the combat potential of forces operating from these facilities.¹¹⁰

A regional power's development of this kind of anti-access capability by 2010 is certainly plausible. Some of the pieces are already being put into place. Iran, for example, seems far more interested in fielding anti-access systems, such as ballistic and cruise missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, submarines, and advanced anti-ship mines, as opposed to the military systems (such as tanks and combat aircraft) that proved largely ineffective for the Iraqis during the Gulf War. North Korea today has a formidable missile arsenal and chemical (and perhaps biological) weapons.¹¹¹

Future US adversaries will almost certainly benefit from access to space-based systems capable of providing imagery for reconnaissance purposes, communications, position location and targeting information, and battle damage assessments. States seeking to boost their anti-access forces will tap into the growing number of countries and multinational consortia anxious to exploit space and willing to sell their services to those who can pay for them. If it is to maintain its current relative superiority beyond the near- to mid-term future, the American military will

¹⁰⁸ Bill Gertz, "The Air Force and Missile Defense," *Air Force* (February 1996), p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ Admiral Jay Johnson, "Anytime, Anywhere," *Proceedings* (November 1997), p. 49.

¹¹⁰ Brigadier V. K. Nair, *War in the Gulf* (New Delhi, India: Lancer International, n.d.), p. 230.

¹¹¹ The National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review, 1997-98* (Tokyo: The National Institute for Defense Studies, 1998), pp. 80-81.

almost certainly have to undertake a major transformation that enables it to project decisive military power in the absence of forward bases.

This has profound implications, not only for the US military, but for America's allies as well. The value of ally forward bases will change, in some cases dramatically, depending upon how the United States attempts to meet the anti-access challenge. Of course, as with all basing modes, the quality and quantity of enemy anti-access capabilities will exert considerable influence on the viability of the various basing options and, consequently, the value of forward bases. In addition to ensuring the ability of US forces to prevail in war, basing options should be viewed with an eye toward how they enable America to accomplish the following:

- *Shape the security environment through forward presence.* Even if it were possible for the United States to divest itself of all its forward bases and still maintain a favorable military balance in key regions around the world, it would still need to preserve a visible presence. Such a physical commitment of forces has, in the past, served as a deterrent to would-be adversaries while providing a measure of assurance to allies within the region.¹¹² Of course, this does not imply that the United States must maintain its current approach to forward basing. To the extent that large, fixed forward bases become increasingly vulnerable to destruction by extended-range strikes, their value, both as a deterrent and as a means for reassurance, is reduced. The challenge is to transform the US forward basing structure to reflect the emerging strategic environment. It also means adjusting the projected relative mix of forward-based and extended-range forces in favor of the latter.
- *Influence the dynamics of military competitions in periods of crisis.* As many of America's existing forward bases become increasingly at risk of destruction from extended-range strikes, crisis instability may increase. This is because an adversary will have a high incentive to strike before the United States can disperse its forces from their bases. Correspondingly, US commanders will see force dispersal as critical in the early phases of a crisis. The governments of allied states will face a dilemma; supporting the dispersal of US forces from their bases could bring on the very attack they seek to avoid. Hence the development of a survivable basing mode will likely be an important factor in preserving crisis stability.
- *Allow the United States to hedge against perturbations in its alliance structure.* In an era of great geopolitical change, ad hoc coalitions are increasingly in vogue. As noted above, ally reliability and durability will be increasingly problematic as the Cold War era fades from memory. Alliance structures may not exhibit the kind of rigidity they did during the bipolar international regime that characterized the long-term US-Soviet competition. If the world is progressing toward a multipolar system, a case can be made that alliances structures will be more transitory, or fluid. In such an international order, the United States' ability to adapt

¹¹² See Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force Without War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1978), pp. 529-30.

rapidly its basing structure in response to shifts in alliance relationships could prove critical to preserving favorable military balances in key regions.¹¹³

While a thorough assessment of US basing options is needed, it also is beyond the scope of this paper. However, a brief discussion of some prospective options follows to provide a first-cut look at the problem.

Sanctuaries

The United States could choose to maintain its current basing arrangements in the hope that these bases will be sanctuaries in the event of a future conflict, for one of three reasons. First, with the spread of weapons of mass destruction, wars may become highly limited due to mutual concerns over the consequences of escalation. Instead of total war, future conflicts may more resemble the Korean War, in which the homelands of the great powers (China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States) involved were accorded sanctuary status. Second, missile defenses might become far more effective than our experience with them to date would suggest. Third, it may be that US forces are deployed from forward bases to conduct operations at the lower end of the conflict spectrum, such as peace keeping and peace enforcement.

Under these circumstances, there may be relatively little risk to US forward bases. However, retaining the current approach to forward basing while relying on these assumptions would be highly risky for America, both because of the threat of a Pearl Harbor-like surprise attack and because access could be denied for political reasons.

Peripheral Bases

In the future, an enemy's robust anti-access capability may force the United States to build up strength first along the periphery of an enemy's military reach. During World War II, for example, United States forces found themselves establishing bases along the periphery of the Axis empires in Europe and East Asia. From these bases, in places like Australia, England and North Africa, US and allied forces engaged German and Japanese forces, gradually pushing them back and seizing bases further forward (and closer to the enemy homeland).

Anticipating this, the United States might establish a network of peripheral bases from which to employ extended-range US military systems and to serve as a staging area for forces and supplies moving from the United States to the threatened theater. Under this approach, allies located along the periphery of potential conflict areas might increase substantially in value. Australia, for example, with its large size and position between South and East Asia, might provide an ideal site for peripheral bases as might Russia.

