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DO FEWER RESOURCES MEAN LESS INFLUENCE? A COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL CASE STUDY OF MILITARY INFLUENCE IN A TIME OF AUSTERITY

Mary Manjikian

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FOREWORD

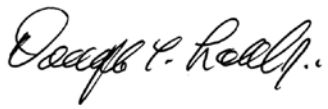
In the 2014 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, military planners speak at great length about the importance of rebalancing our armed forces. As a result of the Budget Control Act of 2011, our U.S. Armed Forces have absorbed significant budget cuts, which are projected to continue into 2016. Not surprisingly, a major theme of the *Quadrennial Defense Review* is the necessity of making tough choices in a period of fiscal austerity.[1]

As Dr. Manjikian's analysis points out, however, many of the themes raised by policymakers, military analysts and the general public in relation to this new politics of austerity are not actually new. Rather, such conversations have taken place at the end of U.S. military actions after the Korean War, in Vietnam, and at the end of the Cold War. Similar conversations have taken place across the sea in Western Europe as well. The historical case studies presented by Dr. Manjikian are valuable because they highlight the ways in which agencies in Washington have navigated previous post-conflict situations, drawing out the lessons for policymakers today as our military forces compete for resources, but more importantly for influence. The case study of defense policymaking in post-World War I Britain shows how diverse agencies, including the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or Treasurer, were able to use economic arguments to put forth their vision of what forces threatened Britain and how economic arguments were used to shape defense policy over a period of nearly 30 years. It provides a cautionary tale, showing us what can happen when military research and development and military doctrines are subordinated to short-term economic interests.

The case studies of the post-Vietnam situation and the post-Cold War situation again illustrate the ways in which social expectations of a "peace dividend" can lead actors in Washington to move quickly to take actions that they see as consolidating the gains of the changed world environment. However, these quick decisions that seem right at the time may actually prove detrimental in the long run.

As this Foreword is being written, our international situation is changing once again. The United States is facing new challenges, including such human security challenges as the Ebola crisis, alongside more traditional security challenges such as the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria in the Middle East. To address these pressing public health concerns, $6.2 billion has been allocated, and agencies are again competing for a shrinking slice of the economic pie as resources are diverted toward new challenges and threats.

The case studies presented here ask us to take a broader perspective in considering how decisions can be made in a climate of austerity, considering not only the issues that are most present currently, but also taking into account problems like reversibility, the importance of maintaining an industrial base, and the challenges of being prepared for future threats that have not yet been identified or named. It is my hope that we can learn from the mistakes of the past as we navigate this problem on into the future.



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ENDNOTE - FOREWORD

1. *Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, The Pentagon, 2014, p. iv, available from *www.defense.gov/pubs/2014_Quadrennial_Defense_Review.pdf*, accessed November 7, 2014.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARY MANJIKIAN is Associate Dean of the Robertson School of Government at Regent University. She previously served as a U.S. Foreign Service officer in The Netherlands, Russia, and Bulgaria, and as a Fulbright Scholar at Durham University's Institute of Advanced Study. Dr. Manjikian's publications include *Apocalypse and Post-Politics: The Romance of the End* (Lexington Books, 2012), *Threat Talk: Comparative Politics of Internet Addiction in China and the US* (Ashgate, 2012), and *Securitization of Property Squatting in Western Europe* (Routledge, 2013). Her articles have also appeared in such journals as *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, *Intelligence and National Security*, and the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Dr. Manjikian holds an M.Phil. from Oxford Unversity and a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan.

SUMMARY

It is common in post-conflict situations for a societal conversation about defense cutbacks to take place. Regardless of the time period or country in which such conversations occur, some universal themes can be identified:

1. A claim (which appears in the media and in the legislature) that cost savings will be realized, and that these savings are collective property "owed" to citizens as a reward for supporting the effort.

2. A redefinition of the utility of traditional military tools in a changed, post-conflict society, accompanied sometimes by a larger conversation about the utility of the hegemon's leading position in the international system.

3. A tendency for new presidential doctrines to emerge that drive defense policy, including defense cuts.

4. A search for new, "cheaper" military technologies developed during wartime to be used in place of conventional military forces.

5. A sense that the military, which grew powerful during wartime, should now take a backseat in society while problems like social welfare are tackled by policymakers.

6. A tendency for threats to be redefined in both the short and long term.

DO FEWER RESOURCES MEAN LESS INFLUENCE? A COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL CASE STUDY OF MILITARY INFLUENCE IN A TIME OF AUSTERITY

INTRODUCTION

At the end of every recent war, whether the United States has achieved a decisive victory or not, the ensuing drawdown and demobilization has resulted in a smaller, more fiscally constrained military. Post-war cutbacks have affected all services—impacting the overall size of the force, the money available for training, military research and development, and normal activities such as infrastructure and equipment maintenance. Here, the United States is not alone. Rather, retrenchment after a conflict is a political phenomenon noted in many states, both those that are democratic and those that are not. Indeed, it is often identified as part of a cycle.

In looking at military drawdowns after conflicts, the redeployment of resources to other sectors is often described and explained with reference to the shorthand phrase "guns vs. butter." The guns vs. butter dynamic suggests that public opinion and domestic political factors often combine in the aftermath of conflicts to produce a narrative suggesting that citizens should be rewarded for their loyalty during a conflict by receiving the benefits of a "peace dividend." In such a scenario, the overwhelming impetus is to pump the savings that are ostensibly realized by the end of conflict into domestic social programs—to include infrastructure projects like roads and buildings, as well as social benefits like tax reductions and in-

creases in pensions and welfare payments. Discussion of a peace dividend rests on the assumption that there are opportunity costs sustained during conflict—specifically, the idea that decisions to increase a nation's defense often affect decisions about domestic spending priorities. As President Dwight D. Eisenhower famously described the dilemma:

> Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sinew of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, and the hopes of its children.[1]

Here, it should be noted that an academic consensus regarding the existence or the extent of the guns vs. butter trade-off does not exist. Rather, as Alex Mintz and Chi Huang point out, some analysts have described governments that are "stingy" as being stingy on all fronts. That is, governments that undertake austerity programs frequently do not distinguish between the need for defense spending and the need for social spending. In addition, they note that other analysts describe defense and welfare spending as "driven by different dynamics" in such a way that spending is not zero-sum. A cut in military spending does not automatically transfer to welfare spending, nor does the opposite always occur.[2]

However, a reliance on the so-called bureaucratic politics model has led analysts to describe the events that occur after a conflict merely as a contest for the deployment of resources. This model for understanding organizational behavior, popularized by Graham Allison in his analysis of the decisionmaking process

undertaken by U.S. policymakers during the Cuban Missile Crisis, posits that politics is best understood as a contest for resources and influences between a discrete number of unitary actors, usually bureaucratic agencies. In this scenario, a conflict is decided when one player prevails over the other in the contest for resources. The party that controls the lion's share of resources also gains the most influence within the political system. In this model, the contest is zero-sum, meaning that one agency's gain is another's loss.[3]

The bureaucratic politics or contest for resources model has been used to frame current discussions about both actual and proposed defense cuts that have either taken place or are slated to take place between 2013 and 2016. For example, in an article entitled, "The Dismal Present and Future of Smart Defense," analyst Stephen Saideman used the following language to describe cutbacks taking place throughout the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):

> Any decision to cut some capabilities and keep others means that there will be winners and losers in the armed forces of each member. Those likely to lose may put up a fight to protect their branch of the armed forces. This is what we have long expected bureaucrats to do—protect their budgets, their portfolios and their autonomy.[4]

In this contest, there are clear winners and losers, agencies that increase in prestige and influence, personnel, and opportunities for their employees, and agencies that lose the contest for prestige, power, and influence. The indicators used to identify winners and losers are quite straightforward in this type of analysis. One can point to specific activities that took place leading up to the budget sequestration of 2013—including personnel cuts and cancellation and cutbacks

in weapons procurement—as an indicator of the U.S. military's loss of influence in policymaking. In this scenario, recent cutbacks in the number of Navy vessels ready for combat, the numbers of Air Force personnel, and the plan to cut back the size of the U.S. Army to the levels it had shortly after World War II can all be read not only as a loss in budget but also as a loss of prestige and influence within policymaking circles. In this model, the group with the largest "footprint" in Washington in terms of real estate, budget, and personnel can be seen as having the most influence.[5] (That is, military spending is seen as an acceptable proxy for calculating military influence).[6] In addition, the contest between agencies for resources also extends to a contest between agencies for employee opportunities and employee resources, as well as ultimately a contest between agencies to hire the most competent and skilled people.[7]

The bureaucratic politics perspective is reflected in an analysis of military spending put forth by Mackenzie Eaglen of the American Enterprise Institute. In an article entitled, "Shrinking Bureaucracy, Overhead and Infrastructure: Why This Defense Drawdown Must Be Different for the Pentagon," she has argued that:

> President Barack Obama has been reducing military capability, capacity and budgets since entering office over 4 years ago. . . . In 2012, the White House directed another 78 billion dollars to be cut from the Pentagon's request in the name of loosely identified efficiencies. . . . The result is that [the Department of Defense] has been drawing down, scaling back war plans, absorbing ever more efficiencies, canceling weapons systems and reducing readiness for the past 4 years. These trends are not likely to fade any time soon.[8]

In applying the bureaucratic politics model to understanding how cuts in defense spending—including the loss of personnel and programs—occur, analysts traditionally have pointed to a contest between hawks and doves within Congress. In this scenario, hawkish senators and representatives (who are usually Republican) seek to control significant positions within the House and Senate, such as the majority of seats on the Senate Armed Services Committee, while dovish senators and representatives seek to do the same. Each group fights for the interests of its constituents—with doves seeking to divert resources away from military projects and spending toward domestic political programs, including those administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Education. At the same time, hawks seek to control greater military resources, usually by attempting to pull resources away from other projects whose constituencies are largely domestic. In addition, the bureaucratic politics model has been used to describe a contest between various branches of the armed forces, with the suggestion that a nation's ground, air, and naval forces might compete against each other to increase the size of their budgets, with each claiming that their organization's readiness is the most important value to be preserved in a time of increased austerity.

We can also point to a contest between two specific branches of government—the Armed Forces and the Department of the Treasury. As Vincenzo Bove and Roberto Nistico note, "The Armed Forces tend to hate ministries of finance more than their notional enemies, since cutbacks may be driven by financial crises."[9]

As illustrated here, the bureaucratic politics model depends on the fact that planning for defense cutbacks often occurs in a public sphere where all actors are aware of and party to the deliberations involved. The media and politicians often frame the discussion as a conversation about how 'our national resources' should be spent—whether they should be held by defense planners in order to prepare for contingencies that may or may not occur in the distant future or whether they should be immediately distributed to the taxpayers in the form of public goods or tax cuts. Politicians and administrators are put in a position where their expertise counts as much as that of the military experts, and the result is a situation in which actors other than the military end up shaping not only the military budget, but also the doctrines and strategies that depend on and stem from the resource base allowed for military operations. In this way, both American grand strategy and specific military strategies and doctrines are often shaped by a large group of bureaucratic interests, including public opinion, congressional representatives who may overemphasize the interests of their constituencies, think tanks, and academics.

