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HISTORY OF UNITED STATES STRATEGY:

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Military ambitions predate recorded history. And military doctrine is driven by technology. New discoveries invariably find their proving grounds in a martial application. Such was the case from the discovery of metal to nuclear energy. Since World War 2, and the advent of the military-industrial complex, the progression of military applications has dominated in the area of protecting America's economic adventurism. It has stunted the development of alternative forms of conflict resolution.

When studying US military strategy one must understand the meaning of "**national interests**" and "**national security**." The overriding national interest is economic. From that it follows that it is business interests that need security. Therefore, the term "national interests" can be translated to "business interests," and "national security" to "corporate security." With these definitions in mind let us proceed to a discussion of US strategy.

During World War 2 we had a War Department (now Department of the Army) and a Department of the Navy, which also included the Marines. The Air Force later split off from the Army and all military branches were unified under the so-called Department of Defense. The Pentagon was built and chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was rotated among the Army, Navy and Air Force.

With the interaction of technology and the need to integrate operations, lower-echelon "unified commands" became more common. Each theater of operations around the globe now has a Regional Commander-in-Chief over all the US military in that theater.

In 1991 the unified "Joint Strategic Command" replaced the Air Force's Strategic Air Command to control all nuclear forces. Earlier, all special operations were unified under a "Special Operations Command."

So we can see that the trend is shifting from emphasizing the specialized functions of each military branch, to integrated operations that meet the military needs of geographic regions. This paper will trace the evolution of US military strategy through the 1980s and during the post-cold war period of the 1990s. Current US strategy and what the Pentagon envisages for the 21st century are discussed in another paper.¹

¹See PLRC-970607, *United States Strategy: Securing America's Interests*.

A. EVOLUTION OF MILITARY DOCTRINE DURING THE 1980s.

The Vietnam air war and automated battlefield sparked an avalanche of military technology. Many activities which have been practiced by the military for decades had to be better defined with the advent of new sensing devices, communications methods, data processing, etc. The first attempts were specific isolated applications such as Air-Land Battle in Europe. As the need for closer interaction among the military branches was recognized, unified commands were set up. Finally it became apparent that the array of modern military forces is so complex that focus on long-term planning and integration of forces was needed. To study these issues the Pentagon inaugurated The Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy.

1. ***Discriminate Deterrence.***

The term "Discriminate Deterrence," coined by The Commission On Integrated Long-Term Strategy, includes a wide spectrum of responses from low-intensity conflict on the covert side to fighting a thermonuclear war on the visible end. The Commission stated in its January 1988 report:

Our strategy must be designed for the long term, to guide force development, weapons procurement, and arms negotiations. Armaments the Pentagon chooses today will serve our forces well into the next century. Arms agreements take years to negotiate and remain in force for decades.

Our strategy must also be integrated. **We should not decide in isolation questions about new technology, force structure, mobility and bases, conventional and nuclear arms, extreme threats and Third World conflicts. We need to fit together our plans and forces for a wide range of conflicts, from the lowest intensity and highest probability to the most apocalyptic and least likely.**²

We have actually seen this range of military activity over the past half-century. Immediately after World War 2, low-intensity conflict was practiced in the Philippines when the US sent military advisers to help the Filipino government counter Hukbalahap guerrillas. Later it was used to overthrow Allende in Chile, and for many other applications. The cold war hysteria, however, caused more public awareness of the nuclear aspect. More recently in the Balkans, low-intensity conflict was employed to help Iran arm the Bosnian army. The spectrum of activities is not new. But forces integration and long-term planning have taken on a new dimension.

2. ***Special Operations Forces (SOF).***

Each military branch has employed special operations forces for decades. US Navy special operations submarines spied on the Soviet Union and recorded sonic signatures of Soviet submarines. Others were organized to meet specific crises, such as the failed rescue of hostages from Iran in April 1980. The latter caused the Pentagon to set up a commission to study special operations issues. But the 1983 attack on Grenada and the 1985 hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* cruise liner sparked congressional interest.

²*Discriminate Deterrence*, p. 1 – emphasis added.