Distributed Bases

The United States might develop a substantially larger network of relatively austere forward bases than it maintains today. This basing scheme is somewhat similar to the multiple aim point

¹¹³ Stephen Peter Rosen, *Forward Basing*, Memo to Andrew Marshall, Office of Net Assessment, Department of Defense, August 25 1997.

basing arrangement envisioned for the deployment of the MX Peacekeeper ICBM.¹¹⁴ This basing approach assumes that greatly increasing the number of potential bases available can substantially mitigate the risks associated with forward basing in an anti-access environment. Further, it assumes that, at any given time, only a relatively small fraction of these bases would be in use and then only for brief periods.

Again, this implies significant changes in US military systems, force structures, base operating procedures, and doctrine. The potential benefit is that, to attack forward-based US forces with a high degree of effectiveness, an enemy would have to strike most, if not all the bases, since he could not be certain which bases were currently being used by US forces. This would be particularly true if US forces were operating out of these bases along extremely compressed timelines or what is sometime referred to by aviators as on a touch-and-go basis. One key challenge for such a basing scheme is to make the ground base support functions highly mobile as well lest they become the basing system's weak link.

Moreover, a distributed basing scheme could facilitate the employment of preferential defenses against the ballistic and cruise missile threat. If so, US missile defense effectiveness might increase dramatically.¹¹⁵

This basing structure might favor allies with relatively large land masses. Australia again comes to mind as an ally whose value might increase substantially under these conditions. Russia also begins to look much more attractive as an ally if this basing scheme is viewed as having promise as might Turkey. The specific attributes of a distributed basing scheme would depend on a number of factors. Obviously, the character of the threat must be considered as well as the suitability of the terrain identified for distributed bases. The threat will help inform such matters as the number of distributed bases required (so as to avoid the risk of saturation attacks on all bases) and the spacing between bases (to limit, for example the effectiveness of extended-range munitions whose trajectory—and thus targets—can be altered in flight). Countries that are strategically positioned and possess a relatively large land mass may be the best candidate for a distributed basing network. However, other factors, such as terrain, must be considered as well.

¹¹⁴ In weighing options for deployment of the MX Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in the 1970s and 80s, senior US officials confronted the growing vulnerability of fixed-point targets to a first-strike Soviet attack. One solution considered was to establish a series of widely spaced shelters over 20 for each missile. In theory, the Soviets would have had to destroy all of the shelters to ensure the one missile shuttling between them would also be destroyed, exacting far too great a cost on the Soviet missile forces for such an attack to be profitable. Hence, the MX would be survivable. For a variety of reasons, this basing mode was never implemented. For a discussion of the MX basing scheme referred to here, see Bernard T. Feld and Kosta Tsipis, "Land-based Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles," *Scientific American* (November 1979), pp. 57-59.

¹¹⁵ The concept of preferential defense is fairly straightforward. Since US and allied missile and air defense forces would know those forward bases that were being used by friendly militaries, they could be instructed to intercept only those missiles targeted on bases currently in use. As with any defense, there are some potential problem areas. First, one must assume that the enemy's intelligence is limited, and also that he does not possess the capability to conduct saturation attacks against all bases. Second, one must also assume that creating substantial numbers of bases is feasible. For example, it would likely be difficult to establish such a basing scheme in a country like Israel or Japan. Third, defenses designed to operate early in an enemy's attack phase (e.g., ballistic missile boost-phase intercept systems) cannot, at present, differentiate between those missiles targeted on bases in use, and empty bases. In short, they cannot practice preferential defense. Fourth, there is likely to be a residual support structure required even at austere bases. Unless this support structure can be made mobile, erosion of base infrastructure support may occur under the weight of enemy attacks.

For example, large portions of Russian Siberia and the Australian Outback may not be suitable for bases. Moreover, if they are to sustain a large contingent of forces, the logistics strain involved in supporting dispersed or remote bases may prove prohibitive.

Mobile Basing

An obvious way to reduce the vulnerability of US forward-deployed force elements is to make their bases mobile and thus more difficult to target. Today the United States possesses mobile bases of a kind in the form of its Navy carrier battle groups (CVBGs) and Marine amphibious ready groups (ARGs). These platforms, however, are highly limited both in their capacity and in their ability to project power ashore especially at extended ranges. Another option, the Mobile Offshore Base (or MOB) merits serious consideration. As envisioned by the US military, a MOB would be a multi-module floating structure based on the latest offshore platform technology. It would extend roughly one mile long, provide some 115 acres of storage space and be able to accommodate 150 helicopters or VSTOL aircraft. It would be able to land large transport aircraft like the US Air Force's C-17s and C-130s. To the extent they can be deployed in open waters, MOBs, which can move at a speed of 5-10 knots, can further complicate an adversary's targeting requirements.¹¹⁶ If practicable, these bases offer the advantage of contouring the US footprint, or presence, on allied territory to fit the host nation's political and cultural needs. They also can be moved (albeit slowly) both in the event of crisis in another sector or if a shift in alliance relationships occurs.

Export Bases

A portion of the military capabilities resident at forward bases might be relocated to bases in the United States itself. This implies an increased reliance on military systems and forces with extended, even intercontinental range, such as long-range bomber forces or death-of-distance electronic strike elements.¹¹⁷ Other capabilities involving C4ISR, and perhaps strike, might be exported to space. With respect to US space-based assets, allies that enable the positioning of survivable, redundant ground stations and support facilities might increase in value, as might allies that could facilitate the rapid relaunch of satellites to replace those rendered ineffective due to enemy military operations conducted in space. For example, allies that enable equatorial launches could enhance a rapid satellite replacement capability as well as provide launch-site diversification.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Bryan Bender, "USA Must Keep Base Plan Afloat," *Jane's Defence Week* (May 12, 1999), p. 3; and Lisa Troshinsky, "Marine Corps and Industry Heat Up Plans For An Offshore Refueling 'Base'," *Navy News & Undersea Technology* (March 1, 1999), p. 1.