THE CONTEST FOR RESOURCES VS. "STRATEGIC CULTURE"

While the bureaucratic politics model suggests that agencies engage in competition merely for its own sake—in order to grow their organizations and increase their footprint in Washington—other analysts have suggested that the share of resources commanded by a particular agency is actually an indicator of a deeper phenomenon. That is, it is too simplistic

merely to say that, for example, in Britain in the interwar period, a contest for resources took place between Britain's Exchequer (Treasury Department) and the branches of the military and that the Treasury prevailed over the military in that contest. Instead, it is important to consider what military spending was seen to represent in Britain in the interwar period and how the military's resourcing affected what it was and was not able to accomplish within the international system.

As Charles J. Hitch, an advisor to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, famously noted, "Strategy and cost are as interdependent as the front and rear sights of a rifle."[10] Here, Hitch tied together the ways in which planners might change doctrines not for reasons of military strategy but instead for reasons of cost. He was particularly concerned with the ways in which planners might choose a cheaper new technology, like nuclear weapons, over a more expensive technology, like an armed invasion. His analysis points out that, in some instances, "economics drives the train" and that considerations of costs may eventually weigh into how objectives are defined and strategies and tactics are drawn up.

At the same time, Kier has noted that doctrines may also rest on decisions made by civilians, who may have their assumptions about how the military is supposed to work within society, how much power it is supposed to have, and how military power should fit into power politics overall within society.[11] She argues that an organization's budget is both a symbol of its power vis-à-vis other organizations in a society and that the organization's budget may be contingent upon other larger issues—such as how voters think about civil-military relations in a democracy, for example.

Her strategic culture approach thus offers a much longer and broader temporal perspective for understanding funding decisions. The bureaucratic politics model looks only at limited or immediate competition for resources between agencies and tends to describe a conflict as won or lost at the moment a decision is made about the division of resources between agencies. In contrast, the strategic culture model may treat the final decision about finances as the culmination of a contest or debate that has been ongoing for a longer period of time. That is, by the time that Congress has decided to reign in defense spending, the process by which the military has been losing influence and failing to shape the debate about its future role may have been occurring for several years already.

A strategic culture approach places debates about the necessity of military spending within a broader conversation about the overall position of the United States in the world today, about the utility of military force in general, and about American military force in particular. Here, strategic culture is defined as "the nexus between domestic politics and grand strategy—or an analysis of their role of domestic political events in establishing grand strategy."[12] In this perspective, a move to cut the military's budget may say something deeper about changes in civil-military relations in a society. This model suggests that, when defense cutbacks occur, they are often attempts to stem the influence, power, and prestige of the military within society by depriving it of resources and, as a result, of influence. In such a scenario, the President might thus seek to privilege other types of solutions to international conflict—such as an economic or diplomatic solution—over a military solution and a result reducing the perceived utility of having a strong military.

In this way, the drive to maintain military readiness may come to be seen as less crucial, once the military solution is no longer the obvious solution to every problem that arises in the international system.

In this paradigm, we can see how a well-resourced military also has a significant voice within policy debates. Here, military officials will often serve as key interpreters of the political events that are occurring in the world and may even have the last word in terms of defining the threats facing the nation. Military leaders can also influence the types of military solutions that are considered, with each branch agitating for a solution that would prioritize the use of its own forces. Using this perspective, we can see that the U.S. military has been well resourced for most of the years since the end of World War II, occurring in tandem with the increasingly prominent role the military had in the formulation of foreign policy during this time frame.[13]

As Elizabeth Kier has pointed out, the question of how much power the military in particular should have within a democratic society (in terms of resources and influence) is one where the answer may vary, depending on a nation's history. Military funding decisions within a society may often grow out of special historical, political, and cultural understandings. In her study of French military policy in the 1970s, she suggests that the French decision to embrace the so-called *force de frappe* strategy—in which military resources were redirected to social programs, and the decision was made to depend on the cheaper nuclear option over preparing and training a strong conventional force—was a particularly French decision best understood through referencing the prominent role that traditionally had been played in politics by military personnel, including General Charles de Gaulle.

She argues that some French policymakers were concerned with what having a highly trained and strong conventional force might mean for French democracy, and thus the decision was made to spend money on armaments rather than personnel.[14] In addition, she argues that the decision to cut back on the French military during this time period was a reflection of a larger conversation about the role France should play in the world and whether or not empire was necessary or desirable.

Similarly, we can consider the British decision-making process regarding the equipping of Britain's Navy after World War I, or to embrace an East of Suez strategy in the 1970s as being not merely conversations about defense budgets, but rather as part of a larger societal conversation about whether Britain needed to be an empire and who should bear the costs of sustaining that empire. Finally, the strategic culture paradigm can help to explain why a region might be perceived as being particularly militarily important at one time—but not at another. Here, we can consider why it was perceived as important during the 1980s for the United States to be deeply militarily involved in Latin America and why it is not regarded the same way today. We can also consider the degree to which U.S. military spending discussions currently are embedded within larger conversations about what the U.S. Mideast policy should be and how important it is for America to continue to engage in Iraq in particular.

In the strategic culture paradigm, the priority for military spending is not a given. Indeed, international system structure alone does not predict military spending. Rather, states can decide to fund a large and active military largely for domestic political reasons

(such as using the military to guarantee a stable world for free trade, which benefits citizens economically at home) or to cut back for the same reasons.

In applying a strategic culture approach to understanding current military spending decisions, we can point to two recent developments within academic and policy circles that have helped to structure the climate in which defense cuts have occurred. First, we can consider the discourse about "securitization," which has been prevalent in American policy circles since September 11, 2001 (9/11). European and American academics have warned against the increasingly broad use of security language to describe issues that previously might have been described simply as social or criminal problems. Barry Buzan *et al*. point to the ways in which immigration, drugs, and poverty are also increasingly described as serious threats to social stability and safety. They warn that the use of the phrase "war on" often signals an attempt by state authorities to pursue an end without paying sufficient attention to citizens' civil liberties and rights.[15] More recently, academics and pundits have warned against government overreach in the areas of surveillance and tracking, carried out by government agencies like the National Security Agency. This has resulted in a more generalized fear that security and public agencies, emboldened by post-9/11 increases in personnel and budgets, may be driven to co-opt more and more social functions within society, as they seek to broaden their influence and portfolios of activities. In addition, analysts argue that the distinction between a foreign military activity and a domestic counterintelligence or policing activity is becoming less and less clear-cut today. Thus, there is a fear that providing military and police forces with large budgets might

somehow serve not to make citizens safer, but rather to chip away gradually at their rights.

At the same time, both in Britain after World War I and in the United States today, the broader debate taking place is not simply about how large a military is needed in a post-war world, but it is rather about what it means to be a hegemon in that post-war world. Today, the debate about the size of America's military is situated within a larger debate about whether America is still a superpower, whether it is necessary that it perform as one, and the question of whether a hegemon is necessary to organize and administer the international system.

AMERICA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE: LESSONS FROM THE PAST

As this introduction has made clear, in considering the context in which current debates about American restructuring are taking place, it is useful to look at the past and to consider similar historic examples. The situation in which the United States has found itself in the past years is not actually unusual. It is common for states to take stock periodically and to attempt to affect a balance between the military need for defense and the state's domestic priorities in terms of providing for social welfare and benefits programs. This set of activities is particularly likely to take place in the aftermath of a war—where there may be a push for a seeming "return to normal"—when the pendulum swings back from a wartime mobilization of resources to one where defense is seen as less critical, while domestic needs are seen as more pressing. The desire to "balance" domestic economic needs and military priorities can be observed as occurring in the 20th cen-

tury in Britain, the United States, France, and, most recently, in Israel.

The post-war period thus is often viewed as a period of stock-taking—both internally within the military and also within a broader societal context. Internally, military planners can consider the lessons learned from the conflict and make recommendations as to how the lessons learned can be applied to planning for the next war. Indeed, it has been argued that the austere military budgets that may emerge in the post-war period allow for the military to consider carefully and strategically the next steps, moving purposefully to spend funds well and considerately. Outside of the military, this stock-taking may include the creation of study committees (both within the legislature and within various think tanks) and the holding of congressional hearings to consider the new post-war environment and the unique challenges it may pose.

Perhaps the best-known historic example of the establishment of such a commission is the creation in 1902 in Britain of the Committee of Imperial Defense (CID), which answered to Britain's Parliament. The commission considered Britain's activities in its colonial territories and the larger question of what types of military presence Britain should have abroad. The organization, which answered to Britain's Prime Minister, Lord Arthur Balfour, included representatives from both the British Navy and Army, and was later widened to include cabinet ministers. The organization's mandate was understood to be "determining the work for which the army and navy have to be fitted and how they are to be fitted for it"[16] and was later widened to consider "the military needs of the empire." The committee met every 2 weeks and considered a wide variety of issues, including how cus-

toms duties should be charged during wartime, how the invention of the wireless telegraphy might affect military activities, and how ships should be insured during wartime. They also carried out what we might describe today as defense planning simulations, concluding that Britain did not need to worry about an invasion, for example.[17] Those who favored the committee saw it as a vital step toward interagency cooperation, as well as international cooperation. However, many naval officers argued that many group members were insufficiently versed in the issues being studied and that the attempts by Parliament to regulate the military spending patterns and future plans of the military constituted an undue intrusion into military affairs.

As the example of Britain's CID shows, particularly in post-conflict transitions, all domestic policy players (the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the agencies that administer the budget, social affairs, and the military) may not agree about the nature of the threats facing the state, their severity, or which threats are most likely to emerge in the long term. In this transition period, the danger is that the military will come to be seen as unnecessary or irrelevant and that this decision will be made by nonmilitary actors, who may have different assumptions and informational bases on which to make this decision. In many cases, the prevailing winds in the post-war period may lean toward a re-examination of the utility of military force and the utility of armed conflict. There may be a move both nationally and globally toward disarmament, with a push to establish understandings quickly between nations regarding limits on the production and deployment of weaponry. At the same time, there is a danger that warnings by the military

about the nature of emerging threats will be unheeded by agencies and players with different priorities and different agendas.

