

Over-promising and under-delivering?

Ambitions and risks in US defence strategy

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The United States has entered a period of strategic change. After spending more than a decade fighting a global counterterrorism campaign and two ground wars, it now faces shifting security challenges. The United States has killed Osama bin Laden and decimated the core leadership of Al-Qaeda and like-minded groups in Pakistan, but regional Al-Qaeda affiliates in Yemen and the Horn of Africa have taken the lead in planning and attempting terrorist attacks. American troops have left Iraq and are leaving Afghanistan, but 15,000–30,000 may remain in Afghanistan after 2014 to train Afghan forces and strike terrorist cells. Iran continues to pursue the ability to produce nuclear weapons rapidly should its supreme leader decide to do so, further destabilizing a Middle East region shaken by the Arab Spring. China continues to invest heavily in military modernization, raising sharp concerns among its neighbours. North Korea may continue to lash out militarily as its new leader Kim Jong Un seeks to demonstrate control. Last but certainly not least, the global economy remains fragile, the American economic recovery has stagnated, and US policy-makers have responded to rapidly growing American debt by reducing government spending in numerous areas, including defence. The size of these budget cuts may increase substantially in the months ahead.

To address these challenges, the Obama administration has reshaped US defence strategy, plans and forces. In January 2012, the Department of Defense (DOD) released a new strategic guidance document, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership: priorities for 21st century defense*, which declared that the US military would make the transition ‘from an emphasis on today’s wars to preparing for future challenges’.¹ In February 2012, DOD submitted a US\$525 billion base budget request, which excludes war costs, for fiscal year (FY) 2013.² The request reduced DOD’s planned spending over the next decade by US\$487 billion to comply with spending limits included in the Budget Control Act, a deficit reduction measure approved in 2011 by bipartisan majorities in both houses of the US Congress and signed into law by President Obama. The amount of defence budget cuts will roughly double in

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¹ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership: priorities for 21st century defense*, Jan. 2012, p. 1, http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

² Department of Defense, *Defense budget priorities and choices*, Jan. 2012, p. 1, http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Budget_Priorities.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

size if the US government does not undo sequestration, a process for across-the-board reductions set to take effect automatically in January 2013.³ Sequestration was triggered in late 2011 by the failure of the US Congress to reach a political compromise on reducing America's soaring budget deficits. Even if the government averts sequestration, the pressure to reduce spending will remain for the foreseeable future.

The recent changes to US defence strategy, plans and forces have placed the United States at greater risk of over-promising and under-delivering on its global security ambitions. This risk affects every actor in the international system because the United States serves as the linchpin of an interconnected system of alliances and coalitions that accounts for almost 80 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) and more than 80 per cent of global military spending.⁴ America's success in achieving its goals directly affects other actors' success in achieving their own goals. Analysts in the United Kingdom, the United States and elsewhere need to think critically about the weaknesses in US strategy. If not managed properly, these weaknesses could sever the connection between power and purpose, leaving the United States militarily pre-eminent but unable to achieve the goals articulated in its strategic guidance. Such an outcome would reinforce global perceptions of American decline.

This article begins by describing America's ambitions, which are to sustain the US military's global pre-eminence and its ability to operate worldwide, but to apply this military power using the new planning and regional concepts contained in the strategic guidance. It then analyses three risks facing US strategy: emerging security threats; the role of US allies and partners; and domestic constraints in the United States. The article focuses on military affairs but recognizes that economic strength and diplomatic influence are critical to achieving American goals. For research material, it draws on government statements, news accounts, scholarly articles, and dozens of off-the-record interviews with US policy-makers conducted by the author in 2011 and 2012 while preparing two reports on US defence spending.⁵

Ambitions of US strategy

Today, the United States is seeking to preserve its global military pre-eminence as a matter of national policy. Pre-eminence entails having, and being perceived as having, a level of military strength that surpasses the closest competitors by a significant margin, so potential adversaries know unequivocally that they will

³ Leon Panetta, 'Effects of sequestration on the Department of Defense', 14 Nov. 2011, http://lgraham.senate.gov/public/_files/_pdfs/11%2014%2011%20Panetta%20McCain%20Graham%20Ltr.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁴ Michael O'Hanlon, *The wounded giant: America's armed forces in an age of austerity* (New York: Penguin, 2011), pp. 23–4.

⁵ David W. Barno, Nora Bensahel, Matthew Irvine and Travis Sharp, *Sustainable pre-eminence: reforming the U.S. military at a time of strategic change* (Washington DC: Center for a New American Security, 2012), <http://www.cnas.org/sustainablepreeminence>; David W. Barno, Nora Bensahel and Travis Sharp, *Hard choices: responsible defense in an age of austerity* (Washington DC: Center for a New American Security, 2011), <http://www.cnas.org/hardchoices>, both accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

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incur high costs if they challenge the United States. The US government has pursued military pre-eminence for decades, and both Republican and Democratic defence policy establishments are deeply committed to it. Even leading figures who have criticized how the United States has used its power since 9/11 tend to support pre-eminence.

Thus, despite today's fiscal challenges and regular warnings from scholars advocating greater restraint in the use of US military power, America's political leaders want the country to remain militarily pre-eminent.⁶ 'Our military will be leaner, but the world must know the United States is going to maintain our military superiority,' stated President Obama in January 2012.⁷ Echoing the Commander-in-Chief, General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said about the strategic guidance: 'It's a sound strategy. It ensures we remain the pre-eminent military in the world.'⁸ Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has criticized the Obama administration for cutting defence and has called for more military spending.⁹ Regardless of who wins the election in November 2012, the American president for the next four years will support US military pre-eminence.