¹¹⁷ The death of distance is a term used by the telecommunications industry to connote the lowering of barriers to global communication, both in terms of improved service and reduced cost (hence the industry's other slogan: "faster, better, cheaper"). Employed here the term refers to the growing potential for states, groups or individuals to undertake information (or electronic) warfare campaigns against critical military and economic information infrastructure targets from almost anywhere on the globe.

¹¹⁸ By launching where the Earth's rotational pull is strongest, rockets can carry significantly more weight into space than they can from other latitudes. "Rocket Launched from Ocean Platform in Orbit," *Seattle Insider* (March 28, 1999), <http://www.seattleinsider.com/news/1999/03/28/sealaunch.html>.

The exporting of US military capabilities from their forward bases will likely pose increased costs as extended-range systems typically cost more than their shorter-range counterparts. It also implies a reduction of US forward-stationed forces which could reduce the credibility of America's security guarantees to its allies.

Rapid Base Development

Given the high level of geopolitical uncertainty and the growing military risk to forward basing forces, the United States might adopt a defense posture in which it waits until the appearance of a crisis or conflict before it identifies base locations and deploys substantial forces into a threatened region. This, arguably, was the approach followed by the United States at least through World War I, and perhaps leading up to World War II as well. The potential advantages of assuming a "wait-and-see" posture are several. If alliances are fluid, or shifting, the United States would want to avoid investing heavily in developing bases to which it may not maintain long-term access or, worse still, have fall into the hands of its competitors. This approach would also increase a potential adversary's planning uncertainty with respect to US crisis or wartime power-projection plans.

However, there are likely downsides to this scheme as well. The reduction in US forward presence may erode the credibility of American security guarantees. The US military would have to acquire the ability to develop forward bases, in whatever form (e.g., peripheral, distributed) very quickly.¹¹⁹ This approach to basing would almost certainly increase the need for extended-range military systems whose capabilities could be brought to bear almost immediately, while rapid forward base development is occurring.

¹¹⁹ The United States has demonstrated something like this kind of capability in the past. For example, during World War II the rapid base development capabilities of America's Naval Construction Battalions (or SeaBees) supported its island-hopping campaigns in the Pacific Theater. The development of artificial harbors, called Mulberries, were important in sustaining the allied offensive in France after D-Day. During the Vietnam War the US military developed basing facilities in South Vietnam with remarkable speed and effectiveness.

Figure 17: Advantages and Disadvantages of Various Basing Options

Basing Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sanctuary Bases	Uses current US base structure Enhanced credibility	May degrade rapidly as adversaries deploy anti-access forces Ally durability and reliability
Peripheral Bases	Reduced vulnerability to anti-access forces	Ally durability and reliability Major changes in US force structure/equipment needed Base development costs
Distributed Bases	Reduced vulnerability to anti-access forces Greater leverage of missile defense assets	Ally durability and reliability Major changes in US force structure/equipment needed Base development costs
Mobile Bases	Reduced vulnerability to anti-access forces Greater leverage of missile defense assets Relatively immune to alliance structure shifts	Major changes in US force structure/equipment needed Base development costs Less effective in support of deep inland operations
Exported Bases	Reduced vulnerability to anti-access forces Immune to alliance structure shifts	Reduced credibility of US security guarantees, at least over the short term Major changes in US force structure/equipment needed Base development costs
Rapid Deployment Bases	Reduced vulnerability to anti-access forces Relatively immune to alliance structure shifts	Major changes in US force structure/equipment needed Need to acquire rapid base development capability

Candidate Base Providers

What countries might serve as key providers of bases to US forces? Again, although it is not possible to answer this question with great precision, some informed speculation is possible. Any basing structure also would be influenced significantly by a competition between the United States and other great powers within the region. In the case of Europe, the great powers would be the European Union (again, assuming it succeeds in integrating the defense and diplomatic

elements of power) and perhaps Russia. China and Japan stand out as the great powers of East Asia and India as the dominant power of South/Central Asia. Assuming the United States is able to retain its core great power allies—NATO and Japan—great power challenges to regional balances would come from China, India or Russia, either independently or as members of a counter coalition. Figure 18 speculates on potential key base providers for various basing modes under these conditions.

Figure 18: Potential Base Providers for Various Basing Options

Basing Option	Key Potential Providers East Asia Region	Key Potential Providers South-Central Asia Region	Key Potential Providers Europe Region
Sanctuary Bases	Japan* Philippines ROK* Russia Singapore Taiwan Vietnam	Azerbaijan Diego Garcia (U.K.)* Israel* Khazakhstan Pakistan Turkey	NATO Europe* Russia Turkey Ukraine
Peripheral Bases	Australia* Russia	Australia* Russia Turkey Ukraine Saudi Arabia	Israel* Russia Saudi Arabia Turkey
Distributed Bases	Australia* Russia	Australia* Russia Ukraine	Russia Turkey Ukraine
Mobile Bases	N/A	N/A	N/A
Exported Bases	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rapid Deployment Bases	Scenario Dependent ¹²⁰	Scenario Dependent	Scenario Dependent

* Indicates ally with relatively high durability and reliability.