In several historic examples, one can identify the ways in which legislative committees, legislative hearings, and consultative studies carried out by independent think tanks and study groups have affected government decisions regarding how post-war balancing and budget reprioritization should take place. In some cases, outside authorities have acted to shift military strategies by altering large-scale strategic thinking regarding the types of scenarios the military needs to prepare for; deciding how large the purview of the state should be in world affairs; and deciding whether the emphasis should be on homeland defense or defense of territories abroad that fall into the state's orbit. Study committees and public hearings have also succeeded in altering military strategies due to cuts that render certain scenarios logistically untenable. For example, in deciding that a state will not fund its own specialized weaponry but will instead depend on specialization and sharing of resources among allies, a study committee or congressional committee can affect the ability of a service or nation to act unilaterally. In other cases, specific types of cuts to either manpower or weaponry have succeeded in shifting military tactics and doctrines through altering the balance of resources available to the military. Finally, a budget decision may force a military to rely more on "cheaper" new technologies and, as a result, cause it to abandon reliance on other sorts of weapons. This phenomenon, however, has been insufficiently studied and is not sufficiently acknowledged. Instead, there is a tendency to treat changes in strategies, doctrines, and tactics as emanating from the military services

themselves without considering the ways in which cost-cutting measures and decisions may constrain military planning and thought.

In this analysis, I present three comparative case studies of previous defense reductions. First, I consider the debates that occurred in British society regarding the curtailment of military spending in the period between World Wars I and II. In many ways, the situation in Britain in the early-20th century can be compared to the situation in the United States in the early-21st century. At the end of World War I, both the general public and the Labour politicians campaigned for a devastating system of defense cutbacks—including the cancellation of programs for British naval modernization and large-scale cutbacks in human resources—in order to fund increased social programs at home. The contest between Britain's treasury department (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) and Britain's military branches played out over the course of 15 years, from 1919 until 1934. While the contest was ostensibly only about the deposition of fiscal resources within Britain, it also both framed and defined a larger set of issues—including what Britain's role should be in the world, how many of the defense resources Britain was currently providing to its possessions overseas could conceivably be outsourced to the possessions themselves, and who should define the nature of the strategic threats facing Britain in the future and on what basis this decision could be made. In addition, there was a question of technology—specifically, how should developments in the newly created British air force be understood? What were the cost savings to be reaped from this new technology, and to what degree was it appropriate for Britain to count on its new

and modern air force to make up for fiscal cutbacks in other areas, including the navy and ground forces?

In addition, the British case raises the interesting question of what Jürgen Brauer and Hubert Van Tuyll have termed the law of marginal return.[18] This principle, derived from economics, suggests that there may be a limit to the utility that an organization can reap through continuing to grow, and that it is possible to define a point at which more of something is not always better. They draw on the example of shipbuilding, with the British Navy suggesting that, beyond a certain point, there are no more economies of scale to be reaped by increasing the size of a battleship. At this point, it makes no more sense to keep diverting resources to this goal, and suggest that, instead, resources should be put elsewhere. The question for British planners was, as it is for Americans today, whether it is ever possible to decide that one has purchased enough military security—both offensive and defensive—and that there are few returns to be reaped by continuing to purchase more.

As they note, calculating marginal returns into the future also involves prediction, based on assumptions about what that future will look like.[19] At what point was it appropriate for British defense planners to decide that Britain's lead over its adversaries was sufficiently great that it was appropriate to seek only to maintain that edge, rather than seeking to improve it? Clearly, the study of British defense cuts can hold many lessons for U.S. military leaders today.

The second case study looks at U.S. decisions regarding defense cutbacks in the post-Vietnam era. It is in this time period that the term "peace dividend" is first utilized to describe an understanding that the cost savings derived from the withdrawal of Ameri-

ca's military presence in Southeast Asia could be reapplied to address social problems within the United States. In this period, a discussion also took place about the utility of nuclear weapons, including anti-ballistic missiles, to replace American reliance on conventional forces. The resulting discussion about the "hollowing out" of the U.S. military helps us to consider both the costs and benefits of such an approach. Again, there are several clear lessons to be derived from this analysis which can be applied to understanding current debates about cost savings, the reapplication of these funds, and the savings from technology.

The third case study considers the public debate that took place beginning in 1989 about the peace dividend the United States expected to see as the result of defense builddowns in the aftermath of the Cold War. While certain features of this time period were unique (including the speed at which the Soviet threat was seen to have fallen apart), there are still many lessons that can be applied to the current situation. In particular, the debate about the nature of the threat, which took place between the intelligence community and the military, suggests that developing a consensus about future threats is very difficult but ultimately necessary.

The monograph concludes with a list of recommendations to U.S. military leaders regarding ways in which they can ensure that the U.S. military, particularly the Army's powerful and important voice in policymaking in Washington, will still be preserved, despite cuts to programs and infrastructure.

Case Study 1: Britain's Post-War "Ten Year Rule."

At the conclusion of World War I, Britain emerged a victor. Britain's navy was the largest and best equipped in the world, and the state had begun to put together an air force. The war had given Britain an opportunity to make strides in military doctrine and preparedness. However, Britain had spent an estimated $47 billion (in 1913 U.S. dollars) in concert with other commonwealth nations on the conflict. Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison describe World War I as a war of attrition in which the nations that were wealthy enough to fight on eventually prevailed. They describe the war as a contest in which wealthy nations like Germany, France, Britain, and the United States eventually "ground each other down with rising force levels and rising losses."[20] The war concluded in November 1918, after a period of 4 years. The terms of the German surrender—requiring their military disarmament and a stiff economic reparations payment package—served to convince both British citizens and policymakers that, at least for the foreseeable future, Britain was not in any danger militarily. These terms were codified in the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on June 28, 1919. At the same time, the British public was wearying of Britain's role of subduing conflicts in the colonies, particularly in the wake of the Amritsar massacre in India in 1919. Together, these forces combined to produce a climate that was unsupportive of further military expenditures and investments.

Thus, in July 1919, Cabinet Secretary Lord Maurice Hankey wrote a memo to Prime Minister (PM) Lloyd George arguing that now that the war was over, it was important to reduce "non-productive expenditures on

armed services to within narrowest limits consistent with national safety."[21] G. C. Peden argues that the Prime Minister was attempting to balance the budget and carry out social reforms, largely by economizing on defense expenditures.[22] As a result, in August 1919, Her Majesty's Cabinet made the decision to reduce defense spending, based on the assumption that the British Empire did not anticipate participating in any conflict similar in scope and size to World War I—at least for the next 10 years. In 1921, Foreign Secretary Austen Chamberlain described the prospect of war with Japan as "very remote." Winston Churchill, who served as Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1924 until 1930, again noted there was no foreseeable danger of war with Japan and thus no need for Britain to build additional ships or bases, nor to strengthen its base in Singapore.

Based on these understandings, the decision was made in 1919 that Britain did not need to consider arming or mobilizing in preparation for such a conflict. This decision, which came to be known as the Ten Year Rule, has been described by some scholars as a decision to give the Treasury Department control over British service policies.[23] However, Christopher Bell points out that the situation is actually more complicated and that the decision to limit military spending was, in part, the outcome of a clash between the Foreign Office and the Admiralty, both of which were attempting to set foreign policy. Cutting off naval modernization thus allowed the Foreign Office to take the lead in making policy.[24]

In retrospect, it seems stunning that Britain should adopt such a bizarre policy as the Ten Year Rule. It is particularly difficult to understand the role which Churchill himself, the visionary figure who led Britain

through World War II, played in helping to dismantle Britain's military in the interwar period. However, though Churchill was a brilliant military strategist throughout the 1920s, he wore his "treasury hat" and acted in the interests of the Treasury, rather than the military. He actually appeared hostile toward the navy, which he described as wasteful, speaking of "dockyards . . . choked with war vessels."[25] He thus put forth the understanding that the navy was overbuilt and that moving to a normal post-war footing involved not simply ceasing production, but cutting back.

The decision not to regard Japan as a threat and to behave as though modernization was unnecessary does not appear to have been based on intelligence estimates, including military intelligence—but rather was a purposive decision made by politicians. In addition, the Ten Year Rule was considered a "rolling assumption"—meaning that every year the assumption was renewed, and the 10-year clock began again. In this way, the Ten Year Rule was used to justify decisions to reduce the absolute size of Britain's military both in terms of manpower and equipment, to defer its modernization programs, and to delay improvements to bases around the world. At the same time, Britain's commonwealth possessions were urged to take on gradually more responsibility for their own defense and defense policymaking. As a result of the Ten Year Rule, defense expenditures were cut by more than half from the years 1919 until 1932.

The Ten Year Rule alone was not the only factor in the builddown or stagnation of Britain's armed forces that occurred during that time. In addition, there was an international consensus to prevent an arms race that was codified in the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922

and the London Naval Treaty of 1930. Both agreements limited the size of navies for all participants—The United States, Britain, and Japan. However, as Jeremy Black argues, while Britain sought to end an arms race with the United States, the real victor was Japan, which was able to increase its standing in the naval contest during this time. In effect, Britain opted out of competing with Japan, thus ceding to Japan the opportunity to achieve parity.[26]

The Ten Year Rule remained in effect until 1932 when it was revoked largely due to the actions of Japan, which clashed with China in Manchuria.[27] The rule is nonetheless seen as the main reason why Britain was caught unaware and unable to respond in this crisis. In 1933, Britain established the Defense Requirements Subcommittee (DRQ) to look at existing deficiencies in British rearmament and defense policy.[28] Here again, the lead in making these decisions was not granted to the military itself but rather to the Treasury. Thus the Treasury is seen as responsible for the decision not to devote sufficient resources to reconstituting the military industrial infrastructure needed by Britain at the outset of World War II. Bell even goes so far as to suggest that the British government initially adopted an appeasement strategy with Germany largely because of its deficient industrial base caused by granting Treasury control over the making of defense policy.[29] He also suggests that the DRQ thus "made policy" in the sense that it decided that Germany was a greater threat than Japan and oriented defense spending based on that assumption. In considering the deliberations over the military budget that occurred in the 1930s, therefore, Britain's military branches are seen as playing largely a passive role. They did not take a key part in making financial

decisions regarding their own weapons systems, nor were they key players in deciding which threats were the most serious and what steps should be taken to prepare for coming conflicts.

As this brief case study shows, the period after the end of conflict was particularly damaging for Britain's navy, air force, and ground troops. Domestic pressures to invest more in social services, the public's war-weariness, and the failure of the military to work together or to formulate a strong message about the dangers facing Britain and the steps needed to secure Britain militarily all combined to make the military the "loser" in the bureaucratic contest for resources. Britain's military failed not only to campaign in Whitehall and to win allies for its positions, but in a larger sense, they failed to convey the exact nature of the threats facing Britain and the importance of maintaining a strong military even during peacetime. In present-day terms, we might argue that they failed to "capture the narrative."

LESSONS FOR TODAY FROM POST-WAR BRITAIN

In considering the military drawdown in Britain after World War I and the adoption of the Ten Year Rule in particular, there are several dynamics of interest to analysts today. First, Britain then resembled the United States today in the sense that the public evinced a war weariness and lack of commitment to military spending, given economic difficulties facing the nation and its population. The United States is still recovering from the 2008 economic meltdown with employment levels, housing starts, and consumer spending still not back to earlier levels. At the same

time, Britain faced a post-war economy with high unemployment and housing shortages. These problems were exacerbated by the worldwide Great Depression that began in 1929. In both Britain and the United States, the general public voiced the issue as one of guns versus butter.

