# The Strategic Defense

America’s Next National Security Concept

**Abstract**

Financial necessity will soon drive the United States to cut its defense spending. Defense policy makers must develop a national security concept now by first defining the nation’s security goals and then developing a concept that can shape future defense policies to achieve those goals.

A Strategic Defense will provide a more secure, more stable, and more prosperous future for the United States and should be America’s future national security concept.

**Subject Terms**

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**ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words)**

Financial necessity will soon drive the United States to cut its defense spending. Defense policy makers must develop a national security concept now by first defining the nation’s security goals and then developing a concept that can shape future defense policies to achieve those goals.

A Strategic Defense will provide a more secure, more stable, and more prosperous future for the United States and should be America’s future national security concept.
THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE
AMERICA'S NEXT NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT

MAJOR MARK W. ELFERS, USMC

AY 09-10
Executive Summary

Author: Major Mark W. Elfers, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: U.S. policy makers must fundamentally change the way they think about war. War is so expensive and its results so uncertain that America must resort to it only when its enemies attack. American policy makers must turn away from an aggressive, offensive national security concept and embrace the Strategic Defense.

Discussion: Today, U.S. national security policy makers face significant economic challenges. National budget deficits and federal debt will combine to force sharp cuts in future defense spending. Therefore, the White House and the Department of Defense must define a future national security concept now in advance of impending Congressional cuts.

Conclusion: The future national security concept of the United States must fuse the fundamental nature of war, accept that defense is the stronger form of war, and simultaneously retain America’s global economic, political, and military role. The concept should have historic roots, logical and theoretical basis, and most importantly, must be economically feasible. America’s future national security strategy must be the Strategic Defense.
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INTRODUCTION

Defending a country is difficult. Many complex variables determine if a country will be secure. Not surprisingly, creating effective security policy is also difficult. Most U.S. administrations have used a broad strategic concept, like neutrality, containment, or pre-emption, to shape its security policy and strategy development.

Before policy makers can develop a strategic concept, they must set national security goals, study the present, and predict the future. If current policy makers had to develop a new concept today, they would see a weak economy, record unemployment, and the looming retirement of Baby Boomers, all of which will decrease tax revenue and increase spending. In addition, they would find paying for the Global War on Terror has led to a federal debt that threatens to overtake the U.S. economy. Looking at these facts together, policy makers would see that Congress is likely to increase taxes, change social security and Medicare laws, and slash defense spending. Therefore, the Department of Defense (DOD) should develop a new strategic concept now, which will shape national security policy when Congress does make defense budget cuts.

America’s strategic concept must recognize that federal debt undermines national security, defense is the stronger form of war, and America has a global role as the sole superpower. War is so expensive and its results so uncertain that America must resort to it only when its enemies attack. Thus, America’s next national security concept should be one of Strategic Defense.

This paper outlines future national security goals and current threats to the United States. It introduces and explains the Strategic Defense national security concept and outlines several
arguments against this idea. Finally, this paper presents several ways the Strategic Defense concept would translate into national defense policy.

CHOOSING A DESTINATION

A clearly defined national security goal must drive security concept development just as one chooses a destination and then plots a course. America’s security goals should be to: (1) be able to resist external military persuasion; (2) retain possession of current natural and human resources; and (3) assist allies militarily while retaining the ability to act autonomously. When America has done these things in the past, it has been secure.

The first security goal addresses the global perception of U.S. military power. If potential adversaries perceive America as unable or unwilling to protect itself, they may try to influence U.S. policy with threats of military force. America’s Great White Fleet, the Soviet Union’s military parades of the Cold War, and North Korea’s recent ballistic missile tests all conveyed a warning to anyone who would try to prevent the achievement of those country’s goals. The United States must retain a military capable of countering similar attempts at military persuasion.

The second security goal addresses American possessions. Much of the country’s economic strength comes from the vast natural and human resources located within the continental United States. These possessions must stay as secure as they currently are. However, many American industries rely on overseas markets for oil or other mineral resources and for the sale of finished goods. As these resources and products form the foundation of the American economy, the U.S. must guarantee freedom of global navigation to secure them.