Several implications can be drawn from this discussion. First, the importance of ally durability and reliability cannot be underestimated as decisions are made in the near term to begin the long-term transformation of the US basing structure. This is particularly true with respect to

¹²⁰ Rapid deployment bases are scenario dependent in the sense that their location is determined only after a crisis has developed or a conflict has begun. Thus, their placement is highly dependent upon the character of the specific contingency confronting US forces.

establishing sanctuary, peripheral or distributed bases, where the infrastructure costs are almost certain to be significant.

One also cannot discount the potential of Australia, Turkey and perhaps Russia to emerge as key allies by virtue of their ability to support various basing arrangements oriented on several key regions. Australia, while perhaps not as versatile a potential provider as Russia, nevertheless remains especially attractive owing to its likely durability and reliability. Russia, on the other hand, is highly unstable and almost certain to remain so for some time to come. Moreover, Russia is not a long-term ally of the United States as is Australia. Still, depending upon how the geopolitical competition evolves, and the future character of the Russian state, the United States should look for opportunities to cultivate the Russia Option. Turkey falls somewhere in between the two. To be sure, it is a long-term ally of the United States; however, if the new international order falls out along the lines of cultural affiliations, as some predict, the United States may have to accord substantially greater priority to its alliance relationship with Turkey in order to sustain it.

Given the breakout provided in Figure 18, it seems obvious that the United States should make every effort to sustain its alliances with the great (and second-tier) powers with which it shares enduring security interests. This means preserving NATO as a military alliance or, failing that, US bilateral alliances with key European powers such as France, Germany, and Great Britain. Perhaps even more important is the need to maintain Japan as an ally, given that China and/or India could have the potential to pose serious challenges to the military balance in Asia's various subregions. Again, however, it is far from clear that the United States can succeed in preserving alliance structures over the long term that have already outlived the principal purpose for which they were formed. Moreover, it also must be understood that even if these cornerstone alliances are maintained, they will have to be *transformed* to reflect the changed environment brought about by the emerging geopolitical and military revolutions.

Finally, in reviewing US future forward basing requirements and options for addressing them, one cannot ignore the important role that future US force characteristics will likely play and the implications for alliance requirements. For example, if the United States military continues to emphasize relatively short range, heavy, logistics intensive military systems and formations, it will find several of the basing options mentioned above difficult to pursue, let alone exploit.¹²¹

Summary

The migration of the international system toward a more multipolar regime, a shift of relative power from Europe to East (and perhaps South) Asia and an emerging military revolution will combine to alter the value of existing and prospective forward bases supporting US military

¹²¹ Ironically, although US forward bases are fewer in number than during the Cold War, and secure base access is likely to be increasingly problematic, the US air forces have actually experienced a trend toward shorter-range aircraft over the last decade. Since the Berlin Wall fell, US long-range bomber aircraft have seen their numbers reduced by roughly 60 percent, while shorter-range tactical aircraft have been reduced by only 40 percent. At present, the Air Force, Navy and Marines are engaged in a major modernization of the tactical air forces. The Air Force has no plans to buy any new bombers for the next several decades. William S. Cohen, *Annual Report to the Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1999), pp. 43, D-1, D-2; and "Air Force to Wait 35 Years Before Beginning New Bomber Production," *Inside the Air Force* (March 5, 1999), p. 1.

forces. Over time, this will lead to a revaluation of America's allies, who have relied upon their granting of base access throughout the last half-century as a major contribution to their alliance relationship with the United States. While it is premature to identify with precision the effects of these large-scale changes on future US basing requirements, it seems likely that four factors will grow in prominence:

- **Location.** Preserving a favorable balance of power in Asia will likely prove more demanding than in Europe, if only because “that’s where the money is.” America’s trade with the region continues to grow, increasing the region’s importance to a healthy US economy. The great powers of the region—China, India and Japan—will likely see their economies grow to exceed those of all other states save the United States. With economic size comes military potential. The Asian Tigers—Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan—may exploit the Information Revolution better than most, leading to disproportionate gains in economic, and perhaps military, might. The development of Central Asian energy resources may see that region’s stability emerge as an important US security interest. There exists no overarching security structure to moderate the competition for power and influence in Asia as there is in Europe. Indeed, barring the rapid resurrection of the Russian economy or the collapse of the European Union, there seems to be little basis for a great power competition on the Continent. Hence, in the coming years, the United States will likely place increasing value on bases in East Asia in particular, and in Asia in general, relative to those in other parts of the world including Europe.
- **Large Land Mass.** Allies who possess a large land mass could become very important in any US forward basing scheme that involves distributed basing or peripheral basing. There are two rising great powers in Asia that offer such basing opportunities: China and India. It seems unlikely, given their history, that even if these countries became allies of the United States, they would permit the establishment of American bases on their soil. Two other powers along the East Asian periphery, Australia and Russia, also encompass large land masses. Because of its relatively high potential as a reliable and durable ally and its location on the periphery of both East and South Asia, Australia’s value as a location for future US forward bases is likely to be high. Russia also has potential to support a distributed and/or peripheral US basing scheme and would be especially valuable if Central Asia emerges as a key area of great power competition. However, owing to its high political and economic instability, Russia would rank low in terms of its reliability and durability as an ally. Ukraine might emerge as a second choice candidate, although it suffers from many of the same maladies that plague Russia.
- **Mobile Forward Bases.** If technology will support the development of mobile offshore bases, they will almost certainly grow in importance. To paraphrase the US Navy, such bases would not require the permission of allies before US forces could be employed from these facilities. If the future international order is characterized by shifting alliance structures, MOBs would remove the potentially awkward political effects involved in shifting bases from one ally to another. Moreover, MOBs would also alleviate much of the infrastructure costs associated with opening and closing major base facilities. These bases arguably would also be more valuable in a predominantly maritime theater such as East Asia, than in Europe. They would provide US field commanders with the ability to concentrate

their military forces in a manner that is not possible with large, fixed forward bases. Finally, to the degree that MOBs eliminate the need for forward bases located ashore, they would also eliminate the need for allies to provide such bases, thereby giving the United States an additional degree of freedom in employing its forces in power-projection operations.