But what lessons does the British example offer for military personnel today? We can point to five crucial lessons for military leaders today who wish to maintain a strong military that is ready for conflict, even during peacetime:

1. **Do not get caught up in interservice warfare and rivalries**. As this example shows, it will be particularly important for all American military branches to present a unified front in terms of identifying the most critical dangers to U.S. national security interests in the short term and long term, since a division among the services will lessen their bargaining power in Washington. Bureaucratic infighting among the services will lessen their ability to make defense spending a priority.

In the British example, we note that until 1936, there was no single Minister for Defense tasked with speaking for all service branches. Instead, the different branches each had different priorities and saw different emerging threats. Britain's navy and air force often failed to work together to formulate defense policy and did not share a view of the specific strategic threats facing Britain. Instead, the navy was preoccupied with the threat of a rising Japan as well as the possibility of a naval arms race with the United States, while the Royal Air Force was particularly worried about the possibility of air war with Germany. The two sides failed to coordinate policies and strategies and thus both were vulnerable to a loss of influence and resources.

Today, in the United States, the joint operations environment seeks to reconcile competing or contradicting views regarding the nature of emerging threats. However, one might still argue that the Navy is most concerned with the China threat and the emergence of conflict in the South China Sea, while U.S. ground forces are particularly oriented toward training for and reacting to the prospect of increased instability in the Middle East. We can also point to recent reporting on disagreements between leaders of the Air National Guard and the Air Force active duty and reserve leaders regarding the duties of the two groups. As the report indicates, disputes have been noted regarding the role of the National Guard in carrying out cyber and intelligence activities, as well as surveillance and reconnaissance activities.[30] There are also disputes regarding how duties are to be shared and reconciled between the branches. In each case, these disputes are part of a larger conversation about the ways in which homeland defense and defense of the United States beyond its borders are to be thought of, as separate, complementary, or unified activities.

The British example shows that during periods of time when there is a lack of consensus about doctrine and objectives, it is also more likely that defense cutbacks will take place. Similarly, when there is a competition between players due to lack of consensus about doctrine and objectives, it is also more likely that defense cutbacks will take place.[31] Messaging and unity of objectives are thus particularly important during these periods of instability and flux. As the British example shows, in an atmosphere of scarcity, the branches competed among themselves, and none of them was independently successful in convincing Parliament or the Prime Minister of the importance of preparing for conflict.

Finally, it is important for the armed services to avoid the temptation to cannibalize each other's budgets during a period of austerity or to create a situation in which one is "robbing Peter to pay Paul."[32] Though it is clearly necessary for the United States to take the lead, for example, in the area of cyber warfare, this leading position should be maintained without taking those costs from another area, such as naval defense.

2. **Be prepared for a rethinking of the utility of military force in general, and specific types of military force in particular, in the aftermath of a conflict**. In the British example, each military branch believed that the international system itself could be objectively examined and that, in doing so, all participants would instinctively understand what the threats were and why having strong ground forces, a navy, or an air force were necessary to defend against that particular threat. That is, they assumed that planning decisions were going to be made on the basis of objective facts derived from an analysis of the international system. The international system was thus seen by the military players themselves as dictating budget decisions.

However, to borrow contemporary international relations language, one could argue that in the post-conflict situation, both the concepts of threat and of military necessity were actually socially constructed by a variety of actors. There was no absolute consensus regarding what the most pressing threats were to Britain in the post-conflict environment, nor was there a consensus regarding how much security Britain needed to possess to function effectively in its environment. Rather, different players—including Parliament, the Committee on Imperial Defense members, the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

and the public—all saw the situation differently, and each arrived at a conclusion based on how they put the same set of data together. Each group came to its own conclusions regarding how to interpret events in the international system—which ones to prioritize or weight more heavily, which ones to ignore, and how to assemble the information that remained. Since the international system was also dynamic, events that arose during the window in which budget decisions were made tended to be overemphasized by planners, who were less able to consider events that might arise in the future, particularly in the distant future. As intelligence planners have long argued, prediction about future events become more and more difficult as the time horizon is extended. For that reason, decisions regarding what the threat level for Britain might be in 10 years were based on an individual's values and hopes, rather than on significant available data.

In the British example, the Royal Air Force (RAF), created in 1918, was the clear winner in the contest for resources, largely because it was best able to redefine its mission in the post-war period. In addition, the RAF benefitted from opportunities to prove its utility through participation in colonial conflicts in British Somaliland and Afghanistan.[33] As Bruce Hoffman states, the RAF was able to redefine its peacetime mission as one of "'policing the empire." They also quickly won the support of Chancellor of the Exchequer Churchill, who argued in 1920 that the responsibility for Iraq should be taken from the army (and the colonial office) and given to the air force—for financial reasons. In the post-World War I period, ground forces in particular came to be seen as slow and expensive, versus the newly emerging air power which could be reconfigured and deployed more quickly.

At the same time, however, the British public itself evinced a war-weariness that extended to their lack of support for imperial adventures. Public opinion did not attribute much utility to any type of military force, though air power was preferred due to its lower costs.

The lesson for today's military planners is clear. Any perception of utility that they may have won through past developments in Iraq and Afghanistan will likely expire quickly. It will be important for all branches to clarify their new missions and to argue for the continued utility of military strength as a component of overall U.S. foreign policy. In no situation should military planners assume that the data speaks for itself or that the utility and value of military force is self-evident or obvious. It is important for the military not to be perceived as unnecessary or outdated. Here, new policies that stress the utility of military actors in Phase Zero operations help to maintain this understanding.

3. **Consider the trade-off between old and new weapons**. As the British example also shows, there is an inherent temptation for politicians to see new technologies as cheaper and more efficient, and thus as a means to overall cost savings on military spending. Thus, not surprisingly, the dynamics of military spending in Britain produced a situation where new programs (in the areas of weapons research and development) were directly competing with older programs. There was a common understanding that, in order for Britain to move ahead as a leader in air force and aviation warfare, the "bite" needed to be taken out of the navy. Similarly, today, one can identify a dynamic in which it is possible that the funding of new programs like drones and cyber warfare will be

at the expense of conventional forces, which might not be sufficiently maintained or resourced.

4. **Always consider the problem of reversibility**. Thus, it is important for planners to consider the fact that in a changed situation, the utility of the weapons currently being relied upon may change as well. It is very important to stress keeping older weapons up to date so that they can be brought back "on line" in the future if the situation warrants it. Today, this phenomenon has come to be known as "reversibility." In the British example, we can identify some acknowledgement of this idea of reversibility. In July 1919, Cabinet Secretary Hankey's memo to PM Lloyd George noted that "a machinery should exist for re-creating a great army,"[34] though this might be only a schematic on paper delineating responsibilities. However, in point of fact, military industries were allowed to wither away, and they were only recreated with great difficulty in the late-1930s when they became necessary once again. Today, military planners have succeeded in making Washington policymakers aware of the concerns of reversibility and the ways in which keeping some infrastructure in place for a later contingency is a wise risk-averse strategy.

5. **Consider the opportunity costs of ceding one's leading position in the development or employment of a new technology, not only the short term but in the long term as well**. The British example also illustrates the phenomenon of path dependence—which is defined as a situation in which seemingly minor decisions made at the beginning of a production process can have far-reaching, often irreversible and unanticipated, effects later on in a product's life cycle.

Analysts refer to the ways in which an advantage or disadvantage may be "locked in" because once a decision is made and a process is institutionalized, it may become prohibitively expensive or impossible to go back and change it later.

In the British example, the Ten Year Rule resulted in decisions being made that locked Britain into certain "ways of war" later on. In deciding to builddown key naval elements and forgo modernization of military equipment, Britain ceded certain advantages to its competitors that it was never able to reclaim later. That is, even when the criterion for reversibility are met, in that a state can resurrect its industry in time to mobilize for war, the state may still lose the advantages that naturally accrue with being the first to develop a technology. In ceding its place as a technological innovator, the state unwittingly cedes something else—namely the opportunity to guide the conversation that emerges regarding doctrines and norms for the employment of the new technology.[35] The nation that develops and deploys a new technology first has the advantage of being able to shape broader social understandings regarding what uses of the technology are legal, ethical, moral, and possible. As a leader in the field of aerial combat, Britain thus initiated the first ethics discussions of such military technologies as strategic bombing and led the way in the development of norms regarding the use of aircraft for the aerial delivery of chemical weapons.

In this way, the early adopters and innovators end up having an outsized effect as they shape the conversation for years to come. Public opinion in the nation that first develops the technology may come to be seen as a crucial variable in guiding the use of technology and can affect decisions regarding whether a weap-

on should be used for purely defensive purposes or whether it can also be used for offensive purposes. As Shawn Brimley *et al*. point out, public opinion can also shape the so-called "ladder of escalation" or the perceived requirements for the use of new technologies, as well as shaping how a new weapon is perceived in relation to existing weaponry. For this reason, they speak of the importance of "locking in" America's privileged technology position.[36]

Unfortunately, U.S. military spending in research and development has declined as a consequence of the 2011 Budget Control Act at the same time that many traditional military research and development activities have been increasingly off-loaded to the private sector or to U.S. allies. There is an insufficient acknowledgement here of the fact that U.S. military may also be ceding its right and its ability to have the leading voice in conversations that emerge about the norms, ethics, and legality surrounding the use of technologies like drones, surveillance equipment, and cyber warfare tools. When policymakers cede the military's opportunity to have a leading role in the development of new technology, they are implicitly acknowledging that this new technology may develop in ways the United States either never wanted or never anticipated. The builders determine the ideology and possible uses of new technologies, and technologies built by our adversaries—Iran, Russia, or China—may implicitly contain a set of values that are antithetical to U.S. values.

Case Study 2: Defense Planning in the Post-Vietnam Era: The Politics of the "Hollow Force."

The next analogous situation in which defense cuts took place after a conflict is the period beginning in the late-1960s and leading up to the 1972 Paris Peace Settlement, when policymakers began discussing the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam and the next steps to be taken in U.S. military planning. It is during this phase that the phrase "peace dividend" was first coined—and it was used in reference to savings that would be recouped once the United States was no longer involved in the Vietnam War.