Maintaining pre-eminence helps ensure that American armed forces can operate worldwide in several locations at once. American leaders have long believed the US military's global reach deters armed conflict, reduces international insecurity, undergirds the interdependent global economy and promotes political freedom consistent with western democratic values.¹⁰ The guidance pledges to preserve global reach: 'As a nation with important interests in multiple regions, our forces must be capable of deterring and defeating aggression by an opportunistic adversary in one region even when our forces are committed to a large-scale operation elsewhere.'¹¹

Though the guidance upholds the two long-standing American goals of global pre-eminence and global reach, it seeks to apply this military power using new planning and regional concepts.

⁶ For advocates of restraint, see Stephen M. Walt, 'The end of the American era', *The National Interest*, no. 116, Nov.–Dec. 2011, pp. 6–16; John Mearsheimer, 'Imperial by design', *The National Interest*, no. 111, Jan.–Feb. 2011, pp. 16–34; Christopher Preble, *The power problem: how American military dominance makes us less safe, less prosperous, and less free* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Andrew J. Bacevich, *The limits of power: the end of American exceptionalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008); Barry R. Posen, 'The case for restraint', *The American Interest* 3: 2, Nov.–Dec. 2007, pp. 7–17.

⁷ Barack Obama, 'Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon', 5 Jan. 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4953>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁸ Martin Dempsey, 'Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon', 5 Jan. 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4953>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁹ Mitt Romney, *An American century: a strategy to secure America's enduring interests and ideals*, Oct. 2011, pp. 13–17, http://www.mittromney.com/sites/default/files/shared/AnAmericanCentury-WhitePaper_0.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

¹⁰ For influential analyses of these dynamics, see Barry R. Posen, 'Command of the commons: the military foundation of U.S. hegemony', *International Security* 28: 1, Summer 2003, pp. 5–46; William C. Wohlforth, 'The stability of a unipolar world', *International Security* 24: 1, Summer 1999, pp. 5–41.

¹¹ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 4.

Planning concept

The guidance subtly changes DOD's force planning construct, an esoteric but important tool consisting of scenarios that defence officials use as 'a yardstick by which to gauge the sufficiency of current and future forces'.¹² The construct helps DOD determine how to size, equip, organize, train and position US military forces.

For decades, DOD's force planning construct centred on the US military's ability to fight and win two major regional conflicts (MRCs) in overlapping timeframes. During the 1990s, American planners generally assumed these MRCs would be conventional wars against state adversaries possessing substantial ground forces, with Iraq and North Korea serving as the most plausible adversaries.¹³ In 2001, the Bush administration proposed a more nuanced construct in its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the major DOD planning document released every four years. This form of the construct introduced more flexibility and refined the temporal requirements: a notable change, because reaction time is typically the most demanding variable in US military planning. Yet the 9/11 attacks and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq quickly overwhelmed the construct's assumptions.¹⁴ The Bush administration's second construct, released in 2006, placed greater emphasis on irregular warfare, threats from non-state actors and homeland defence. Yet it neglected to list the military forces required to execute its plan, thereby widening the gap between rhetoric and reality.¹⁵ Overall, the Bush administration revised but did not discard the framework of two near-simultaneous MRCs.

US strategists have long debated whether the two-MRC standard was anything more than a figment of DOD's imagination used to justify large defence budgets. Many observers have questioned whether the US military has ever had the ability to win two conflicts simultaneously.¹⁶ The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have intensified these doubts, which will not disappear any time soon.

The Obama administration's 2010 QDR and 2012 guidance did not abandon the two-MRC standard, but they did revise it further. The QDR declared:

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. Ensuring flexibility of the whole force does not require each part of the force to do everything equally well. Not all challenges pose the same degree of threat to national interests, rely on U.S. military capabilities equally, or have the same chance of occurrence. Opera-

¹² Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Feb. 2010, p. 41, http://www.defense.gov/qdr/images/QDR_as_of_12Feb10_1000.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

¹³ Kathleen H. Hicks and Samuel J. Brannen, 'Force planning in the 2010 QDR', *Joint Force Quarterly* 59, 4th q. 2010, p. 137.

¹⁴ Anthony H. Cordesman and Paul S. Frederiksen, *America's uncertain approach to strategy and force planning* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2006), pp. 10–11, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060705_strategy_force.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

¹⁵ Cordesman and Frederiksen, *America's uncertain approach to strategy and force planning*, pp. 14–15.

¹⁶ Colin Clark, 'Obama drops two MRCs; invests in ISR, counter-terror and Pacific', AOL Defense, 5 Jan. 2012, <http://defense.aol.com/2012/01/05/obama-sort-of-drops-two-mrcs-invests-in-isr-counter-terror-and/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

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tions may also vary in duration and intensity for maritime, air, ground, space, and cyber forces.¹⁷

The guidance elaborated on this approach. It stated:

Our planning envisages forces that are able to fully deny a capable state's aggressive objectives in one region by conducting a combined arms campaign across all domains—land, air, maritime, space, and cyberspace. This includes being able to *secure territory and populations and facilitate a transition to stable governance on a small scale for a limited period using standing forces and, if necessary, for an extended period with mobilized forces*. Even when U.S. forces are committed to a large-scale operation in one region, *they will be capable of denying the objectives of—or imposing unacceptable costs on—an opportunistic aggressor in a second region*.¹⁸

A senior Obama administration official said the guidance's language meant that the United States would be able to fight and win one conflict while being able to 'spoil' a second adversary's ambitions.¹⁹ As a result, some analysts use 'win-spoil' as shorthand to describe the administration's revised construct.