- **Extended-Range Systems.** To the degree that the United States exploits the death of distance characteristics of the emerging military revolution, it will be able to export capabilities out of a theater of operations while still maintaining the ability to influence the military situation in theater. The use of satellite architectures to provide C4ISR, long-range bomber and missile forces for extended-range precision strikes and the potential for electronic strikes executed at the speed of light from the US homeland could, over time, reduce significantly US requirements for forward-positioned forces. To the extent this occurs, the need for allies that provide such basing support will diminish as well.

VII. ALLIANCE INTANGIBLES

MAINTAINING FREEDOM OF ACTION

Ideally, by pooling its capabilities with those of its allies, the United States enhances its overall military capability and its security. But alliances do not achieve this goal in all circumstances. For example, part of the baggage allies may bring along with them are additional security interests and enemies.¹²² Furthermore, in an international system in which security concerns are increasingly regional, the United States, as a global power, may find itself cobbling together ad hoc coalitions on a contingency-by-contingency basis. For these reasons, a strategy that relies on allies to provide layered as opposed to niche capabilities is desirable. This approach avoids creating a situation in which a fickle ally possessing a critical niche capability can exercise a de facto veto over US military operations or at least increase substantially the risks and costs associated with such operations. The United States must also anticipate that its use of forward bases on an ally's territory (or even overflight rights, for that matter) may be revoked on short notice.

The consequences of both defense industry globalization and the desire to increase the use of commercial off-the-shelf parts in military systems also could limit US freedom of action. For instance, America may find itself with an ally that is unwilling to provide critical components needed to sustain the systems employed by US forces in the field. Indications are that components of US weapon systems (to include, in some instances, software code) will be fabricated offshore and then shipped to the United States for integration into military systems. If an erstwhile ally places an embargo on critical components, it may not affect US military capability significantly in the event of a brief conflict. If the war were protracted, however, withholding critical components for US weapon systems could seriously degrade the US military's combat potential. It may be that an era characterized by ad hoc alliances, coalitions of the willing and defense industry globalization will require the United States to take offsetting measures, such as establishing alternate sources of supply and creating stockpiles of critical components.

LEGITIMACY

It has been argued that in today's international system the successful employment of military power depends to a significant extent on it being sanctioned by the international community. Although the truth of this contention is debatable, a strong case can be made that during its half-century as an active, dominant, global power, the United States has only initiated significant military operations when sanctioned by the international community (e.g., the United Nations), its allies or both. The United States secured United Nations support in two of the three major wars in which it became engaged—the Korean War and the Persian Gulf War. In the Vietnam War (which, it should be noted, the United States lost) Washington failed to secure either United

¹²² For example, when the United States joined NATO, it was for the purpose of blocking the Soviet threat to the independence of Western Europe. However, in so doing, the United States also found itself having to deal with threats to French colonial interests in Indochina and British and French concerns in the Middle East.

Nations support or the active participation of its great power allies. Yet even then the United States aggressively pursued its regional allies for support.¹²³ When US forces went into action in Lebanon and Grenada during the early 1980s, they did so as part of an allied contingent.¹²⁴

With the Soviet Union's collapse in the early 1990s, the United States has become the world's dominant military power. Nevertheless, the United States has continued to seek international and allied support for any significant military operation it has conducted in recent years. It may be that, for the United States, the ability to employ military power in support of its interests is strongly associated with the ability either to win broad international sanction or, at a minimum, significant allied support.

To date, there seems to be a correlation between the magnitude of the military operation and the stature of the allies involved. Larger operations, such as Desert Storm and Allied Force have involved America's great power allies, such as France, Great Britain and Germany. Lesser operations, such as Uphold Democracy (Haiti) and Support Hope (Rwanda), have been undertaken with fig leaf allies. Only when employing discrete, punitive strikes, such as the attack on Osama Bin Laden's suspected terrorist facilities (Operation Infinite Reach), has the United States felt comfortable going it alone. One might go so far as to ask whether this represents an enduring limitation on the use of US military power. In any event, it would be imprudent to ignore this strain in the American political culture when assessing the future of US alliance structures.

AVOIDING THE AUSTRIA-HUNGARY SYNDROME AND OTHER ALLIANCE PITFALLS

As alliances are entered into with an eye toward improving one's competitive advantage relative to would-be adversaries, it is imperative to avoid acquiring allies that fail to contribute toward this goal. An alliance is not an unambiguous good. Just as the United States wants certain things of its allies, it must make certain commitments to its allies to assist in *their* defense.