As Jungkun Seo notes, in the 1966 State of the Union address, then-president Lyndon B. Johnson described no conflict between "guns vs. butter," arguing instead that:

> I believe we can do both. We are a country which was built by pioneers who had a rifle in one hand an ax in the other. . . . We can do both. And as long as I am president, we will do both.[37]

However, by the late-1960s, that understanding had changed as the concept of a peace dividend was born. The phrase "peace dividend" can be traced back to a statement by Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Murray L. Weidenbaum in August 1968. He wrote, "It is easy enough to conjure up visions of so-called fiscal dividends and peace dividends totaling up more than forty billion dollars in the year after peace is achieved."[38]

Both policymakers and the general public were eager to reap the benefits they saw accruing to the nation

as the result of a cessation of hostilities in Vietnam and the Asian region. President Richard Nixon's chief economic advisors noted in August 1969 that, if the war ended immediately, $8 billion would become available for civilian programs. As in the British case, a number of private and congressional study groups put forth analyses and recommendations regarding the existence and preferred deposition of the peace dividend. The private Committee for Economic Development predicted that defense spending would decline by almost $20 billion in 1971, if troop withdrawals began in 1969. President Johnson's Cabinet Coordinating Committee on Economic Planning for the End of Vietnam Hostilities was also convened in January 1969. As is currently the case, bureaucratic interests quickly identified shortfalls in domestic infrastructure that had been ignored at the height of military mobilization, including city planning, elementary and secondary education, foreign aid, and poverty programs. These programs were described as being underfunded, with authorizations not being met, along with programs in the areas of mass transit and housing.

While congressional committees thus quickly moved to capture the military budget and divert it to other pressing U.S. needs, military officers spoke back, arguing that even at the height of hostilities in Southeast Asia, the military had been under resourced. Defense expenditures fell by over 30 percent from 1969 until 1975. Thus, they argued that, throughout the conflict, insufficient resources had been devoted to repairing and building infrastructure, both that of physical equipment and human resources. In addition, throughout the 1970s, insufficient resources were devoted to weapons modernization, the replacement of aging equipment, and the stability of the defense

industry. As Andrew Feickert and Stephen Daggett point out, the end of hostilities meant the end of the draft in 1973, and the military struggled to establish plans to continue to recruit high quality personnel, due to salaries that failed to keep pace with inflation, along with erosions in benefits.[39]

In both the post-Vietnam era and today, the general public was war-weary and more concerned with domestic economic problems than with conducting an ongoing discussion about defense priorities. Presidents Nixon (and later Gerald Ford) and Barack Obama spoke directly to the public regarding the ways domestic political situations could be repaired now that military conflict would no longer draw such a high level of citizen and public resources, and both Nixon and Obama framed foreign policy doctrines renouncing U.S. unilateral military activities and declaring instead that the United States would seek to work more closely with its allies, which needed to do more of the heavy lifting both financially and in terms of concrete military contributions of manpower and equipment. Indeed, even Nixon's overtures to China can be understood as a mode of keeping the peace through diplomacy, which was seen as a more cost-effective strategy than undertaking increased defense spending.

In the Nixon example, the military was encouraged to develop an "offset strategy" in which it would rely more on precision guided weapons than on conventional forces. Under the Nixon administration, purchases of the *Trident* submarine, cruise missiles, and the B1 bomber were carried out, funded through cutbacks on conventional military forces.[40] Similarly, the Obama administration has evinced an increased reliance on and interest in developing categories of

unmanned or autonomous weapons, which are seen to be the future of warfare.

In both examples, warfare also became more highly specialized and technocratic. As Robert Tomes notes, the Nixon years led to the strengthening of organizations like Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency as well as the growing role of nuclear arms specialists, who became frequent expert witnesses at congressional hearings that focused on understanding and analyzing the status of America's nuclear forces.[41]

In both situations, there was a tendency for politicians and military planners to regard the most recent conflict as an aberration or a failed experiment rather than a set of events military planners might learn from. Particularly in the Vietnam situation, the prevailing tendency was for military planners to devote resources and efforts to developing new types of weapons and strategies, such as a reliance on anti-ballistic missiles, rather than considering how strategies of insurgency learned during Vietnam might be strengthened and the gains realized maintained. Strategies for fighting insurgency were seen as having little utility and the decision (which would come to be seen as foolish in hindsight) to allow U.S. capabilities in this area to wither was made.

As in the British example, one can identify a conversation both about the utility of existing weaponry as well as about the law of diminishing marginal returns. The coining of the phrase "mutually assured destruction" in the 1970s reflected the new understanding that there was an absolute point beyond which additional expenditures would not necessarily guarantee more security. As Henry Kissinger stated in 1974 in Moscow, "When two nations are already

capable of destroying each other, an upper limit exists beyond which additional weapons lose their political significance."[42] This new understanding was reflected in academic conversations about the value of relative versus absolute power as well.

As Lawrence Freedman notes, the conversation about the value and utility of military power was also a larger conversation about the legitimacy, respect, and honor of military solutions as well. It was this larger context that made it difficult for those who lobbied for an increased military budget. Freedman suggests that many regarded the military as incompetent and its endeavors pointless. Thus, it was hard to create a consensus about the importance of increased military spending. The analogy between the post-Vietnam budget discussions and current military budget discussions is particularly apt. In the period leading up to and following America's withdrawal of forces from Vietnam, both the emotions of the general public and of political figures were very high. It was impossible for public debate about budget cutbacks to occur independently or divorced from a larger conversation about the meaning of the Vietnam conflict, the role of America in the world, and the utility of military force in the present environment. As Henry Kissinger, who served as Secretary of State from 1973 until 1977, indicated:

> In the anti-military orgy spawned by Vietnam, to have challenged the overwhelming Congressional sentiment for domestic priorities was almost an exercise in futility, pouring salt on the open wounds of the Vietnam debate.[43]

Similarly, the conversation about military cutbacks today is occurring within a larger conversation, and debate continues about whether conventional military strength is still a critical variable within America's overall global position, as well as about whether America is still a hegemon in the world and whether it should continue to seek that position.

What are some lessons that defense planners can draw today from the politics of defense cutbacks in the post-Vietnam era? There are three major lessons that one can identify.

1. **Discussions about defense spending are often deeply politicized, and context is important**. Because the Vietnam War, along with media coverage of that war, served to sow doubts among voters and politicians about the legitimacy and utility of military force, defense planning decisions were made within a context where it was incumbent upon the military to prove the need for defense spending, rather than beginning with the assumption that such spending was necessary. Thus, for example, in a climate that favored arms control and weapons reductions, it was necessary for the military to prove that both nuclear and conventional weapons were still required—rather than for those who favored arms control to prove that it was safe or wise to reduce U.S. defense expenditures. Throughout the 1970s and into the early-1980s, the military was essentially in a defensive position politically where it could not take for granted that either the public or politicians would support increased defense. Again, one can consider that the military failed to "capture the narrative" regarding the utility or necessity of military spending.

2. **Economic decisions can affect doctrines**. As the post-Vietnam example shows, economics led the Nixon administration to make three political decisions that had major effects on U.S. military doctrines. First, economics caused the administration to embrace a new "one and a half wars" strategy in which the United States would no longer have the ability to fight wars on two fronts. Similarly, economics led to the creation of the Nixon Doctrine, in which America's allies would increasingly be responsible for their own defense around the world, and the decision was made to seek détente with Russia and a diplomatic relationship with China.

While traditional defense thinking suggests that planning should proceed from a clear accounting and understanding of the strategic objectives to be pursued, the post-Vietnam example suggests that the reverse actually occurred. Planners began with an understanding of the military resources and funds available, and then proceeded to create a military strategy that would allow the achievement of strategic objectives most efficiently, given those limitations. In many ways, it appeared that the first questions politicians asked were "Can we afford it?" and "Is it worth it?" when considering military action, rather than asking if it was necessary and what might occur if military actions were not taken.

As the post-Vietnam example shows, in situations where economic considerations precede and outrank strategic considerations, the military is more likely to adopt a risk-averse strategy, more concerned with fulfilling defensive objectives than with pursuing a more proactive approach toward containing conflict in the international system.

3. **Conversations about military spending often take place in a short-term context, while military planning occurs in a much longer time frame.** As in the British example, the long-range damage sustained by the military due to short-term cutbacks did not become apparent for many years. In the British case, Treasury Department officials asked military planners to proceed upon the assumption that no major conflicts would occur in 10 years. Similarly, by May 1980, U.S. military planners were starting to argue that the United States had created a so-called "hollow army." Chief of Staff of the Army General Edward C. Meyer used this phrase during a House Armed Services Committee hearing to describe situations where the services might have had sufficient equipment, but often lacked the funds to maintain, modernize, or man this equipment. Similarly, planners are using this term today to refer to problems within the military in regard to personnel, training and readiness.

Case Study 3: The Politics of the Peace Dividend in the Post-Soviet Era.

The final case of defense retrenchment to be considered is the situation the United States faced in the late-1980s with the end of the Cold War. Just as in Vietnam, the notion of a peace dividend quickly surfaced with the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the phrase is most commonly associated with this time period rather than with Vietnam. What is unusual about the defense spending debate that took place in this era was that the circumstances that led to the debate occurred both so quickly and so unexpectedly. Thus, players on all sides scrambled to articulate and advocate for their interests once it became apparent

that a reconsideration of American defense spending was going to take place. Unlike the Vietnam and Iraq scenarios, where there had been a clear timetable for troop withdrawals and the ability to marshal resources gradually and arguments to support one's position over several years, the breakup of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe occurred within a span of only 4 months, from the August 1989 opening of Hungary's border with Austria to the opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989.

Due to the quick pace at which these events unfolded, the tendency for all actors was to think only in a short-term perspective regarding the disposition of the peace dividend (if indeed one existed), rather than considering what the long-term U.S. strategic interests were both domestically and within the international system. In hearings, the tendency was to ask "What should next year's defense budget look like as the result of these activities?" rather than considering what new threats might emerge and how the military might best prepare for these threats, which might not emerge for another 10 or more years.

The U.S. Congress convened the first set of hearings regarding the deposition of America's peace dividend less than 1 month later in December 1989. These public hearings on the subject of the peace dividend, which were widely covered by domestic and international media, helped to build the understanding that the peace dividend belonged to everyone and that "we" won the Cold War. In this way, any cost savings realized by a redeployment or builddown of forces were seen as belonging not only to the Department of Defense (DoD), but also to the general public. As Representative Lee Hamilton, Chairman of Joint Economic Committee, noted in one such hearing:

> It seems clear that we will soon be faced with major choices about how to employ the peace dividend—Should it be used for deficit reduction, tax cuts, and new spending programs? Is this an appropriate occasion for a major reordering of priorities?

Similarly, Democratic Senator Jim Sasser referred to the "dawn of an era of domestic economics."[44] Even Robert McNamara, Defense Secretary under President John Kennedy, testified, noting that the chief security threat facing the United States at that time was the deficit, not the Soviets. He voiced the sentiment that "security depends on more than military force—it is a function as well of economic strength and social cohesion."[45] Witnesses asked whether the savings could be diverted to put an astronaut on Mars; to launch new satellites; or to improve childcare, health care, and education. Some optimistic predictions included the claim that Pentagon spending would be safely cut in half by the end of the 1990s if Gorbachev remained in power. Other agencies, like National Aeronautics and Space Administration, lined up to claim the savings they expected to be generated from the inevitable defense cutbacks.