Instead of shaping its forces around the ability to fight two overlapping MRCs using combined arms campaigns in which 'each part of the force [does] everything equally well' and commanders 'rely on U.S. military capabilities equally', to use the 2010 QDR's language, DOD is now planning around the ability to wage one comprehensive campaign while undertaking a more tailored campaign elsewhere using a more selective force package that may be smaller and/or exclude certain capabilities.²⁰ The US military will array its forces to meet the requirement to deploy significant conventional ground forces and supporting elements to win a comprehensive campaign while relying more on naval, air, cyber- and special operations forces to deny an aggressor's objectives in a tailored campaign.²¹ In other words, DOD will be more willing to disaggregate the joint force and use only certain parts of it to meet certain security challenges.²² As Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter observed: 'In some cases we can best meet our objectives and deny the aggressors' objectives in ways other than by land invasion and occupation.'²³

In the light of this disaggregated approach and new budget constraints, the Obama administration has made numerous cuts to US military forces. The Pentagon has decided that it does not require as many ground forces as it needed to fight simultaneous wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Accordingly, the guidance

¹⁷ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, p. 42.

¹⁸ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 4 (emphasis in original).

¹⁹ Elisabeth Bumiller and Thom Shanker, 'Panetta to offer strategy for cutting military budget', *New York Times*, 2 Jan. 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/03/us/pentagon-to-present-vision-of-reduced-military.html>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

²⁰ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, p. 42.

²¹ The US military also will be sized and equipped to conduct so-called 'steady state' missions, such as homeland defence and nuclear deterrence, as it conducts the two campaigns.

²² Analysts seeking to better understand this disaggregated approach should consult Andrew R. Hoehn, Adam Grissom, David A. Ochmanek, David A. Shlapak and Alan J. Vick, *A new division of labor: meeting America's security challenges beyond Iraq* (Washington DC: RAND Corporation, 2007), http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG499.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

²³ Ashton Carter, 'Defense strategic guidance media roundtable at the Pentagon', 5 Jan. 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4954>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

declares that ‘U.S. forces will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations’.²⁴ The DOD proposed reducing by 2017 the size of the US Army on active duty from 562,000 to 490,000 and the US Marine Corps on active duty from 202,000 to 182,000.²⁵ The reductions will restore both Army and Marine Corps to levels closer to those of 2001, although officials have emphasized that today’s forces are far more capable.²⁶ In addition, DOD trimmed its goal for the size of its naval fleet from 328 ships to between 310 and 316 ships, and announced plans to eliminate 280 aircraft over the next five years.²⁷ DOD will offset the risks involved by cultivating ‘reversibility’: the management of military personnel, force structure and the defence-industrial base in ways that permit the United States to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet unforeseen future demands.²⁸

Regional concept

The US government often avoids regional prioritization for fear of sending the wrong signals to both allies and potential adversaries. Nevertheless, the current guidance sets clearer priorities than most previous US strategy documents by identifying the Asia–Pacific and the greater Middle East as the two regions where the US military should focus its attention and resources.

The guidance embraces what can be described as a ‘pivot but hedge’ global posture for the US military.²⁹ American armed forces will pivot to the Asia–Pacific but hedge against potential threats in the greater Middle East and elsewhere. The guidance declares that the United States ‘will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia–Pacific region’ by emphasizing current regional alliances, expanding cooperation with emerging partners, and making additional investments as required.³⁰ At the same time, the United States ‘will continue to place a premium on U.S. and allied military presence in—and support of—partner nations’ throughout the greater Middle East.³¹ Finally, the guidance declares that the United States must ‘evolve’ its posture in Europe and develop ‘innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches’ in Africa, Latin America and elsewhere.³²

American leaders have argued that defence cuts will not impair the US

²⁴ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 6.

²⁵ Martin Dempsey, statement to the Budget Committee, US Senate, 28 Feb. 2012, p. 9, http://budget.senate.gov/democratic/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=f6e340d8-4785-45a7-881d-1a8fda502572, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

²⁶ Raymond T. Odierno, ‘The U.S. Army in a time of transition: building a flexible force’, *Foreign Affairs* 91: 3, May–June 2012, p. 7.

²⁷ Congressional Budget Office, *An analysis of the Navy’s fiscal year 2013 shipbuilding plan*, July 2012, pp. 1–4, http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/07-25-12-NavyShipbuilding_0.pdf; US Air Force, *Air Force priorities for a new strategy with constrained budgets*, Feb. 2012, p. 3, <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-120201-027.pdf>, both accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

²⁸ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 7.

²⁹ The guidance actually used the word ‘rebalance’ instead of ‘pivot’. For more on the ‘pivot but hedge’ approach, see David W. Barno, Nora Bensahel and Travis Sharp, ‘Pivot but hedge: a strategy for pivoting to Asia while hedging in the Middle East’, *Orbis* 56: 2, Spring 2012, pp. 158–76.

³⁰ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 2.

³¹ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 2.

³² Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 3.

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military's growing presence in the Asia–Pacific. 'We will be strengthening our presence in the Asia–Pacific, and budget reductions will not come at the expense of that critical region,' President Obama declared.³³ To maintain the regional military balance, the Pentagon will bolster its partnerships with states including Australia, Singapore and Vietnam. It will assign 60 per cent of its naval forces to the Pacific by 2020, up from about 50 per cent today.³⁴ And it will further develop Air–Sea Battle, an operational concept designed to overcome the anti-access/area-denial military strategies employed by countries such as China and Iran. In its new budget, DOD prioritized investments related to Air–Sea Battle such as attack submarines, a new stealth bomber, enhanced missile defences, cyber offence and defence, and resilient space-based capabilities.³⁵

Meanwhile, US leaders have pledged to stay prepared to respond to future contingencies in the volatile Middle East. 'We have very strong capabilities in place to deal with any circumstances that could develop in that region. We feel fully prepared for whatever might take place,' Secretary Panetta avowed.³⁶ The US military plans to preserve regional security by maintaining a favourable balance of power *vis-à-vis* Iran, keeping energy trade routes open and preventing terrorist groups from establishing bases of operation.³⁷ DOD believes that regular regional training deployments by US ground and air forces, complemented by tailored deployments of special operations and naval forces as well as targeted arms sales and maintenance agreements, will both deter adversaries and reassure friends.