Ideally, in an alliance the security of both (or all) states is enhanced, but this does not have to be the case. For example, the alliance between Imperial Germany and Austria-Hungary during the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II offered Germany relatively little in the way of increased military capability and strategic location. It did, however, saddle Berlin with a cluster of security problems, the foremost of which were Italy and Russia, which proved catastrophic to Germany over the long term.¹²⁵ In sum, Germany's alliance with Austria-Hungary had an overall negative

¹²³ Forces from Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand fought alongside US and South Vietnamese forces during the Vietnam War. President Lyndon Johnson initiated a Many Flags campaign designed to win the active support of as many US allies as possible to secure the legitimacy of America's Indochina war objectives. The Johnson Administration often pointed out that more non-indigenous allied troops were deployed with US forces in Vietnam than had been deployed in Korea during that war.

¹²⁴ In Lebanon, US forces were part of a Multi-National Force (MNF) comprising of French, Italian, and (eventually) British troops. In Grenada, American forces were accompanied by fig-leaf allies such as police forces from Barbados, Jamaica and other Caribbean countries.

¹²⁵ Russia, perennially at odds with Vienna over the Slavic question in the Balkans, left the Three Emperors League that had been crafted by Bismarck. Italy, although part of the Triple Alliance that included Austria-Hungary and

effect on the European military balance from Berlin's perspective. Germany's Axis alliance with Italy during World War II contributed little to its military capabilities, but arguably cost it dearly when it had to assume primary responsibility for failing Italian military adventures in the Balkans and in North Africa. Indeed, Winston Churchill allegedly observed, "It is only fair the Italians should ally with the Germans. We had to take them in the last war."¹²⁶

It is also important to avoid making security commitments that will likely prove difficult to fulfill or that will drain resources away from more important interests to the point where the United States' ability to secure them falls below acceptable levels of risk. The old adage "He who attempts to defend everything ends up defending nothing" holds true here. Arguably the United States encountered this problem with its membership in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) with respect to Indochina. NATO's recent expansion into Eastern Europe, by adding the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland as new members, recalls to some the 1925 Locarno Pact. Then security guarantees were made to East European states during a relatively placid time that proved unsustainable in the face of German aggression in the late 1930s. Over time, NATO's expansion may require the military capability to project substantial US (and NATO) forces far inland in the absence of access to forward bases. Such a capability is not resident in US/NATO forces at present and, given current modernization plans, not likely to be developed any time soon.¹²⁷

As the world's sole superpower, the United States also must judiciously employ its ability to moderate competition between its allies. Recall that as long as Austria-Hungary and Russia were joined together with Germany in the Three Emperors' League, Germany could act as a moderating influence on frictions between the two powers.¹²⁸ The United States should learn from this experience when considering its long-term alliance strategy with respect to similar intra-alliance competitors like Greece and Turkey and Japan and the Republic of Korea. This means working to tamp down differences between potentially antagonistic alliance members to avoid losing one to a hostile power or coalition (as occurred when Russia formed its alliance with France).

Germany, had irredentist claims against Austria-Hungary. Both Italy and Russia ended up fighting with Britain and France against Austria-Hungary and Germany in World War I. Although it had no vital interests in the Balkans, Germany was drawn into the conflict by its ally, Austria-Hungary, over a crisis concerning Serbia.

¹²⁶ Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact on November 6, 1937, described by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop as a "military alliance between Italy, Germany and Japan in anticipation of the inevitable conflict with the Western Powers." Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 131. Churchill's remark may be apocryphal. It also has been recounted as occurring during a meeting between Churchill and the German military attaché. When told by the attaché that Italy would stand by Germany, Churchill quipped, "We had them last time—now it's your turn." Cited in Ward B. Chamberlain, Jr., "Churchill and the Italian Campaign," (Richmond, VA: Unpublished paper, presented at the ICS United States Conference, November 3, 1991).

¹²⁷ Current US war planning emphasizes power projection operations in littoral regions such as the Persian Gulf and Korean Peninsula. Heavy reliance is placed on maritime forces in these operations. This advantage would be greatly dissipated in the event forces had to be projected into Eastern Europe. As discussed earlier, current US military planning and force modernization has yet to come to grips with the growing risk to forward base access.

¹²⁸ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 218-21.

Indeed, as the demise of the Three Emperor's League shows, the United States also must review its alliance structures with an eye toward how the loss of an ally might enhance the capabilities of would-be adversaries. Divesting an allied relationship may be in the United States' interest when viewed in terms of the net gain to US military capability versus the commitments it must be prepared to meet. However, this represents only part of the calculus. *Attention must also be given to a former ally's potential to increase the military capability of would-be adversaries or coalitions.* In 1892, Europe's two orphan great powers, France and Russia, formed an alliance that presented Germany with the prospect of a two-front war. In short, in reviewing its alliance portfolio, the United States must account for alliances that offer little in the way of positive value, but which may have a high negative value if dissolved. Much is made over the matter of whether America's allies are bearing their fair share of the common defense burden. This is an important consideration in determining the value of an ally. However, US strategic planners must also consider that great power allies, left to their own devices, may pursue paths with respect to their defense that, over time, produce far greater problems for American security.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This monograph raises some issues with respect to long-term American alliance planning and strategy in light of the large-scale changes currently under way in the world. As America confronts a new century, much of the optimism of the early 1990s has given way to a realization that, although the world is in the midst of profound changes, it will still be characterized by traditional great power rivalries. Moreover, the bipolar international system that characterized the Cold War has passed into history, and with it, some of the ties that bind America and its allies together.

With the passing of the Soviet threat, security interests are increasingly regional and coalitions increasingly ad hoc. America's unipolar moment that gave rise to the hope of a new international order based on cooperative security is also fading. To be sure, the United States will probably remain the world's only global power for at least the next few decades, but it will do so within an increasingly multipolar world comprised of rising great regional powers and formidable second-tier powers.