The third security goal addresses the paradox of military alliances. Most countries do not want to go to war without allies nor be drug into war by allies. A secure America will be able to
fight with its friends but will also have the self-assuredness to decline an “invitation” to war if it
does not support American interests. \(^9\)

While these goals are clear, if policy makers do not understand war’s timeless nature,
they certainly cannot develop a wise strategic concept with which to shape national security
policies. \(^{10}\) Therefore, to be clear, war is a violent struggle between two otherwise irreconcilable
organizations. It is the most complex of all human enterprises and is fundamentally disorderly,
with a countless number of unpredictable events and outcomes. \(^{11}\) Finally, there is political
point to every war. If there is no point, it is not war. \(^{12}\) Three thousand years of human
experience proves war’s timeless nature. As U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates recently
wrote, “[w]ar is inevitably tragic, inefficient, and uncertain, and it is important to be skeptical of
systems analyses, computer models, game theories, or doctrines that suggest otherwise.” \(^{13}\)

While the nature of war certainly informs policy makers, the current environment is just
as important. Currently, the most dangerous military threat facing the United States is a
simultaneous nuclear attack on major U.S. cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago,
Houston, Philadelphia, etc., because of the catastrophic effects it would have on the country.
Important national infrastructure like ports, railroads, and airports would be unusable; local and
state governments would not be able to provide emergency services to care for the injured; and
the federal government would be much less able to protect the nation from a follow-on
conventional threat. Such an attack would nearly erase America’s ability to secure itself, as
“even a small-scale, regional nuclear war could produce as many direct fatalities as all of World
War II.” \(^{14}\) This is the most dangerous threat to the existence of the United States and the
American nation. While an attack of this nature is by no means about to happen, it is possible
with existing Russian weapons and delivery systems.
Military threats aside, America’s federal debt certainly poses a challenge to the country’s future. American decisions over the last ten years have pushed the United States toward fiscal insolvency. While federal debt may not lead to a national security crisis, it does mean that to execute policy and exercise sovereignty, the government must have the confidence of lenders willing to purchase U.S. Treasury bonds. A dearth of willing lenders or a concerted effort to drive up interest rates would certainly threaten America’s ability to resist military persuasion, protect its resources, and assist its friends and allies.

CHARTING THE COURSE

Having considered national security goals, the nature of war, and threats to the United States, one may proceed to a national security concept with which to shape and to frame all U.S. security efforts. The United States should adopt a Strategic Defense as its national security concept. The basic premise of this concept is to retain a credible military force but to preserve that force to defeat an attacking enemy rather than to attack a defending enemy. Carl von Clausewitz’s *On War* explains the basis of this concept saying, “the defensive form of warfare is intrinsically stronger than the offensive,” and the “the natural course in war is to begin defensively and to end by attacking.”\(^{15}\) Clausewitz also wrote that, “as a rule, the defender can count on outside assistance more than can the attacker; and the more his survival matters to the rest – that is, the sounder and more vigorous his political and military condition – the more certain he can be of their help.”\(^{16}\) Jon Sumida reinforces this point in his book, *Decoding Clausewitz*, noting that, “no matter how determined the attacker, no political/policy motive for national aggrandizement through offensive action can be equal to or stronger than the motive of national survival on the part of a defender determined to preserve its sovereignty.”\(^{17}\)
America’s founding fathers followed such a path, consistently choosing to fight only when attacked. Presidents George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson all chose neutrality when war between Great Britain and France spread to parts of Western Europe. Washington observed that “[t]he nation prompted by ill will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government contrary to the best calculations of policy (italics added),” before ending his farewell address with “[i]t is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world.”\(^{18}\) For his part, John Adams resisted the demands of many Americans during the XYZ Affair, and resolved a prickly diplomatic situation that could have turned to war had cooler heads not prevailed. He later said, “I desire no other inscription over my gravestone than: ‘Here lies John Adams, who took upon himself the responsibility of peace with France in the year 1800.’”\(^{19}\) Jefferson, facing intense domestic pressure to go to war with France or England, also abstained. He did send an armed fleet to defeat the Barbary pirates, who were attacking U.S. commercial shipping in the Mediterranean Sea. On this he said, “[m]y hope of preserving peace for our country is not founded in the greater principle of non-resistance under every wrong, but in the belief that a just and friendly conduct on our part will procure justice and friendship from others.”\(^{20}\) While the thoughts, writings, and experiences of the founding fathers are certainly dated, the essence of this concept remains: wage war only when you need to, not when you want to.