Pentagon officials have insisted that budget cuts and the guidance's promise to 'evolve' America's posture in Europe do not signal US abandonment of its European allies. As General Dempsey argued, 'What we do will always be built on the strong foundation of our traditional strategic partnerships, and NATO is chief among them. So this is not a separation in any way from NATO.'³⁸ DOD has proposed removing two army heavy brigade combat teams from Germany, leaving only two brigades—agile Stryker and airborne formations—to train with allied ground forces. The United States intends to offset the reduction by allocating a US-based brigade to the NATO Response Force and additional US-based units to Europe for regular training rotations. It also will continue to invest in NATO missile defence.³⁹

Finally, US officials have maintained that the guidance's emphasis on the Asia–Pacific and greater Middle East does not signal US retrenchment from other regions. 'Even as we put an emphasis on Asia and the Middle East, we're not abandoning every other region of the world. We are a global power with global

³³ Obama, 'Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon'.

³⁴ Leon Panetta, 'Remarks by Secretary Panetta at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore', 2 June 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=5049>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

³⁵ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, pp. 4–5.

³⁶ Leon Panetta, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US Senate, 14 Feb. 2012, p. 60, <http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2012/02%20February/12-02%20-%202012-14-12.pdf>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

³⁷ Michèle Flournoy and Janine Davidson, 'Obama's new global posture: the logic of U.S. foreign deployments', *Foreign Affairs* 91: 4, July–Aug. 2012, pp. 60–2.

³⁸ Dempsey, 'Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon'.

³⁹ Flournoy and Davidson, 'Obama's new global posture', pp. 62–3.

interests. We're going to stay engaged. We're going to keep investing in those relationships,' pledged former Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy.⁴⁰ The US military intends to build the capacity of its partners in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere through regional engagement activities such as military exercises, foreign military sales and training, and political and economic assistance. To strengthen engagement, the US military will increasingly rely on special operations forces, joint interagency task forces, the US Coast Guard and the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Risks to US strategy

The United States should be able to sustain its global military pre-eminence and global military reach for decades to come if it makes the political decision to do so. Despite the intensifying debate over American decline, these two long-standing American goals should remain achievable for three reasons. First, the US military is significantly more capable than its closest competitors, who cannot close the gap solely through large investments in men and materiel. US forces are superior because of both their experience and how they are led, employed, trained and supported.⁴¹ It will take competitors years to match American proficiency in these areas. Second, the United States will be wealthy enough to afford a pre-eminent military with global reach even if its relative economic position declines. The United States currently spends 3.5 per cent of its GDP on its base defence budget, a sum it can afford into perpetuity if it chooses to prioritize accordingly.⁴² Third, Americans have evinced an enduring preference for the United States to play a major role in world affairs, and they have been willing historically to pay a lot to enable it to do so.⁴³ Despite some signs of creeping isolationism within the electorate, America's preference for global pre-eminence and global reach is unlikely to slacken any time soon. In fact, its appetite for pre-eminence may grow as Americans become more concerned about China's rise.⁴⁴

The primary risks in US defence strategy lie not in preserving global pre-eminence and global reach, but in successfully applying that military power in the ways outlined in the strategic guidance. Emerging security threats, the role of US allies and partners, and domestic constraints in the United States each present a distinct risk.

⁴⁰ Michèle Flournoy, 'Defense strategic guidance media roundtable at the Pentagon', 5 Jan. 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4954>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁴¹ Stephen Biddle, *Military power: explaining victory and defeat in modern battle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Risa A. Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley, eds, *Creating military power: the sources of military effectiveness* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007).

⁴² Department of Defense, *National defense budget estimates for FY 2013*, March 2012, p. 266, http://comptroller.defense.gov/defbudget/fy2013/FY13_Green_Book.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁴³ Gallup, 'U.S. position in the world', undated, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116350/Position-World.aspx>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁴⁴ Of course, there is no formula for determining the defence budget required to preserve pre-eminence. Different answers might reasonably be hundreds of billions of dollars apart, confounding the expectations of allies and potential adversaries.

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Emerging security threats

At least three emerging threats pose a serious risk to US strategy: the proliferation of advanced military technologies; the rise of China; and the continued prevalence of state instability and failure.

Military technologies, ranging from nuclear weaponry and stealth to the global positioning system and night vision, have given the US military an edge for decades. In the future, however, American dominance in the global competition for technological supremacy may not be guaranteed. As Secretary Panetta conceded when asked about the risks associated with the guidance: 'We depend an awful lot on technology here. I think technology is very important, but our ability to develop that technology, to make sure that it works, to make sure that we have that leap-ahead capability, is something that involves some risks.'⁴⁵ With budgets under constraint, the United States will find it harder to spend the money required to research, develop, test, field and protect military technologies that will outpace those of its future enemies.

The US military faces growing threats from precision-guided munitions, cyber weapons, biotechnology, advanced air defences, unmanned aircraft systems, stealth aircraft and robotics. The spread of these technologies and shifts in the global balance of power have led to what the influential American strategist Andrew Krepinevich calls the 'democratization of destruction'.⁴⁶ The US military's heavy dependence on technology makes it uniquely vulnerable to an adversary who can neutralize its advanced systems. For example, an attack against US satellites could disrupt global command and control of American forces, leaving US commanders unable to coordinate military operations. China is currently developing kinetic kill vehicles, jammers, lasers, microwaves and cyber weapons to disable the space-based assets of its adversaries in future conflicts.⁴⁷

Another distinct risk to US strategy lies in America's response to the rise of China, because the United States may do too much or too little to deal with China's burgeoning power. American leaders have emphasized that the United States does not seek to contain or confront China. Yet the strategic guidance outlines how the US military will preserve the regional balance of power, such as bolstering the US military's regional presence and developing Air–Sea Battle.