Although their influence will be less than America's, the great regional powers will benefit from a key asymmetrical advantage: while the United States will have to diffuse its power in addressing its global interests, the great regional powers will be able to focus the bulk of their capabilities on enhancing their position within their respective territories. Moreover, the focal point of US security is likely to shift from Europe to East and South Asia. For the United States this implies, over time, a greater need to acquire or to maintain alliances that will sustain current favorable military power balances in key regions.

During this period, the military competition seems almost certain to experience major changes to include the dramatic expansion into space and cyberspace. In many instances, existing missions also will undergo dramatic alterations (e.g., power-projection in the absence of forward bases, achieving air superiority against missile forces, effecting ground and area control against extended-range precision-strike forces, counter-blockade operations against land- and space-based maritime blockade forces, etc.). As its homeland comes under substantially greater threat of attack, the United States will likely find itself devoting a greater share of its military resources to defending the nation. This will leave relatively fewer resources for projecting US military power and a greater need for allies to take up the slack.

The likely emergence of new challenges to US security—both in scale and in form—demands a major reevaluation of America's existing and prospective allies. Fortunately, the United States enters this new era with a formidable pair of great power alliances, Japan and NATO. This alliance structure comprises the world's three richest (if one equates NATO with the EU), most technically advanced states. America also has alliances or close relationships with several potential second-tier powers, such as Israel, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. The United States would do well to maintain these alliances over the long-term, albeit in a substantially different form than exists today.

If this proves possible, it would leave China, India and perhaps Russia as potential great regional power challengers. While a counter-coalition comprising these powers seems unlikely, there have been odd couple alliances in the past to include both the Allied and Axis alliances during World War II. Were such a coalition to emerge, the United States would likely confront a challenge far more formidable than that posed by China and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Thus maintaining good relations with at least one of these latent powers presents another major challenge for US statecraft.

Over the longer term, the United States should also consider adopting a strategy that resembles the relentless pragmatism practiced by Great Britain during the *Pax Britannica*, rather than the rigid and formal structure that marked US alliances during the Cold War. The wisdom or necessity for such an approach would depend in part on how effectively the United States is able to maintain its traditional European and East Asian alliances. But even assuming the United States can sustain these formal alliances, the more flexible and ad hoc approach of the *Pax Britannica* might well be appropriate for other parts of the world.

For the United States, the ability to employ military power in support of its interests has been linked with the ability either to win broad international sanction or, at a minimum, significant allied support. It would be imprudent to ignore this strain in the American political culture when assessing the future of US alliance structures. However, if the alliance structures described in this paper are realized, the ability to field coalitions of the willing should not be a significant barrier to the United States maintaining its freedom of action.

DIVISION OF LABOR

The purpose of any defense posture is to minimize the overall risk to the national security given the resources at hand. Alliances, by offering a way to augment defense resources, also offer the prospect of reducing risk. For the United States, the level of security risk is likely to increase over time with the rise of great regional powers and with the changes in the character of conflict that stem from an emerging military revolution. Thus greater emphasis needs to be placed on preparing for long-term challenges than was the case during the Cold War.

America's current defense program, however, places its greatest priority on near-term readiness, even though long-term challenges are likely to be far more formidable. Worse still, the United States today is confronted by a mismatch between its defense posture and projected defense budgets. That is to say, its defense program is too ambitious to be sustained by projected resources.¹²⁹ To bring its defense posture into balance within its current budget estimates, while not further compromising its ability to prepare for emerging security challenges, the United States will almost certainly need to scale back its near-term force structure. One way to do this without increasing risk or reducing commitments is to encourage allies to fill in some of the gaps created through near-term reductions in US military capabilities. It would especially helpful if the allies assumed the lead in those mission areas for which the United States has little capability

¹²⁹ This is true whether one looks at the Clinton Administration's budget projections or those of the Republican-controlled Congress. See Steven Kosiak and Elizabeth Heeter, "Congressional Budget Resolution: Final Action," Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (April 27, 1999).

or appetite—such as those which are manpower intensive, risk substantial casualties or are protracted in nature. These are also missions where the allies are readily able to assume a greater share of the burden.

For obvious reasons, the United States should avoid outsourcing its core mission requirements. To do so would restrict its freedom to act independently when necessary. If core missions must be outsourced, every effort should be made to place them with highly reliable and durable allies. This is also true with respect to more discrete niche missions capabilities such as naval minesweeping.

Rather than encouraging allies to develop niche mission capabilities, or outsourcing core missions to them, the United States should instead emphasize layering allied mission capabilities with its own. Here layering refers to allies providing capabilities similar to those already found at substantial levels within the US military. Layering can liberate resources for the US military to ensure that it has *adequate* capability across its core mission requirements.

ONE NEAR-TERM OPTION

For example, the United States might encourage allies to assume a far greater role in peacekeeping operations. To be sure, the United States should still participate in peacekeeping operations but should transition to a much more limited and focused involvement than is the case today.¹³⁰ The United States might also transfer to its allies the bulk of its mission requirements in the area of urban control, a growing challenge in peacekeeping operations, and also potentially in the case of large-scale conflict.

But this is only part of the challenge. To sustain its current dominance, the United States will have to transform its military and most likely assist in the transformation of its allies' militaries as well. This means America will either have to apportion substantial additional resources for defense—a highly unlikely prospect at present—or ask its allies to assume a still greater role in providing for the common defense. Assuming the latter option proves necessary, the United States might rely on its allies to provide the majority of the land forces in any near- to mid-term regional conflict.