Although hearings were quickly convened in the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to examine changes in the Communist Bloc and their impact on spending, there was not an initial consensus between the executive and legislative branch, nor between government agencies, on whether a peace dividend did, in fact, exist and how it should be reallocated. The various bureaucratic actors also disagreed about the timing of this reorientation, with the general public in particular eager to "cash in" and spend the peace dividend,

while military planners in particular sounded a note of caution.

One of the most publicized cases of disagreement occurred between Central Intelligence Agency director William Webster and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney. Cheney accused Webster of acting prematurely in declaring that the Soviet system no longer represented a threat to the United States and disagreed with his assessment that the Soviet Union's decline was irreversible. Webster had stated during a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee that "there is little chance that Soviet hegemony could be restored in Eastern Europe."[46] The nonprofit Center for Security Policy think tank accused Webster of setting the conditions for eviscerating President Bush's defense budget.[47]

Walter Mears argues that the Pentagon wanted to ease up gradually on defense spending, a plan that would not have significant effects on the domestic economy until 1991. Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz noted that if you cut too much, too fast, you risk undoing the security you have created.[48] Similarly, Secretary of Defense Cheney noted that:

> I want to emphasize this is a six-year look that's being offered at a time of considerable turmoil and uncertainty [building up to Gulf War] . . . and I would like to reserve the right to come back at some future time and say we can't go down as fast or as far as this program would.[49]

At the same time, defense planners noted that even at the height of the Cold War, the DoD did not have a blank check for its activities. It still needed to prioritize and was not able to fully fund infrastructure and maintenance in the best manner. Thus, they argued that it made sense to reorient the funds freed up

through the nuclear arms builddown with the Soviet Union and reduce the number of U.S. troops along borders with East Germany to make up for shortages in infrastructure and production. Here, their arguments were bolstered by statements made by former President Gerald Ford, who argued that the peace dividend was perhaps an illusion or an invention rather than a concrete reality. He argued that there was, in fact, no dividend after the Vietnam War, due to increases in the inflation rate throughout the 1970s which "swallowed" any savings, since budgeted funds seldom matched the actual prices at that time. Thus, he argued that any savings realized after the breakup of the Soviet Union should go directly into deficit reduction, not new spending.

The lack of agreement between the intelligence community and the defense community was particularly damaging for the DoD since the general public saw the lack of agreement about the nature of the threats facing the United States as an indication that there was no threat, and that any claims regarding such a threat were simple exaggerations being made for public relations purposes. At the same time, the President's staff, like the DoD, did not rush to judgment regarding the significance of these events. A Bush White House official noted that, "We are much too preoccupied with the immediate year to think about five or 10 years out."[50] President Bush noted that it was premature to speak of cuts and a dividend, and expressed a warning that the peace dividend might, in fact, fail to materialize. He suggested not being unduly optimistic and warned against the danger of a fire sale. While academics discussed the events at the American Economic Association and 10 congressional committees held hearings on the subject, the White House

did not convene expert panels nor attempt to take the lead in conducting post-Cold War assessments.[51] Indeed, the President's team did not put together its own response to the breakup of the Soviet Union until August 1990, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, thus changing the conversation altogether.

Perhaps because of this failure by the White House to play a leading role in this conversation, discussions about the peace dividend instead exploded in the popular and scholarly media. Just as in the previous cases, the conversation soon turned from considering not only how the cost savings should be spent, but also to asking about whether military force was still useful in this changed world and whether it was necessary to reprioritize how much of a state's budget should be devoted to defense overall. As Mears argued, voters were no longer convinced of the necessity of defense spending by December 1989. He notes that with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the general public no longer saw the U.S. as threatened. In this way, he argues, voters and the general public had a more radical understanding of how much the military should be cut back than did policymakers. Public opinion, in this way, served to move policymakers to a more radical position. He describes voters as insisting on defense cuts more drastic than the administration deems wise.[52]

The media, as well, tended to overemphasize the significance of the end of the Cold War, using hyperbolic language to describe a new era in international relations. As Mark Sommer notes, the cover of the December 11, 1990, issue of *Business Week* pictured a dove with a dollar bill in its beak with the headline, "The Peace Economy: How Defense Cuts will Pay Off for America." In the article, the author spoke of a "veritable cornucopia of positive effects: lower inflation

and interest rates (down to 5.5 percent), a declining budget deficit (half less by 1991); and faster growth . . . a reduced trade gap and more housing starts."[53]

However, as we saw in the previous case studies of Britain and Vietnam, the debate about the peace dividend was also about something much larger. In particular, academics and media pundits voiced the sentiment that military force no longer had the same utility as it once did, and that, in the new environment, other types of power and influence would be more meaningful, including soft power tools like diplomacy, state building, civic education, educational exchanges, and so forth. This new understanding of the role and utility of military power was reflected in the assessments by other key constituencies that lobbied for defense cuts. Here, the most optimistic assessments came from other international groups like the United Nations (UN) Development Program, which proposed a worldwide builddown of weapons, with the proceeds to be devoted to programs that would eliminate poverty and equalize living standards around the world.[54] UN documents from this time argue that:

> If there is to be a peace dividend, there must be disarmament, a reversal of the technological arms race, improved international relations on a global scale, a fair chance for economic development in the third world . . . and the establishment of centres for crisis avoidance and crisis management. As well as the introduction of a new security concept. . .[55]

The UN report made the claim that, as a result of the breakup of the Soviet Union, the current number of 25 million armed forces worldwide could be reduced by half, as could the figure of approximately 15

million workers employed in the arms industry. UN planners hoped to see a 5 percent military expenditure reduction globally every year for 10 years. At the same time, European policymakers anticipated an end to the large-scale U.S. military presence in Europe and a lessening of U.S. military and political presence.[56] They hoped to halve the American presence on the European continent, and as a result, anticipated a savings of $50 billion to $100 billion dollars a year.

*Lessons from the Peace Dividend***.**

What lessons do the deliberations of 1989 to 1990 offer to defense policymakers today? Six are highlighted here.

1. **Do not move too quickly in making defense cuts**. The example of the post-Cold War drawdown shows the importance of the pace and timing of cutbacks. The situation was unusual due to the degree that all parties (not least the intelligence community) were surprised by what had occurred. The breakup of the Soviet Union was somehow both inevitable and unanticipated, and there were no clear plans immediately accessible regarding what the next logical steps should be. However, both the presidency and the DoD lost the advantage from being the first to speak out in the new environment. Both the legislature and the media acted quickly to consolidate the gains of the peace dividend and to affect the parameters of that conversation. Perhaps if DoD had spoken more forcibly about the dangers of a transitioning democracy, the increased likelihood of small conflicts in such a situation and the fact that the long-term success of the post-Soviet transition was not yet assured, then they could have had a greater role to play in decisionmaking.

2. **Do not assume that there will only be one conflict or that we can anticipate what it would look like**. In both the British and the post-Soviet example, there was a tendency for policymakers to assume that, because the conflict they had just exited was over, therefore conflict was over. In retrospect, it is easy to see how planners and policymakers were surprised by the violence of separatist movements within the former Soviet Union and the sectarian violence within Yugoslavia. There was little attempt to see into the future to anticipate what the next conflict might look like and to plan accordingly.

3. **Think really long term**. In the present day, as the United States attempts to formulate a workable foreign policy toward Russia's President Vladimir Putin, it is clear that, while the Cold War might be over, conflict with Russia is not. However, in conversations regarding the disposition of the peace dividend, only two possible time frames were considered—next year, and the next 5 to 10 years. It appears again that little thought was given to the possibility that Russia might reemerge as a power with territorial ambitions and a revanchist foreign policy some 25 years later. As current conversations about containment and the possibility of restationing U.S. troops in Western Europe as a buffer against Russian territorial ambitions toward Moldova, for example, continue, it becomes clear that reversibility was not an important consideration in the post-Soviet builddown.

4. **Avoid bureaucratic infighting**. The post-Cold War example clearly shows the importance of cooperation between the intelligence and defense communi-

ties. In retrospect, it appears that the intelligence community's premature statements about the end of the Soviet threat were extremely harmful to U.S. defense planning and that the very existence of such a conflict was embarrassing to both parties and the administration. This example shows the importance of behind-the-scenes coordination between both parties prior to participating in congressional testimony, for example.

5. **Guard against the tendency to view conflict as an aberration or a departure from the norm, rather than the default setting**. Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis has noted that, for the soldiers of the Greek city-states, there was no actual distinction made between wartime and peacetime. Instead, war was seen as a constant state for which one must be continually prepared. There were no binary opposites like wartime and peacetime. However, in each of the case studies examined here, the general public, the legislature, and the agencies like the Department of the Treasury clearly distinguished between wartime economies and peacetime economies, and the state of war and the state of peace. The tendency to identify a peace dividend, for example, rests on the assumption that a state's defensive posture can be markedly different between the two periods and that some activities can be turned off in the post-war period.

In the post-Soviet situation, both policymakers and the general public were affected by the 1989 essay by academic Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History," which appeared in *The National Interest*. In this essay, Fukuyama stated that:

> What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War or the passing of a particular period of post-

> war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.[57]

In the essay and a later book, Fukuyama framed a triumphalist argument in which it seemed appropriate for policymakers to focus on consolidating the gains accrued through winning the Cold War, rather than considering what new and unanticipated threats were likely to arise. However, Gaddis suggests in his work that the Cold War period in particular was an anomaly. He argues that the Cold War artificially froze the results of World War II in place for a period of nearly 45 years, and it was only when this anomalous period ended, that politics as usual began once again.[58] In the period since the end of the Cold War, the United States has found itself engaged in peacekeeping, responding to humanitarian disasters, and carrying out "right to protect" activities across the globe. Similarly, the end of the Vietnam War did not, in retrospect, provide an opportunity for the United States to wind down its military presence worldwide. Today, it is equally important for policymakers not to view the end of U.S. participation in conflict in Iraq as an inevitable transition to a peacetime economy in which conflicts will no longer exist and there will no longer be a need to prepare for it. Contrary to the claims of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, there is no "reset button" that will fundamentally alter either the U.S. position in the world or the situations that may arise that will require U.S. military intervention.

Case Study 4: Considering Cutbacks Today.

The parallels between the three cases considered here—Britain's drawdown after World War I, America's drawdown after the Vietnam War, and the conversation regarding the disposition of the post-Soviet peace dividend—and current events are many. Indeed, the term "peace dividend" has again come into popular usage. A 2011 *New York Times* article entitled "How to Spend the Peace Dividend" quotes President Obama telling an audience, "America, it is time to focus on nation-building here at home."[59] That same year, the U.S. Conference of Mayors issued a statement that called for a quick end to wars abroad and for diverting savings to projects that would improve roads and services and create more public sector jobs.

In a speech on June 22, 2011, on Afghanistan,[60] President Obama noted that by July 2011, 10,000 troops would come home, with another 33,000 scheduled to return by summer 2012. The speech can be read as a valedictory speech President Obama saw himself delivering at the end of a conflict he assumed the United States had won. He stated that "We're starting this drawdown from a position of strength," noting that more than half of al-Qaeda's leadership had been identified and removed.