On the one hand, the United States risks doing too much by making conflict with China a self-fulfilling prophecy. From the Chinese perspective, Washington's actions appear threatening and suggest that the United States intends to balk China's rise. Beijing may respond to this perceived threat militarily, triggering a classic security dilemma that will leave other regional actors trapped perilously between competing superpowers.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Panetta, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US Senate, p. 23.

⁴⁶ Andrew Krepinevich, 'Get ready for the democratization of destruction', *Foreign Policy* 188, Sept.–Oct. 2011, pp. 80–1.

⁴⁷ Department of Defense, *Military and security developments involving the People's Republic of China 2012*, May 2012, p. 9, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2012_CMPR_Final.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁴⁸ For a concise version of this argument, see Paul Godwin, 'Asia's dangerous security dilemma', *Current History* 109: 728, Sept. 2010, pp. 264–6.

On the other hand, the United States risks doing too little by signalling that it is not serious about maintaining the regional balance of power. The Obama administration is simply not credible when it claims that budget cuts ‘will not come at the expense’ of the Asia–Pacific.⁴⁹ As Secretary Panetta himself admitted, ‘you can’t take a half a trillion dollars out of the defense budget and not incur some risks’.⁵⁰ The administration has argued that any force reductions were more than offset by America’s increased regional military presence and its preservation of those capabilities most relevant to regional security, such as attack submarines and long-range bombers. While this argument may be true, it may also be irrelevant, because the presence and effectiveness of US forces rarely align perfectly with perceptions of American power. Budget cuts reinforce perceptions of American decline among some audiences regardless of whether the US military remains visibly present and capable of achieving its stated goals.⁵¹ Should sequestration occur in January 2013, the presence and effectiveness of the US military, along with international perceptions of its efficacy, may deteriorate even further.

The third and final security threat, state instability and failure, endangers a US strategy that downsizes the ground forces typically required to respond to unexpected security crises. Insecurity within states shows no signs of abating.⁵² Global trends related to demographics, urbanization and climate change may intensify destabilizing phenomena, including refugee flows, illicit trafficking, religious radicalization, the creation of safe havens for terrorist groups and civil wars. Many Americans continue to support active use of the US military to remedy these ills, despite the risks involved.⁵³ Though many Americans are unhappy with how the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have unfolded, their disappointment may not harden into permanent scepticism about armed intervention abroad.

Politico-economic trends suggest that the regions most likely to generate near-term crises stemming from state instability and failure calling for US military intervention are the greater Middle East and Africa.⁵⁴ For example, the US military might have to intervene in Egypt to secure the Suez Canal and the Suez-to-Mediterranean Pipeline in order to protect global trade and energy flows as civil conflict erupts in the country. It might have to deploy forces to Yemen to eliminate terrorist bases that have served as staging locations for regional attacks. Or it might have to lead a UN-sanctioned multinational force into Sudan to repel northern Sudanese forces that had invaded independent South Sudan. Any one

⁴⁹ Obama, ‘Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon’.

⁵⁰ Panetta, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US Senate, p. 23.

⁵¹ Of course, shrinking budgets are merely one factor that may have an impact on perceptions of American decline.

⁵² J. J. Messner, *Failed states index 2012: change is the only constant* (Washington DC: Fund for Peace, 2010), <http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/?q=node/239>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁵³ Pew Research Center, ‘The American–Western European values gap’, updated 29 Feb. 2012, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/11/17/the-american-western-european-values-gap/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁵⁴ In contrast, the Asia–Pacific’s dominant security concerns revolve around China’s opaque military modernization and assertive foreign policy, which will pose far more of a challenge 10–15 years from now. The United States therefore has a window of opportunity to get its approach to the Asia–Pacific right. Interestingly, Chinese analysts view the challenge posed by the US military as unfolding along a similar timeline. See Department of Defense, *Military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China 2012*, p. 2.

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of these scenarios would require at least one brigade of approximately 5,000 US ground forces for several weeks, and all could expand quickly beyond that basic requirement.⁵⁵

These scenarios crystallize the risks that state instability and failure pose to US strategy. If the United States had to perform any of these missions, it would have to do so while simultaneously maintaining its significant troop commitments in Afghanistan, Europe, South Korea and elsewhere. Responding rapidly would place immediate stress on US ground forces and the air, naval and intelligence assets that support them. As Secretary Panetta remarked:

We are going to have a smaller force, and when you have a smaller force the ability to move that force where you have to is not going to be as easy as it would be with a larger force, the ability to move quickly, to be agile, to be able to deploy them. I think we can do it under the plan we've presented, but it clearly is an additional risk.⁵⁶

US ground forces are the shock absorbers of the global security environment, and having fewer of them will expose the United States and its allies to greater risks from unforeseen crises. DOD's new guidance accepts greater risk than military commanders would prefer, all other things being equal, by shrinking the US military and relying more on selective force packages that may lack the capabilities required to meet unexpected contingencies. As General Dempsey remarked: 'We do accept some risks in this strategy as all strategies must. Because we will be somewhat smaller, these risks will be measured in time and in capacity.'⁵⁷ The US military may respond more slowly and with fewer forces than it can today, and it may not be able to sustain as many deployments for as long without mobilizing its reserve forces. In humanitarian crisis scenarios, the cost of a smaller and slower response might be measured in human lives.