It is important to note that today America is neither a fledgling republic nor an 18\(^{\text{th}}\) Century European state — it is the global superpower, with friends, alliances, and interests worldwide. Interestingly, that changes neither the validity of the points made by the American Founding Fathers nor those introduced by Clausewitz and reinforced by Sumida. In fact, recent history reinforces their points.
During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the U.S. was able to make a compelling argument that Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait was an intolerable act. The argument was so politically sound that nearly the entire world came together to either fight or support the war. To underscore this point, the Syrians supported the operation. Likewise, immediately after 9/11, global sentiment supported the United States. As the attacked, America was the defender and held the more “vigorous political condition.”

Then, one short year later, when the United States made an argument to attack Iraq, global sentiment nearly flipped as American motives seemed suspect. The assertion that Saddam Hussein was working with Al Qaida to attack America with weapons of mass destruction and that he must be forcibly deposed did not resonate on the global stage. The U.S. political position was unclear, hard to follow, and difficult to understand. The U.S. position was simply not politically sound.

Many nations who have attacked first eventually failed. Germany started both world wars and was defeated, never enjoying a sound international political position. On the contrary, as the attacking nation, Germany became an international pariah. Japan suffered the same fate during WWII. North Korea’s initial success in 1950 ended with no gains and huge losses years later. France chose to fight nationalist insurgencies in both Indo-China and Algeria only to be defeated. America similarly chose to fight in Vietnam and lost. The Soviet Union attacked into and left Afghanistan with its goals unfulfilled and its economy in ruins.

The above examples support Clausewitz’s premise that the reason for fighting matters. The weaker the political logic, the more difficult it will be to sustain domestic and international support. If the attacker’s political logic is fundamentally unsound or its argument unclear and
difficult to follow, its potential allies may desert, stand by neutrally, or even offer aid to the
defender. As war is an extension of policy, this point cannot be over-emphasized.24

COUNTER-POINTS

An attack by French forces into Germany in 1936 or in 1939 might have forestalled
Adolf Hitler’s aspirations.25 That short, hopeful statement encompasses the strongest counter-
points to the Strategic Defense: a small investment in conventional military action now might
prevent larger military losses later and may even yield huge peace dividends. No state wishes to
re-enact Neville Chamberlain’s hopeful yet ultimately naïve leap of faith nor wants to hide
behind its own version of the Maginot Line, waiting for the attack they know is coming.26

Along these same lines, some posit that preemptive military action against terrorists
could prevent terrorist attacks. This argument highlights under-governed regions around the
globe within which highly motivated and well-financed terrorist groups could plan for and
execute attacks on America or her allies. Some argue that U.S. defense organizations should
figuratively “drain these swamps,” thereby denying these areas to global terrorists such as Al
Qaida. According to this counter-point, this would be a wise investment and might eliminate a
potential threat. Moreover, a small but early investment could lead to better governance,
increased stability, and enhanced regional security, all of which might roll back an ever-rising
tide of fundamentalist terrorist groups. U.S. President George W. Bush described this counter-
point when he said, “the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle
to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge.”27
These points seem to resonate with large portions of the American public, policy wonks, and some Congressional leaders. Thus, to support the Strategic Defense as America’s best future national security concept, each point must be addressed.