Many analysts identify this speech as the first stage in the framing of a so-called "Obama Doctrine." In June 2011, President Obama opined not only on the meaning of American withdrawal from Afghanistan and Iraq in the context of American military might, but also went on to speculate about the utility of military force and American engagement in the new environment. He noted that "Already, this decade of war has caused many to question the nature of America's

engagement around the world" and then pointed to a variety of new directions which America might take. First, he noted, America could retreat from a position of leadership in the international system. In the future, America would only be drawn into conflict when not doing so was unavoidable, versus consciously framing and pursuing an activist role in politics. Second, America could embrace isolation entirely, or, finally, he suggested that America could continue to be overextended, "confronting every evil that can be found abroad."[61]

In this document, President Obama lays out a spectrum of positions from the most isolationist to the most activist, coming down clearly against an extremely activist position in the world today. He speaks out against the notion of knee-jerk involvement, or involvement that does not fit within the list of U.S. foreign policy priorities today. Instead, President Obama called for a "more centered course"—which would allow America to play a unique role in international affairs but also be pragmatic. He also reprises the notion of guns vs. butter in noting that "strength abroad ultimately rests on our strength at home."[62]

Here, we can identify a similar tendency to that which Churchill evinced in Britain's post-World War I drawdown. It is as if the President has decided to behave as if the world is safer and suggests a relatively short-term perspective in which only current events are considered. That is, in both the British and American cases, leaders have thought about the need for a strong military in the context of the conflict which has just ended, thus thinking about the short term rather than the extreme long term. The assumption that, because this threat has been confronted successfully (i.e., the Soviet threat in the Cold War or the German

threat in World War I), therefore the job of the military is done. As in the British case, America's leadership seemed to be arguing that because the conflict was over, the hegemon's strong presence in the region was no longer as necessary or useful as it was previously. In this same vein, cuts have been undertaken in the areas of arms control monitoring and nonproliferation activities. In particular, in 2013, the White House undertook a $57 million cut to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, housed in the DoD. This was described not as a cutback, but rather as a "more judicious outlay" of resources.[63]

As in the British case, the larger question is really about the law of diminishing returns. Specifically, how large a force does a country that no longer seeks to be the sole hegemon or guarantor of stability need to have? How much military force is sufficient, and how much is too much? As in the British case, we can identify a disconnect between how policymakers and military planners answered this question. Travis Sharp argues that, even within the confines of the Obama Doctrine, the United States is still committed to being a preeminent power. That is, America wishes to outpace even its close competitors in its overall level of military strength so that anyone wishing to engage in military action against the United States would undertake significant risks in doing so.[64] Here he points to a speech that President Obama delivered in January 2012, in which he stated that "our military will be leaner, but the world must know the United States is going to maintain our military superiority with armed forces that are agile, flexible, and ready for the full range of contingencies and threats."[65]

As in the post-Vietnam era, however, the question arose of how many military conflicts the U.S. military

must be capable of simultaneously fighting, including unilaterally. Here, the 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review* provides the first evidence that this standard would be altered again under President Obama. In that document, planners wrote that:

> it is no longer appropriate to speak of 'major regional conflicts' as the sole or even the primary template for sizing, shaping, and evaluating U.S. forces. Rather, U.S. forces must be prepared to conduct a wide variety of missions under a range of different circumstances.[66]

Under conditions of defense planning austerity in both the United States and Europe, the new thinking has been that specialization of forces and the sharing of specialized expertise both among services and among states is a chief way of creating efficiencies, reducing redundancies, and saving money. As Elizabeth Bumiller and Thomas Shanker note, the new U.S. vision—laid out in January 2012 in the administration's new defense strategy, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense"—includes the notion that the United States should be able to fight and win one conflict while "spoiling" or denying adversaries' intentions toward another region. The shorthand for this idea is "win-spoil."[67] Spoiling might occur in a variety of ways and does not always include the application of military force.

The Obama Doctrine's emphasis on multilateralism over unilateralism was defined in great detail in the so-called "West Point Speech," President Obama delivered on May 28, 2014. That speech includes the lines:

> The United States will use military force, unilaterally if necessary, when our core interests demand it—when

> our people are threatened, when our livelihoods are at stake, when the security of our allies is in danger. . . . On the other hand, when issues of global concern do not pose a direct threat to the United States, when such issues are at stake—when crises arise that stir our conscience or push the world in a more dangerous direction but do not directly threaten us—then the threshold for military actions must be higher. In such circumstances, we should not go it alone.[68]

The doctrine thus represents a step away from the previous Bush Doctrine which stressed both the grounds for unilateralism and the necessity of often reducing risks and costs through taking preemptive action.

The Role of Public Opinion in Defense Cuts.

As noted in the examples of both Britain and the United States in the post-Soviet era, public opinion has also influenced defense policymaking and in particular the politics of defense cuts—in some cases causing policymakers to adopt more radical stances toward undertaking defense cuts than they otherwise might. Traditionally, as we have seen, it has been difficult for military policymakers to sustain an argument on behalf of greater military spending in the face of a public perception that conflict is over and that military strength has less utility than it previously did. In each of the cases examined, there have also been partisan divides with Labour supporters in Britain and Democrats in the United States opposing greater military spending and campaigning most strongly for military spending cuts in a post-conflict situation. However, in the post-Vietnam case, voters on both sides of the partisan divide were wary of increased military spend-

ing and were more likely to conclude that the United States had "enough" military.

Similarly, in the current case, a 2012 survey by the Center for Public Integrity suggests that both Democrats and Republicans appear convinced that currently the military is wasteful in its spending, that too much is being spent on nuclear weapons, and that cuts could be identified in the areas of naval, air and ground forces.[69] As Sharp argues, Americans seem to hold two sets of conflicting ideas simultaneously. They believe that the military is too active in world affairs, but at the same time, they are committed to the notion that the United States itself should play a leading role in the international system and are willing to help to finance that activism.[70] In addition, public opinion polls seem to show conflicting trends. While the Center for Public Integrity poll suggests a majority of Americans support defense cuts, data from the Gallup Agency shows the opposite. A Gallup report shows that, since the 1960s, Americans have been divided about military spending. In this data, 37 percent of respondents are reported as believing that the United States spends too much on the military, while 28 percent believe that it spends too little.[71] It is unclear whether the two parties and their supporters will be able to come together to arrive at a bargain that would resolve conflicts about defense spending. However, it does not seem likely.

*The Role of Academics in the Current Debate***.**

As noted earlier, academics have played key roles in framing the debate about defense spending in a post-conflict situation. In the post-Vietnam situation, academics opposed to the war effort helped to stoke the perception that the military was illegitimate, that

the war had been lost, and that it was appropriate to punish the military for the role it had played in losing the war. In the post-World War I situation, academics were chief supporters of the notion that the League of Nations could work to make war obsolete, replacing military might with a more effective resolution of conflicts through diplomatic channels. In the post-Soviet situation, Fukuyama convinced much of the public that the United States had won the Cold War, making conflict less likely in the future and the military might less necessary.

In the current environment, the international system is seen as being in flux, with many foundational ideas seen as up for grabs (such as the role of the state versus the role of nonstate actors; the role of religion and ideology; the significance of economic policies that are seen as leading to inequality). It is also likely that influential thinkers from the civilian sector, including academia, will have a fundamental influence on how Washington thinks about foreign policy.

In recent years, both American and international academics have undertaken an exercise in so-called revisionist historiography, leading to a fundamental rethinking of the academic discipline of international relations since its inception, as well as a re-examination of how academics historically have understood and explained America's role in the world. Included in this narrative is a rethinking of the so-called unipolar moment that occurred between 1989 and 1991 when the Soviet Union had broken up and the United States was the sole remaining hegemon in the world.[72]

Academics working on these issues have arrived at the claim that policymakers who conduct and react to conflicts are often too focused on looking for historic analogies, based on the assumption that the lessons of the past are still relevant today. In contrast,

many academics argue that "we are moving toward a world for which there is no historic precedent."[73] This academic development has had, and will continue to have, far-reaching consequences on policymaking as these ideas are carried into the halls of Washington by academics serving on advisory panels or serving in government positions as political appointees. Furthermore, pundits have aired these ideas in media appearances and in op-eds in the press, and in this way, these understandings have begun to influence public opinion more generally in the United States. Currently, the president of the International Studies Association, one of two preeminent academic professional organizations for U.S. and international professors of political science and international relations (the other is the American Political Science Association), is a Canadian academic, born in India, currently teaching at American University. Much of his own writing has explicitly questioned the narrative of American exceptionalism and the power American policymakers have assumed that America has in the world—including both hard and soft power.

The new academic narrative rests on certain key assumptions: First, many academics today believe that it is not simply American military power that is less useful and less relevant than it has been historically—it is American power in general, including both soft and hard power. This new narrative also contains an acknowledgement that many of the activities that occur in international relations today occur outside of American, and indeed state, control—and often without state knowledge. In this way, the claim is made that it is not that military power is less useful, but rather that America is irrelevant to much of what transpires in the world today. Thus this argument presents America's decline as a sort of logical end to the evolution of

the international system. This argument suggests that the international system has moved toward multipolarity, and, as a result, America is less central to the conduct of international affairs than it was in previous generations. This new situation is seen as having been generated independently from anything America did or did not do. America's decline, thus, is presented as occurring not due to a failure to build the necessary domestic infrastructure, to cultivate the right values, or to engage in sufficient military readiness training, rather it is simply the natural, predetermined order of things that have come to pass. Empires decline.[74]

The viewpoint, referred to by some as the "declinist stance," leads to certain policy prescriptions: In *The Upside of Down: Why the Rise of the Rest is Good for the West*, Charles Kenny argues that the United States need not be concerned with maintaining dominance, but should rather seek to emulate Britain, which may have declined in terms of international reputation, but which still has a successful economy. Kenney argues that it is incorrect to believe the realist paradigm, which regards security and defense as zero-sum or that one party's loss is another's gain.[75] At the same time, Amitav Acharya has argued in *The End of American World Order* that the new international structure will be neither unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar. Instead, he argues, the international system should be seen as multiplex, where there are a variety of different types of configurations available (in terms of cultural, economic, or political power) and where power has multiple layers that are constantly shifting and changing. In such a system, there is no one absolute central set of ideas, institutions, or nations around which politics revolves. In this new world, the concept of a hegemon is truly meaningless.[76]

Academics thus often suggest that the problem with merely coming up with new definitions in an area such as "smart power" is that this is simply too little, too late. It is seen as a halfway measure aimed at preserving the status quo, while academics and global policymakers are already behaving as though the status quo—with America as the leading player in the international system—is past.