On 14 November 1986 "Congress enacted Public Law 99-661, Section 1311 to revitalize special operations and correct deficiencies identified in the nation's ability to conduct special operations."³ The US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) was established during April 1987. By March 1988 most special operations forces had been assigned to the Command. Public Law 99-661 mandated ten activities over which the Command would have authority:

- **Direct Actions.** Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions to seize, destroy, or damage a specific target; or to destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material. (Example: the invasion of Panama to capture Manuel Noriega; sending forces to Somalia.)
- **Special Reconnaissance.** Obtain and verify information concerning the capabilities, intentions, and activities of an actual or potential enemy; or secure data concerning meteorological, hydrological, geographic, or demographic characteristics of a particular arena. Includes target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance. (Example: use of Predator unmanned aerial vehicles over Bosnia; locating Scud launchers and other targets in Iraq.)
- **Unconventional Warfare.** A broad spectrum of military or paramilitary operations, usually of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. Includes guerrilla warfare, ambushes, and other direct offensive, low-visibility, covert or clandestine operations; as well as indirect subversion, sabotage, intelligence collection, and evasion or escape. (Example: helping Iran smuggle arms to Bosnia; US military retirees training Croatian and Bosnian soldiers; helping local soldiers combat drug smugglers in South America; helping peasants grow non-drug-related crops.)
- **Foreign Internal Defense.** US special forces train, advise, and otherwise assist host nation military and paramilitary forces. (Example: helping to train Arab troops; training Bosnian officers under the US "Train and Equip" program; training Uganda and Senegal troops in 1997.)
- **Counterterrorism.** Application of highly-specialized capabilities to fight terrorism abroad; including hostage rescue, recovery of sensitive material, and direct action against terrorist infrastructure. (Example: the US F-111 raid on Libya; firing Tomahawk cruise missiles at Iraq in retaliation for an assassination plot against ex-President Bush.)
- **Civil Affairs Operations.** To establish, maintain, influence, or strengthen relations between US and allied military forces, civil authorities, and people

³GAO/NSIAD-94-105, p. 10.

in friendly or occupied country/area. (Example: dispatching troops to California to help quell the Los Angeles riot after the Rodney King verdict.)

- **Psychological Operations.** To support other military operations and actions to favorably influence the emotions, attitudes, and behavior of a foreign audience on behalf of US interests. (Example: mass media techniques.)
- **Humanitarian Assistance.** Conducted to supplement the efforts of host nation authorities in relieving or reducing the results of natural or man-made disasters, or other endemic conditions such as human pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or loss of property. (Example: helping African governments control epidemics, reduce industrial pollution, and conserve natural resources; teaching Cambodians and Afghans to clear mine fields; assisting at domestic and foreign natural disasters.)
- **Theater Search and Rescue.** To recover distressed personnel during wartime or contingency operations. (Example: rescue of the downed F-16 pilot in Bosnia.)
- **Other Activities.** As specified by the President or Secretary of Defense. These could include actions against manufacturing plants for chemical-biological-nuclear weapons, information warfare, counter-drug activities, countermine activities, security assistance, and more. (Example: coordinating western and Arab troops preparing for war in Kuwait, sending US troops to Haiti in 1994 to prepare country for UN peacekeepers; combating domestic drug running.)

Pentagon reluctant to implement all of the Congressional mandate prompted new legislation. Public Law 100-180, enacted in December 1987, directed the Defense Secretary to provide adequate resources for USSOCOM; and established a "Major Force Program-11" budget category for special operations. Public Law 100-456, Section 712 made the USSOCOM responsible for submitting budget proposals and program recommendations, and for exercising authority over its own budget. Since 1990 this budget has averaged about \$3 billion annually.

USSOCOM is composed of about 47,000 personnel -- 30,000 active duty, 14,000 reserve and national guard, and 3,000 civilians. Of the 30,000 active duty, some 14,000 have been special-operations trained and assigned to deployable units. The remainder serve in such areas as maintenance and logistics.

Special operations forces are specially trained over the spectrum of their responsibilities to conduct operations in worldwide support of the five US regional commanders-in chief, American ambassadors, and other government agencies. USSOCOM headquarters is at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida. There are three service components: the Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina consisting of the Army Special Forces (Green Berets), Rangers, special operations aviation units, civil affairs units, and psychological operations units; the Naval Special Warfare Command at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, California consisting of Sea-Air-Land

(SEAL) units and Special Boat units; and the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Florida which consists of the Special Operations Wing and a Special Tactics Group. Also at Fort Bragg, North Carolina is a sub-unified Joint Special Operations Command.