First, currently, no conventional force threatens the existence of the United States. According to Andrew Krepinevich, “[t]he United States has no rival (or combination of rivals) that can muster even half the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP).”28 Strong economies translate to strong militaries. In 2008, the combined defense spending of China and Russia, the world’s second and third highest military budgets, was $191B, less than one third of total U.S. defense spending that year. After Russia, the top spenders were the UK, France, Japan, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, India, Australia, and Canada; all friends and allies of America. Of note: “the U.S. spends 5.8 times more on its military than China, 10.2 times more than Russia, and 98.6 times more than Iran.”29

While some imagine a conflict with China or with Russia, neither country has the capacity nor the historical proclivity to project military power and fight non-contiguous wars. While they have fought along their borders with contiguous neighbors, neither has conducted global offensive military action. Moreover, both of these countries share borders with peer or near-peer competitors and have domestic stability issues. These and other factors force China and Russia to focus on domestic and regional security issues, in that order, and not on a military conflict that could threaten the existence of the United States.30

The second point is that terrorist organizations will never constitute an existential threat to America. The Al Qaeda-led attacks on 9/11 tragically killed almost four thousand Americans in one day, and the nation continued to exist. Conversely, during WWII, some 5.5 million Germans and 1.9 million Japanese were lost; yet both the German and Japanese people, and their
cultures, continue to exist. The French suffered through nearly ten years of war between 1914 and 1945, yet the state and nation live on. The stories of nations suffering war and surviving fill history books. Therefore, the argument that a terrorist’s attack, even with a dirty bomb or a nuclear weapon, threatens the very existence of the United States is unfounded. Terrorists, by their very nature, operate clandestinely. Their need for secrecy precludes them from amassing the resources required to render extinct either the United States or the American nation. To suggest otherwise is to be alarmist or dangerously divorced from reality. American security policy makers should not use this illogical premise to build a wise national security concept.

Finally, the fundamental nature of war prevents accurate predictions regarding a conflict’s outcome. No one can predict the results of a conventional or unconventional military intervention just as no one can predict how the stock market, global economies, or global politics will change over time. There are simply too many inputs and complex variables to make confident assertions about the future. All of these clarifications support the idea that the Strategic Defense is the right U.S. national security concept to adopt now, when the country is facing historic federal debt.

WEIGHING ANCHOR

Using the Strategic Defense concept, the most effective way to defend the United States with a smaller portion of the federal budget is to fight only mandatory wars. While this is seemingly obvious, policy makers must clearly state and support it. America should wage war only when it needs to, not when it wants to. America will certainly fight and defeat all comers; however, the enemy must choose to attack. The Strategic Defense security concept would ensure that America never again wages a discretionary war, that it fights only when attacked, and thus
holds the soundest political position from which to pull domestic and international support, resources, and eventually, victory.

The next means to defend the nation is always to act multi-laterally. Rather than take the lead on global security crises, America should work through multi-national agencies, offering the lead to others while it supports the effort. One reason for this is that international organizations will challenge America’s definition of crisis, thus ensuring that a tragic global event does not escalate to unnecessary military action. For if neither the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nor the United Nations (U.N.) can be convinced that a situation requires military action, it probably does not. Along this line, former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski recently wrote that NATO could play a larger role on the global stage, arguing it “has the experience, the institutions, and the means to eventually become the hub of a globe-spanning web of various regional cooperative-security undertakings among states with the growing power to act.”

Similarly, the U.S. could work through other multi-national bodies to address concerns that fall outside of U.S. or NATO’s immediate regional concerns. For example, by using the World Health Organization, the World Bank, or the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. could further its interests without pushing its brand. The key is to abide by the decisions of international bodies, and thus reduce the image of an overbearing country that must have its own way, while quietly retaining the ability to retaliate unilaterally against military attack.

By taking a small step down as the world’s most powerful nation and simultaneously helping allies step up onto a larger and more inclusive stage, the U.S. could defuse some of the Muslim resentment that motivates would-be terrorists. In that regard, Dr. Brzezinski wrote, “[t]he combination of Washington’s arrogant unilateralism in Iraq and its demagogic
Islamophobic sloganeering weakened the unity of NATO and focused aroused Muslim
resentments on the United States and the West more generally. If American leaders adopt the
Strategic Defense as their national security concept, and allow that concept to shape government
policy, they need not worry about degrading national sovereignty by sharing the world stage. In fact, this concept would ensure America retains the soundest political position from which it
can more efficiently prepare for war, and more effectively wage it – but only when attacked.

Furthermore, by allowing other nations to take the lead in crises, America would encourage its allies to spend more on defense. Presently, American resources and capabilities
assuage our allies’ defense worries, allowing them to spend less on their own defense, confident
the U.S. will protect them. Considering America’s economic issues, it is time for American
friends to spend more on defense, or to rest less soundly under a thinner blanket of American
protection.