The role of US allies and partners

The United States has fought virtually all its past wars alongside allies and partners, and will almost certainly seek to do so in the future. The strategic guidance states that 'across the globe we will seek to be the security partner of choice', and uses some variation of the words 'ally' and 'partner' 49 times in eight pages.⁵⁸ After all, the quickest way for the US military to expand its capabilities in response to a security threat is to persuade allies to contribute forces to a campaign. States dealing with constrained budgets often look to their allies to carry more of the security burden, and the United States is doing so today.⁵⁹ In November 2011, Secretary Panetta reiterated America's intention to 'share our burdens more and

⁵⁵ These scenarios are derived from Nathan Freier, *U.S. ground force capabilities through 2020* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2011), pp. 23–61, http://csis.org/files/publication/111116%20-%20Freier_USGroundForces_Web.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁵⁶ Panetta, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US Senate, p. 23.

⁵⁷ Dempsey, 'Defense strategic guidance briefing from the Pentagon'.

⁵⁸ Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. global leadership*, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Andrew Krepinevich, Simon Chin and Todd Harrison, *Strategy in austerity* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2012), pp. x–xi, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2012/06/strategy-in-austerity/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

more effectively with our partners'.⁶⁰ While political and economic contributions by allies can help overcome security challenges, they are no substitute for military contributions, which send the strongest message of resolve and underwrite politico-economic initiatives.

The changing nature of the global security environment has made allies increasingly vital to accomplishing American goals.⁶¹ The global commons of air, sea, space and cyberspace, which no one nation controls but on which all rely, are the conduits of today's international economy. Yet the commons are too vast and too complex for the US military to guard single-handedly. Mobile communications and internet-based social media ensure that modern conflicts occur under unprecedented scrutiny. In this interconnected world, the US military cannot attain the political legitimacy required to support a successful military campaign unless its allies are involved. Finally, twenty-first-century threats such as state instability and failure, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and cyber attacks are transnational and necessitate coordinated action across borders. The US military cannot protect American interests against these threats unless it cooperates with other nations.

However, America's allies may prove unwilling or unable to increase their military investment and involvement to the levels required to offset defence cuts by the United States. This may create a global security vacuum that could result in greater instability and the emergence of new regional orders, particularly in the Asia-Pacific, that are less compatible with western interests and values.⁶²

The yawning capability and commitment deficit in NATO constitutes a serious risk in US strategy. The United States has been asking its European allies to contribute greater capabilities to alliance operations for decades, with only limited results. As the world economy teetered from 2008 to 2010, at least 16 European NATO member states reduced their defence spending.⁶³ The lingering global financial crisis and the demands of ageing populations will continue to constrain European military budgets, while domestic politics will continue to limit European countries' willingness to participate in operations outside Europe—which is precisely where crises are likely to erupt. Even if European countries do increase their military investment or adopt innovative ways to pool their resources, they still will not keep pace with the US military, which will continue investing in technologies that its allies cannot afford. As a result, the interoperability gap between the US military and European forces will continue to widen, although interoperability can be maintained on a limited basis and in certain niche areas such as cyber capabilities.

⁶⁰ Leon Panetta, 'Remarks by Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta at the Halifax International Security Forum', 18 Nov. 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4931>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁶¹ For the author's take on the unique role of the United Kingdom, see Travis Sharp, *An international regulator: a US view on future UK defence plans* (London: Royal United Services Institute, 2010), <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4BD7D5F88D18A/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁶² G. John Ikenberry, 'The future of the liberal world order: internationalism after America', *Foreign Affairs* 90: 3, May–June 2011, pp. 56–68.

⁶³ John Chipman, *Military balance 2012: press statement* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2012), <http://www.iiss.org/publications/military-balance/the-military-balance-2012/press-statement/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

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Although European countries have made noteworthy contributions to the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, most US policy-makers—regardless of the diplomatic chords they strike in public—remain perpetually dissatisfied with European defence investment. Many in Washington viewed the Libya campaign as a discouraging demonstration of NATO's dependence on the United States to provide basic capabilities. Future US defence leaders who have spent the past decade fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq have inherited the American brand of Euroscepticism. In Afghanistan, the standard joke about the acronym 'ISAF'—that it stands not for 'International Security Assistance Force' but for 'I Saw Americans Fighting'—elicits more grimaces than grins from American troops.⁶⁴ Such attitudes imperil the future of NATO.

The United States is looking to new partners, particularly in the Asia–Pacific, to play larger roles in the protection of international security. On this front there are reasons to be guardedly optimistic. Empowered by economic expansion and motivated by fear of China, many Asian nations have demonstrated more political will to invest in defence than their European counterparts. In 2012, Asian defence spending is expected to exceed European defence spending for the first time in modern history.⁶⁵ India was the world's largest importer of weapons systems between 2006 and 2010, and has taken steps to develop its indigenous defence industry.⁶⁶ Members of the Gulf Cooperation Council including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates continue to invest their oil wealth in robust military modernization. South American countries such as Colombia and Brazil have taken steps to project military power outside the continent. Even some mineral-rich African nations have increased their defence spending in response to the metastasizing threat from Al-Qaeda.

Yet many of these new partners face the same capability and commitment deficits that plague Europe. Asian nations are hesitant to accentuate their military power too much for fear of provoking China. They may prefer to play the United States and China off against one another in order to maintain their independence and harvest as many favours as possible from the duelling superpowers. Indian leaders have pledged to maintain their country's traditional independence, and some Indian military officials have spoken sceptically about the prospect of their country's becoming a net provider of regional security. Middle Eastern countries are focusing inward on terrorism and domestic instability in the wake of the Arab Spring. They have never been particularly keen on participating in military operations outside the region, although those that have done so previously will probably continue to make sizeable contributions in order to curry favour with the United States. In Latin America and Africa, most nations lack the resources required to field capable militaries and prefer to concentrate on domestic and border threats.