The Command has already ordered 50 CV-22 tilt rotor cargo aircraft adapted to special operations from the Marine Corps V-22 Osprey, 24 MC-130 Combat Talon II transport aircraft, and 13 specially modified C-130 aircraft with rapid-fire guns and precision sensors. Procurement from now to the end of the decade will be for small ships and miniature submarines designed for special operations. The Command is also interested in the Army's "21st Century Land Warrior" program to give the individual soldiers advanced computers and displays, sensors, advanced weaponry, and protective armor.

SOF deserves close scrutiny because, as will be seen below, it could be the precursor of 21st Century warfighting strategy. The US General Accounting Office (GAO) reports that "SOF are considered to be an essential element of the CINC's successful implementation of US national security objectives. SOF have come to be the CINC's force of choice in many instances."⁴ The GAO goes on to say that "officials of the Southern Command said that nothing could be done militarily in the theater without SOF."⁵

B. SHIFTING EMPHASIS DURING THE 1990s.

Although discriminate deterrence covers a wide spectrum of military activities, focus on specific areas of the spectrum may shift as world conditions change. It is the purpose of force integration and long-term planning to make these shifts smoothly and timely. With the end of the cold war a shift in focus was mandated when then President George Bush announced a "new world order."

1. The Reed Panel.

After the aborted Moscow coup during August 1991, Air Force General Lee Butler, then director of US nuclear targeting, convened the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff Advisory Group, composed of 21 nuclear experts from the Carter, Reagan and Bush administrations and chaired by Thomas Reed, Air Force Secretary under President Reagan. The Reed panel, as it was called, issued a 44-page secret report which was leaked to the Washington Post. It proposed a "comprehensive nuclear targeting plan for the post-Cold-War era," which has been described as the most sweeping revision of US strategic targeting since the dawn of the nuclear age.⁶

a. Halve the Strategic Triad. The Reed panel recommended that the administration cut strategic warheads to about 5,000 -- a level substantially below what is allowed by the START-1 Treaty. This, the panel contended, would be enough to deter a massive attack by Third World countries and former Soviet republics, and would still bolster America's world-leadership status. Further cuts in the future may be in order but the panel warned that US inventories should always be

⁴GAO/NSIAD-97-85, p. 4.

⁵GAO/NSIAD-97-85, p. 5.

⁶*Mercury News*, 6 January 1992, p. 14A.

larger than those of Britain, France, and China combined. The Reed panel calls for this strategic warhead reserve to be used as needed.

b. Cover All the Bases. The Reed panel also suggested that a set of plans be drafted to mount strikes against "every reasonable adversary" with either nuclear or conventional weapons.⁷

Contrary to the traditional public thinking that nuclear weapons are only to deter a nuclear attack, the Reed panel added several other purposes:

- **Preserve US prestige and dissuade nuclear proliferation.** Maintaining a substantial number of strategic nuclear weapons will aid in maintaining US prestige and prevent other countries, such as Germany and Japan, from developing nuclear arsenals.
- **Rethink the 1979 pledge.** It may be necessary to depart from the promise not to use nuclear arms against non-nuclear countries. The Reed panel predicted that America will have to use strategic nuclear arms more and more to deter use of chemical or biological weapons by smaller countries, or other hostile actions by those countries.
- **Protect America's Interests.** In his briefing to the nuclear targeting director, Reed said the US "must keep nuclear weapons to protect its fundamental interests ... (including) a healthy and growing US economy. If the United States moves from superpower to being an equal, others may decide to become equals as well." Reed said that American arms could deter annihilation of states such as Israel and Taiwan, the seizure of critical raw materials such as oil, or foreign domination of a segment of space.⁸
- **Create a Nuclear Expeditionary Force.** To fulfill all of the above, the Reed panel recommended establishing a nuclear expeditionary force armed with a few strategic air-launched and submarine-launched weapons, as well as tactical nukes. In his briefing, Reed said this force would be primarily for use against China and Third World countries. This means that strategic bombers and Trident submarines designed for total thermonuclear war would be given a tactical role in regional wars.

2. *The Bush Initiatives: Trimming the Fat.*

Prior to the Reed Panel's recommendations there had been moderate headway in removing obsolete and defective nuclear weapons in both the tactical and strategic areas. The INF Treaty eliminated ground-based intermediate-range tactical nuclear missiles. The START-1 Treaty, signed during the sunset days of the Soviet empire, removes old, obsolete strategic weapons and does nothing to prevent a US first-strike capability

⁷*Mercury News*, 6 January 1992, pp. 1A & 14A.