GETTING UNDERWAY

While acting multi-laterally is a behavior that America would have to learn and Congress
would have to approve, the U.S. must retain the ability to protect itself unilaterally from it most
dangerous threat: a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile attack. Indeed,

a credible [nuclear] deterrent should give U.S. leaders a range of retaliatory options,
including the ability to respond to nuclear attacks with either conventional or nuclear
strikes, to retaliate with strikes against an enemy’s nuclear forces rather than its cities,
and to minimize casualties. The Strategic Defense concept absolutely translates into the credible deterrence of nuclear attack.
Thus, the DOD must retain its fleet of nuclear weapons and platforms from which to deliver
them. In addition, research on intercepting airborne missiles, either near their launch sites, in
space, or during their re-entry, must continue.
Additionally, the U.S. should have persistent naval surface presence in international sea-lanes. The U.S. must retain the capability to counter violent threats to shipping and then use those forces with no apologies. Any attack on commercial shipping requires a harsh military response. Although, according to the Strategic Defense concept, military forces would simply dispatch pirates, saboteurs, or terrorists, rather than taking the fight on land for the sake of stability or improved governance.

The U.S. currently has the means to accomplish the above with U.S. Navy surface ships. However, aircraft carriers are simply not required for this mission. Congress should cut the number of U.S. Navy carrier strike groups from twelve to six, enough to keep two underway at all times, in the Atlantic and the Pacific, or in areas with the highest potential threats to international shipping. The carrier strike groups certainly act as deterrence to any attacks on U.S. coasts or on U.S. shipping. While the two underway groups would thus defend American resources; two of the remaining four would conduct post-deployment maintenance and training; and the final two would be preparing for their next deployment.

Similarly, the Marine Corps should reduce to one active duty Marine Expeditionary Force, with another in reserve. This force will be singularly focused on opposed amphibious landing operations and would be manned, trained, and equipped to that mission, rather than as a land force with many of the same skills and missions of the U.S. Army. The country still needs a Marine force to contribute to the nation’s military; however, the history of WWII shows that when America is mobilized, it can certainly grow the force required to defeat any enemy. The Strategic Defense would demand a Marine Corps that can serve as the stem cell for a much larger amphibious force, capable of opposed landings on the enemy’s shores.
For its part, the Army must retain a ground force capable of deterring and defeating an aggressive force invading the U.S. or one of her allies. In this role, the Army has the lead in securing current American human and natural resources and aiding U.S. allies within the limits of national interest. The DOD can support this by withdrawing all Army and Marine units permanently based overseas back to the continental U.S. and deploying rotating units to potential crisis points for twelve-month tours. Thereby, rather than the U.S. taxpayer sustaining a small U.S. military city in South Korea or Germany, American troop would live on bases maintained by our allies, encouraging them to bear the weight of their state’s security instead of depending on the American taxpayer to do so.

In terms of diversifying its defense, the country’s security and immigration services should combine the electronic databases used by national intelligence agencies, U.S. citizenship and immigration services, consular activities, and local law enforcement in order to identify potential terrorists and either expel them from or deny them entrance into the United States. These bad actors, representing the most likely future attack on U.S. soil, have found a gap between these services that, when exploited, allows them to enter the country and prepare for attacks here, greatly simplifying their mission. The integration of immigration, intelligence, and law enforcement networks will close this gap.

The U.S. should then share this database. Information sharing strengthens bonds with allies, who often stand to lose as much or more if terrorists successfully attack America. Had these precautions been in place, the now infamous “Underwear Bomber,” Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, could never have purchased a ticket to the U.S., nor could he have passed through European security in December 2009. These steps are easy and cost effective. The President would have to sign an executive order and establish a deadline; his cabinet members
would then oversee the order’s implementation. Importantly, neither troops nor money need leave the U.S.