⁶⁴ Thom Shanker and Steven Erlanger, 'Blunt U.S. warning reveals deep strains in NATO', *New York Times*, 10 June 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/11/world/europe/11nato.html>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁶⁵ Chipman, *Military balance 2012: press statement*.

⁶⁶ Guy Ben-Ari and Nicholas Lombardo, *India's military modernization* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2011), <http://cis.org/publication/indias-military-modernization>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

The paucity of highly capable and deeply committed security partners available to the United States worldwide is clearly a risk in America's defence strategy. The strategic guidance commits the US military to building the capacity of allies and partners so that they can resolve security problems themselves. Yet many elements of this global capacity-building campaign are unprecedented and may fall short of expectations, whether because of lacklustre US performance, a lack of budgetary resources, or the misgivings and misdeeds of partner nations.

Domestic constraints in the United States

Budgetary, political and institutional constraints in the United States are a third major source of risk in US defence strategy. These constraints consume much of the attention of American policy-makers and the US media, and they affect the security calculus of America's allies and potential adversaries alike. Regrettably, the current debate in Washington is for the most part failing to account for the international reverberations of American decisions.

While the United States usually reduces its defence spending as it ends wars, the current push to cut defence is also being fuelled by Americans' widespread frustration with growing US indebtedness.⁶⁷ US national debt held by the public has reached nearly US\$11 trillion, more than 70 per cent of America's GDP: the highest level since 1950.⁶⁸ Foreign nations hold more than US\$5 trillion in US debt. China alone possesses more than US\$1 trillion, representing 7.6 per cent of US GDP.⁶⁹ As noted above, in 2011 the US government adopted the Budget Control Act, which reduced DOD's planned spending by US\$487 billion over the next decade as part of an agreement to raise the US Treasury's debt ceiling and avoid its defaulting on its financial obligations. And, as also noted above, the size of defence cuts will roughly double if the US government does not undo sequestration before it goes into effect in January 2013.

US defence officials have argued that if sequestration occurs, they will have to throw the new strategic guidance 'out the window' and start from scratch.⁷⁰ General Dempsey has said that sequestration would pose 'unacceptable risk'

⁶⁷ The desire to reduce government budget deficits was also a factor during America's last defence drawdown following the Cold War.

⁶⁸ Department of the Treasury, Bureau of the Public Debt, *Monthly statement of the public debt of the United States*, March 2012, <http://www.treasurydirect.gov/govt/reports/pd/mspd/2012/opds032012.pdf>; Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Gross domestic product: fourth quarter and annual 2011*, March 2012, http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/national/gdp/2012/gdp4q11_3rd.htm, both accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁶⁹ Department of the Treasury and Federal Reserve Board, *Major foreign holders of Treasury securities*, updated 16 Apr. 2012, <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/data-chart-center/tic/Documents/mfh.txt>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012; Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Gross domestic product: fourth quarter and annual 2011*.

⁷⁰ Leon Panetta, 'Remarks by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the 48th Munich Security Conference, Bayerischer Hof, Munich, Germany', 4 Feb. 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4972>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012. However, administration officials have alluded to the possibility that DOD may be able to absorb some cuts beyond US\$487 billion without abandoning the strategic guidance. As former Secretary Flournoy commented: 'We've managed this in a way that the risks associated with this are acceptable. But I think there is a point at which if you went too far down the road of further cuts, that statement would no longer be true': Flournoy, 'Defense strategic guidance media roundtable at the Pentagon'.

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because logistical and political limits on DOD's ability to downsize its ground forces and basing infrastructure will force the Pentagon to generate most of the savings by cutting operations, maintenance and training—the cornerstones of US military pre-eminence.⁷¹ Military commanders fear that cutting spending in these areas will lead to a 'hollow force' reminiscent of the US military after the Vietnam War. A hollow force appears ready for combat but in reality lacks the high-quality people, equipment and training that produce military effectiveness.

Even if the US government averts sequestration, the pressure to reduce spending will remain for the foreseeable future. Additional defence budget cuts will impose higher risks on US defence strategy by reducing the combat forces available to execute America's global security ambitions.⁷² Reductions in naval ships will lessen America's ability to project power in the vast maritime domain of the Asia–Pacific. Reductions in F-35 aircraft will challenge America's ability to deploy and sustain combat air power in two different theatres simultaneously, and will raise the unit cost of the aircraft for America's partners buying the jet. Reductions in ground forces will hinder America's ability to respond rapidly to unexpected threats. Reductions in defence-wide expenditure on elements such as intelligence and DOD's civilian workforce will encumber the sophisticated support network that gives US troops an advantage on the battlefield.

If the US government adopted innovative new policies, it might be able to reduce some of these capabilities while increasing the overall effectiveness of the US military.⁷³ Yet to date American leaders have proved unwilling to embrace such policies. Sticking to the status quo carries serious risks because the costs of fielding US military forces continue to grow. Since 2001, military personnel costs on a per-person basis have grown by 46 per cent in real terms owing to new and expanded benefits, health care inflation, increased allowances for housing and subsistence, and pay rises higher than the employment cost index.⁷⁴ Per-person operation and maintenance costs have grown by an average of US\$4,000 per year since 2001, about 85 per cent more than the historical annual growth rate since 1980, owing in part to the wear and tear of fighting intense ground wars on the other side of the world.⁷⁵ If these trends are not reversed or the defence budget does not grow to keep pace, DOD will have fewer resources available to invest in weapons procurement and research and development, the technological underpinnings of US military pre-eminence.