THE MILITARY RESPONSE

A bureaucratic politics model would suggest that in the face of conversations about drawdown and changes in the utility of military force, the best strategy for military officials would be to dig in their heels and defend their turf, reacting defensively against those who would seek to redeploy military resources and change military strategies and doctrines as a result. However, in this case, military officials have been involved in the dialogue about the changing role of the military, seeking to shape and guide the conversation that has occurred. The military has thus taken a proactive role in redefining its mission in response to perceived changes in the environment. Specific actions have included working to create regional organizations that would serve as allies, thinking about new military roles, addressing the problem of reversibility and leading conversations about new, cheaper weapons and their role in conflict.

1. **Cultivating and training new allies**. The understanding contained within the Obama Doctrine that the U.S. military needed to engage in greater specialization and burden-sharing among allies was incorporated within military doctrines in 2011, when Defense Secretary Leon Panetta spoke of the impor-

tance of looking to new partners, particularly in the Asia-Pacific, to play larger roles in the protection of international security.[77] We can also point to advances in Japanese Defense policy, beginning with actions of Japanese Defense Force in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. It has been suggested that the United States pressured Japan to pass legislation that would allow for an expansion of its military's roles, from a position of providing only for Japan's defense to also acting on behalf of collective security. In this new strategy, the United States will depend not only on historic allies like the NATO countries, but also on bilateral and multilateral arrangements, including newly emerging partnerships with nations in Asia and with groups like the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in the Middle East. [78]

Certainly, a decision to off-load key defense activities to not only historic allies, but also newer partnerships, represents a major change in U.S. military strategy, one apparently being caused largely by economic pressures. We can see evidence of these pressures beginning with the 2010 *Ballistic Missile Defense Review*, which states that "a key objective of US strategy is to expand international efforts and cooperation on ballistic missile defense." Other steps have included measures to increase U.S.-GCC security cooperation in the areas of ballistic missile defense, maritime security, counterterrorism, and border security, including cybersecurity.[79] In December 2013, President Obama designated GCC members as eligible for participation in the program of foreign military sales, in essence granting them the same designation as NATO, and in May 2014, the first U.S.-GCC Defense Ministerial Conference occurred.

In an analysis, John Anthony writes:

> the GCC Countries' demonstrating a degree of significantly heightened resolve to strengthen and expand their deterrence and defense capabilities in and of itself ought to be welcomed by the American taxpayer. A reason is that it shows the requisite determination by America's GCC partners to utilize the maximum of their own resources, combined with ongoing American security assistance, to accomplish a goal of vital strategic importance not only to themselves and the United States but to their and our respective friends, allies, and respective working partners.[80]

Clearly this strategy carries certain risks. Are the savings in costs and logistics worth the risk of depending on other states, which might not necessarily have the same interests or incentive to cooperate with the United States? What are the risks and downsides of this strategy? Here we can consider the already existing policy differences that exist with GCC members over the questions of diplomatic and military strategies in reference to Egypt, Iran, and Syria. In addition, GCC members may be tempted to utilize their Peninsula Shield Force not only in defending from outside aggressors, but also for internal peacekeeping in the face of democratic uprisings in nations such as Bahrain. At the same time, GCC members worry that, as the United States becomes more energy self-sufficient, it may have less of a commitment to working with GCC members. Again, one can point to the historic example of Britain's decision to off-load more of the requirements for national defense to the Commonwealth nations after World War I. Although there were cost savings in the short run, there is disagreement about the long-term effects of this decision.

This disagreement also appears among U.S. military personnel today. Thus, for example, Chief of Staff of the Army General Raymond Odierno has written about and spoken in favor of a new model of regionally aligned forces. He describes regionally aligned forces as allowing for a flexibility that means that forces will be prepared for a variety of scenarios, the details of which can be worked out later.[81] However, at the same time, Sharp argues that many military commanders worry that this realignment could lead to the same types of problems that surfaced after Vietnam with a hollow force. As in the Vietnam example, the "hollow force" language refers both to a shortfall in manpower, and also to problems with the pipelines of weapons procurement, including in the areas of research and development.[82]

Cultivating New Military Roles.

As this analysis has shown, the notion of austerity in military planning traditionally has simply translated into the creation of a military that is less well-resourced and less prepared to engage in conflict and defense. In the face of austerity measures, the legislature and the treasury have acted to allocate less funding to traditional defense activities. However, in recent years, it is possible to identify a trend within the U.S. military aimed at redefining and broadening the notion of "military activity." In this way, the defense forces have been positioned to receive funds not only for the conduct of traditional military activity, but also to cooperate and compete with agencies engaged in other types of state-building and diplomatic activities. Kofi Nsia-Pepra refers to this process as a "militarization of foreign policy," arguing that the tendency for American ground forces in particular to undertake a

new portfolio of activities in Africa (which he notes include fighting terrorism, providing for the security of oil and other energy resources on the continent, and countering Chinese influence in the region) is harmful in the long run.[83]

However, an organization theory perspective would identify such strategies as important adaptive mechanisms for a threatened organization or industry. Drawing upon an analogy from the animal kingdom, the theory suggests that those species that have thrived over the long run were best able to carve out a new ecological niche for themselves when their livelihood has been threatened. That is, companies that have manufactured typewriters might move into manufacturing personal computers when the technology changes, and companies that printed books might move into e-publishing. In this way, the move by the military into new areas of public diplomacy and economic development appears as a natural evolution or adaptation to a changed environment. However, not all DoD personnel have been on board in supporting this new evolution. Indeed, in 2012, Secretary of Defense Gates expressed concerned about the increasing 'militarization' of U.S. foreign policy.[84]

Military Modernization and the Problem of Technology.

As the previous case studies have shown, a period of reduced military expenditure often coincides with a push to "do more with less" through relying on new technological innovations. But as Brauer and Van Tuyll point out, the decision to "substitute" technology for other types of military strengths—including manpower—is not merely an economic decision, but is rather one that also affects tactics and doctrines.[85]

In examining cutbacks to France's defense services in the aftermath of World War II, they ask:

> Did France purchase a nuclear force as a substitute for an existing or prospective alternative, most obviously conventional forces? The principle of substitution holds that if two goods held comparable benefits users will drift, ceteris paribus, toward the good with the lower relative price.[86]

This question has renewed resonance in the current climate of austerity, given that in the January 2012 document, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense?" the White House noted the need to build up cyber defense.[87] Here again we can identify the substitution principle at work. In an analysis published in 2012, Jan Kallberg and Adam Lowther describe both nuclear weapons and cyber weapons as "cheap,"[88] noting that the estimated $30 billion per year we spend on nuclear weapons is only 5 percent of the defense budget. Kallberg and Bhavani Thuraisingham also argue that states will be driven to embrace cyber conflict largely for financial reasons, since cyber warfare is a cheap option both for defense (deterrence) and for offensive cyber operations. As they suggest, "cyber warfare is a cheaper option for both covert operations and to engage and destabilize an adversary."[89]

Here, history warns us of the danger of relying exclusively on one type of military technology as a substitute rather than a complement to other types of conventional military technologies. In the British example, one can point to the ways in which the navy was insufficiently resourced as funds were devoted to the RAF. Similarly, it is important that cyber war capabilities not be established instead of or at the expense of conventional forces. Cyber warfare capa-

bilities should complement, rather than substitute for, traditional warfighting capabilities.

As the British example shows, it is always dangerous for a state to allow one type of capability to wither to the point that it cannot be easily and quickly reestablished, should the situation change such that it is again necessary. France's decision to rely so heavily on nuclear arms was shown to have consequences when it was unable to contribute well-trained conventional forces in the 1991 Gulf War conflict, for example. The claims that the U.S. ground forces were hollowed out in the post-Vietnam era again speaks to the problem of substitution without regard to reversibility.

However, current planners are aware of this dilemma and have begun to emphasize heavily the principle of reversibility, which can be seen as a type of risk-averse strategy (as opposed to the more risky strategy of substitution alone). This doctrine came out of the January 2012 *Comprehensive Strategic Review.* In Philip Ewing's analysis of the review, he states that the Department of Defense should "be mindful that anything it stops, delays, breaks or undoes, it needs to be able to restart, accelerate, repair, and redo."[90] At the same time, *U.S. Defense Strategic Guidance* issued in January 2012 noted that:

> The Department of Defense will manage the force in ways that protect its ability to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet future, unforeseen demands, maintaining intellectual capital and rank structure that could be called upon to expand key elements of the force.[91]

Steps taken to safeguard reversibility have included personnel decisions and steps to work with the private defense industry to assure that needed capabilities—and skills—do not go offline.

CONCLUSION: LESSONS FOR U.S. DEFENSE PLANNERS IN A CLIMATE OF AUSTERITY

As this analysis has shown, the situation in which the U.S. military finds itself currently is neither unique to the United States nor is it unique to the 21st century. Indeed, given that the economy is felt by many to behave in a cyclical fashion, the question of how heavily the military should be resourced in tight economic times is one we will be called upon to answer and respond to again and again. Thus, the case studies considered here offer several lessons that are relevant to military planners as they consider policymaking in the current climate of austerity:

1. **Do not be tempted to search for or rely on cheaper substitutes for U.S. military expertise**. In the current climate, military planners might be tempted to rely on cheaper cyber weapons, for example, over the provision and deployment of traditional military hardware. Planners might also see increased reliance on unmanned drones as an opportunity for cost saving, replacing trained and skilled pilots with computer programs and equipment. It is also possible that the service seen as farthest out front technologically will be tempted to cannibalize the budgets of rival services, whose missions and equipment might seem outdated and less necessary by comparison.

However, as the example of France's *force de frappe* and England's decision to prioritize the development of its air force over its navy show, short-term cost savings may have unexpected long-term effects. Overrelying on one technology increases the risk that valuable skills and expertise may be allowed to atrophy, making them difficult to resurrect at a later date.

2. **Consider the extreme long-term**. Planners should continue to cultivate relationships with the intelligence and academic communities and to fund research which looks at the threat environment in 25 years or longer, and which considers not only short-term events like revolutions but longer term socio-cultural phenomena, including demographic changes and changing social roles.

3. **Strive for a position of leadership in the development of new technologies—not only in technological terms, but also in terms of being the leading voice for the responsible and safe use of these technologies**. Planners and decisionmakers should be wary of making economic decisions which would cede America's leadership role in defining the meaning and use of new technologies to another country or group of nations. For America to continue to lead militarily, America needs to be out front in terms of deployment of new technologies and leading the conversation regarding their ethical, legal and moral use.

4. **Do not undertake new missions at the expense of traditional missions—even though this temptation may be great**. Planners may be tempted in a climate of austerity to reinvent the mission of the U.S. military or to undertake missions which are far outside of their areas of expertise in order to advertise their continued relevance. Here, for example, we might consider the temptation to deploy U.S. troops in Africa to combat the ebola virus in a high profile humanitarian mission. While in the short term this might seem wise, in the longer term this sort of activity will make it difficult to maintain operational readiness and mission focus and to return to operational tempo when the environment changes.

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