The Pentagon could take additional steps to save money and increase the military’s effectiveness. The first would be to abolish service-specific training centers that teach joint skills. For each joint skill, joint training centers could replace service-specific training. For example, the U.S. Marine Corps should close its Small Wars Center of Excellence at Quantico, VA, and integrate into the U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Similarly, the DOD should reorganize the U.S. Navy Fighter Weapons School, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, and the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron into Joint Airpower Training and Education Centers. This is just one of many proposals the Pentagon could study to deal with budget cuts yet retain a military ready to defend the country on the Strategic Defense.

Finally, Congress should dissolve the Department of Homeland Defense. This administrative behemoth consumes federal funds and resources yet provides few services to U.S. taxpayers. DOD should return to the fore as America’s homeland defenders. However, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) should become a part of the DOD. As such, FEMA would gain easier access to the vast military resources that could provide rapid assistance to either natural disasters or terrorist attacks in the continental United States. It is time to put the “defense” back in DOD.

CONCLUSION

Today, U.S. national security policy makers face significant economic challenges. National budget deficits and federal debt will soon combine to force sharp cuts in future defense
spending. This means the White House and the Department of Defense must define a future national security concept now, to stand ready when Congress makes these cuts, because, as Secretary Gates wrote, “[t]he United States cannot expect to eliminate national security risks through higher defense budgets, to do everything and buy everything. The Congress, with the President and his cabinet, must set priorities and consider inescapable tradeoffs and opportunity costs.”37

Therefore, U.S. policy makers must fundamentally change the way they think about war. War is too expensive and its results so uncertain that America must resort to it only when its enemies attack. American policy makers must turn away from an aggressive, offense minded national security concept.

The future national security concept of the United States must be based on the fundamental nature of war, must recognize that federal debt weakens national security, must accept that defense is the stronger form of war, and yet allow for America’s global economic, political, and military role.38 This concept should have historic roots, logical and theoretical basis, and most importantly, must be economically feasible. The key is to this concept is to maintain an obviously well trained and capable military force, and then use it only when attacked. America’s future national security strategy must be the Strategic Defense.

The Strategic Defense is not pacifism. It is not defeatism. It recognizes that while peace is a national interest of the United States, war is an option, but the enemy must choose it. Only then will America fight and defeat him.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


NOTES


3 This is not a new premise. In 1802, President Thomas Jefferson cut both Army and Navy spending. The majority of national defense responsibility rested on the militia and a fleet of gunboats for coastal defense. During this period, Jefferson’s administration decreased the federal debt from $80 million to $57 million and accumulated a $14 million savings in the Treasury, “despite the unanticipated expenditure of $15 million for the purchase of the Louisiana territory” and funding a war with the Barbary pirates in the Mediterranean; see Forrest McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson* (Lawrence, KS: 1976), 44. See also C. Fred Bergsten, “The Dollar and the Deficits: How Washington Can Prevent the Next Crisis,” *Foreign Affairs* Volume 88 no. 6 (November/December 2009): 22. Additionally, every presidential administration of the past one hundred years has cut the armed services after cessation of hostilities.

4 Andrew F. Krepinevich, *Strategy For The Long Haul: Defense Investment Strategies In An Uncertain World* (Washington, DC: The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008), ix. In this passage, the author writes, “The temptation [of investment strategists] to adopt a ‘wait and see’ attitude can be great. Decision makers can fall pretty to the illusion that, do doing so, they are preserving their options. But this is a chimera. Choices are being made. Rosource are being allocated. Finally, a critical component to any investment strategy is a clear statement by the Do leadership describing its vision of the future competitive environment, the objectives to be achieved, and how the Department’s investment strategy will enable those objectives to be met.” Also see page 67; in this passage, the author writes, “The inability or unwillingness of senior decision-makers to make these ‘hard choices’ is, perhaps, the principal reason why the US military is reacting to the transformation in certain areas of warfare that clearly emerged in the wake of 9/11, rather than having anticipated it.” The author’s topic is defense planning during periods of discontinuous change and how planners and policy makers must develop specific choices as to how limited resources can best be used to provide for the nation’s security.


6 Krepinevich, *Strategy For The Long Haul: Defense Investment Strategies In An Uncertain World*, 32. In this passage, the author writes, “As John Kotter observed, ‘In every successful transformation…the guiding coalition develops a picture of the future that is relatively easy to communicate and appeals to customers, stockholders, and employees.’ This holds true for the Defense Department as well as the private sector. Another, more familiar saying has it that ‘If you don’t know where you want to go, any road will take you there.’ For more on Kotter’s argument, see John P. Kotter, “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail,” Harvard Business Review, March-April 1995.