⁸*Mercury News*, 6 January 1992, p. 14A.

a. Bush's September Initiatives. In the wake of the INF and START-1 Treaties, President Bush progressively implemented the Reed panel's doctrine. On 27 September 1991 he announced several unilateral cuts in accordance with the Reed panel recommendations.

- **Withdraw and destroy all remaining ground-based tactical nuclear weapons worldwide.** 850 Lance missiles and some 1300 nuclear artillery shells affected. Remaining in Europe are some 1,300 nuclear air-delivered gravity bombs.
- **Remove all Navy tactical nuclear weapons.** Depth charges are being destroyed. 500 nuclear Tomahawk cruise missiles and some bombs were put in storage.
- **Take strategic bombers off 24-hour strip alert.** Air-Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs) and Short-Range Attack Missiles (SRAMs) were stored.
- **Remove from alert all silo-based missiles scheduled to be dismantled under START-1.** 450 Minuteman-2 missiles.
- **Cancel the follow-on nuclear short-range attack missile (SRAM-2).** Hopelessly mired in development problems.
- **Drop plans for a rail-mobile MX missile.** No secure mobile mode had ever been found.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to match US reductions. However, all of the affected weapons were obsolete or in serious difficulty, and played no useful part in the Reed Panel's doctrine. As Under Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz admitted, "the main thrust of this initiative is to get rid of weapons that are no longer necessary."⁹

Along with his September 1991 initiatives, President Bush also announced formation of the new Joint Strategic Command (StratCom), which replaces the Air Force's Strategic Air Command, to control all nuclear forces. The commander-in-chief of StratCom rotates every two years or so between a Navy admiral and an Air Force general. This provides the command structure to carry out the Reed Panel formula for integrating strategic and tactical nuclear weapons.

b. State-of-the-Union Concessions. The Soviet Union finally collapsed in December 1991 and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) emerged. During his 28 January 1992 State-of-the-Union Address, President Bush announced more unilateral cuts:

- **Halt B-2 bomber production at 20 planes.** Congress had refused to fund more than 15 so Bush squeezed in five extra.
- **Cancel the small ICBM -- "Midgetman."** The Pentagon has never wanted this missile which was mandated by Congress.

⁹*PCDS Briefing Paper*, "The Bush and Gorbachev Nuclear Arms Cuts Proposals."

- **Cease production of warheads for sea-based missiles.** Only the 475-kilo-ton warheads for Trident-2 missiles was in production, and had serious fabrication and safety problems.
- **Cease production of MX missiles.** Congress had already refused to fund more for silos MXs rail-mobility was gone.
- **Cease production of advanced cruise missiles.** 461 of the planned 1,000 were produced. The trend toward highly accurate conventional weapons obviated the need for more.

Again, troubled, obsolete, or unneeded items were scrapped to bring the US nuclear inventory closer to the Reed Panel's model.

c. Bush Challenges Yeltsin. President Bush then said during his State-of-the-Union speech: "I have informed President [Boris] Yeltsin that if the Commonwealth [of Independent States] will eliminate all land-based, multiple-warhead ballistic missiles, I will do the following:... eliminate all [MX] missiles.... reduce the number of warheads on Minuteman missiles to one,... and reduce the number of warheads on our sea-based missiles by about one-third. And we will convert a substantial portion of our strategic bombers to primarily conventional use...."¹⁰ Russian President Yeltsin immediately met Bush's bid and raised the ante -- cut strategic warheads to somewhere between 2,000 and 2,500. This led to signing the START-2 Treaty which Russia still must ratify.

3. ***Regional Scenarios: Seven Wonders of the Pentagon World.***

Classified documents calling attention to frightening war-planning considerations were anonymously leaked to the New York Times in February 1992. They proposed seven scenarios for US military activities during the next decade.

- **Another war** with Iraq.
- **War** with North Korea.
- **Simultaneous wars** with both Iraq and North Korea.
- **A resurgent Russia** launching a major military strike against the Balkan States.
- **A coup in the Philippines** endangering US citizens.
- **A narcotics terrorist plot** against the government of Panama.
- **The emergence** of a new rival superpower.