This is not to say the American military would get out of the land warfare business. To be sure, the United States would retain significantly smaller land forces than currently planned. However, this force could be expanded if a great regional power threatened to upset the military balance. The United States could use the resources liberated by such an alliance strategy to begin transforming its military to meet emerging challenges (e.g., projecting land power in the absence of forward bases, providing homeland defense against novel forms of attack, controlling space, etc.). This will yield, over time, a far more capable US military (to include its land forces) than would be realized under the current defense program.

¹³⁰ For example, under this strategy, the United States would emphasize providing those capabilities that offer the greatest value-added to peacekeeping operations. Examples might include C4ISR and logistics support.

Technology Transfers

If the United States is going to transfer key military technologies, both to enhance its value as an ally and to increase the effectiveness of ally military forces, it will want the recipient allies to be both durable and reliable. It makes little sense to effect such transfers to states where there is a substantial risk that, over time, they might pass on these technologies to potential competitor states or even become competitors themselves. This presents the United States with a dilemma: the transfer of military-unique technologies increases the attractiveness of the United States as an ally, yet the subset of allies that are deemed to be both durable and reliable is likely to remain quite small for the foreseeable future.

It may, however, be possible to construct an alliance relationship that emphasizes allied access to *capabilities* based on proprietary US technologies on an as-needed basis. Such an approach might be workable with respect to America's global C4ISR architecture which is projected to be a highly networked system of systems. The United States might allow allies to tap into the architecture as required. Allies could receive support from an entire systems architecture, comprising a range of integrated systems, rather than being sold individual systems. By retaining the architecture rather than transferring it, the United States may be able to mitigate some of its concerns with respect to ally reliability over the long term.

As long as the US armed forces remain dominant over the near- to mid-term future, there is less need for allies to be broadly (as opposed to selectively) engaged in transforming their militaries to exploit an emerging military revolution save in selected areas such as urban warfare and the development of anti-access defenses.

America's great power allies—France, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan—might be viewed as a major source of military *potential*, to be collectively tapped if and when a major challenge to common security interests emerges. This implies the United States must be able to increase an ally's military capability more rapidly than an adversary (or adversary coalition) could offset the gain thereby maintaining a favorable military balance in a US-led coalition. Such support could be important as regional great powers emerge and as the threat of a major attack on the American homeland increasingly taxes US power-projection forces.

Forward Basing

For America's allies, the value of the bases they have provided to support forward-deployed US forces has offset, to a considerable extent, the relatively modest military contributions they have made to the common defense. However, their value will likely change dramatically over the next few decades, a trend that should exert a major influence on any US strategic review of its alliance relationships.

There are three reasons why US overseas bases are likely to change in value. First, US access to forward bases will become more problematic as security interests become more regional. Second, the relative value of forward bases will be altered due to geographic factors. Finally, the value of certain forward bases is likely to diminish as a consequence of the diffusion of anti-access capabilities that will enable even militaries of the second-rank to hold fixed bases at risk of destruction.

In reviewing US future forward basing requirements and options for addressing them, one cannot ignore the important role that future US force characteristics will likely play and the implications for alliance requirements. For example, if the United States military continues to emphasize relatively short range, heavy, logistics intensive military systems and formations, it will find several of the basing options mentioned above difficult to pursue, let alone exploit.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Today the United States is the world's dominant power—its sole superpower. There is a natural tendency under such favorable circumstances to discount the value of alliances or to treat them with a form of benign neglect. This would be a grave error.

Recent disturbing events indicate that competition among great powers is not a historical artifact but an enduring characteristic of the international system. These powers will have substantially greater potential to challenge key US security interests than is the case today. If so, America will likely have to place increasing reliance on allies to maintain the favorable military balances essential to preserving the peace.

The emerging military revolution will further encourage US alliance transformation. Development of anti-access (or theater-denial) capabilities by prospective adversaries will make traditional US power-projection operations far more difficult to execute if they do not invalidate such operations entirely. Moreover, as the threat of an attack on the US homeland increases, it will likely impose a significant and growing, tax America's defense resources leaving relatively fewer dollars and troops available to secure interests overseas. Allies will be needed to take up the slack.

While America will find it needs more from its allies, it will not necessarily need more of the same kinds of support that allies have provided in the past. In particular, the United States and its allies will have to sort out a new division of labor to account for the changes brought about by the geopolitical and military revolutions. The same will be true for forward basing support and technology transfers. Overshadowing all alliance planning should be a recognition that, in a world of great uncertainty, ally durability and reliability will be more problematic than during the Cold War era. This will pose a dilemma for US planners: at the same time America is looking for its allies to do more, it may also be reluctant to support them in this endeavor for fear that they will not remain allies over the long term. Carefully crafting the division of labor among military missions, to include emphasizing the temporary provision of capabilities (as opposed to their transfer), may help resolve this dilemma.

Fortunately, the United States' current alliance posture is one of great strength. America should work to strengthen its core alliances and try to avoid an active military competition with the other rising (or recovering) great regional powers. Owing to the transformation of the geopolitical order, the global economy and the military-technical environment, the United States might find certain countries' potential value as allies increasing substantially.

In short, if the United States is to extend its current dominant position in the international system beyond the near- to mid-term future, it will find itself increasingly dependent upon allies for support. But it may require a somewhat different set of alliances than exists today. Moreover, it will almost certainly require very *different* forms of support from its allies. Restructuring alliance relationships to meet these requirements will take years, and likely decades, to accomplish. Hence it is no exaggeration to say that a strategic assessment of America's alliance relationships should be undertaken now while its opportunity to shape the future is at its greatest.