7 For a discussion on the concept of Non-Offensive Defense in the post-Cold War World, see Bjorn Moller and Hakan Wiberg, eds., *Non-Offensive Defense for the Twenty-First Century* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994). While not the same as the national security concept of Strategic Defense that I propose in this paper, the idea of Non-
offensive defense is that the more offensive your arsenal, the more likely you are to cause a conflict during which to use them, or the more likely you are to instigate your closest enemy to strike you first.

8 There is significant historical precedence for this policy. From 1801-1804, President Thomas Jefferson, a supposed pacifist philosopher, sent an armed naval force into the Mediterranean Sea to protect U.S. shipping from Barbary pirates. See Gilbert Chinard, *Thomas Jefferson: The Apostle of Americanism* (KS: 1976), 443.


10 There is an important difference between the nature of war and the character of a war. The following definitions provide additional fidelity. NATURE OF WAR: The nature of war refers to those constant, universal, and inherent qualities that ultimately define war throughout the ages, such as dominant role of policy and strategy, psychological factors, irrationality, bloodshed, violence, uncertainty, friction, fear, danger, chance, and luck. CHARACTER OF WAR: The character refers to those transitory, circumstantial, and adaptive features that account for the different periods of warfare throughout history. It is primarily determined by the prevailing international relations, domestic politics, economic, social, demographic, religious, legal, and other conditions in a certain era and also last but not the least the influence of the new technological advances. Hence, in contrast to its nature, the character of war is not unchangeable. Milan N. Vego, Re: SAW visit/article, Sunday 10:09 PM, email to author.


15 Clausewitz goes on to write that “Moreover, the “sudden and powerful transition to the offensive – the flashing sword of vengeance –is the greatest moment for the defense,” Clausewitz, *On War*, 357-378; and Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz*, 357, 370, 358.

16 Clausewitz, *On War*, 376.

17 Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz*, 162. While this is indeed what Sumida wrote, there are historical exceptions. During America’s Vietnam War, the South Vietnamese forces fighting to preserve their freedom were simply outperformed, outthought, outfought, and overcome by North Vietnamese regular and insurgent army that was well equipped, well led, well trained, and experienced. The South Koreans would have likely faced a similar fate in the summer of 1950 had the U.N. not successfully intervened to restore previously set border between the two Koreas. For more on these two conflicts, see Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), 311-812 and T. R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, (Washington DC: Brassey’s, 1963).


22 Clausewitz, On War, 376.

23 For a brief summary of these conflicts, see Grenville, A History of the World in the Twentieth Century, 116-120, 293-322, 404-408, 548-557, 627-632, 800.

24 Clausewitz, On War, 87-89.

25 This suggests that a strategically offensive action could have delayed or even prevented World War II. Such a suggestion is based on the historical narrative found in many places, including: Grenville, A History of the World in the Twentieth Century, 216 and Donald Kagan, On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 344-345.


28 Krepinevich, Strategy For The Long Haul: Defense Investment Strategies In An Uncertain World, 67. The author states, “Moreover, the United States can also count most of the world’s greatest economic powers (e.g., France, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan) among its allies.”


30 It is important to note that a resource competition in the Indian Ocean or in the South China Sea would not, I believe, pose an existential threat to the United States, i.e., the United States would no longer exist, or the nation of American people are extinguished. While certainly, someone might imagine this scenario, and could argue the second, third, fourth, and fifth order effects of a military conflict with China that leads to the end of the United States, I find the argument to be unfounded.

Some might argue that by not forcing our way through international governmental organizations, the United States might weaken its international stature. I argue that when one has the ability to strike, but does not, his stature and respect increase among his peers. However, the argument is moot if you have not ability to strike. For a comparative case study, compare pre-WWII British foreign policy with that of the Kennedy administration during the Cuban Missile Crisis in Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 281-565.

Brzezinski, “An Agenda for NATO – Toward a Global Security Web,” 2