Broader political constraints also imperil US defence strategy. Partisan politics have always influenced US defence policy, even though many Americans forget

⁷¹ Martin Dempsey, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US Senate, 14 Feb. 2012, pp. 23–4, <http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2012/02%20February/12-02%20-%202-14-12.pdf>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁷² Barno et al, *Hard choices*, pp. 13–22.

⁷³ Barno et al., *Sustainable pre-eminence*, p. 5.

⁷⁴ Todd Harrison, *Analysis of the FY 2012 defense budget* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2011), pp. 18–19, 25, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2011/07/analysis-of-the-fy2012-defense-budget/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁷⁵ Congressional Budget Office, *Long-term implications of the 2013 future years defense program*, July 2012, p. 18, http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/07-11-12-FYDP_forPosting_o.pdf, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

the white-hot politicization that characterized debates during the Cold War. Nevertheless, US policy today is subject to the tribulations of America's intensifying political polarization, which by several objective measures has become more extreme.⁷⁶ Some American analysts believe Republicans and Democrats will ultimately negotiate a 'grand bargain' to reduce US budget deficits, arriving at a measure that includes some combination of tax increases, spending cuts and entitlement reforms. Yet given the current schisms between and within the Republican and Democratic visions for government, there is the real possibility that in the absence of an American war, the two parties will fail to reach any enduring understanding about the appropriate level of US defence spending.⁷⁷ Even if Congress negotiated a grand bargain, law-makers could later repeal it if they had the political support to do so. Defence spending could become just another recurring skirmish in the never-ending political war between Republicans and Democrats in Washington.

A final domestic risk in US strategy is institutional: that DOD and the US military will not execute the concepts outlined in the strategic guidance. History is replete with examples of militaries performing poorly not out of malicious intent, but because combat operations are complicated endeavours undertaken by unpredictable and sometimes unreliable human beings. Unintentional failure is certainly possible in today's complex security environment. However, a more interesting institutional risk is purposeful resistance by parts of the US military. Historically, declining defence budgets have increased rivalry among the services, and the competition is clearly heating up today. The strategic guidance's focus on the Asia-Pacific and the 'win-spoil' force planning construct may intensify interservice competition for missions and resources among and within the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. Each service's deepest fear is that the security challenges for which it is less suited will emerge as America's dominant security priorities, facing it with eventual irrelevance. The US Navy and Air Force have borne this fear since 2001 as the United States focused on the ground-centric campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, two landlocked countries that offered no opportunities for the naval battles and aerial dogfights they were designed to win.

The Navy and Air Force see America's pivot to the Asia-Pacific, a vast maritime domain in which land armies are hindered by the tyranny of distance, as an opportunity to reclaim their rightful place atop the US military's pecking order. In contrast, many in the US Army see the pivot to the Asia-Pacific as an inherent threat to the army's relevance. They have responded either by emphasizing the important role played by the army in the Asia-Pacific or by warning that unexpected security challenges are likely to emerge outside the Asia-Pacific and that the United States will need ground forces to respond to these.

The risk to US strategy from these perceptions is that the services will resist implementing those concepts in the guidance that do not play to their institutional

⁷⁶ Pew Research Center, 'Partisan polarization surges in Bush, Obama years', 4 June 2012, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/06/04/partisan-polarization-surges-in-bush-obama-years/>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁷⁷ Though the parties' policies may overlap in many areas, this agreement may not extend to defence spending.

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strengths. To oversimplify, the Army may resist pivoting to the Asia–Pacific, and the Navy and Air Force may resist focusing on the greater Middle East, stabilization operations and certain counterterrorism programmes. It is important to be clear that this resistance is not malicious or petty, but a result of the different strategic world-views inculcated in the different services.⁷⁸ Regardless of the cause, interservice competition could impair the achievement of America’s global security ambitions by diminishing unity of effort within the US military.

Conclusion

The United States faces a future in which it will continue to struggle to direct its military power towards its most important geopolitical priorities, such as rebalancing in the direction of the Asia–Pacific, as opposed to simply responding to the many security surprises that are sure to arise. The United States has failed repeatedly to predict when and where it will fight its next war. As General Dempsey commented, ‘we generally find that we don’t predict the future with any degree of accuracy’.⁷⁹ The United States may not be able to rebalance towards the Asia–Pacific unless it limits its response to crises elsewhere. Historically, the United States has not exhibited such restraint with any consistency. If the United States does respond militarily to crises elsewhere, doing so will consume resources and attention that otherwise would flow to the Asia–Pacific. Indeed, President George W. Bush and President Bill Clinton both advocated a shift to Asia but spent much of their time focused elsewhere.⁸⁰

If the past is any guide, American political leaders will respond to the risks outlined in this article in the worst way possible: by maintaining the current US defence strategy while they slash the resources to support it. Leaders are likely to keep the strategy because adopting a less ambitious version would incur political costs by suggesting that they are willing to retreat from American global leadership. They already have demonstrated their willingness to cut budgets, and popular support for such efforts shows no signs of abating. Keeping the strategy and cutting the money will increase the risks to the well-being of the US military, which will try dutifully to maintain its current level of activity with fewer resources. If the situation persists, US civil–military relations will suffer at the hands of political leaders unable to reduce their appetite for armed activity abroad and unwilling to foot the bill.

⁷⁸ Carl H. Builder, *The masks of war: American military styles in strategy and analysis* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

⁷⁹ Martin Dempsey, statement to the Armed Services Committee, US House of Representatives, 13 Oct. 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4905>, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.

⁸⁰ ‘U.S. foreign policy turns toward Asia’ (editorial), *Washington Post*, 15 Nov. 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-foreign-policy-turns-toward-asia/2011/11/15/gIQAXLncPN_story.html, accessed 1 Aug. 2012.