Pentagon officials confirmed existence of the documents but, when pressed for more details on the military threats, then Defense Secretary Cheney said: "I think I need for diplomatic reasons,

¹⁰*Mercury News*, 29 January 1992, p. 10A.

if no other, to avoid specifying individual nations."¹¹ Nevertheless, this planning fits well into the doctrine suggested by the Reed Panel.

When Senator Sam Nunn, then Armed Services Committee chairman, asked why these top-level documents were not made available to his committee, then Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral David Jeremiah, said they were classified. It is frightening when a congressional committee, whose constitutional purpose is to oversee the Pentagon budget, and which is authorized to go into executive session to hear classified information, is denied that information. Such denial puts democratic processes on hold.

4. *The Pentagon's Bottom-Up Review.*

As the first Secretary of Defense in the Clinton administration, Les Aspin, vacillated on whether the US should be able to fight two wars simultaneously or one at a time. In October 1993 he ordered a comprehensive review of America's nuclear strategy from the bottom up -- not just strategic weapons but also tactical; not just targeting but also the threat from terrorism, renegade nations, and nuclear proliferation; not just to deter a nuclear threat but also to respond to chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. The review would consider the size of the nuclear arsenal as well as how it is deployed.

The Bottom-Up Review, completed in early 1994, upheld the requirement to be able to fight two regional wars almost simultaneously. It also addressed the requirements for intervention in smaller conflicts or crises, and forces deployed overseas.

Congress became concerned that the Pentagon had not fully examined the Bottom-Up Review assumptions and attached a rider to the fiscal year 1995 Pentagon budget directing the Secretary of Defense to do so. He was to report back to Congress in May 1995.

5. *Commission on Roles and Missions.*

This congressional mandate led to an "independent" Commission on Roles and Missions of the US Armed Forces to sort out the various military functions and define who is responsible for them. The Commission's final report, *Directions For Defense*, was delivered to Congress and the Pentagon in May 1995.

Early on, the Commission decided to focus on the regional commanders-in-chief needs to carry out joint operations and various support activities -- not on the capabilities of the individual branches of the military. The result was several proposals to improve joint military operations along with suggesting that more of the support work be contracted to private businesses.

The Commission made over a hundred specific suggestions, the core of which is being implemented along four lines:

- **Being** Prepared for Joint Military Strikes.
- **Having** the Forces and Equipment to Strike.
- **Ensuring** Force Modernization.
- **Efficient** Support Structures.

¹¹*Mercury News*, 18 February 1992.

6. ***The Quadrennial Defense Review.***

The Commissions on Roles and Missions also recommended that the Pentagon conduct a Quadrennial defense Review at the beginning of each newly-elected Presidential administration. Therefore, Congress added Subtitle B, Sections 921-926 to H.R.3230, the *National Defense Authorization Act of 1996* (Public Law 104-201) mandating that such a review be completed by 1997. Section 923 reads:

The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall complete in 1997 a review of the defense program of the United States intended to satisfy the requirements for a Quadrennial Defense review as identified in the recommendations of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. The review shall include a comprehensive examination of the defense strategy, force structure, force modernization plans, infrastructure, budget plan, and other elements of the defense program and policies with a view toward determining and expressing the defense strategy of the United States and establishing a revised defense program through the year 2005.¹²

The Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review was submitted to Congress in May 1997. Each review has build upon the previous and the outcome is reflected in current US Security Strategy and Joint Vision 2010, both explained in another paper.¹³

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¹²H.R.3230, Section 923a.

¹³See PLRC-970607 -- *United States Strategy: Securing America's Interests*.

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GLOSSARY.

ALCM	Air-Launched Cruise Missile.	PLRC	Pacific Life Research Center.
BASIC	British American Security Information Council.	SEAL	SEa-Air-Land. A Navy SOF unit.
GAO	General Accounting Office.	SFOR	NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia.
ICBM	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile.	SOF	Special Operation Forces.
IFOR	NATO's Implementation Force in Bosnia.	SRAM	Short-Range Attack Missile.
INF	Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces.	START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks.
JMNA	Joint Military Net Assessment.	UN	United Nations.
MX	Missile-X. America's newest ICBM.	US	United States.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization.	USCENTCOM	US Central Command
		USEUCOM	US European Command
		USLANTCOM	US Atlantic Command
NBC	Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical.	USPACOM	US Pacific Command
PCDS	Pacific Campaign for Disarmament and Security.	USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command.
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive.	USSOUTHCOM	US Southern Command